

VERSION 4.0

Glossary/Who's Who in UCL Research Misconduct

1. What is research misconduct?

The definition of what is considered research misconduct at UCL can be found at Annex 2, paragraph 7 in the UCL Research Misconduct Procedure.

2. What is the UCL Research Misconduct Procedure?

This Procedure is used for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct in academic research. It normally applies to all UCL staff (including honorary staff). It also applies to research students where the allegation relates to work intended for publication or already published as well as work conducted on UCL premises or using UCL facilities (Part A).

3. Who is the Complainant?

The Complainant is a person making an allegation(s) of misconduct in research against one or more Respondents.

4. Who is the Respondent?

The Respondent is the person against whom an allegation(s) of misconduct in research is made.

5. Who is the Named Person?

The Named Person is the individual at UCL who is responsible for ensuring the integrity of proceedings conducted under this Procedure. UCL's Registrar is normally the "Named Person" in any allegation of research misconduct at UCL.

6. Who is the Governance Manager: Research Integrity

The Governance Manager: Research Integrity is the person who is responsible for the administration of the UCL Research Misconduct Procedure and normally serves as the Secretary to any Screening or Formal Investigation Panel. This person is likely to be the main point of contact for all parties throughout any research misconduct process.

7. What is the Initial Assessment stage

This is the first stage of the Procedure where the Registrar will conduct an Initial Assessment of the allegation based on the information received from the Complainant. At this stage the Registrar can find the allegation should proceed any further or that it should be referred to the UCL Research Misconduct Committee and considered further by a Screening Panel. The Registrar will communicate this decision in writing to the Complainant and Respondent as necessary (paragraphs C9 and C10).

8. What is the UCL Research Misconduct Committee?

This Committee is comprised of senior UCL academics who are trained in handling cases involving allegations of research misconduct. The members of individual Screening Panels are drawn from this Committee.

10. What is a Screening Panel?

A Screening Panel is usually comprised of three members from the UCL Research Misconduct Committee. The Panel's job is to determine whether there is sufficient evidence of research misconduct for the allegation to be referred to a Formal Investigation Panel. The Screening Panel cannot decide that research misconduct has occurred; instead it decides whether there is sufficient evidence for the allegation to be investigated further. Screening

Panels may ask to meeting with the Complainant and/or Respondent and ask for additional relevant information.

13. Who is a Companion?

A “companion” is someone who accompanies a Complainant or Respondent to a meeting during the research misconduct process. A companion for members of UCL staff or honorary staff must be a workplace colleague or trade union representative. A companion for a UCL student must be a student friend, a UCL Union sabbatical officer or a member of staff who is in receipt of a valid contract of paid employment with UCL (Annex 1, paragraph 9). A companion cannot be a legal adviser.

12. What is the Formal Investigation stage?

At the Formal Investigation stage, a formal hearing on the allegation is held to gather additional information. This involves the Formal Investigation Panel hearing from both the Complainant and the Respondent, and they may ask for additional relevant information.

13. What is a Formal Investigation Panel?

If the Screening Panel refers the allegation to a Formal Investigation, a new panel will be convened consisting of three different senior academic members of staff (internal and/or external to UCL). They will consider the allegation and make a final decision on the allegation (Annex 7). This Panel can determine that the allegation is upheld in full; in part; or not at all. The panel’s decision about any allegation(s) is made on the balance of probabilities based on the information it has before it (Annex 1, paragraph 40).

Principles of the UCL Research Misconduct Procedure

Wellbeing support

UCL appreciates that being involved in a research misconduct process can be a very distressing experience. UCL has a number of resources that are available to support any member of staff or student, including those from outside UCL, going through this process, which can be found at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/health-wellbeing/being-well-ucl>.

Confidentiality

The Procedure will be conducted as confidentially as is reasonably practicable (Annex 1, paragraph 15). It will be emphasised throughout the process that any information shared between anyone involved in the process is confidential (paragraph C17).

Presumption of innocence

The research misconduct process operates on the assumption that any allegation(s) made is unproven, unless and until a Formal Investigation Panel reaches the conclusion that research misconduct has occurred (paragraph C17).

Anonymity

The identity of the Complainant and/or the Respondent will only be made known to any third party not involved in the process in specific circumstances (Annex 1, paragraph 18).

Appeal

The Complainant and Respondent will not have the option of appealing against the reports of either stage of the Procedure. Should the matter subsequently be referred to the relevant disciplinary process, then the Respondent will have a right of appeal as part of that process (paragraph C87).

Communication

The research misconduct process is not a formal legal process; it is a UCL internal procedure for dealing with allegations of research misconduct that involve members of UCL. As a result, no communication, either oral or written, will be entered into with any representative (including legal advisers) advising either the Complainant or the Respondent. Throughout the process the Complainant and the Respondent must only communicate with the Screening Panel and/or the Investigation Panel via the Secretary (Annex 1, paragraph 10).

Sharing of evidence

Copies of any records or materials that are obtained will be shared with the Respondent, in order for them to be able to put forward their position. No records or materials obtained throughout the Procedure will be provided to the Complainant, given they will have already put their complaint forward and gathered any supporting evidence as necessary. The Screening Panel and/or Investigation Panel can gather any further relevant information as considered necessary that will be confidential to the Panel (paragraph C23).

Expenses

It is not possible for UCL to refund any costs/expenses incurred by a Complainant of Respondent (and/or of their companion) in relation to attending any meeting or hearing convened under the Procedure. This also includes any costs incurred from seeking advice from legal advisers and/or any other advisers.