Template: annual statement on research integrity

If you have any questions about this template, please contact: RIsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk.

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	Institute of Zoology, Zoological Society of London
1B. Type of organisation: **higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)**	Independent Research Performing Organisation (within an international conservation charity)
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	31/12/2025
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	https://www.zsl.org/what-we-do/institute-of-zoology/research-ethics-and-integrity
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Johan du Toit
	Email address: johan.dutoit@ioz.ac.uk
1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity	Name: Professor Guy Cowlishaw
	Email address: guy.cowlishaw@ioz.ac.uk

Section 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture. Description of actions and activities undertaken

2A. Description of current systems and culture

Please describe how the organisation maintains high standards of research integrity and promotes positive research culture. It should include information on the support provided to researchers to understand standards, values and behaviours, such as training, support and guidance for researchers at different career stages/ disciplines. You may find it helpful to consider the following broad headings:

- Policies and systems
- Communications and engagement
- Culture, development and leadership
- Monitoring and reporting

The Institute of Zoology (IOZ) is a world-leading research centre in conservation science, and the research division of the Zoological Society of London (ZSL). The IOZ is core-funded by Research England through Special Funding, with oversight from an Independent Science Advisory Board comprising representatives from UK universities, UK Government, international conservation NGOs and subject specialists.

Staff (c. 75) and post-graduate students (c. 170) at the IOZ conduct research that directly addresses global conservation challenges. All researchers at the IOZ (including staff, consultants and affiliated staff, registered and affiliated students, research technicians and Honorary Research Associates) are expected to observe the highest standards of ethics and integrity in the conduct of their research, outlined in the Institute of Zoology Code of Practice for Research.

Policies and systems

The IOZ Code of Practice for Research outlines the responsibilities and expectations of researchers at all career stages, and signposts to other relevant policies, including the Institute of Zoology Misconduct in Research Policy; and wider ZSL policies, including the ZSL Use of Animal in Research Policy; Conflicts of Interest Policy, Data Protection Policy, Dignity and Respect at Work Policy, Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, Equality and Diversity Policy, Global Code of Conduct, Global Safeguarding Policy and Global Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

Research Ethics

Legislative context: UK legislation relevant to scientific research using animals includes the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 Amendment Regulations 2012 (ASPA), the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (which covers the use of animals for training veterinary students), the Animal Welfare Act 2006, and the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

Ethics Committee for Animal Research: Ethical review for research involving animals is provided by ZSL's Ethics Committee for Animal Research (ECAR). The Committee reviews research projects which are not regulated by ASPA (Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 Amendment Regulations 2012), and provides advice to the ZSL Director overseeing the research. Where the work requires a UK Home Office licence, there is a legal requirement for it to be reviewed by ZSL's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB). The AWERB is effectively a sub-committee of the ECAR. Both committees comprise expert and lay external members alongside appropriate representatives from ZSL.

ZSL Policy on the Use of Animals in Research: The ZSL Policy on the Use of Animals in Research explains the circumstances in which research involving the use of animals may be undertaken by staff, students, and other representatives, and the relevant ethical and animal welfare principles and review processes.

Research on animals is conducted only when it will contribute to the advancement of knowledge, inform conservation, and/or lead to improvements in the health and welfare of animals. All such research is undertaken on the basis of well-defined scientific objectives and gives due consideration to animal welfare. Principal Investigators (PIs) ensure that studies involving animals are planned ethically and that the research complies with ASPA and any other relevant legislation, as well as any relevant codes of practice, whether the work is carried out at the IOZ, in the field, or at other research organisations.

Ensuring high standards of animal welfare: The IOZ aims to minimise the number of animals used and avoid unnecessary replication and applies the principles of the National Centre for Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) ARRIVE guidelines 2.0. We align our work with the UK Government's commitment to create a science-led approach to reduce the use of animals in the biosciences.

Research Involving Human Participants: Ethical review for research involving human participants is provided by ZSL's Human Ethics Committee, which was formed in order to ensure that research involving humans engages them legally, safely, consensually, and transparently, and also minimises risk to staff, students and partners. This includes reviewing appropriate guidelines and legislation, ensuring that the correct processes and trainings have been considered in the development of the project, and that participants are taking

part with a full understanding of the aims and outputs of the work and how any data they provide will be used.

Researchers at the IOZ can access legal advice on risk management, data protection and freedom of information from ZSL's legal support team.

The IOZ is formally affiliated with UCL and research staff at the IOZ are Honorary Research Fellows at UCL. This affiliation provides IOZ research staff with access to UCL's Library and support for open access. Research outputs from the IOZ are deposited in UCL's institutional repository, UCL Discovery, in accordance with the UCL's Open Access policy.

Communications and Engagement

Induction is in place for all new staff and students to ensure they are aware of expectations relating to research integrity. In addition to the IOZ research policies, wider ZSL policies are signposted in the induction handbook and on our Intranet.

The ZSL Intranet provides contact details for the Secretary to the ECAR, along with details for administrative or process queries relating to ethical review. Condensed minutes of ECAR meetings are shared with all staff and students via the ZSL Intranet. The IOZ Research Ethics and Integrity webpage provides details of who should be contacted if there is concern regarding scientific misconduct. Contact details for the Secretary to the ECAR are provided on the ZSL Intranet, along with details for administrative or process queries relating to ethical review.

An easy-to-use decision tree is provided on the ZSL Intranet to help researchers identify which research projects require ethical review, and information on approval requirements and processes.

PGR students are supported through a variety of sessions organised by the relevant Centres for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Training Partnerships with which our students are registered.

Culture, development and leadership

The IOZ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee oversees the development of the IOZ EDI plan, which provides a roadmap for how the IOZ is developing a fairer, more collaborative and inclusive research culture where both its research and research community can thrive. The EDI plan focuses on four pillars: (1) Inclusive and Diverse Representation; (2) Transparent and Equitable Science; (3) Outreach and Engagement and (4) Oversight and Accountability. The EDI Committee comprises staff and students at all career stages, alongside representatives from HR, Conservation Education, Library and Health and Safety teams.

In addition to EDI activities and engagement, researchers participate in the development of ZSL's FAIRER initiative, which promotes a Fair, Accountable,

Inclusive, Respectful, Ethical and Reflective approach to conservation. FAIRER takes a rights-based approach to conservation delivery across projects and programmes and has committed to implementing environmental and social safeguards through the development of an environmental and social management system. All researchers are invited to attend workshops and discussion sessions which create a space for critical reflection, learning, co-design and analyses of power and privilege.

Monitoring and reporting

The approval process for research projects requires that PIs submit a project for approval through the Zoological Projects Database (ZPD). The approval process includes a checklist for ethical review. Projects requiring ethical review are monitored and reported through the ECAR and AWERB, and the Human Ethics Committee.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

Please provide an update on any changes made during the period, such as new initiatives, training, developments, also ongoing changes that are still underway. Drawing on Commitment 3 of the Concordat, please note any new or revised policies, practices and procedures to support researchers; training on research ethics and research integrity; training and mentoring opportunities to support the development of researchers' skills throughout their careers.

The Institute of Zoology Code of Practice for Research was reviewed in December 2025.

The ZSL Use of Animals in Research Policy was reviewed in December 2025.

We are continuing to develop and enhance our institutional processes for regulatory compliance related to research, alongside a wider programme of training, including data protection, cyber security and safeguarding.

In 2025 we produced the IOZ Business Plan 2025-2028, *Science for Restoring Nature,* which details IOZ's commitment to research integrity and open science (see page 34).

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments This should include a reflection on the previous year's activity including a review of progress and impact of initiatives if known relating to activities referenced in the previous year's statement. Note any issues that have hindered progress, e.g. resourcing or other issues.
In 2026 we will: (1) Review the IOZ Policy of the Use of Animals in Research with the ECAR and AWERB to ensure that all research meets UKRI requirements, relevant legislation and best practice. (2) Review the provision of Research Integrity training for staff and students. (3) Develop clear policy guidance on open science. (4) Develop guidance for the use of AI in research.

2D. Case study on good practice (optional) Please describe an anonymised brief, exemplar case study that can be shared as good practice with other organisations. A wide range of case studies are valuable, including small, local implementations. Case studies may also include the impact of implementations or lessons learned.
[Please insert response]

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

3A. Statement on processes that the organisation has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct

Please provide:

- a brief summary of relevant organisation policies/ processes (e.g. research misconduct procedure, whistle-blowing policy, bullying/harassment policy; appointment of a third party to act as confidential liaison for persons wishing to raise concerns) and brief information on the periodic review of research misconduct processes (e.g. date of last review; any major changes during the period under review; date when processes will next be reviewed).

- information on how the organisation creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct (e.g. code of practice for research, whistle-blowing, research misconduct procedure, informal liaison process, website signposting for reporting systems, training, mentoring, reflection and evaluation of policies, practices and procedures).

- anonymised key lessons learned from any investigations into allegations of misconduct which either identified opportunities for improvements in the organisation's investigation procedure and/or related policies / processes/ culture or which showed that they were working well.

Misconduct in Research Policy

Researchers at the IOZ have a responsibility to report misconduct, whether it has been witnessed or is suspected.

The Institute of Zoology Misconduct in Research Policy is designed to ensure that all allegations of misconduct are assessed and investigated thoroughly, fairly, in a timely manner, and with care and sensitivity. The Policy includes information about what constitutes unacceptable research practices and provides details for the first point of contact for raising a concern.

IOZ staff and students are supported by a host of contact points, union, and a dedicated HR business partner, who can be contacted informally to discuss any concerns. The ZSL Global Code of Conduct emphasises the importance of a

shared responsibility towards building a supportive and inclusive community, in which all staff are treated with respect, and includes an expectation that staff report activities which are in breach of ZSL policies.

IOZ also benefits from wider organisational policies, including ZSL's Global Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, designed to ensure that concerns can be raised and appropriately dealt with without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination, disadvantage or dismissal, and ZSL's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

Please complete the table on the number of **formal investigations completed during the period under review** (including investigations which completed during this period but started in a previous academic year). Information from ongoing investigations should not be submitted.

An organisation's procedure may include an initial, preliminary, or screening stage to determine whether a formal investigation needs to be completed. These allegations should be included in the first column but only those that proceeded past this stage, to formal investigations, should be included in the second column.

Type of allegation	**Number of allegations**			
	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	**Number of formal investigations**	**Number upheld in part after formal investigation**	**Number upheld in full after formal investigation**
Fabrication	0			
Falsification	0			
Plagiarism	0			
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0			
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0			
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0			
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0			
*Other**	0			
Total:	**0**			

***If you listed any allegations under the 'Other' category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.**
During 2024–25 there have been no Research Misconduct allegations or investigations.