

Lancet Countdown Code of Conduct

ACADEMIC BEHAVIOUR POLICY

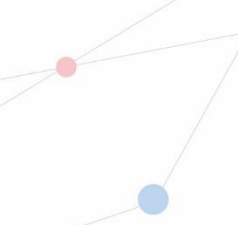
Last update: 9th of February of 2025

Note: this is an internal policy document of the *Lancet* Countdown on Health and Climate Change. It should not be shared beyond the approved contributors to the collaboration.

The success of *Lancet* Countdown's work lays on the rigour of its academic outputs. As a transdisciplinary, international research collaboration at the forefront of climate change and health science, it is crucial that all contributors to the Lancet Countdown's work abide by the highest standards of academic behaviour. In support of such standards, this policy is aimed at all contributors to the Lancet Countdown's scientific work, including contributing authors, secretariat members, and governance bodies. It is complemented by the [Lancet Countdown's behavioural standards policy](#), which serves as an essential companion to this document.

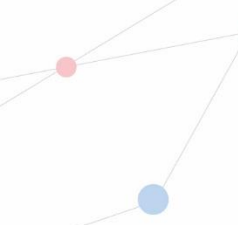
The *Lancet* Countdown is committed to uphold the principles of research integrity, and to foster a safe, respectful, and intellectually stimulating environment that encourages meaningful research collaborations and exchange of ideas among its members. In this spirit, the Lancet Countdown expects all its academic contributors to comply with the following policy, which draws on the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (the 'Concordat').

The Concordat defines research misconduct as "behaviour or actions that fall short of the standards of ethics, research and scholarship required to ensure that the integrity of research is upheld", e.g. fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or deception in performing or reviewing research, and in reporting research outputs, etc. This policy builds on the Concordat's 5 pillars for research integrity: honesty, rigour, transparency, respect and accountability. Additionally, this policy lays out academic behavioural expectations intended to ensure all contributors conduct themselves ethically and with integrity, ensuring that information shared within the collaboration is treated confidentially, and that all intellectual contributions, including research ideas, are properly acknowledged and respected.



Any and all individuals engaging and being involved with the *Lancet* Countdown should maintain the highest standards of integrity in all aspects of their research activities by:

- 1) Promoting and maintaining a culture of honesty, openness and responsibility, enabling all research to be conducted with integrity;
- 2) Treating any information shared with confidentiality;
- 3) Respecting intellectual ownership and contribution of fellow Lancet Countdown collaborators, acknowledging intellectual contributions appropriately;
- 4) Conducting all aspects of research honestly, including when gathering data, reporting findings and acknowledging the ideas, work and contributions of others;
- 5) Using the appropriate and rigorous methods when conducting research in line with the *Lancet* Countdown's norms and standards, strictly adhering to the agreed protocols and systematically communicating research findings as and when appropriate;
- 6) Remaining rigorously transparent in declaring competing interests;
- 7) Remaining rigorously transparent when documenting the analysis and interpretation of data, and making research findings available, and adhering to all principles set out in [Wellcome's Data, software and materials management and sharing policy](#) on how to manage and share data arising from Wellcome-funded research and outputs management plans;
- 8) Displaying the utmost care and respect for all individuals involved in the *Lancet* Countdown's research activities;
- 9) Actively promoting respect for the integrity of research records, including correcting honest errors when they are identified;
- 10) Taking responsibility for actions and inactions when conducting research and working with others;
- 11) Working collectively to create a positive and inclusive research environment;
- 12) Cultivating a supportive work environment by addressing any allegations of research misconduct in an impartial, fair and timely manner that protects the rights of all individuals involved (see below).



PROCESS TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS RAISES A CONCERN RELATING TO POTENTIAL RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

With the purpose of cultivating a supportive work environment for everyone involved in the collaboration, and of complying with Wellcome's terms and conditions, any allegations of research misconduct will be handled confidentially, initially addressed informally by the Working Group Lead with the individual in question. If necessary, the concern will be escalated to the respective centre Director and, if needed, further addressed by the Board. In doing so, the Lancet Countdown will follow steps 1 ("Scope, Purpose and Standards"), 2 ("Receipt of Allegations") and 3 ("Initial Investigation") of UKRIO's Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research that sets out best practice in this area.

Should this initial investigation show that there is sufficient cause for concern, allegations of research misconduct will be raised with the individual's host institution, with a recommendation for a full formal investigation to be carried out. Where the individual's host institution should not have in place an internal procedure that sets out the process to be followed when a concern relating to potential research misconduct is raised, it will be recommended to adopt UKRIO's Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research. Any formal investigation should be conducted in an impartial, fair and timely manner to ensure that the rights of all individuals involved are protected and that appropriate action is taken. Any investigation will be seen through to its conclusion, with findings documented and appropriate disciplinary procedures applied.

In addition, when a formal investigation has been opened into an allegation of research misconduct, the Lancet Countdown shall inform Wellcome's Director of Research Funding, as set out in Wellcome's grants' terms and conditions. This should include information on the category of research misconduct and the investigation process. All members of the *Lancet* Countdown should be aware and agree that personal data may be shared with Wellcome as part of such disclosure, as set out in Wellcome's Research Misconduct Policy.

Any breaches of this commitment could result in individuals being removed from the *Lancet* Countdown network for future iterations of the report.

Sources:

1. Universities UK. (2019) [The Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#).
2. Wellcome's [Research Misconduct Policy](#)
3. UCL's [Research Integrity Policy](#)
4. [UKRIO's Short Guide to research misconduct](#)
5. [UKRIO's procedure for investigation of allegations of research misconduct](#)