

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

COUNCIL

Annual Statement on Research Integrity

Background

In July 2012, Universities UK published the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* (July 2012), a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance. HEFCE, NIHR, RCUK and the Wellcome Trust are included among its signatories, and HEFCE in particular has stipulated that compliance with the *Concordat* is a condition of the HEFCE grant from 2014/15.

The *Concordat* requires in particular that the University should present a short annual statement to its governing body that:

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

To improve accountability, and provide assurances that measures being taken continue to support consistently high standards of research integrity, the statement must be made publicly available. The University's Statements are published at <https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-integrity-and-ethics/>.

Statement for 2014/15

1. During 2014/15, the University has undertaken the following actions and activities to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues:
 - (a) A cross-campus information and awareness campaign to launch the University's revised policies on research integrity, ethics and misconduct (approved July 2014) to all staff involved in research and all postgraduate students. More tailored face-to-face briefings were provided for Heads of Department, Chairs of departmental research committees and subject-level ethics committees, and relevant departmental and central administrators.
 - (b) Delivery of a programme of training for staff and postgraduate students in support of research integrity, informed by the University's revised policies. This primarily took the form of contributions to central provision already in place in relation to

- research, including staff and student induction, but also included some bespoke sessions for individual academic departments. A 'research integrity forum' was launched, open to all staff and postgraduate research students, to provide termly academic-led opportunities to discuss what constitutes good conduct of research.
- (c) Continued development of an online research integrity tutorial for postgraduate research students, intended for launch in 2015/16.
 - (d) Promotion of the University's Research Data Management Policy (approved July 2014) to all staff and postgraduate research students. Research data management awareness raising activities and advocacy for good practice have been supported by a new website, workshops, and departmental briefings.
 - (e) Introduction of an annual meeting of subject-level ethics committee Chairs, convened by University Ethics Committee, to share good practice.
2. The University's *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* was revised and updated in 2014 to ensure it was transparent, robust, fair and appropriate (approved by Senate July 2014). The conduct of cases under the revised *Policy and Procedure* during 2014/15 has indicated in practice that the latter is fit for purpose. The *Policy and Procedure* is due to be reviewed again in 2017/18.
3. (a) There have been no cases of academic misconduct by a research student during 2014/15. Potential misconduct issues in relation to a PhD dissertation, reported as under investigation in 2013/14, were found to be without foundation.
- (b) Two allegations of research misconduct were reported to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research in 2014/15. In one case, the allegation was subsequently withdrawn. In the other case, the allegation related to work carried out at another institution, which carried out an investigation and found there was no case to answer.

Council is asked to note and approve this Statement.

**PROFESSOR DEBORAH SMITH
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research
June 2015**