Research Integrity Annual Statement
1ˢᵗ Aug 2018- 31ˢᵗ July 2019

Background

In July 2012, Universities UK published '*The Concordat to Support Research Integrity*', a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance. HEFCE, NIHR, RCUK and the Wellcome Trust were included among its signatories, and HEFCE stipulated that compliance with the *Concordat* is a condition of the HEFCE grant from 2017/18. Subsequently, UK Research & Innovation has fully endorsed the *Concordat*.

The Concordat lists the four core elements of research integrity as: honesty; rigour; transparency and open communication; and care and respect. There are five commitments for researchers, employers and funders to uphold. The *Concordat's* 5ᵗʰ commitment requires that the University should present a short annual statement to its governing body that:

- Provides a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues;
- Provides assurances that the processes they have in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation; and
- Provides a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken.

To improve accountability and provide assurances that measures being taken continue to support consistently high standards of research integrity, this statement will be made publicly available. The University of Surrey's statements are published at:
https://www.surrey.ac.uk/research/excellence/integrity-and-governance.

Statement for 2018/19

1. Introduction

The University of Surrey launched its new Research and Innovation Strategy in June 2019; a new integrated framework that outlines how the University will take advantage of opportunities to build its scale and excellence of world-class research and innovation based on the core values of respect, ambition, collaboration, integrity and excellence.

At the University, we are committed to delivering the principles set out in the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* and strive to incorporate these into our everyday research culture. We have followed closely the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee Inquiry into Research Integrity, which concluded with reports being published in 2018 and recognises that we cannot become complacent and must continue to place research integrity at the centre of our research endeavours. To this end, we responded to the consultation on the revised Concordat and are committed to implementing the requirements of the new version of the Concordat which was released on the 25ᵗʰ October 2019. Over the course of 2018/2019, the University has undergone some major changes in the management and structure of its Research and Innovation support framework, including the establishment of a new senior role of Head of Research Integrity and Governance to lead the Research Integrity and Governance Office (RIGO), within the Research and Innovation Services directorate. This investment is a reflection of the University's continued strong commitment to supporting the changing landscape in research integrity.

2. Key Achievements

During 2018/19, the University has undertaken the following actions and activities to support and strengthen the understanding and application of research integrity issues:

a) Revisions/Changes to Existing Policies
- The University's [Ethics Handbook for Teaching and Research](#) was updated in November 2018 to clarify review criteria in light of the introduction of GDPR. Further changes are anticipated in October 2019 to reflect the new ethical review process.
- The [Code of Practice on Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct](#) was updated in April 2019. Some additional clarifications and updates were made, mostly regarding the referral process and website links.
- The [Security-sensitive Research Policy](#) was revised in December 2018.

b) Training/Awareness
- RIGO provided 'Research Integrity, Ethics & Governance' drop-in surgeries. These were held three times a month across all three faculties to educate and advise researchers on research ethics, governance and integrity issues on a responsive one-to-one basis.
- RIGO has also adopted an 'on demand' advisory role where they deliver training to specific groups/departments of researchers or professional services staff as well as one-to-one training.
- RIGO continues to update and expand its online guidance and templates for researchers. Students were supported by a wide variety of sessions provided through the Researcher Development Programme (RDP) as part of the Doctoral College training events.
- The University also provided training sessions and workshops covering: Research Data Management, Data Management Plans, Introduction to Surrey's Data Repository, Introduction to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), GDPR for Researchers, and Integrity and Plagiarism: Exploring Perceptions and Misconceptions.
- During 2018-19, members of RIGO acquired and disseminated knowledge from attendance at the following events:
  - UKRIO Annual conference
  - ARMA Annual conference
  - Interdisciplinary ethics in development research and practice (global research)
  - UKRI Research Integrity Forum
  - NHS R&D Annual Forum

c) Compliance with Best Practice

- **Committees**
  The Research Integrity and Governance Committee (RIGC) is responsible for ensuring that research activity at the University is carried out to the highest standards of rigour and integrity and to provide strategic direction on the development, implementation and evaluation of research policies to be compliant with the Concordat. The RIGC is a sub-committee of the University Research & Innovation Committee (URIC) and was chaired by the Senior Vice-President (Global) during this time, meeting on 24th October 2018, 12th December 2018, 14th February 2019 and 15th May 2019. The overarching research governance structure of the university has been reviewed by the new Head of Research Integrity and Governance and an improved, more encompassing and efficient oversight structure is being established for next academic year. This will enable the RIGC to meet its responsibility for overseeing all aspects of research integrity and governance as research activity continues to grow across the University.

  The University Ethics Committee (UEC) is also undergoing change. With the previous

Chair completing their term, a new Chair was appointed to the UEC in October 2018. The University conducted an internal audit of its ethics review processes in 2018 which highlighted areas for improvement. In response to the audit, the new Chair has introduced some new working processes, such as a consensus review for studies that are assessed as having a higher level of risk. In addition, a new ethics committee structure is being launched in autumn 2019, to harmonise the staff and student review processes, operating a three-tier system of ethical review, depending on the scale and complexity of the ethical issues raised by the research.

- **External memberships**
  The University keeps abreast of developments in research integrity through its membership of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), Understanding Animal Research (UAR) and the Association for Research Administrators (ARMA).

d) Research Governance

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): The University continues to work on creating and improving facilities and guidance for GDPR compliance in research. This includes joint working across several professional services teams including the information compliance unit, the library's open research team, IT security and RIGO.
- A member of RIGO undertakes the sponsor role for the Health Research Authority (HRA) and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) research applications.
- Human Tissue Act (HTA): The University has had an inspection from the Human Tissue Authority 16-18 July 2019. Inspection reports are published on the HTA website. The University is establishing a more robust overarching governance structure for research using human tissue with an effective date of December 2019.
- RIGO has had more involvement in supporting the ethics review of the Global Challenges Research Fund projects.

  With the previous Chair completing their term, a new Chair was appointed to the University's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB), and responsibilities will transition in October 2019. There has also been a change in the place establishment licence holder (PELH) to the Vice-Provost, Research and Innovation in July 2019.

3. Research Misconduct

a) The University provides assurance that the processes in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, robust and fair and that they are appropriate to the needs of the organisation.

The Code of Practice on Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct was introduced in 2015. The Code was developed with the involvement of a number of stakeholders including the University of Surrey Students Union, academic representatives from the University, UKRIO and the Legal and Secretariat team.

An updated version of The Code of Practice on Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct has been published as per point 2a.

b) The University Statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken.

During the academic year 2018/19 the University has received one allegation of research misconduct. This case does not involve UKRI funding and is currently at the Screening Stage (see Annexe 1).

Professor David Sampson
Chair of the Research Integrity and Governance Committee
and Vice-Provost, Research and Innovation

Annexe 1.   Research Integrity Statement 1st August 2018-31st July 2019

The table below is based on the former RCUK assurance questions as a model – and recommended that doing so could be considered as good practice.

This table shows that by academic year, the number of formal investigations completed and of those, the number which were upheld (either in whole or in part)

- *Figures are provided for the past 3 completed academic years with year 1 representing the most recently completed year.*
- *"Formal investigation" is as described in the RCUK Policy and Guidelines*
- *The date is when the formal investigation was completed*
- *Investigations should be split by Research Council, and by type (as defined in the integrity section of the UKRI webpage)*

	Year	Fabrication		Falsification		Plagiarism		Misrepresentation		Breach of duty of care		Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct		Other	
		Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld	Completed	Upheld
AHRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BBSRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EPSRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ESRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

MRC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NERC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STFC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0