



Annual Statement on Research Integrity November 2023

Foreword

1. Cardiff University exists to create and share knowledge and to educate for the benefit of all. Pending the launch of a new institutional strategy under the leadership of our new Vice-Chancellor, our vision remains 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](#)).
2. Research is a core part of our institutional identity, and the University aspires to be amongst the best in generating new knowledge and tools, facilitated by a vibrant and inclusive research environment.
3. In the 2021 Research Excellence Framework ('REF'), 90% of our research was confirmed as world-leading or internationally excellent and we secured our place as a top 20 University in the UK for the overall quality of our research. The University is seeking to enhance its position even further and embraces this challenge within an increasingly competitive international stage.
4. Research Integrity, ethics and open research is a critical part of our vision and the University is fully committed to upholding the principles of the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) ('Concordat') and to supporting our researchers to conduct research to the highest standards of integrity.

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 seventh Annual Statement. Once approved by relevant University groups and committees, the Annual Statement will be made publicly available on our website and a link provided to the Concordat Secretariat. The University's historic Annual Statements remain publicly accessible on our "[Research Integrity and Governance](#)" webpage.

Period covered by this Annual Statement

6. This Annual Statement summarises the actions and activities undertaken during the 2022/2023 Academic Year to strengthen Research Integrity. It also provides the required assurances and statements on research misconduct for the same time period.

Actions and activities (2022/2023 Academic Year)

During the 2022/2023 Academic Year, the University has undertaken a wide range of activities to help support and strengthen Research Integrity. Key activity during this period is summarised below.

7. Publication of an institutional 'Research Integrity Action Plan'
 - 7.1. Earlier this year, the University published its first public-facing [Research Integrity Action Plan](#). The Action Plan is the output of a detailed internal review and reflection exercise led by our Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics team ('RIGE'), utilising the [UKRIO Self-Assessment Tool](#). The review identified many examples of good practice in supporting Research Integrity and confirmed that the University is meeting or exceeding sector-wide expectations across a range of areas. However, the review also identified some areas of research practice, policy and culture that would benefit from improvement to further bolster and embed Research Integrity.
 - 7.2. Publication of the Action Plan is part of our proactive journey to improving visibility of our Research Integrity expectations and strengthening the support we provide in this area. It also represents a step change in our approach to Research Integrity, moving towards a system of improved integration and collaboration, underpinned by the concept of shared responsibility, and understanding. It is hoped that this approach will help to ensure that Research Integrity is embedded within the research ecosystem, resonates with researchers, and ultimately helps foster an environment where good research practice is not only enabled, but valued.
 - 7.3. Progress against the Action Plan will be regularly reviewed and reported to our Open Research Integrity and Ethics Committee ('ORIEC') and summarised in relevant Annual Statements. The published Action Plan will also be colour-coded annually to indicate which actions have been achieved and those where significant progress has been made. The first colour-coding exercise will take place in April 2024, a year after the Action Plan was approved.

- 7.4. As at the date of preparing this Annual Statement, 76% of the actions that had a target date on or before September 2023 are complete or are in progress with completion expected shortly. There are nine (9) actions that were due for completion that have not yet commenced and/or have been paused. This is due to a range of internal and external factors, including:
- the need to re-prioritise resource and support to other areas of activity, where required; and
 - pursuing collaborative opportunities that have arisen with internal and external stakeholders which may improve efficiency and produce better outcomes for our research community.
- 7.5. ORIEC is satisfied with the progress made against the Action Plan to date (particularly given its breadth and ambitious nature) and is proud that its staff engage regularly and actively with external stakeholders and are able to adapt to changing priorities and ensure that support is concentrated where it is most needed.

8. UK Committee on Research Integrity ('UK CORI') visit and workshop

- 8.1. On 24 April 2023, the University welcomed members of UK CORI to its recently developed [sbarc/spark](#) building (this was to be the location of UK CORI's April meeting). Following UK CORI's meeting, University colleagues and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales ('HEFCW') co-hosted a Strategy Workshop which included a series of presentations, a roundtable discussion, and a networking lunch. Attendees at the workshop included UK CORI members and representatives from UKRI, HEFCW, and Welsh Higher Education Institutions.
- 8.2. During the workshop, our 'Dean of Research Environment and Culture' and 'Research Integrity and Governance Officer' delivered presentations about our approach to Research Integrity and research culture and particular initiatives and challenges in this area. The roundtable discussion that followed was an opportunity for all attendees to share best practice and discuss particular integrity and culture challenges in Wales. UK CORI said the following about this meeting on its website:

"The UK Committee on Research Integrity's April 2023 meeting was held at the University of Cardiff, hosted by Professor Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, Dean of Research Environment and Culture, and Harriet Barnes, Director of Policy and Funding, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

...we were pleased too to be joined by people from universities across Wales who are active in supporting research integrity in their organisations. We heard about the higher education landscape in Wales – a diverse group of universities with common strong emphases on community and civic engagement. Professor Wahl-Jorgensen and Emma Gore, Research Integrity and Governance Officer, described how the university is working to strengthen a positive research culture – 'a precondition for excellent research'. Others described the activities in their own universities, with discussion of a number of issues – how excellence in supporting and embedding research integrity is recognised and rewarded; the value of discipline-specific research integrity material; the role of training; the importance of senior buy-in.

The committee hugely appreciated the time, enthusiasm and insights of the participants, and recognised once again the importance of sharing good practice, and having cross-institutional fora for discussion”.

8.3. The University looks forward to engaging with UK CORI in the future and hearing more about its planned initiatives and activities.

9. Revision of Research Integrity and Governance Code of Practice ('RI CoP')

9.1. The University has revised its RI CoP to reflect changing and/or emerging good research practice topics and standards, together with feedback from a range of University stakeholders. The revisions also address a range of policy-related improvements identified through the internal review referenced in Section 7.1.

9.2. As a reminder, the RI CoP is our institutional framework (policy) for Research Integrity. It applies to everyone involved in research at the University and is designed to promote good research practice throughout the research lifecycle and to help ensure that staff and students achieve the highest standards of Research Integrity.

9.3. The revised RI CoP now includes new content and expectations in the following areas:

- Collaborative working;
- Conducting research overseas, “Trusted Research” and internationalisation;
- Publication ethics, including best practice when undertaking peer review, editorial functions and selecting a publisher; and
- Raising a concern about Research Integrity.

There have also been a range of pre-existing content improvements, together with many signposting improvements (in terms of additional resources of relevance and internal/external support and initiatives). The main revisions will be communicated to key stakeholder groups (and integrated across other workflows) during Autumn 2023.

10. Research Integrity Online Training Programme ('RI Training')

10.1. During the 2022/2023 Academic Year, approximately 950 members of staff and 3,200 students (inclusive of PGR, PGT and UG students) completed the University's RI Training. As a reminder, completion of our RI Training is mandatory for all Academic Staff (unless exempted¹) and mandatory for all students undertaking Doctoral, MRes or MPhil programmes of study. Completion of the training is also a mandatory component of various other internal research processes and is highly recommended for anyone else involved in research.

10.2. As referenced in previous Annual Statements, securing completion of the RI Training by all individuals to which the training is mandatory (together

¹ The University has an exemption request process that can be used by Schools to request an exemption for specific staff on T&S contracts who have no involvement in research activity. There is a strict process that needs to be followed by Schools and all exemption requests are reviewed (and if appropriate, approved) by ORIEC.

with monitoring and reporting activity) is a challenge and represents a significant administrative undertaking. Internal discussions are ongoing as to how this can be improved, particularly given the University's size and structure.

10.3. There have been a small number of updates to the RI Training during the 2022/2023 Academic Year, mainly to address outdated URLs, improve instructions to users and address technical glitches. Some other changes to the RI Training material include:

- Alteration to some quiz/assessment questions to improve clarity (following feedback from staff and students);
- Replacement of our Research Integrity governance structure diagram, to reflect some new working groups and name changes; and
- Addition of the UKRIO subscriber logo to the "Research Integrity at Cardiff University" section of the training.

11. Research Ethics

11.1. There has been a large amount of activity aimed at evolving our approach to ethical review and better supporting our School Research Ethics Committees ('SRECs') and research community. Below are just some examples of relevant activity during the 2022/2023 Academic Year:

- **Approval of new ethical review channels for UG and PGT activity**
Following an extensive piece of work conducted by a cross-University Task and Finish Group, ORIEC has approved a suite of ethical review channels (options) that can be utilised by SRECs for UG/PGT projects involving human participants, human data or human material. This includes two new ethical review channels that enable ethical scrutiny on a module-wide basis, provided certain parameters are met and documents utilised. These new channels aim to provide a risk-based, flexible and manageable solution that will not only improve proportionality and help alleviate SREC workload challenges, but also help to ensure that ethics is integrated into teaching.

A two-year pilot of the new ethical review channels has now commenced, supported by approved template documents and process requirements, to ensure they are fit for purpose. It is anticipated that the process and supporting documents will be refined over the pilot period, informed by any challenges during implementation and feedback from the research community.

- **Review of Annual Ethics Reports and supporting documents**
The Annual Ethics Reports and supporting documents received from SRECs were reviewed by RIGE and a summary provided to ORIEC in June 2023. The reports confirm that over 2,500 applications were reviewed in accordance with our SREC procedures during the 2022 calendar year, with 97% of applications ultimately receiving a favourable ethical opinion. The Annual Ethics reporting process enabled RIGE to identify a number of common themes and areas requiring further attention, together with areas of best practice and the identification of SREC-specific issues or challenges. RIGE has engaged with SRECs via bespoke communications and an all-SREC webinar hosted in July 2023 to ensure that the common themes and issues identified were communicated and discussed.
- **Initial scoping of an online ethics system**

The University's RTS² Future Research Service project is currently exploring an online solution to manage our ethical review activity, alongside other research-related functions. Whilst no final decisions have been made, initial scoping of our institutional requirements in this area (informed by a mapping exercise and engagement with relevant internal stakeholders) has taken place throughout the 2022/2023 Academic Year. The Future Research Service is in the process of completing a procurement exercise for an online system to manage a range of research-related functions, and University approval will be sought by February 2024.

- **Appointment of Chair and Members for the new 'Ethics and Publicly Available Data Task and Finish Group'.**

This Group will meet throughout the 2023/2024 Academic Year and is aiming to help ensure the University's approach to the ethical review of projects using only publicly available information is appropriate and balances the need for a suitably robust ethical review system, whilst being proportionate to risk and the needs of the University.

- **University Standard Operating Procedure ('SOP') for projects involving audio/visual recordings of human research participants**

A University-level SOP has been developed to provide an approved framework for the use of audio and/or visual recordings of human research participants. Where utilised, the SOP will provide assurance that appropriate ethical consideration has been given to the use of recordings and that the common risks associated with this have been appropriately mitigated. As well as helping to protect research participants, utility of this SOP will likely speed up the ethical review process for SREC applicants as it will enable SRECs to concentrate on other ethical risks.

11.2. Alongside the work conducted centrally, a significant amount of work has been conducted locally by SREC Chairs, Members and local support staff to help improve the University's existing ethical review systems and to support researchers in achieving the highest ethical standards. Below are just some examples of activity that has taken place locally:

- Collation of feedback/responding to consultation exercises connected to the improvement of the University's ethical review systems.
- Providing volunteers to sit on various University Task and Finish Groups connected to the ethical review process.
- Creation of Ethics Protocols/Standard Operating Procedures for research projects meeting a specific "full review criterion".
- Implementation of a Group Application process for ethical review.
- Development of local and/or disciplinary guidance on the ethical review process and SREC expectations.
- Information/awareness-raising sessions for staff and students on the ethical review process and common ethical issues arising in the discipline.
- Engagement with teaching and learning colleagues to better understand the type of student projects conducted in the School, the risk associated with such projects and what ethical review options could be implemented locally to appropriately review these projects.

² "Recast Transforming Services" - A programme of work aimed at making improvements across several priority areas, with a number of projects having completed and others underway. The projects are intended to review and improve University processes and reduce inefficiency, improve the alignment of teams which are dependent on each other, and ensure the University is making best use of technology and digital capabilities.

12. Research Misconduct

12.1. The University has carried out a comprehensive review and update of its Academic Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure to improve alignment to the “Research Misconduct” definition contained in the Concordat and to address findings from the internal review mentioned at Section 7.1 and relevant guidance from the recently published UKRIO template research misconduct procedures. The revised Policy/Procedure is available on our [“Academic Research Misconduct”](#) webpage.

12.2. Below are some of the revisions made to the Policy/Procedure:

- Addition of information regarding the support available to all involved in an investigation (including complainants and respondents)
- Improved clarity regarding how the Policy/Procedure interacts with other key University procedures including staff grievance/disciplinary procedures.
- Addition of new content relating to “questionable research practice”, “authorship” and predatory journals. These additions were also as a result of lessons learnt and queries/issues arising during the Academic Year.

13. Clinical Research

13.1. The Cardiff Joint Research Office (‘JRO’)³ continues to develop and evolve. Establishing the JRO’s governance, reporting and accountability structures has been a main focus of the past twelve months. The governance structure, including a ‘Clinical Trials Governance Group’, ‘Quality Management Group’ and the Joint Research Governance Group (‘JRGG’), is enabling the development of a joint quality assurance and quality management system and improved information sharing on incidents and common clinical research governance issues. Upward reporting from JRGG to ORIEC and the Health Board’s Quality and Safety Executive ensures senior oversight of joint activity.

13.2. As previously reported, in May 2022 NHS-Digital conducted an audit of the University’s ‘AML 15’ trial, focussing on Information Transfer, Access Control and Data Destruction. The final audit report was published by NHS Digital (now NHS England) in July 2023 and is publicly available [here](#). A cross-University Working Group was established in March 2023 to review and improve the ways in which the University manages NHS Digital data assets (for studies managed outside the University’s Clinical Trials Unit) and the oversight of the central Data Security Protection Toolkit and Information Asset Register. Work to strengthen the University’s oversight and protection of NHS Digital data is due to be completed during the 2023/2024 Academic Year.

13.3. Over the next Academic Year, priority work includes strengthening existing guidance and procedures in key areas of clinical research governance and focusing on the development of new guidance, where no existing procedure exists. In particular, this will include a review of non-

³ A partnership between Cardiff University and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, launched in September 2021.

compliance/incident reporting and the development of guidance on managing consent issues in clinical research.

13.4. There are significant synergies between the information required by the Human Tissue Act Compliance and Research Governance teams, and therefore the information that flows between the two teams. A specification for a shared Human Tissue and Research Governance database has been completed. Work is due to commence on developing the Human Tissue element of this database in autumn 2023 (Phase 1), with the Research Governance elements (phase 2) to follow.

14. Human Tissue Act (HTA) Research and Governance

14.1. The University's SOPs for Human Tissue Research have been reviewed, updated and re-structured to ensure training in these procedures is relevant to the study/collection and to reduce the overall training burden as and when SOPs change. Previously, all persons using human tissue were required to read and follow **all** the University's SOPs for Human Tissue Research. Whilst these SOPs cover the HTA regulatory requirements associated with each procedure, not all the procedures are applicable to all collections of relevant material. Alongside the suite of mandatory SOPs, Chief Investigators will now determine which of the additional SOPs are applicable and therefore mandatory for the study/collection.

14.2. The introductory section of the SOP for Human Tissue Research has been expanded to include information to help researchers navigate HTA and HTA-related regulatory requirements throughout the course of a study, including:

- Information and signposting for areas managed by other Professional Services teams that are often utilised by researchers whose work falls under the HTA, such as ethical review and material transfer agreements.
- A list of documents produced by the HTA Compliance Team for use by researchers, including where the documents can be found and when the documents are for mandatory use, for guidance or to be used as templates.
- Checklists and flowcharts detailing actions required by the researcher before the study commences, during the study and before the study ends.
- A collated and comprehensive list of all records required for each procedure detailed in the SOP for Human Tissue Research.

14.3. The updated SOP for Human Tissue Research and the Code of Practice for Human Tissue Research were approved by the Human Tissue Standards Committee in May 2023.

14.4. In addition to the above activity, Cardiff University's Internal Audit department has conducted a review focused on the assurance provided to Governance Committee and ultimately Council (via the University's sub-committee structure) regarding compliance with the HTA (in addition to the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986). The review made recommendations in five areas, including recognising the need for the redevelopment and expansion of the online database containing details of

all human tissue studies/collections in the university. This piece of work was already in progress and now has greater priority following this review. Once the requirements for the redevelopment of the online database have been finalised, timeframes for completion will be agreed.

14.5. A service model and 3-year plan have also been developed by the HTA Compliance Team to formally document the scope of the service and monitor service delivery.

15. Animal Research and Governance

15.1. The 2022/2023 Academic Year saw a development in the governance and oversight of animal work that is not regulated by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 ('ASPAs'). It was determined that the University's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body Subgroup would amend its terms of reference to incorporate the ethical oversight of this work. Specialists may need to be invited onto the Subgroup as necessary, to ensure the effectiveness of the review process for non-ASPAs proposals.

15.2. This Academic Year saw a considerable amount of effort spent on a service improvement project for Biological Services, which is part of a wider feasibility study for the University. A steering group was set up to support this project, with a view to making improvements to facilities and the infrastructure that supports animal research.

15.3. The University has entered an agreement with a new external provider for the provision of Veterinary Services, who are experts in the field. As part of this agreement the establishment now has a new Named Veterinary Surgeon, which is one of the legal named roles under ASPA. The advantage of this arrangement is having a pool of experts on hand when needed.

15.4. In addition to considering a range of areas identified through the internal Research Integrity review referenced in Section 7.1 and the subsequent Action Plan, the University has also formally endorsed (through its Biological Standards Committee and the Animal Welfare and Research Panels) the PREPARE guidelines (*Planning Research and Experimental Procedures on Animals: Recommendations for Excellence*).

16. Research Culture

16.1. The University has continued to advance its research culture objectives, assisted by two additional members of staff who provide dedicated support to the development of research culture and have been in post since January 2023. Some specific highlights during the 2022/2023 Academic Year include:

- Completion of our first institutional triennial research culture survey to establish benchmarks for longitudinal monitoring. The survey had a total of 1,312 responses, including 36% of all staff on Teaching & Research contracts. The results relating to Research Integrity and ethics are largely positive across the board. Specifically, 80% of respondents agree that Cardiff University takes Research Integrity seriously, and 91% of respondents indicate that they know what is

considered unacceptable research practice and ‘research misconduct’. Furthermore, 86% of respondents feel confident that they know how to meet the ethical requirements of their research, with 48% of those agreeing strongly with this sentiment. Further analysis of additional qualitative data from the survey is underway and is likely to highlight some challenges and barriers relating to Research Integrity and other areas. Actions to address these will be agreed by our Research Culture Development Group in January 2024 following consultation, as part of a general redevelopment of the institution’s action plan to take account of survey findings across all aspects of research culture. This redevelopment will take account of proposals temporarily placed on hold until the completion of the survey, such as implementing DORA health-checks in schools.

- Production and dissemination of new guidance for research staff career progression, through the regrading processes, and enabling named researchers to be attached to bid proposals at a higher grade, following completion of an established role assessment process prior to bid submission.
- A successful bid to the Wellcome Trust for funding to design a series of staff development programmes for academic Early Career Researchers as well as Professional Services and technical/specialist staff. These will be focused on advocacy for, and development of, research activity that supports a positive research culture. A positive research culture is one that we have defined as values led and encompasses dimensions of Research Integrity but also, for example: equality diversity and inclusion; job security and career development; well-being; open research; and collaboration and collegiality.
- Completion of the [CRediT](#) (Contributor Roles Taxonomy)⁴ pilot in three Schools, seeking to enable greater transparency and recognition of Cardiff researchers’ diverse contributions to scholarly outputs. One of these schools is further developing their use of CRediT. There have been a number of learning points from the pilot and it has highlighted that one key barrier is a perception that use of the scheme will be more time-consuming than traditional authorship practices. We are investigating ways in which we can further promote the visibility and value of the scheme as well as the reality of implementing it, including via promotion of an internal case study. We are also considering the feasibility of monitoring use of CRediT via our institutional repository, ORCA.

16.2. A review of our academic promotion process is also currently underway with a view to embedding and highlighting contributions to a positive research culture, including in the areas of Research Integrity, Open Research and responsible research assessment and ensuring that such activity is recognised and rewarded. It is anticipated that recommendations will be submitted to the University’s Academic Promotions Committee in Autumn 2023.

17. Open Research and Transparency

⁴ CRediT describes 14 roles that represent the parts typically played by contributors to a scholarly output

- 17.1. The University remains committed to the Open Research agenda and our Open Research Operational Group ('OROG') has continued to meet during the 2022/2023 Academic Year and is exploring ways in which the research community can be better supported in this area.
- 17.2. We are a partner institution and provide input and leadership to the Open and Responsible Researcher Assessment Working Group, part of UKRN's [Open Research Programme](#). In particular, Cardiff University is leading work to develop a community of practice across the HE sector, as well as tracking the progress of selected case study institutions.
- 17.3. During the 2022/2023 Academic Year, we participated in a GW4 pilot of UKRN's "train the trainer" scheme, aimed at developing internal expertise in training people on Open Research practices. As part of this scheme, 4 members of our staff attended "train the trainer" sessions run by UKRN and GW4 in March and April 2023, and then developed training material specific to process and practice at Cardiff University. In July 2023, two pilot sessions on 'Open Research & Open Access', and 'Open Research & Sharing Data and Code' were run for [sbarc/spark](#)-based researchers. These sessions provided an introduction to Open Research, and enabled participants to:
- Identify practices associated with Open Science and 'FAIR' research;
 - Describe the benefits of Open Access publishing;
 - Understand the differences between Open Access routes;
 - Identify appropriate outlets for needs;
 - Understand the reasons, benefits and risks of data sharing;
 - Explain the importance of data management plans;
 - Define sensitive data within their field;
 - Select appropriate storage and sharing options;
 - Understand and evaluate the benefits and challenges in sharing code;
 - Apply good practice in developing code for sharing; and
 - Understand potential routes to sharing code.

There are plans to run further sessions during the next Academic Year, including at the Cardiff University Research Staff Association's annual symposium in November 2023 (to coincide with a GW4 Open Research Week), and to the University's WISERD (Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data) centre in January 2024.

- 17.4. The University Library Service has also undertaken a range of activities aimed at strengthening Open Research and the support provided to the research community. For example:
- A rights retention pilot has commenced to support academics to retain rights over their outputs when publishing in scholarly journals.
 - We have taken out a subscription for Cabells Predatory Journal Reports to support academics in identifying and avoiding predatory journals.
 - We have undertaken a review of open access publication compliance rates following REF, identifying that compliance rates had dropped. A project was initiated to review the reasons for this, address the gaps and ultimately increase the number of Open Access publications across the University. This has now completed, and the project made recommendations for further staff training and awareness of the

benefits and requirements for open access beyond REF. Current Open Access compliance across the University is 92% for outputs accepted from 01 November 2022 and deposited in our repository since 01 January 2023.

- Guidance on open access monograph publication is also being developed and a strategic review of our open access Cardiff University Press is underway, with recommendations expected in Autumn 2023

17.5. Prior to considering the appointment of 'Open Research Integrity Leads' (to potentially replace our existing 'Research Integrity Leads') or equivalent, consideration is being given to providing resources and signposting that is relevant for researcher engagement with this agenda. This will help to improve visibility and understanding of open research expectations. OROG is collating internal and external resources related to open research and intends to develop a short and accessible output which signposts these resources to staff and will help to improve awareness of the open research support that is available.

18. Trusted Research

18.1. The University remains committed to the "Trusted Research" agenda and has undertaken a number of activities in this area during the 2022/2023 Academic Year, including:

- Becoming an active member of the Russell Group Trusted Research Forum Steering Group, guiding the agenda of the Forum. The Forum provides a key opportunity to collaborate with and learn from Russell Group colleagues.
- Continued engagement with the [Higher Education Export Controls Association](#) ('HEECA') and the [Research Collaboration Advice Team](#) ('RCAT') to discuss ideas and share best practice. The University has also interacted with RCAT on specific projects and holds regular meetings with RCAT to discuss Trusted Research principles and practice.
- Continued awareness raising and/or training sessions with various key internal committees and groups including ORIEC, University Executive Board, International Strategy Group, Professional Services Board and researchers within the School of Engineering.
- Revising the University's intranet content on Export Controls and Trusted Research (awaiting publication).
- Introducing of a number of tools to ensure the consistent recording of Export Control and Trusted Research enquiries. These tools include an Export Control Enquiry Form, Goods Checker Assessment tool and a Trusted Research Assessment summary.
- Integration of Trusted Research considerations into the University's Due Diligence process for research.

18.2. A 'Research Integrity and Compliance Officer' post has also been created and a candidate successfully appointed to start in December 2023. This will enable the development of the University's governance structures and systems around Trusted Research and internationalisation, including the development of an institutional Export Controls Policy.

19. Data management

19.1. Alongside business-as-usual activity to support good practice in research data management, including the provision of advice, training and support, there have been a number of specific activities to further support our research community and/or improved governance during the 2022/2023 Academic Year. For example:

- Face to face training in Data Protection and Records Management was re-introduced for staff and students, alongside some online sessions.
- Intranet guidance for the research community has been augmented and advisory services from Compliance and Risk, University Library Service and Research and Innovation Services continue to be utilised by researchers.
- In June 2023, colleagues from RIGE, Compliance and Risk and the Library Service delivered a 'Data Protection and Records Management Workshop' specifically designed for SREC Members. This followed a call for additional training and support from some members of the SREC community and some common challenges identified in this area from the annual SREC reporting exercise. The workshop was recorded for members who were unable to attend.
- Research data management and data protection advice was incorporated into the draft University SOP for projects involving audio and/or visual recordings of human research participants (referred to in Section 11).
- Procurement for a new research data repository system was successfully concluded, with the contract awarded to Digital Science for their Figshare for Institutions product. Implementation has commenced, with the aim of launching the new University Research Data Repository service in early 2024.
- A new off-site storage service contract has been procured, and exit arrangements agreed with the current supplier.
- The Research Contracts team were provided with updated guidance for international/restricted personal data transfers based on new requirements published by the Information Commissioner's Office. An appropriate approach has been agreed in terms of supplementary contract documentation, in consultation with Legal Services.

20. External engagement and sharing best practice

20.1. The University has continued to engage with external groups and organisations to share best practice, explore effective governance arrangements and initiatives for the promotion of Research Integrity and to collectively influence policy and practice. In particular, the University continues to be an active member of UKRIO and the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum, as well as topic-specific groups such as the Russell Group Trusted Research Forum, UKRN, HEECA and the Association of University Sponsors.

20.2. During the 2022/2023 Academic Year, RIGE representatives have also presented at various conferences and events relating to Research Integrity and/or Research Culture including the [Research Culture and Practice Forum](#) in June 2023. The University's Dean for Research Environment and

Culture has also been invited to run a session with Newcastle University at the International Research Culture Conference in Warwick (September 2023) on *“How to do a research culture survey”*. There are also plans to disseminate methodology, materials, outcomes and evaluation from our Wellcome Trust funded research culture programme with other Welsh Universities.

20.3. Cardiff University has also supported HEFCW officers in developing a proposal for pan-Wales Research Culture networks, for consideration by the HEFCW board. Such networks would facilitate collaboration between institutional research culture leads and professional services colleagues working on research culture-related issues (e.g., research integrity and ethics) and would strengthen relationships.

Planned activities

21. Alongside the various activities already referenced in this Annual Statement as commencing or concluding during the next Academic Year, our Research Integrity focus and attention during the 2023/2024 Academic Year will be concentrated on progressing the actions contained in our Research Integrity Action Plan and advancing the following areas of work in particular:

- Research Ethics – supporting the pilot of our new ethical review channels for UG and PGT activity, exploring an online solution for ethical review activity, and supporting the work of the Ethics and Publicly Available Data Task and Finish Group.
- Visibility, reward and recognition – seeking to ensure that demonstrating excellence in supporting and/or embedding Research Integrity is better reflected in the University's reward and recognition systems.
- Trusted Research - further development of the University's systems and tools to support researchers and to help ensure responsible practice in this area.

Dealing with allegations of Research Misconduct

22. 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

23. 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 Policy and Procedure ('ARM Procedure'), together with a named contact, is publicly available on the University's [website](#).

24. There are three stages to the ARM Procedure. At each stage the allegation may be dismissed or may proceed to the next stage:

24.1. A Preliminary Stage where the Named Person, in consultation with the PVC and normally carried out within 10 working days of receiving an allegation (depending on complexity), 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.

24.2. 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.

24.3. 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.

25. As stated in Section 12, the ARM Procedure was revised during the 2022/2023 Academic Year and an updated version (v04) is available on the University's "[Academic Research Misconduct](#)" webpage.

Allegations against students

26. 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 level of programme on which the student is enrolled. 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](#).

27. The University's Academic Integrity Policy sets out the overarching principles of what constitutes Academic Misconduct at Cardiff University, including a definition of 'Academic Misconduct in Research' which is aligned to the misconduct categories contained in the Concordat. The policy 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).

28. 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:

28.1. 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.

28.2. 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.

28.3. 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.

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

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

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

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

Statement on investigations of Research Misconduct

30. During the 2022/2023 Academic Year, four (4) allegations/sets of allegations were received under the University's ARM Procedure (ARM 22.01, ARM 22.02 ARM 22.03, ARM 22.04). The decisions in these cases were as follows:

30.1. ARM 22.01 - dismissed at Preliminary Review stage as a review of information provided concluded that this matter did not fall under the University's ARM Procedure as it related to an academic acting in their role as a journal editor. An alternative course of action (to raise concerns via the journal's procedures) was recommended to the individual.

30.2. ARM 22.02 - the issues raised related to a previous investigation carried out in 2020/2021. The complainant was asked to clarify if the complaint was the same as that investigated previously (related to the same issues),

or whether the complaint related to any new issues (was a new allegation). If the complaint was new, the complainant was asked to provide details of this to enable the University to carry out a preliminary review. No new evidence was submitted by the complainant and, in light of this, no further action was taken as the matters raised had already been investigated in 2020/2021.

30.3. ARM 22.03 – A preliminary review was carried out to identify whether an issue raised under an alternative investigation procedure required an ARM investigation. It was concluded that the issue raised was an example of poor or “questionable” research practice and did not fall under the relevant categories of ARM.

30.4. ARM 22.04 - Having reviewed the information provided, this allegation was found to be against the publishing journal and a PI/Correspondence author at another institution. The complainant was advised to raise this with the relevant University.

31. In addition to the above, the University’s Compliance and Risk Team and Legal Services have been asked to assist academic staff with a number of issues relating to predatory journals during the 2022/2023 Academic Year. These teams have sought to advise and support relevant staff where possible and have added specific guidance relating to predatory journals to our ARM Procedure as a result.

32. During the 2022/2023 Academic Year, there were no (0) reports of alleged Academic Misconduct in Research by PGR students.

33. During the 2022/2023 Academic Year, there were no (0) Academic Misconduct in Research investigations concerning UG/PGT students that reached an Academic Integrity Panel.

What has the University learned from the investigations?

34. The following lessons have been learnt from the ARM investigations carried out during the 2022/2023 Academic Year:

34.1. That it is important to identify the correct investigation procedure to follow when issues arise as processes should not be used to re-raise issues that have already been investigated by another policy or organisation if it is not appropriate to do so. The scope of the ARM Procedure has therefore been outlined clearly in the revision along with a table of other relevant policies and contacts. The ARM Procedure does however also detail the procedure if there is more than one issue being raised (e.g. grievance and ARM) as elements of investigations may need to be considered separately alongside each other.

34.2. That academics are experiencing increased contact and/or inappropriate behaviour from ‘predatory’ journals and the University has an important role in raising awareness of the practices of predatory journals.

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 respond to any feedback received through the various channels noted above. It is anticipated that the University's work and initiatives relating to research culture will also help to ensure appropriate reflection in this area.

Preparation of this Annual Statement

37. Preparation of this Annual Statement was co-ordinated by RIGE. A draft of this statement was noted by the University's Executive Board on 10 October 2023 and was approved by ORIEC on 17 October 2023, subject to some minor corrections.
38. The Annual Statement was also approved by the University's Governance Committee on 07 November 2023 and noted by Senate and Council on 08 November 2023 and 22 November 2023 respectively.

Questions on this Annual Statement

39. Any queries regarding the content of this Annual Statement should be addressed to the University's Research Integrity and Governance Officer (cullene1@cardiff.ac.uk) or the Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics team (resgov@cardiff.ac.uk).

Professor Roger Whitaker
Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Enterprise
November 2023

Acronym key

ARM	Academic Research Misconduct
ASPA	Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986
CRedit	Contributor Roles Taxonomy
DORA	Declaration on Research Assessment
GW4	Great Western 4/GW4 Alliance
HEECA	Higher Education Export Controls Association
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
HTA	Human Tissue Act 2004
JRGG	Joint Research Governance Group
JRO	Joint Research Office
MRes	Master of Research
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
ORCA	Online Research @ Cardiff University (our institutional repository)
ORIEC	Open Research Integrity and Ethics Committee
OROG	Open Research Operational Group
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PREPARE	Planning Research and Experimental Procedures on Animals@ Recommendations for Excellence.
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
RCAT	Research Collaboration Advice Team
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RI	Research Integrity
RI CoP	Research Integrity and Governance Code of Practice
RIGE	Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics Team
RTS	Recast Transforming Services
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SREC	Schools Research Ethics Committee
UEB	University Executive Board
UG	Undergraduate
UK CORI	UK Committee on Research Integrity
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation
UKRIO	UK Research Integrity Office
UKRN	UK Reproducibility Network
WISERD	Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data