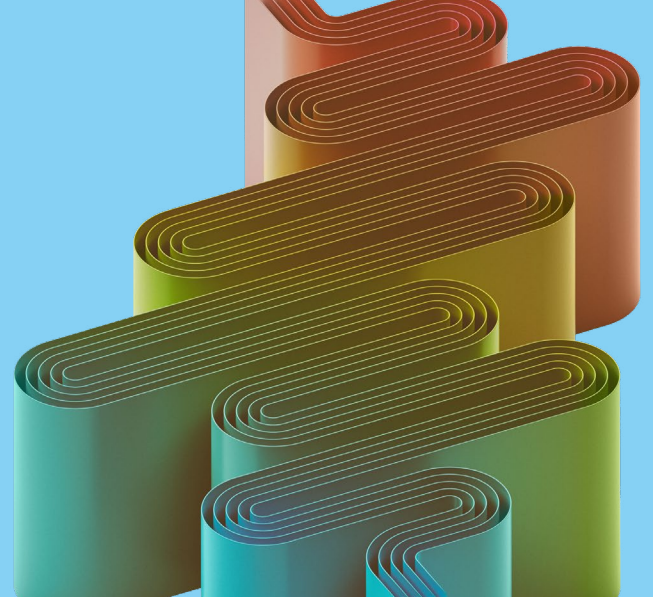


Transforming higher education training



Case Study – *Research Integrity* and Newcastle University

Based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (UK), **Newcastle University** is a research-intensive university which has a broad research remit. It caters to roughly 2,000 researchers in addition to its students. Newcastle originally subscribed to *Research Integrity* in 2022 to provide a reliable 'off-the-shelf' research integrity training provision which could be rolled out on a large scale and meet capacity constraints which prevented regular in-person training.

Stacey Wagstaff began her role in 2024, with the aim of increasing uptake for the programme. Stacey explained that she chose to renew the Epigeum resource for a further 3-year subscription, as they 'needed training to be accessible to unlimited users [...] but didn't have capacity to develop an in-house version.' She hopes the training will continue to bring confidence to Newcastle's researchers and students.



Who did we speak to?

Stacey Wagstaff, *Research Integrity Project Officer,*
Research and Innovation



What kind of subscription does Newcastle have?

Research Integrity is accessed via the Epigeum Platform, linked on an external URL on the Newcastle University Website.



Highlights

77% of those at the university who completed a survey on *Research Integrity* said they were satisfied with the knowledge gained from the programme, whilst many have praised the course for being robust, comprehensive and interactive.

Case study

Implementation

Newcastle have a 'Research Culture Action Plan', under which Professional Services staff and Academics target high priority projects. One project is *Research Integrity*, the main focus of which is training to ensure researchers have 'the tools and resources to apply research integrity to every aspect of the research lifecycle.' For this reason, the Epigeum platform provides 'peace of mind', Stacey explained. They link to Epigeum's e-learning through an external URL on the Newcastle University Website. This promotes external transparency, and provides easy access for their researchers. The website contains information about the modules and support links, as well as wider information on research legislation, activities and their code of good practice.

This e-learning is the main research integrity training in place for Newcastle, although they do offer additional 'on-demand' in-person training. They hope to make this permanent in future to embed the e-learning and build on the theory with practical knowledge.

Newcastle promotes the course via internal comms such as emails, newsletters, and plasma screens around campus. Stacey also attends many events including faculty research committees and school meetings to raise awareness of the resource. There is sustained promotion of the programme throughout the year, but particularly around the induction starting times for PGRs and new staff in September and January. This is followed up with focused promotional sessions to select groups, where they are signposted to the website, and informed which modules are most appropriate to their discipline and school.

Stacey has also disseminated the programme information by sending an introductory slide deck and complementary blended learning resources out to Heads of Faculty for the learning to reach researchers. Newcastle are looking at extending this targeted promotion further by nominating 'Good Research Practice Champions' – providing the Epigeum training and resources to professional staff with experience who are invested in research integrity, to enable them to create their own bespoke training for their discipline.

Research Integrity training is currently only mandatory for researchers who are funded by the Wellcome Trust. They can choose the on-demand in-person training, but many opt for the Epigeum programme instead which fits flexibly around their other commitments. Thus, direct promotion and mailing is provided for this group of researchers to ensure they complete their training, although all researchers are encouraged to use the Epigeum resource to enhance their integrity knowledge.

Stacey appreciates the monitoring and reporting element of *Research Integrity*, as she can view completion rates for the modules. As Newcastle are also taking part in the REF People Culture and Environment Pilot, having data on their institution's research integrity training has proved useful for discussions.

Outcomes

77% of those who completed a *Research Integrity* survey said they were satisfied with knowledge gained from the Epigeum programme, and Newcastle users have praised the course for being 'robust, comprehensive and interactive.' One researcher – who has worked with Newcastle for 28 years – reportedly 'found the training extremely useful and wished it had been available when they started at the university.' To date, 85 researchers have completed the training in full, with many more who have dipped in and out of selected relevant modules. Stacey considers this a success for a programme which is not mandatory for the majority.

Going forwards, Newcastle will move to the upcoming Research Integrity Collection. Stacey believes the flexible pathways of this updated programme will cater to both new and more experienced researchers and increase training uptake. They are investigating making *Research Integrity* mandatory for all new PGR students and staff and may embed a SCORM package on canvas to increase student interaction. Newcastle hope to continue to embed Epigeum's e-learning further within inductions and through increased in-person sessions to fully enhance their researchers' diverse learning experiences.



Get in touch

To find out more about any of our programmes and what Epigeum can do for your institution, please get in touch.

