

IFS Research Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

This document sets out the policy and procedures of the Institute with respect to the promotion of good practice in academic research and the investigation of allegations of academic misconduct. All IFS employees and associates should ensure that their research is conducted according to the appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards, and in line with the principles below.

Principles of good practice

Good research practices are based on fundamental principles of research integrity. They guide researchers in their work as well as in their engagement with the practical, ethical and intellectual challenges inherent in research. These principles are:

- **Rigour** in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources.
- **Honesty** in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full and unbiased way.
- **Respect** for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment.
- **Accountability** for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts.

IFS follows the principles of good practice set out by Universities UK (UKRIO) [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) (revised 2019), attached as Annex A, and complies with [UKRI Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct](#) (revised 2021) and the All European Academies (ALLEA) [The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) (revised 2017).

Research Environment

Each employee and associate of the Institute is responsible for fostering an environment which promotes intellectual honesty and nurtures research integrity and which is intolerant of misconduct in any aspect of research or scholarship. The Institute is committed to upholding and encouraging the highest standards of integrity, honesty and professionalism and to embedding good practice in every aspect of work.

Training, Supervision and Monitoring

IFS undertakes a programme of induction for all new employees to set the expectations surrounding good research practice, and to ensure that all are aware of the relevant policies and guidelines.

Senior researchers, research leaders and supervisors are responsible for mentoring their team members and providing specific guidance and training to properly develop, design and structure their research activity and to foster a culture of research integrity.

Training is available to all researchers across the entire career path.

Research Ethics

Researchers at IFS are required to give full consideration to ethical issues before, and at every stage during, the conduct of research. IFS follows the Social Research Association's [Research Ethics Guidance](#) (revised 2021) and uses the ESRC [Framework for Research Ethics](#) to inform its conduct of research. Guidance for IFS researchers is provided on the intranet [here](#).

Safeguarding

IFS employees and associates must have regard for the health, safety and welfare of the community, of research participants, of colleagues and collaborators, and others connected with their research. IFS is committed to ensuring the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and its Safeguarding Policy can be found on the intranet [here](#).

Data Management

IFS is committed to the principles of security, transparency and replication of research that uses data. IFS's data management policies comprise: data protection policy; data classification and handling policy; and replication data policy. Together, they outline the procedures necessary to ensure the protection, appropriate stewardship and curation of all data and research materials, including unpublished ones, with secure preservation for a reasonable period. Information can be found [here](#).

Researchers should ensure access to data is as open as possible, as closed as necessary, and where appropriate in line with the FAIR Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable) for data management.

Researchers must provide transparency about how others may access or make use of their data and research materials. IFS policy on making data available for replication is available [here](#).

Researchers must also meet funders' requirements for data management.

AI

IFS recognizes that generative AI tools may increasingly become part of the research process to aid productivity with tasks that do not require particular human intellectual input. The Russell Group has produced [principles on the use of generative AI tools in education](#), and IFS will follow developments in policy and practice in this area, to ensure that AI tools are used responsibly. IFS encourages staff to become AI literate in order to understand when such tools may appropriately be used, and what additional scrutiny of results is required to ensure they are used ethically and responsibly, observing all due guidelines around privacy, intellectual property, and data protection laws.

Academic Misconduct

Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not restricted to, the following:

Fabrication: making up results and recording them as if they were real.

Falsification: manipulating research materials, equipment or processes, or changing, omitting or suppressing data or results without justification.

Plagiarism: using other people's work and ideas, written or otherwise, without giving proper credit to the original source, thus violating the rights of the original author(s) to their intellectual outputs.

Misrepresentation: includes:

- Misrepresentation of data, for example suppression of relevant findings and/or data, or knowingly, recklessly or by gross negligence, presenting a flawed interpretation of data.
- Undisclosed duplication of publication, including undisclosed duplicate submission of manuscripts for publication.
- Misrepresentation of interests, including failure to declare material interests either of the researcher or of the funders of the research.

IFS Research Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

- Misrepresentation of qualifications and/or experience, including claiming or implying qualifications or experience which are not held.
- Misrepresentation of involvement, such as inappropriate claims to authorship and/or attribution of work where there has been no significant contribution, or the denial of authorship where an author has made a significant contribution.

Breach of duty of care: whether deliberately, recklessly or by gross negligence includes:

- Disclosing improperly the identity of individuals or groups involved in research without their consent, or other breach of confidentiality.
- Not observing legal, ethical and other requirements for human research participants and misuse of personal data and breach of confidentiality.
- Placing any of those involved in research in danger, whether as subjects, participants or associated individuals, without their prior consent, and without appropriate safeguards even with consent; this includes reputational danger where that can be anticipated.
- Improper conduct in peer review of research proposals or results (including manuscripts submitted for publication); this includes failure to disclose conflicts of interest; inadequate disclosure of clearly limited competence; misappropriation of the content of material; and breach of confidentiality or abuse of material provided in confidence for peer review purposes.

Collusion: the deliberate participation in the academic misconduct of another person.

Malicious accusation: the bringing of a charge of misconduct against another person in bad faith.

IFS Procedure for Investigating and Acting upon Allegations of Misconduct

In considering allegations of misconduct in academic research, it is envisaged that the procedure may be invoked where necessary prior to any use of IFS's standard disciplinary processes. The procedure is designed to allow the full and fair investigation of research-related issues, and to reach a conclusion on any allegations prior to considering any disciplinary or other non-disciplinary steps that might be required or recommended. Disciplinary processes may however be invoked at an earlier stage where there is a concern about potential misconduct other than research misconduct.

This process described below will be followed for employees, and for associates where appropriate¹.

Since an allegation of academic misconduct is a serious and potentially defamatory action which could lead to the instigation of legal proceedings against the Institute, the procedures set out in this section will be followed in every investigation following an allegation of misconduct, except where a variation is agreed by all parties.

All those involved in the investigation should strive to strike a fair balance between, on the one hand, treating the allegation seriously by making a thorough investigation and, on the other hand, protecting researchers against malicious or ill-founded allegations.

Preliminary action

An allegation of academic misconduct must be made in writing by the Complainant to the Director of the IFS. The Complainant may or may not be an employee or associate of the Institute. Before any action can be taken on the allegation, the Complainant must also provide a detailed written

¹ Since the IFS is not the employer of associates, the responsibility for investigating allegations of misconduct by associates will lie primarily with their employing institution. However, the IFS may also undertake its own investigation into the case

statement in support of it.

If the allegation relates to the Director of the IFS, the Chair of Trustees will replace the Director in the procedure described.

The Director will ensure that the Complainant understands the procedures and is prepared to co-operate fully in the investigation process.

The Complainant's statement will be sent by the Director to a nominated Investigator who will be a senior member of IFS staff not directly concerned with the research and with no personal interest in the allegation.

The Director will ensure that all relevant documents and other evidences are held in a secure place.

Investigation

The Investigator will review the allegation and advise the Director whether it has some substance. The Investigator may seek confidential advice in writing from experts both within the Institute and from outside. In doing so, every effort will be made to ensure that no information will be disclosed which could lead to the identification of either the Complainant or the Respondent.

The Investigator will inform the Respondent, in writing and in confidence, of the nature of the allegation and will invite the Respondent to make any written comments within fourteen working days. The identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed.

The Investigator will, within thirty working days of the receipt of the allegation, send a confidential written report to the Director, together with any documentation that has been assembled and any written comments submitted by the Respondent.

Taking account of any comments that may be made by the Respondent, the Investigator will advise the Director:

- That the allegation has no substance; or
- That the allegation has no substance and has been made in bad faith; or
- That the allegation has some substance.

The Director will review the advice of the Investigator and will decide whether:

- The allegation has no substance and is dismissed;
- The allegation has no substance and has been made in bad faith;
- The allegation has some substance and can be dealt with under procedures that are available to the Director under the Institute's relevant disciplinary procedures.

The Director will notify both the Complainant and the Respondent in writing of his/her decision. Should the allegation be dismissed and the Complainant is not satisfied, then they may use the Institute's grievance procedures if they wish to take the matter further.

If, following investigations, the individual is found not to have committed an act of academic misconduct, or the allegation is withdrawn, the Director will protect the interests of the individual and make the outcome clear to all who have been involved. Investigators should also make clear whether or not they believe the allegation was made in good faith. If it was, the interests of the complainant must also be protected, in keeping with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. If the investigator suspects that the allegation was malicious this would constitute misconduct and will be dealt with by the Director according to the Institute's relevant disciplinary procedures.

IFS Research Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

Unless the Director's decision is that the allegation is dismissed, s/he will also notify the Head of Operations of the decision. The Head of Operations will take whatever action is judged to be necessary to protect the interests of any funding body, including notification to the funding body of any sanctions applied to an individual. S/he will also retain the report and documentation, in confidence and in security, for a period of five years.

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