



**UNIVERSITY
OF HULL**

Annual Statement of Research Integrity 2020

Introduction

The University of Hull is committed to ensuring the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects research undertaken by the institution. This includes, research undertaken in the name of the University, or using university resources or facilities. The University recognises its obligation to research participants, funders, partners and the wider community; and in order to maintain high standards of integrity in research the University will uphold the commitments outlined within the revised [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#). All members of the university community (students, staff (visiting or emeritus), contract holders, consultants, and associates) are expected to uphold the principles of honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, care and respect, and accountability, as detailed within the Concordat.

In addition to these core principles, researchers must also act in accordance with appropriate ethical and compliance frameworks and abide by requirements set out by the University to ensure appropriate review and approval of research.

The report detailed below provides an overview of activities and practices undertaken during academic year 2019/20 to support and enhance integrity in research, in accordance with the requirements of the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

Activities to support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues

The Research Governance and Policy Manager left this post during the 2019/20 academic year and a replacement will commence this role at the beginning of the 2020/21 academic year. As a result, activities over the last year have focused on maintaining current processes and activities relating to research integrity and broader research governance. A review and refresh of institutional research governance processes, including research integrity, will take place during the 2020/21 academic year; the details of which will be published in the concomitant future statement on research integrity.

Training

The University of Hull implements a multifaceted approach to training for research integrity, ensuring provision for all researchers, staff and students, is accessible and appropriate.

For staff, training is delivered online, as part of an e-learning package developed by the University's Learning and Development team. All staff, regardless of location are mandated to complete this training before conducting University research. The training covers the fundamental principles of research ethics

and integrity, forming the foundation for more discipline specific training delivered in face-to-face sessions. Completion of the training is monitored by Learning and Development who submit six-monthly reports to the Research Governance and Policy Manager for oversight and additional reporting, as appropriate.

For students, basic research ethics and integrity training is built into their module of study. For Post-graduate research students, research integrity has been incorporated within the compulsory 'Modern Researcher' module of the PGTS (post-graduate training scheme) programme. This module is delivered and managed by the faculties and monitored by the Doctoral College. The programme is offered to students in two formats: 12 sessions dispersed throughout the year or as a block within Easter postgraduate programme. This flexibility ensures that all students have access to training, including those students engaged in fieldwork.

The emergence of COVID-19 has limited the conduct of training events during the 2019-20 period. A workshop was held at the start of the year on research data: GDPR and retention. The suite of training and guidance materials for specific issues pertaining to research will be reviewed in due course, as part of a general planned review exercise and also to take into consideration the new ways of working which have been adopted as a result of the pandemic.

Governance

The University's Research Governance Framework comprises various policies, procedural documents and codes outlining the expectations and requirements of staff, students and the University as a whole. These include, the Statement on Research Integrity, Code of Good Research Practice, Research Misconduct Policy, Research Ethics Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy. These documents are easily accessible on the University website and via internal SharePoint pages.

Support and guidance on matters relating to research integrity is normally provided by the Research Governance and Policy Manager, in addition to faculty specific support offered by respective ethics administrative services and ethics committees. During 2019/20, in the absence of the research Governance and Policy Manager, this has been supported by staff within the central Research and Innovation Team and the faculties. The FHS Faculty Research Manager has also provided support for, and administered the internal sponsorship approval role for the HRA (Health Research Authority).

External memberships

The University remains up to date with changes in the external research environment via membership of UKRIO (UK Research Integrity Office) and ARMA (Association for Research Administrators)

Research Misconduct

The University creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable reporting instances of misconduct. The University's Research Misconduct Policy accepts reports of suspected research misconduct raised internally or externally. Within the research integrity

training, researchers are advised that they may raise concerns via a number of routes, including, but not limited to: supervisors, peers, or formally to the Registrar under the institution's whistleblowing policy.

The University Research Misconduct Policy also outlines the manner in which a research misconduct investigation should be conducted and how appropriate investigation panels should be organised. The objectives of the policy are to:

- ensure that an investigation is thorough and fair;
- ensure that, by using an agreed standard process, errors in the conduct of an investigation should be minimised; and
- reassure those who are under investigation that the process of investigation will follow a standard procedure consistent with national best practice.

Statistical information pertaining to misconduct in research during academic year 2019/20:

Number of allegations: 4

Number of initial investigations: 4

Number of formal investigations: 3

Number of allegations which we're upheld following formal investigation: 1

Lessons Learned:

The number of allegations increased slightly during the academic year 2019-20 although only one allegation was upheld following formal investigation.

The University adopts a position of continuous improvement and this extends throughout the course of any investigation into incidents of research misconduct, alleged or substantiated. Investigation reports include specific opportunities to enable the panel/investigator to identify enhancements to processes and adopt additional safeguards to prevent further incidents/allegations from reoccurring. During 2019-20 such recommendations included minor revisions of procedures and forms and reinforcing the training requirements already in place within the University.

The degree of turnover across the university presents an opportunity to revisit the way in which allegations of research misconduct are reported, investigated and recorded. The research misconduct policy and associated university legislation will be reviewed during the 2020-21 academic year, with a view to centralising records and addressing issues specific to the handling of research degree award students as opposed to students on the university's taught programmes.

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