

The National Archives: Code of Conduct for Research Integrity		THE
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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline principles of behaviour for delivering research at The National Archives. It applies to all staff conducting or supporting the delivery of research, as well as external researchers where The National Archives is the lead institution, and a member of The National Archives' staff is the Principal Investigator (PI) or project lead. This code of conduct also applies to all students who are supervised by a member of The National Archives' staff.

Responsibilities

Our strategic vision, as outlined in Archives for Everyone¹, is guided by three key principles: to be an Inclusive Archive, to be an Entrepreneurial Archive, and to be a Disruptive Archive. Being an Inclusive Archive means building trust with our audiences and collaborators, and tearing down barriers to access, participation and understanding of the work that we do. We can build trust by being *honest, rigorous, and transparent* in the way that we conduct our research and the results we produce. We can break down barriers to participation by showing *respect* for all stakeholders involved in our research and being *accountable* for upholding the highest standards and practices.

This code of conduct is framed around those five key principles: Honesty, Rigour, Transparency, Respect and Accountability, which researchers and research support staff should follow throughout every aspect of their work². We have included below a number of examples for how these principles may be applied, which are based on the RESPECT Code of Conduct for Social Research³ and the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity⁴. Individuals are responsible for familiarising themselves with these principles and applying them to their research activities.

The behaviours outlined in this code of conduct are supported by the following policies:

- Bullying and Harassment
- Conflicts of Interest
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Raising a Concern (formerly known as Whistleblowing)
- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

A member of The National Archives' staff needing to raise a concern relating to the conduct of research should utilise the issue escalation route outlined in the applicable policy, listed above.

Students and external research partners needing to raise a concern about our research, or the way it is being conducted, can do so through any of the following routes:

¹ [Archives for Everyone - The National Archives](#)

² These principles are taken from the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, available at: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-08/Updated%20FINAL-the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf>

³ [The RESPECT project \(the-sra.org.uk\)](#)

⁴ [The Concordat to Support Research Integrity \(universitiesuk.ac.uk\)](#)

- The project lead/PI (in circumstances where The National Archives is the project lead)
- Your PhD supervisor at The National Archives
- A member of our Human Resources department via HumanResources@nationalarchives.gov.uk
- Via the issue escalation route outlined within the Raising a Concern policy (to access a copy of this, or any of the policies listed above, please contact Research@thenationalarchives.gov.uk)
- Via the Senior Nominated Officer named in your studentship or research collaboration agreement with The National Archives

Only members of The National Archives staff are subject to our Grievance Policy and Disciplinary Policy. We may escalate any behavioural issues on behalf of external research collaborators or students to their employer/home institution, via the institution's disciplinary policy or equivalent. We may remove access to our buildings, should it be required, for any student supervised by a member of our staff, or any external researcher with whom we are working (regardless of whether The National Archives are the project lead), if a behavioural issue arises.

Principles

Honesty

Researchers should:

- Adopt an unbiased attitude to the selection and formulation of their research questions and the design of their research, not presuming or determining the outcome nor precluding particular findings.
- Not fabricate or inappropriately manipulate data; including suppression of relevant results/data or knowingly, recklessly or by gross negligence present a flawed interpretation of data.
- Acknowledge the work of other researchers; where there has been a collaboration, the participating researchers should agree on how to determine authorship of publications.
- Acknowledge other forms of assistance, such as financial support (including from research funders) or access to materials.
- Be honest, with themselves and others, about their own qualifications, skills, experience and capacity to undertake research; be conscious of their own limitations and knowledge gaps; and seek help from others where difference perspectives, experiences or qualifications are needed.

Rigour

Researchers should:

- Adopt appropriate research methods for the project.
- Be aware of and follow the requirements of any norms, standards and protocols that apply to any particular research area or methodology.
- Comply with all relevant data protection legislation, bearing in mind that this also applies to the personal data of any living individuals in the material they are using as a part of their research and ensure that the confidentiality of any individual research participants is maintained.
- If the research project involves the use of personal data, the participating organisations must decide

on their respective Data Protection roles (Data Controllers, Joint Controllers or Data Processors) and collaborate with the Grants and Funding Office to put the appropriate Data Sharing or Data Processing agreements in place for the research project. It is the Data Controller's responsibility to decide on the legal basis for making use of personal data. Agreement must be sought from the National Archives' Data Protection Officer.

- Observe fully the ethical and legal requirements of the repositories and collections they use in the course of their work.
- Ensure that they do not infringe the copyright of others, being aware of how copyright and other intellectual property rights affect their work. Where material has been drawn from the work of others, this must be clearly identified, acknowledged and attributed to the original author. Where licencing conditions apply to images, documents or datasets used in the research, those conditions must be followed.
- Report research findings accurately, comprehensively and without distortion, with a clear differentiation between fact, interpretation, opinion, theory and hypothesis.

Transparency

Researchers should:

- Report any conflict of interest, whether personal, academic or commercial, that arises in the course of their work.
- Openly communicate methods of data collection analysis and interpretation, including sharing negative or null results.
- Make all research openly available, in line with the UK Research and Innovation Policy on Open Access⁵, whilst respecting any third-party copyright or licencing conditions relating to the materials used.
- Seek to transparently and openly communicate their research to other researchers and the public.

Respect

Researchers should:

- Show care and respect for all participants in research, and for the subjects, users and beneficiaries of research, including humans, animals, the environment and cultural objects.
- Recognise and manage potential harms and risks relating to their research.
- Ensure that all research activity is designed and conducted in such a way that individuals from underrepresented and marginalised social groups (including all protected characteristics outlined in the UK Equality Act⁶) can fully, fairly and safely interact with research activities as required.
- Ensure that research teams are inclusive and empower different perspectives.

⁵ [UKRI open access policy – UKRI](#)

⁶ [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Accountability

Researchers should:

- Familiarise themselves with these expectations for research integrity, including by undertaking training where appropriate.
- Take responsibility for ensuring that principles of research integrity are always upheld, when undertaking or otherwise engaging with research.
- Ensure that others are held to account, when these principles are not upheld.

Where appropriate, these principles should be read in conjunction with:

1. the research funders' policy on ethics and research integrity (for funded research);
2. other institutions' research ethics and integrity policies, where The National Archives is working in a consortium with other organisations (where The National Archives are not the project lead);
3. The Civil Service Code (for The National Archives' staff).