Research Code of Conduct

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<h1>RESEARCH CODE OF CONDUCT</h1>

A document for all staff, students (including Honours; Masters and PhD students) and visitors undertaking research, informed by The Concordat to Support Research Integrity

Introduction

1   Abertay University expects all staff, students and visiting researchers to adhere to the highest standards of integrity in the conduct of their research. Members of the academic community at Abertay have an individual and collective responsibility to protect the good names of their colleagues, the institution and the wider scholarly endeavour by ensuring that their own research adheres to and promotes the highest principles of good research practice. This document aims to facilitate this process by setting out a code of conduct and good practice in research. The Code covers all research activities and responsibilities, irrespective of funding source, including contract research and research activities conducted within the framework of a consultancy agreement. It should be read in conjunction with other University Regulations, policies and guidelines; for example, with regards to staff and student discipline and health and safety practice.

2   Drawing on the UK funding bodies' definition used in the Research Excellence Framework, as described in Assessment framework and guidance on submissions (2019/01), 'research' is defined as, 'a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction'. Research includes work that is published, disseminated or made publicly available in any form as research outputs, and includes confidential reports, as well as unpublished dissertations and theses.

Wider context

3   Amid growing international concern over reproducibility, data security and research misconduct a number of organisations have proposed that Universities and other research institutions should safeguard public confidence in research and their own institution's reputation by formulating guidelines on good research conduct, and instigating transparent and fair procedures for investigating allegations of research misconduct. Increasingly, funding agencies are making it a condition of eligibility for research grants that institutions have in place agreed procedures for governing good research conduct, which have been made known to, and are binding on, all their staff. Whilst the principles embodied in such guidelines simply reflect good practice, and will be familiar to the vast majority of researchers, the conscious adherence to a published code of conduct is seen as the best preventative measure against research misconduct. In formulating this code of conduct and procedures for dealing with research misconduct the University has drawn heavily upon the Vitae

Report on Research Integrity and the policies and procedures published by a number of international organisations (such as, The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, Berlin: 2017, and strengthened by The European Consensus Statement, Bonn, 2018) and funding agencies, including the Research Councils and the Wellcome Trust; a full list of these is appended to the end of the document. The most recent review of this document incorporates changes recommended in the Vitae Report, the UKRIO Code of Practice for Research and the Concordat to Support Research Integrity published jointly by the RUK, Welcome Trust and Universities UK, which identifies five commitments that all those engaged with research should be able to demonstrate:

- All research is underpinned with common values of rigour and integrity
- All research conforms to all ethical, legal and professional obligations incumbent on the work
- The University will nurture a research environment by creating a culture and - by removing disincentives to support research of the highest standards of rigour and integrity
- The University will use transparent, robust and fair processes to handle allegations of misconduct and protect researchers and whistleblowers
- The University will continue to monitor, and where necessary improve, the suitability and appropriateness of the mechanisms in place to provide continued assurances over the integrity of research.

Research Integrity

There is a general consensus regarding the principles of research integrity. While conscientious researchers are intrinsically motivated to take these principles for granted in their research practice it is worthwhile spelling out the fundamentals of research integrity:

- **Reliability and Rigour** in ensuring the quality of research by methodically and conscientiously adhering to disciplinary norms and standards in the design, methodology, analysis and communication of research.
- **Honesty and Transparency** in all aspects of the research process, including research design, data collection and analysis, reporting findings, reviewing and communicating research in ways that are fair, full and unbiased and that equitably acknowledges the work of other researchers. Potential competing interests should be declared and negative or null results should be reported to recognise their value as part of the research process.
- **Care and Respect** for colleagues, the subjects, users and beneficiaries of research, including humans, animals, the environment and cultural objects in ways that ensure the integrity of the research record.
- **Accountability and Responsibility** of funders, employers and researchers for the research process from conception to publication, its management and organisation, training, supervision and mentoring, and to actively foster a research culture where individuals and organisations are enabled to independently direct the research process and be held

accountable when behaviour falls short of the principles of research integrity.

How these principles apply to the specific research context of Abertay University is detailed below (paras 7 to 31). It is important to recognise that honest mistakes and genuine differences in, for example, research methodology or interpretations do not, in themselves, constitute research misconduct. Minor infractions, including honest errors, where there is no evident intention to deceive, may be addressed informally through mentoring, training and guidance (see para 26 below).

Observance of the Code

4   This Code applies to all staff, students and visiting researchers conducting research within, or on behalf of, the University. Whilst it is assumed that all staff value research integrity as a personal goal they are still expected to familiarise themselves with, and refresh their knowledge of, the Code and ensure that its provisions are observed by themselves, their students and their visitors. The Code of Conduct should be drawn to the attention of newly appointed researchers and research students during their induction processes. Failure to comply with the Code may lead to disciplinary action.

5   Where a researcher is in doubt about the applicability of provisions of the Code, or about the appropriate course of action to be adopted in relation to it, advice should be sought from their academic mentor at Abertay, the Chair of the appropriate School Research Ethics Committee, or the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee. In their absence, or where doubt persists, researchers should seek advice from their line manager or other senior members of staff (e.g. a Dean). All advice should be provided on a confidential basis.

Ensuring Awareness of the Code

6   A copy of this code will be placed on the Research page of the MyAbertay, Research Strategy and Frameworks page. All existing academic and academic-related members of staff will be directed to read the Code of Conduct by their Dean of School. All new academic and academic-related members of staff will be directed to read the Code as part of the induction meeting with their line manager. Postgraduate Research Students will be directed to read the Code by the Dean of Research and the Graduate School at the Research Degrees Induction event. All other students (e.g. taught undergraduates and postgraduates) who are undertaking research shall be made aware of the Research Code of Conduct by their supervisor and directed to read it. Staff responsible for hosting visitors (at whatever level) who will be actively involved in research at the University should draw their attention to the Code at the beginning of their visit.

Principles of Good Conduct in Research

Openness

7   The University encourages researchers to be as open as possible in making their work accessible to other researchers and to the public. To achieve transparency, researchers must comply with the University Research Data Management Policy and the principles of the Concordat on Open Research Data. These policies recognise that researchers are entitled to a limited period of privileged access to the data they generate so as to permit effective publication, and that researchers must comply with the Terms and Conditions of their funder and/or partner organisation, as well as the Abertay Intellectual Property Policy, The University expects researchers to make available relevant data and materials to other researchers prior to publication if requested by publisher policies, after publication or on request, provided that this is consistent with any ethics approvals, consents and contractual agreements which cover the data and materials and any Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in them. Participants, and other relevant stakeholders in a research project, should be offered access to a summary of the research findings.

Leadership and Organisation

8   It is the responsibility of the University Research Executive, the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, and the University's senior management (Deans of School, Heads of Division, Directors of Specialist Centres, and research group leaders) to provide research leadership that ensures a culture is created that allows research to be conducted in accordance with good conduct and practice. These individuals should work together to scrutinise whether existing incentive structures with respect to remuneration and career progression are fit to create a research environment of mutual co-operation in which all researchers are encouraged to engage in transparent research practices and in which strong research culture bonds of collaboration and open exchange of ideas are fostered, and that perverse incentives to compromise research integrity are alleviated by positive research experiences and interactions at all levels. This may also entail participating in large collaborative research projects where an individual researcher may only play a minor role, conducting replications, maintaining a pace of research that prioritises good practice over fast results, and discouraging 'over-hyping' research findings. The University is committed to the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers in accordance with good research practice by providing professional development and training opportunities. Thus, all Abertay Postgraduate Students, researchers and academic staff are given membership of the Graduate School and have access to our dedicated study and social spaces, training and professional development opportunities. Graduate School training on Research Integrity (including research ethics, data management, GDPR for Research and Open Access), is obligatory for all research active and supervising staff, and part of the obligatory induction for Postgraduate Research Students. Training for Research Degree Student Supervisors is also obligatory for all supervising staff. Staff are required to update their knowledge and understanding periodically (at least every 3 years).

Research Supervision and the Needs of New Researchers

9   In conjunction with senior colleagues, research supervisors, group leaders and Principal Investigators, should ensure that appropriate direction of research

projects/programmes and supervision of researchers, research students and other students is provided. Supervision should be provided at all stages of the research process, including planning, practice, analysis and publication. It is particularly important to ensure that researchers who are new to research, whether staff, postgraduate student, or undergraduate student, understand the value of self-motivated good research conduct. The responsibilities of supervisors of research students are set out in the Research Degrees Student and Supervisor Handbook. The University recognises that senior researchers and supervisors need to be encouraged to continuously update their own research skills including in open research, which is a fast-evolving area, so that they can manage and supervise others effectively. Training in supervisory skills and briefings on research integrity and open research will be provided where appropriate.

Documenting Results, Storing Primary Data and GDPR

10   The ownership of, where relevant, data and samples used or created in the course of the research, and the results of the research, should be clear from the outset of the research programme. Guidance on intellectual property issues can be found in the University's Intellectual Property Policy. In the case of funded research, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator/researcher to ensure that funding is in place permitting appropriate data storage.

11   Researchers must keep clear and accurate records of the procedures followed, approvals granted, and results obtained (including interim and null results), during the research process. This is necessary not only as a means of demonstrating proper research practice and protecting intellectual property, but also in case questions are subsequently asked about either the conduct of the research or the results obtained. Documentation of null results is important to enable meta- analyses and prevent publication bias. Researchers must ensure that data generated in the course of research are stored securely at the University, in paper or electronic format (as appropriate), for a minimum of ten years in accordance with the Research Data Management Policy. Data should be maintained for longer than ten years if required by a sponsor which has funded the research, or because of perceived long term-value, to allow for longer-term follow-up. Data stored should be curated according to the standards of the respective discipline to enable future use. Researchers are expected to keep abreast with evolving discipline-specific standards and University policy on data storage and curation. For further guidance on the maintenance of records in paper and electronic format, researchers should consult the Safeguarding IP Guide in the University's Intellectual Property Policy. Note that publication of the data/results does not remove the need to retain the original records. The University commits to treating research data associated with published outputs as a public good, and in accordance with the University Research Data Management Policy, if alternative storage is not available, the University will take responsibility for making available the storage capacity required to support maintenance of a cumulative research record.

Researchers (i.e. any student, member of staff or visiting researcher undertaking research) MUST comply with the GDPR for Research Policy, not least if it involves collecting and processing personal and sensitive data. GDPR regulation is a law that will be rigorously enforced by means of punitive fines for universities. Failure to adhere to GDPR regulations will result in ethical approval of a project being revoked and/or may be treated as academic misconduct which would result in serious penalty. Researchers MUST consult the GDPR for Research Policy document, and design

their research accordingly, before applying for ethical approval. Note that fully and irreversibly anonymised data falls outside of GDPR regulations.

12   When the individual responsible for generating and storing research data/results moves to another institution, retires, or otherwise leaves the employment of the University, the original research records should be transferred to, and archived by, Information Services. Special authorisation by the Dean of School will be required for disposal of records linked to published studies. Under normal circumstances, the individuals who generated the records will be granted rights of access to the materials and/or allowed to take away copies. In general, individuals will only be allowed to retain copies of primary research data, but will be given permission to retain the originals of other outputs, such as original writings and artwork. All such rights shall be conditional on the individual providing appropriate acknowledgement to the University, and any of its employees who contributed to the research, in any subsequent outputs arising from the research.

Collection and Storage of Samples

13   Samples taken/provided for analysis (e.g. of animal, plant or microbial origin) should be collected, stored, labelled and (where permission has been obtained) disposed of in compliance with all ethical, Health and Safety and other regulatory provisions in force, including the Nagoya Protocol governing the fair access to genetic resources in other countries (see https://www.cbd.int/abs/nagoya-protocol/signatories/default.shtml) and UK import licence requirements. The labelling system employed should ensure that samples cannot be mis-identified.

Publishing Results

14   Once any issues relating to confidentiality and IPR have been addressed, research findings should be disseminated so that they can be assessed by peers and the wider public; this is usually a condition of research funding. The most common routes for the dissemination of research findings are publication in peer-reviewed journals (or other equally reputable publications) and presentation at research meetings (conferences, symposia etc.). Within this context there are a number of issues that researchers should be aware of when publishing results:

- To qualify for authorship an individual should have made a substantial contribution to the work, in terms of conceiving, executing or interpreting the research reported, and must accept personal responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the contents of the paper, and can identify their contributions to it. Authors should be listed in a way which is consistent with the relative contributions that each has made. Where possible, author credit statements in accordance with practices of the respective discipline should be included in publications. The practice of honorary authorship is completely unacceptable. Seniority cannot be used to acquire authorial credit where no significant contribution to the work was made.
- Contributions to the work made by individuals not listed as authors, and by sponsors or other organisations, should be properly acknowledged.
- It is common practice to present research findings at research meetings (conferences, symposia etc.) which are published as abstracts or short papers

in conference programmes and/or proceedings. This may not preclude the research from being published in full as a paper in an appropriate journal. However, duplicate or 'redundant' publication of research findings in a journal, i.e. publication of a paper that overlaps substantially   with   one already published (and hence presents little or no new data or information), should generally be avoided. An exception may be granted if the paper is to be published in a different language, included in an edited collection of representative studies for a given field, or is intended for a different group of readers, provided that the authors receive approval from the editors of both journals and refer to the first article in the second publication. When considering whether secondary publication of a research paper is justifiable, researchers are encouraged to consult the guidelines on acceptable secondary publication drawn up by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

If an author discovers an error in a publication which degrades the worth of the reported findings, the author should immediately discuss the matter with the research leader, with a view to notifying co-authors and publishing a correction as soon as possible. Where the findings are found to be in serious doubt, a retraction should be published at the earliest opportunity. To provide the necessary incentive structure for maintaining an accurate scientific record, the University will react with no detriment to individuals if their need for corrections or retractions of published outputs arises from honest mistakes.

- In line with the University's Open Access Publications' Policy, authors of peer reviewed articles and conference proceedings must deposit the final author accepted manuscripts in Abertay's open access repository, Pure, as soon as their papers are accepted for publication and no later than 3 months after acceptance for publication. Where copyright restrictions do not allow the output to be made open access, a metadata record for the output must be available in Pure.
- All funder open access requirements must be met, including a data access statement in the publication where this is required by the funder.
- Authors may apply to the Abertay University Fund for Open Access Publications for support with open access publication charges (APCs) which if awarded should be acknowledged within the publication. Authors in receipt of UKRI funding can request use of the University UKRI block grant to cover open access publishing fees.
- Authors should contact the Graduate School's Scholarly Communications Manager for help and advice on open access publishing, licences and copyright, and funder open access requirements.

Other Research Outputs

15   The publication of research results in article format in the public domain, as described above, is only one type of research output; others include monographs, confidential reports for external bodies, electronic internet publications, software, patent applications, designs, compositions, performances, PgR theses, etc.

These research outputs should (subject to any copyright restrictions) be made openly available via Pure in line with Abertay's Open Access Publications' Policy. Where copyright restrictions do not allow the output to be made open access, a metadata record of the outputs must be available in Pure. Authors should contact the Graduate School's Scholarly Communications Manager for help and advice on open access publishing and copyright.

PgR students must deposit a copy of their final thesis in Pure. Embargo periods for 'publications pending' will be allowed but set at 18 months maximum, with extensions available on request.

Appropriate recognition should be attributed to those who make a substantial contribution to the research which results in the production of such outputs and the contributions of collaborators, sponsors and all others who directly assisted or indirectly supported the research should be properly acknowledged.

Conflict of Interest

16   Conflicts of interest in research, whether perceived or actual conflicts, can cause considerable damage to the reputation of both the individual concerned and the University. Conflicts of interest arise when a researcher's judgement is actually influenced, potentially influenced or may be perceived to be influenced by secondary interests such as financial or other personal gain and personal relationships (e.g. with sponsors, industry, politicians, family). A good indication of whether a conflict of interest exists can be gained by asking the question 'Would I feel comfortable if others learnt about my secondary interest in this matter or perceived that I had one, or if that interest was disclosed in the press or on social media?' If the answer is no, then a conflict of interest probably exists.

17   Should a personal conflict of interest arise during the course of an individual's research, the researcher should disclose this conflict to their Dean of School as soon as possible. Should the researcher be unsure as to whether their situation constitutes a conflict of interest, or identifies that while there is no conflict others might perceive there to be one, they should also consult the Dean of School in the first instance. Deans of School may consult the Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee(s), the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee and/or the University Secretary in cases of doubt. Where a conflict of interest is deemed to exist, the Dean of School, the Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee and/or the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee will, in full consultation with the researcher, agree on the appropriate course of action to be taken.

Integrity in Submitting Research Proposals to External Sponsors

18   Applicants for external research funding, and those responsible for authorising external applications, should take all reasonable measures to ensure the accuracy and completeness of all information submitted to external sponsors. Applicants should not seek to identify or approach external assessors during the appraisal process. All applications will be made via the Funding Support Team by emailing funding@abertay.ac.uk..

Integrity in Managing Research Projects

19	Researchers should take all reasonable measures to ensure compliance with sponsor, institutional, ethical, safety and moral obligations in managing research projects/ programmes. Research project leaders must ensure that any undue pressure exerted on them by external research sponsors, which leads them to feel compromised or exposes them to a conflict of interest, is brought to the attention of their Dean of School, the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee, the Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee or the Dean of Research and the Graduate School, as a first point of contact and confidential liaison.

The Dean of School, the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee, the Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and the Dean of Research and the Graduate School, will discuss individual anonymised cases together as and when they occur, and will notify the University Secretary if initial discussions reveal a case for formal investigation (see paras 30-31 below). The number of initial notifications and formal investigations will be reported annually to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. Alternatively, individuals may raise their concerns about such matters via the University's Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle-blowing) Policy.

Integrity in Reviewing Research Proposals and Articles Submitted for Publication

20	Researchers who are invited to act as referees, panel members or committee members for the assessment of grant applications submitted to external sponsors, or as reviewers/editors for articles submitted for publication, should be aware of the responsibility this entails. In particular, they should treat all information made available to them in the strictest confidence, and decline an invitation to referee or withdraw from the relevant discussion(s) where there is a conflict of interest (personal or institutional) or where they consider themselves to be insufficiently expert to comment on a particular proposal or manuscript.

Research Ethics

21	Researchers and academics must be familiar with, and comply with, the standards of ethical conduct required by the law, external organisations (e.g. government bodies, sponsors) and the University. All research projects (including undergraduate research projects) require ethical approval at the School (or if necessary, University) level before the research starts. Where the research also requires the approval of an external Ethics Committee this must be obtained before the components of the research project requiring such approval start. In such cases approval must be granted from both the external and internal Ethics Committees.

22	Researchers should note that some external funders of research require ethical approval for a project prior to the submission of a grant proposal. Where this is the case, the researcher should seek such approval from the School Research Ethics

Committees. In such cases, researchers are responsible for ensuring that documentation is submitted in a timely fashion affording the School Research Ethics Committees sufficient time to review the proposal.

23   When considering the ethics of their proposed research, researchers should consult the University's Research Ethics policy and guidelines. Researchers should pay particular attention to:

- The requirements for research involving human participants or human biological samples; this includes the need to ensure confidentiality of personal information relating to the participants in research, and that the research fulfils any legal requirements such as those of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR for Research Policy;
- The requirements for research involving animals; this includes the need to consider, at an early stage in the design of any research involving animals, the opportunities for reduction, replacement and refinement of animal involvement, and the need to ensure that the research complies with all Home Office regulations.
- The requirements for biological surveys overseas and subsequent research using organisms or samples back in the UK; this includes the need to consider the Nagoya Protocol governing the fair access to genetic resources in other countries; the organisation of permission or agreement from the host country, and the need to ensure that the research complies with all other appropriate regulations including UK import licence requirements.
- The requirements for research involving sensitive or extremism related research or terrorism-related research, including the need for the safe storage of security-sensitive research material [see UUK's 'Oversight of security-sensitive research material in UK universities: guidance" October 2012].

Researchers requiring further advice on ethical, legal and/or professional obligations and standards should seek advice from their Dean of School, the Chair of their School Research Ethics Committee and or the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee.

Research Misconduct

Definition of Research Misconduct

24   In broad terms, research misconduct can be defined as willful behaviour that breaches the principles of research integrity. For the purposes of the University's Disciplinary Procedures 'research misconduct' is the willful failure to comply with any part of this Code of Conduct. For the avoidance of doubt, research misconduct includes, among other things, the following (as defined by The Wellcome Trust):

25   The fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting results of research or deliberate, dangerous or negligent deviations from accepted practices in carrying out research. It includes deliberate misrepresentation of data, misattribution of authorship, undisclosed duplication of

publication, or failure to declare competing interests. Attempts to threaten whistle-blowers with reprisals or the use of legal instruments, such as non-disclosure agreements, and to censor allegations of misconduct, are all forms of misconduct. A failure to follow established protocols is considered misconduct if this failure results in unreasonable risk or harm to humans, other vertebrates or the environment and facilitating of misconduct in research by collusion in, or concealment of, such actions by others. It also includes intentional, unauthorized use, disclosure or removal of, or damage to, research-related property of another, including apparatus, materials, writings, data, hardware or software or any other substances or devices used in or produced by the conduct of research.

26   It does not include honest error or honest differences in the design, execution, interpretation or judgement in evaluating research methods or results, or misconduct unrelated to the research process. Although research misconduct does not include poor research unless this encompasses the intention to deceive, researchers are encouraged to avoid questionable research practices such as p- hacking, HARK-ing, selective reporting, or failing to disclose sampling strategy.

Examples of research misconduct include but are not limited to:

- Fabrication: the deliberate invention of research data/results
- Falsification: the deliberate distortion or omission of undesired data/results, including the dishonest misinterpretation of results
- Plagiarism: the deliberate unacknowledged presentation/exploitation of the work and ideas of others as ones own, including the misappropriation of published and unpublished material and other resources or outputs, and making unauthorised use of information and ideas in breach of confidentiality associated with peer review, supervision, collaboration with industry etc.
- Deception: the deliberate concealment of a conflict of interest or inclusion of deliberately misleading statements in research funding proposals or other documents
    - Misquotation or deliberate misrepresentation of the results of other researchers
    - Non-compliance: the willful failure to comply with University, statutory, sponsor, and/or professional body obligations (e.g. research ethics and research ethics approvals, safety, data protection & GDPR, grant conditions)
    - Inappropriate attribution of authorship
- Inciting others to be involved in research misconduct
- Collusion in or concealment of research misconduct by others
- Malicious unfounded accusation of misconduct against another

Research Degree Theses

27   The preparation of Research Degree theses must conform to the Research Degrees Regulations, the Postgraduate Research Student and Supervisor Handbook, and the University Code of Student Discipline: Academic Misconduct. Plagiarism Software may be used to investigate misconduct in Research Degree theses. As a result, all theses must be submitted as an electronic version, including all figures, tables and illustrations in MS Word format.

Reporting Research Misconduct

28   All staff, students and visiting researchers are required to report observed, apparent or suspected research misconduct. If an individual is unsure whether a suspected incident constitutes misconduct, they should first discuss the matter informally with their Dean of School, the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee, the Chair of the Research and knowledge Exchange Committee, or the Dean of Research and the Graduate School, as a first point of contact and confidential liaison. The Dean of School, the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee, the Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and the Dean of Research and the Graduate School, will discuss individual anonymised cases together as and when they occur, and will notify the University Secretary if initial discussions reveal a case for formal investigation (see paras 30-31 below). Where an individual, for whatever reason, is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal discussion, they should raise the matter with the University Secretary. The number of initial notifications and formal investigations will be reported annually to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. Alternatively, individuals may raise their concerns about such matters via the University's Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy.

29   Note: An allegation of research misconduct is serious and potentially defamatory, and hence may be actionable in law. It should therefore be made, and dealt with, in the strictest confidence to ensure the protection of both the person making the allegation and the person against whom it is made. In line with the recommendations set out in the Concordat for Research Integrity the University will act with no detriment to whistleblowers making allegations of misconduct in good faith and will provide opportunities for the accused to submit a defence.

Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct

30   Allegations will be dealt with through the University's Staff Discipline Procedure or the Student Disciplinary Code, which provide detailed written procedures for investigating misconduct and taking appropriate disciplinary action where necessary. The procedure is confidential, transparent, timely, robust and fair and protects the rights and interests of all parties to ensure accountability when things go wrong with clear rights of appeal. These procedures will apply whether the alleged misconduct takes place while staff and students are based in the University or whilst conducting research in another institution or organisation; in the latter case, the University will seek agreement on the appropriate course of action with the host institution. During the disciplinary process the University may seek the advice of external or internal experts in the field concerned. Where conflict of interest on the part of the University precludes an objective investigation the matter should be referred to an external, professional, independent or legal body. The University takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard the reputation of any individuals who is exonerated by the investigation.

31   The University Secretary will, at the earliest opportunity, inform research sponsors and/or statutory bodies of any substantiated allegation of research

misconduct involving a researcher they fund. Sponsors will also be informed, in confidence, about any allegation involving a researcher they fund, where the nature of the allegation is such that the research cannot be allowed to continue until the allegation is refuted and/or there are reasonable grounds to believe that the allegation may be substantiated on investigation.

Acknowledgements

This Code of Conduct has been formulated with reference to the following documents:

BBSRC Statement on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice. Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/organisation/policies/position/policy/good-scientific-practice.aspx

UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO). (2009). Code of Practice for Research, Promoting Good Practice and Preventing Misconduct. https://ukrio.org/publications/code-of-practice-for-research/

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (2019) https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat/Download_Concordat_Word

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Universities UK, 2019. https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf

The Concordat on Open Research Data. UKRI July 2016. https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/concordatonopenresearchdata-pdf/

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Great Britain. Department for Business Innovation and Skills. 2012. Letter to Dame Janet Finch on the Government response to the Finch Group report: "Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: how to expand access to research publications". [online] Available from: http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/science/docs/l/12-975-letter-government-response-to-finch-report-research-publications [Accessed 29 October 2012]

MRC Good Research Practice. Medical Research Council, December 2000. http://www.mrc.ac.uk/index.cfm/search-results/?keywords=good+research+practice&display=search&newSearch=true&noCache=1

Nagoya Protocol. https://www.cbd.int/abs/nagoya-protocol/signatories/default.shtml

Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, October 2001. http://www.icmje.org/Working

Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Findings. 2012. Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: how to expand access to research publications. [online] Research Information Network. Available from: http://www.researchinfonet.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/FinchGroup-report-FINAL-VERSION.pdf [Accessed 29 October 2012]

Vitae, The Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) Ltd. Research Integrity: A Landscape Study:

Other Sources of Information

Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research. University of Glasgow, June 2000.

http://www.gla.ac.uk/R-E/pub/policies/research-misconduct-final-draft-8jun2000.rtf

Data Protection Act 2018.
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted

MRC Policy and Procedure for Inquiring into Allegations of Scientific Misconduct. Medical Research Council, December 1997. http://www.mrc.ac.uk/pdf-miscon.pdf

Office of Research Integrity (ORI), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. http://ori.hhs.gov/

Version revision	Purpose/Scope	Author	Date
v.1.1 (i)	First review and redraft of the 2001 Code of Conduct	Vera Kempe	24/06/20
ii	Second revision	Alex Law	18/08/20
iii	Third revision following RKEC SLWG (Nia A White, Vera Kempe, Alex Law, Annelize McKay, Kevin Smith) discussion.	Nia White	21/09/20
v.1.2	Annual review and revision	Nia White	17/11/22
v. 1.3	Annual review and revision	Nia White	06/12/23