

Foreword

1. Our vision is to be a world-leading, research-excellent, educationally outstanding university, driven by creativity and curiosity, which fulfils its social, cultural and economic obligations to Cardiff, Wales, the UK, and the world ([The Way Forward, 2018-2023: Recast COVID-19](#)).
2. Research is a core part of our institutional identity and, notwithstanding the challenges posed by the global pandemic, our ambition to be amongst the best in generating new knowledge and tools, facilitated by a vibrant and inclusive research environment, remains unchanged. This vision is a vital part of accelerating the contributions that Cardiff University makes to the health, wealth, security, and well-being of future generations in Wales, in the UK and globally. Research integrity, ethics and open research is a critical part of this vision.
3. Cardiff University is committed to upholding the principles of the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) ('Concordat') and has robust systems in place to support its researchers to conduct research to the highest professional standards.

Purpose and context

4. To improve accountability and provide assurance that measures are being taken to support high standards of research integrity, the Concordat requires that all employers of researchers prepare and publish an annual statement on research integrity ('Annual Statement'), which provides:
 - 4.1. A summary of actions and activities undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues;
 - 4.2. Assurances that the processes in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, timely, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation;
 - 4.3. A high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including data on the number of investigations;
 - 4.4. A statement on what the University has learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including what lessons have been learned to prevent the same type of incident re-occurring; and
 - 4.5. A statement on how the University creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct.

5. This is the University's fifth Annual Statement. Once approved by the relevant University committees, the Annual Statement will be made publicly available on the University's website and a link provided to the Secretariat of the Signatories to the Concordat.

Period covered by this Annual Statement

6. This Annual Statement summarises the actions and activities undertaken during the 2020/2021 Academic Year to strengthen research integrity. It also provides the required assurances and statements on research misconduct and the research environment for the same time period.
7. For detailed information about the University's overarching approach and framework for research integrity and research misconduct, please refer to the University's [first Annual Statement](#) published in July 2017.

Actions and activities (2020/2021 Academic Year)

Notwithstanding the challenges posed by the global pandemic and the need to prioritise, at times, the provision of prompt advice and support to researchers in a quickly changing landscape, research integrity has continued to be a focus area for the University during the 2020/2021 Academic Year. Key activity during this period to help support and strengthen research integrity is set out below.

8. Research Integrity Online Training Programme ('RI Training')
 - 8.1. Various awareness-raising activities have taken place to improve uptake of the University's RI Training. As a reminder, Cardiff University has developed its own RI Training (first launched in 2017) which is currently mandatory for all Academic Staff and for students undertaking Doctoral, MRes or MPhil programmes of study. The RI Training content is subject to regular review, albeit no major updates were made to the content during the 2020/2021 Academic Year.
 - 8.2. During the 2020/2021 Academic Year, over 2,300 staff and students completed the RI Training, compared to just over 1,500 during the 2019/2020 Academic Year.
 - 8.3. Completion of the RI Training, and/or adoption of the RI Training learning materials, has also been embedded within specific Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught modules. The RI Training has also been made available to the University's staff and students in the Welsh language, therefore improving accessibility.
 - 8.4. As part of the University's broader commitment to working with others to strengthen research integrity, the University has shared its RI Training learning materials with another Russell Group University for adaption and use locally and has engaged with that University to discuss proposed content adaptations and share ideas.
 - 8.5. From the start of the 2021/2022 Academic Year, evidencing completion of the University's RI Training will also become a mandatory component of all

ethical review applications made to one of the University's School Research Ethics Committees ('SRECs').

9. Research Ethics

9.1. The University issued a revised version of its Ethics Policy for Human Research. This policy provides a framework for the ethical conduct of research involving human participants, human material or human data ('Human Research'). The main revisions to the policy were as follows:

- The incorporation (and official launch) of a new University framework for the '*Ethical Review of Research using Secondary Data and/or Publicly Available Information Only*'. This framework was developed by a University Task and Finish Group and approved by the University's Open Research Integrity and Ethics Committee ('ORIEC') in November 2020. Incorporating this framework into the Ethics Policy for Human Research also resulted in the need to revise the definition of 'Human Data' contained within the policy to help improve clarity and ensure consistency with the framework;
- The addition of guidance on research involving the use of social media data (or similar internet-based data), albeit this guidance had already been in circulation within the University for some time (but had not yet been incorporated into policy).
- Clarification that commencing Human Research activity without a favourable ethical opinion (where a favourable ethical opinion is required), may amount to research misconduct (or academic misconduct in a student context).
- The addition of further guidance on electronic consent.

9.2. The University's Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics team ('RIGE') has continued to support Schools with implementation of the new ORIEC-approved SREC templates (which Schools conducting human research were required to implement in readiness for the 2021/2022 Academic Year). Below are some examples of relevant activity overseen by RIGE during the 2020/2021 Academic Year:

- Revision of the Annual Ethics Report proforma submitted by Schools to ORIEC (as part of an annual ethics reporting process) – the proforma was updated to ensure a specific focus on local implementation of the new ORIEC-approved SREC templates. Schools were also invited to provide feedback on specific aspects of the templates and any challenges faced with implementation locally (including in the area of resource/workload allocation).
- Preparation of guidance for SRECs on potential solutions for dealing with high volumes of student projects requiring ethical review.
- Approval of a Group/Module-Wide Ethical Review Application process – this process was approved by ORIEC, subject to SRECs meeting specific minimum requirements resolved by ORIEC.
- Approval of template revisions and specific concessions to enable SRECs to exercise more discretion and autonomy in specific areas – ORIEC approved a number of revisions and concessions following feedback from SRECs as part of the annual ethics reporting process.

- Convening a SREC workshop – a workshop was held for SREC Chairs, SREC Administrators or other nominated SREC members in July 2021 to discuss the revisions made to the ORIEC-approved SREC templates and the concessions approved by ORIEC. This also presented an opportunity for SRECs to raise any questions or concerns.
- Proposal to form a Task and Finish Group to review, and provide feedback on, the Ethics Protocols/Standard Operating Procedures developed by SRECs relating to a full review criterion – this proposal was approved by ORIEC and RIGE is currently working to form such a group. By way of further background, the ORIEC-approved template SREC Procedures require that any Human Research project meeting a full review criterion must be subject to full SREC review unless the SREC has developed a specific Ethics Protocol/Standard Operating Procedure for the relevant full review criterion(s) that can be followed by researchers to enable the project to be considered via proportionate review instead.

9.3. In addition, ORIEC has determined that various other activities must take place to help facilitate good ethical practice, including the development of guidance for researchers on completion of the Template Application Form for Ethical Review (particularly for students) and the facilitation of an annual event for SRECs to help promote information-sharing and knowledge exchange across the SREC community.

9.4. Alongside the work conducted centrally to support implementation of the ORIEC-approved SREC templates, a large amount of work has been conducted locally by SREC Chairs, Members and local support staff to achieve implementation and support researchers through the new process. Below are some examples of activity that has taken place locally:

- Creation of Ethics Protocols/Standard Operating Procedures for a full review criterion (as referenced in a bullet point at paragraph 9.2).
- Development of local and/or disciplinary guidance on completing the new Application Form for Ethical Review, supporting documents and general SREC expectations.
- Information/awareness-raising sessions for staff and students on the new Application Form for Ethical Review and common ethical issues arising in the discipline.
- Inclusion of research ethics training in undergraduate and/or postgraduate programmes of study.
- Promotion of the University's RI Training and the need for this to be completed by SREC applicants.
- Creation of an online ethics submission system to facilitate the ethical review process (by some Schools with high volumes of ethical review applications).
- Collation of relevant ethical review resources into one location for staff and students.
- Increases to SREC Membership.

The enormity of this whole project, aimed at introducing consistency and minimum standards across the University's SRECs, should not be underestimated and the University is extremely thankful to its SREC

Chairs, Members and local support staff for continuing to engage with the process and for providing valuable feedback and suggested improvements to ORIEC and RIGE throughout.

10. Human Participant Research during the Pandemic

10.1. The University established a 'Restarting Human Participant Research Task and Finish Group' to consider and set out the conditions under which research projects involving face to face contact with human participants (both clinical and non-clinical) could recommence and the mitigation measures that should be put in place to ensure the safety of researchers and their research participants.

10.2. Since August 2020, the University's position has been that, where possible, human participant research should be conducted remotely (such as via digital tools) for as long as there are social distancing restrictions in place. New guidance has been developed to help researchers undertaking remote human participant research, including accessing and managing research data remotely and conducting interviews using video and telephone conference methods. Where conducting research remotely is not possible, a risk assessment must be undertaken to identify risks to researchers and participants involved in the project and ensure application of appropriate mitigation measures prior to the start of human participant research. The Human Participant Research Task and Finish Group meets regularly to ensure guidance is kept up to date and in line with national, local and University requirements.

11. Animal Research during the Pandemic

11.1. Caring for research animals on site was seen as an essential activity throughout the pandemic. Although some research projects had to delay their start dates during lockdown periods, all experiments that had begun were completed to avoid wastage of animals. Notwithstanding the challenges posed by the pandemic, technicians charged with the daily care, maintenance and welfare checks of animals on site continued to attend site on a daily basis as legally required.

12. Research Culture

12.1. Research culture continues to be a key focus area for the University and the University is committed to fostering a positive, supportive, and creative research culture which enables its researchers to succeed and develop. Research integrity is one of the many areas of relevance to the broader work being conducted at the University around research culture.

12.2. The University's Research Culture Working Group ('RCWG'), which includes representatives in the areas of research integrity and research misconduct, has continued to meet and engage during the 2020/2021 Academic Year. Whilst there are many examples of University activity aligned to furthering its commitment to a positive research culture, below are two examples of activity of specific relevance to research integrity:

- Summary of the University's historic research integrity review activity - RIGE presented a detailed paper to the RCWG which contained a summary of the historic reviews co-ordinated by RIGE to assess/reflect on the University's implementation of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. The paper presented to the RCWG included a summary of the areas in which the University has historically met or exceeded expectations, together with any areas of improvement identified and the appropriate actions taken. The paper presented to the RCWG has led to improved engagement between relevant University teams responsible for specific themes of research culture and an impetus for such teams to align relevant activities. Moving forwards, members of the RCWG will be involved in feeding into the University's research integrity review activity which will encourage a more diverse range of views on ways in which the University can continue to improve its approach to promoting research integrity.
- Participation in the 'Concordats and Agreements Review' commissioned by UUK, UKRI and Wellcome Trust – members of the RCWG have participated in this review by completing an online survey and, in some cases, attending an interview to assist UUK, UKRI and Wellcome Trust with the development of institutional case studies. By way of background, this review is broadly aimed at exploring the impact of concordats and agreements on research culture and the research environment. The Concordat to Support Research Integrity is one of the concordats in scope. The review is being conducted alongside the [UK government's review of research bureaucracy](#) in support of the broader aims of the [UK's Research and Development Roadmap](#).

13. Open Research and Transparency

- 13.1. The University's open research position statement was approved by the University's Council and has been published on the University's [website](#), re-enforcing the University's commitment to open research.
- 13.2. Progress has continued in the development of the Cardiff University Research Data Repository, which will enable researchers to share and preserve research data in accordance with the FAIR data principles. Substantial work around integration with the University's Research Portal has taken place during summer 2021 and the launch of the repository is scheduled for autumn 2021. The repository is powered by the [Jisc Research Repository Plus](#) service.
- 13.3. Whilst the recruitment of School and College Open Research and Integrity Leads (under an extended role description) has been delayed due to workload concerns during the pandemic, the existing College and School Research Integrity Leads have been retained under the previous role description.
- 13.4. During 2021, the University also contributed to a successful funding application made by the UK Reproducibility Network ('UKRN') to the Research England Development Fund to form a consortium to drive uptake of open research practices across the UK. The funding will help to further the UK's position at the forefront of rigorous and reproducible research and will help to ensure the UK continues to generate globally leading research

of the highest quality. The funding will drive uptake of open research practices across the UK, through the delivery of training (initially across institutions that are part of the UKRN, such as Cardiff University) and evaluation of its impact.

14. Responsible research assessment

14.1. Since the University signed the Declaration on Research Assessment ('DORA') in November 2019, it has made significant progress towards implementing its recommendations. Some relevant activity during the 2020/2021 Academic Year is set out below.

14.2. In April 2021, the University's Council approved a [Statement on Responsible Research Assessment](#). The policy statement, created in consultation with research staff, the DORA Working Group and University Library Service, provides a set of principles on the appropriate use of quantitative research metrics.

14.3. To ensure that the University does not rely on journal-based metrics, such as journal impact factors ('JIFs'), in assessing an individual researcher's contributions, the University has reviewed and revised existing processes and documentation that relied (explicitly or implicitly) on JIFs or journal prestige. In particular, the University has updated probation guidance for staff, specifically citing DORA, and has incorporated responsible research assessment into recruitment and promotions panel training.

14.4. There has been a continued focus on training, development and consultation with the University's Responsible Research Assessment Officer conducting organised drop-in sessions, focus groups and tailored training sessions on DORA and responsible research assessment across the University. As a result of focus group participant feedback, the DORA Working Group is developing processes for reporting and monitoring responsible research assessment within Schools.

15. Conflicts of Interest

15.1. The University has developed a new '[Compliance with External Conflict of Interest Requirements Policy](#)'. This policy reinforces the University's commitment to the accepted principles of public life which embrace selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. The policy recognises that researchers are in receipt of public and private funding and must uphold levels of transparency and accountability in relation to declarations of interest. The policy refers to some specific notification requirements and provides a procedure to facilitate relevant declarations of interests.

16. Safeguarding

16.1. The University participated in UKRI's Preventing Harm (safeguarding) in Research review, returning a self-assessment of its safeguarding procedures and arrangements for training. In light of COVID self-isolation requirements, the University has updated its guidance and risk assessment

template for safeguarding activities to include specific guidance on delivering online activities.

17. Research Data and Records Management

17.1. The University has reviewed and revised its retention periods and associated guidance statements for research records and data. As part of this exercise, consultation took place with the University's Directors of Research, Directors of Postgraduate Research and SREC Chairs and a review of funder data policies, together with practice at other institutions, was also undertaken. The results of this exercise and the proposed revisions to the retention periods (in light of consultation feedback) were put to ORIEC, the University Executive Board and the University's Governance Committee, who, subject to a minor amendment, approved the revised retention periods and associated guidance statements which are outlined in Section 2.9 ('research project conduct') of the [University's Research Records Retention Schedule](#).

17.2. Three training sessions have been provided to staff and student researchers on managing research data via the University's Staff Development and Doctoral Academy programmes. Two bespoke sessions have also been provided for the School of English, Communication & Philosophy on research data and data protection. A short online tutorial on managing research data has also been developed and added to the staff and student intranet. A network of information management champions is in the process of being set up across the University to increase understanding of data protection and records management.

17.3. The University also added a signpost to its Data Protection Impact Assessment requirements within the template Application Form for Ethical Review (completed by researchers applying for ethical review by a SREC).

18. Human Tissue Governance

18.1. The University has developed a position statement and procedure regarding the future use of relevant material for uses silent in the consent. Based on external legal advice, use of material for such purposes would be dependent on evidencing that:

- (a) the various legal, regulatory and ethical requirements for consent had been followed; and
- (b) the University had assessed whether, at the time of obtaining consent, use for sensitive purposes such as animal work or commercial use was known or likely and concluded that it was not.

The approved procedure has been added to the CU Standard Operating Procedures for Human Tissue Research and a new Silent Consent Declaration has been developed for any researchers wanting to use samples for such purposes.

19. Trusted Research

19.1. The University is reviewing its current approach and governance structure around Trusted Research and is undertaking a number of activities with a view to developing a Trusted Research Action Plan. This activity involves various stakeholders across the University including the Pro Vice-Chancellor for International and Student Recruitment and Head of the College of Physical Sciences and Engineering, and a number of professional services teams including Research and Innovation Services, Compliance and Risk, Human Resources and Registry.

19.2. In respect of specific sub-themes of Trusted Research, the University intends to finalise the development of an Export Controls Policy and to review its existing Security Sensitive Research Policy once the University's broader approach and governance structure around Trusted Research is finalised. Pending the above, a large amount of background work, information gathering and engagement is taking place between the University, internal stakeholders, external groups and Government agencies.

20. Research Excellence Framework ('REF')

20.1. Whilst the REF exercise is not, in itself, a research integrity-specific activity, the University's preparations for REF presented an opportunity to reflect on the University's broader research environment and how the University could embed integrity-related themes into central and local REF submission procedures. Below are some examples of relevant activity:

- The University updated its Code of Practice for REF 2021 with an emphasis on promoting ethical and inclusive behaviours. A comprehensive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ('EDI') training programme was delivered for reviewers and decision makers, which aimed to support fair reviewing and make people aware of issues such as unconscious and conscious bias.
- Reviewers were provided with an interactive EDI session designed to reduce bias when reviewing papers. The training involved splitting the reviewers into groups with EDI facilitators encouraging free and frank discussion. The training opened with a section covering the fairness of the REF process, the influence of a reviewer, which groups experience benefits and which experience barriers. Subsequently, a group discussion considering where potential bias can emerge in the reviewing process unearthed reviewers' unconscious biases and led to peer-to-peer challenge. Finally, the session ended with a reflective discussion on what can be changed for a fairer process and a senior academic's power to induce change within the University.
- Most of the sessions were attended by staff with a research integrity role either central to the University or a Dean of Research. The sessions were arranged so that there was a diverse range of Schools represented. This had the benefit of each School hearing about each other and their processes. Many left with a stated intention of improving consistency in recruitment, promotion, how research opportunities are made accessible and how research groups behave. This had clear benefits from an inclusivity point of view but there was a strong view that it would have a positive impact on research ethics and integrity amongst all staff who carry out research. It was recognised that senior staff have

a responsibility to raise awareness of good research behavior amongst early career researchers within their research groups.

- 75% of people in a REF decision-making role and 54% of people in a reviewing role took part in this in-depth training session.
- The University also provided a safe and supportive environment for staff to declare circumstances which affected their ability to research productively, and it reduced its expectations on staff whose circumstances are agreed to have affected their productivity.
- Throughout the University's REF preparations, senior staff within the University and local administrative teams continued to promote completion of the University's Research Integrity Online Training Programme as a way of further bolstering integrity within local research environments.

21. External engagement and sharing best practice

21.1. The University has continued to engage with external groups and organisations to share best practice and explore effective governance arrangements for the promotion of research integrity. In addition to those already mentioned above (such as UKRN), the University continues to be an active member of the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum and the Russell Group Export Controls Forum. RIGE also has periodic calls with the UK Research Integrity Office ('UKRIO'), to which Cardiff University subscribes and to whose activity Cardiff University actively participates. The University also ensures RIGE attendance at meetings of the Association of University Sponsors wherever possible.

21.2. The University has also continued (whether on its own, or as part of a wider group of representatives) to provide feedback on newly developed external guidance and/or policy in areas of relevance to research integrity. Specific examples include UKRIO's Self-Assessment Tool for the Concordat and the Export Control Joint Unit's guidance on Export Controls on Academic Research.

Planned activities

22. In addition to the continuation of many activities mentioned above, there are several research integrity activities planned to commence and/or conclude during the next Academic Year including:

22.1. Detailed review of University's performance against revised Concordat

Following publication (in September 2021) of UKRIO's revised Self-Assessment Tool for the Concordat, RIGE will lead on co-ordinating a detailed review of the University's performance against the revised Concordat, utilising the UKRIO Self-Assessment Tool. ORIEC will have oversight responsibility for this activity.

22.2. Policy and Procedure reviews

Various policies and procedures relating to research integrity are due to be reviewed (and most likely revised), including:

- The University's Research Integrity and Governance Code of Practice (the University's framework for good research practice). RIGE is co-

ordinating a general review of this Code of Practice to ensure it remains fit for purpose. It is likely that the detailed review of the University's performance against the revised Concordat noted at paragraph 22.1 will inform the Code of Practice review;

- The University's Academic Research Misconduct Procedure. Whilst a review of this Procedure commenced during the 2020/2021 Academic Year, the review is still underway. The review has the following primary aims:
 - To ensure the procedure aligns with the revised Concordat and emerging best practice in this area (work aligning definitions commenced in 2020/21).
 - To consider and outline an appropriate approach/procedure for behaviours that fall short of research misconduct but do not currently have a clearly identified alternative procedure within the University.
 - To provide clarity around the management of authorship disputes.
 - To provide clarity around the University's approach to complainants raising issues that have already been resolved already e.g. under grievance procedure.
 - To ensure appropriate support is available to respondents that goes beyond the current 'right to be accompanied' and ensures that more information is available around the process.
 - To provide clarity on how the University will manage non-engagement with its procedures.
 - To provide clarity on how the University will manage anonymous complaints.
- The University's Open Access Policy. This review will focus on ensuring the policy aligns with recent changes to UKRI policy in this area and emerging expectations.

22.3. Open Research Integrity Leads

Whilst there has been some delay to this initiative as indicated at paragraph 13.3, the University intends to advertise and appoint College and School Open Research Integrity Leads during the next Academic Year.

22.4. Trusted Research

As indicated at paragraph 19.1, the University intends to finalise its approach and governance structures around Trusted Research and to develop an institutional Export Controls Policy.

Dealing with allegations of Research Misconduct

23. The University is committed to ensuring that its processes for dealing with allegations of research misconduct are transparent, timely, robust, fair, and appropriate to the University's needs.

Allegations against Cardiff University staff

24. The University takes all allegations of Academic Research Misconduct seriously and has a dedicated procedure to deal with such allegations. The University's Academic Research Misconduct Procedure ('ARM Procedure'), together with a named contact, is publicly available on the University's [website](#).

25. There are three stages to the ARM Procedure. At each stage the allegation may be dismissed or may proceed to the next stage:
- 25.1. A Preliminary Stage where the Named Person, in consultation with the PVC and normally within 20 working days, conducts a preliminary review of the allegation. In order to reach a decision, the Named Person may seek the advice of an internal expert on the seriousness and credibility of the concerns.
- 25.2. A Screening Stage where, normally within 30 working days, a Panel of up to three internal members of staff with relevant expertise and academic standing will conduct a preliminary evaluation of all relevant material relating to the allegation supplied by the Complainant and the Respondent and seek further clarification if required. The Screening Panel will make a confidential written report of its evaluation and decision and lodge it with the Named Person.
- 25.3. A Formal Investigation Stage where a Panel is set up, consisting of an impartial, independent Chair and two impartial members with appropriate expertise and seniority. The Chair and at least one of the two members should be external to the University, being neither a person employed by or contracted to the University. The internal member should not be a member of staff in the same School as the Respondent.
26. As noted at paragraph 22.2, the ARM Procedure is currently being reviewed and it is expected that a revised procedure will be published during the next Academic Year.

Allegations against students

27. The University takes all allegations of student misconduct during, or relating to, research seriously and has a range of policies and procedures to deal with such allegations. The exact policy and procedure to be applied will depend on the nature of the allegation/the alleged conduct and the type of student. The most relevant student misconduct policy in this specific context is the University's Academic Integrity Policy, and related Academic Misconduct Procedures. These are all contained within the University's Academic Regulations which are publicly available on the University's [website](#).
28. The University's Academic Integrity Policy sets out the overarching principles of what constitutes Academic Misconduct and confirms that a relevant Academic Misconduct Procedure will be applied to any student alleged to have engaged in such conduct. The relevant procedures referred to are the University's Academic Misconduct Procedure (Research Degrees) and the University's Academic Misconduct Procedure (Taught Students).
29. The University's Academic Misconduct Procedures contain a fair and clear process for considering and investigating Academic Misconduct concerns. In respect of the Academic Misconduct Procedure (Research Degrees) in particular, there are three stages to the procedure as follows:
- 29.1. Stage 1 (Preliminary Review) - the Director of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of the Awards and Progress Committee (or an appropriate

nominee), as applicable, conduct an initial review of the concerns. Depending on when the concerns were raised, the outcome of the Preliminary Review could be to dismiss the concerns, take remedial action or refer the concerns for a Stage 2 investigation.

29.2. Stage 2 (Formal Investigation) - the Head of School appoints a senior member of the school's academic staff to act as an Investigating Officer and to consider the concerns, meet with the relevant parties and produce a report. The Head of School considers the report and all available evidence and determines, on the balance of probabilities, whether Academic Misconduct has occurred. The Head of School may dismiss the concerns if they are unfounded or if there is insufficient evidence that Academic Misconduct has taken place, or they can determine that, on the balance of probabilities, Academic Misconduct has occurred. If it is determined that Academic Misconduct has occurred, the Head of School can refer the case to a Stage 3 Academic Integrity Panel or can determine that, due to the level of seriousness and/or other relevant circumstances, the case does not warrant referral to Stage 3 and that specific remedial action can be taken instead.

29.3. Stage 3 (Academic Integrity Panel) - an Academic Integrity Panel is convened, comprising 3 members of academic staff from outside the School, to consider the case. The panel can dismiss the concerns or determine that, on the balance of probabilities, Academic Misconduct has occurred. If the panel determines that Academic Misconduct has occurred, it can impose one or more of a set of listed actions and sanctions which includes, by way of examples, a written apology, thesis amendment and other formal reprimands including exclusion from the University.

30. The University has a central Student Cases Team that has the following role in relation to Academic Misconduct cases:

30.1. To advise Schools on the steps required under the procedures;

30.2. To convene a panel, and support the panel process (where the earlier investigation determined that a panel was required); and

30.3. To record the outcome of an investigation whatever the outcome (including dismissal of concerns).

Statement on investigations of Research Misconduct

31. During the 2020/2021 Academic Year, three allegations/sets of allegations were received under the University's ARM Procedure (ARM 21.01, ARM 21.02 and ARM 21.03). The decisions in these cases were as follows:

31.1. ARM 21.01 – dismissed at Screening Stage. Whilst the Preliminary Review identified questions relating to misrepresentation/authorship and plagiarism to be considered by a screening panel, the panel did not uphold the allegations. However, some recommendations regarding authorship best practice were made to the respondent and to the School.

- 31.2.ARM 21.02 – dismissed at Preliminary Review stage as there was no evidence of misconduct due to authorship criteria not being met.
- 31.3.ARM 21.03 - no action was taken in relation to an investigation as this was not received as a complaint. The Head of School notified the academic of the comments in an online post and offered relevant support.
32. During the 2020/2021 Academic Year, the Student Cases Team received three reports of investigations in respect of PGR students (conducted under the University's Academic Misconduct Procedure (Research Degrees)). The decisions in these cases were as follows:
- 32.1. Case 1 – Academic Misconduct concerns dismissed by Head of School (or nominee).
- 32.2. Case 2 – Academic Misconduct concerns upheld during a Stage 2 investigation. However, due to the level of seriousness and/or other relevant circumstances, it was determined that the case did not warrant referral to a Stage 3 Academic Integrity Panel. Instead, the Head of School imposed the following sanctions on the student: A requirement to revise written work and the issuing of a note on the student's record.
- 32.3. Case 3 – Academic Misconduct concerns upheld during a Stage 2 investigation. However, due to the level of seriousness and/or other relevant circumstances, it was determined that the case did not warrant referral to a Stage 3 Academic Integrity Panel. Instead, the Head of School imposed the following sanctions on the student: A requirement to revise written work and attend further training.

What has the University learned from the investigations?

33. The following lessons have been learnt from the ARM investigations carried out during the 2020/2021 Academic Year:
- 33.1. That it would be useful to develop an information sheet to provide to respondents of ARM cases to explain the ARM Procedure in a simple format and to identify the support available.
- 33.2. That the ARM Procedure should be updated to consider circumstances where the respondent does not engage with the procedure and to identify an opportunity for written submissions to be made without engaging with the initial/subsequent explanation/engagement meetings.
- 33.3. That authorship disputes remain as one of the key areas of conflict and often amount to disagreement of contribution rather than deliberate misrepresentation by one party. This suggests that further work with Schools is required to encourage best practice in this area, which may include utilising appropriate credit models and using authorship agreements to clarify roles and contributions.
34. In respect of student misconduct cases, given that the majority of Academic Misconduct cases are investigated and resolved locally (by the Head of School in most cases), the University is considering ways in which it can better report

on any lessons learnt from such investigations with a view to providing this information in future Annual Reports.

Creating and embedding a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct

35. The University is committed to fostering an environment in which all its staff and students are able to report misconduct and feel supported through this process. The University has several mechanisms and enablers for this including:
- The availability of advice and support from central University teams/contacts on a range of topics and themes including research integrity, research ethics, research culture, responsible research assessment and whistleblowing.
 - A named point of contact for ARM allegations.
 - A network of School Research Integrity Leads and Ethics Officers (local points of contact).
 - The University's Research Integrity Training which contains dedicated content on research misconduct reporting and signposts internal support and the availability of UKRIO as a source of external, independent advice.
 - The delivery of bespoke research integrity and/or research misconduct training sessions to Schools where required or requested.
36. The University will continue to review and monitor its approach in this area and will look to review any recommendations made by UKRIO within its Self-Assessment Tool.

Preparation of this Annual Statement

37. Preparation of this Annual Statement was co-ordinated by RIGE. A draft of this statement was presented to the University's Executive Board for note and was approved, subject to one addition, by ORIEC on 28 September 2021.
38. The Annual Statement was also approved by the University's Governance Committee on 22 October 2021 and noted by Senate on 10 November 2021, before being presented to Council for noting on 24 November 2021.

Professor Kim Graham
Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Enterprise
November 2021

Acronym key

ARM	Academic Research Misconduct
DORA	Declaration on Research Assessment
ORIEC	Open Research Integrity and Ethics Committee
RCWG	Research Culture Working Group
RGRIF	Russell Group Research Integrity Forum
RIGE	Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics Team
SREC	Schools Research Ethics committee
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation
UKRIO	UK Research Integrity Office
UKRN	UK Reproducibility Network
UUK	Universities UK