

# 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 2015/16

1. During 2015/16, the University has undertaken the following actions and activities to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues:
  - (a) Subscription to the UK Research Integrity Office, an independent charity offering support to the public, researchers and organisations in relation to research integrity and ethics. The Chief Executive, James Parry, visited the University in October 2015 and led a workshop session open to all staff and PGR students. Meetings were also held with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, the Chair of the University Ethics Committee and the Registrar and Secretary, to discuss the University's approach to integrity and ethics and share

good practice. Internal webpages have been developed to advertise the resources and support offered by UKRIO to individual members of staff.

- (b) Participation in a meeting of Russell Group research integrity administrators (summer 2015), to advance understanding of how collaborative approaches to dealing with allegations of research misconduct would operate in practice.
- (c) Launch of a mandatory online Research Integrity Tutorial for postgraduate research students.
- (d) Continuation of the University's programme of training and support for staff and postgraduate students, including in relation to research data management and open access. Subject-level ethics committee chairs have continued to meet regularly to share good practice. The Research Integrity Forum has hosted sessions on managing sensitive qualitative data and working with vulnerable research participants, and resources from past sessions have been made available online.
- (e) A review of the University's research training and support, which has identified research integrity and ethics as a key area for further development. A number of actions have been recommended, to be taken forward by a Research Excellence Training Group from 2016/17.

- 2. The University's *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* was informally reviewed as part of the visit of the Chief Executive of UKRIO, and deemed to be fit for purpose. A number of suggestions were made to strengthen the *Policy and Procedure* still further, which are currently under consideration. A formal review of the *Policy and Procedure* is scheduled for 2017/18.
- 3. (a) There have been no cases of academic misconduct by a research student during 2015/16.
- (b) One allegation of research misconduct against a member of staff was reported to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research in 2015/16. Following investigation, the allegation was not upheld.

**Council is asked to note and approve this Statement.**

**PROFESSOR DEBORAH SMITH  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research  
June 2016**