

Code of Practice on Research Integrity

The purpose of the University's Code of Practice on Research Integrity is to ensure those involved in research activities under the University's auspices are well-informed and compliant with current legal, regulatory, and institutional principles and expectations when planning, conducting, and disseminating their work. The Code draws together a number of other University policies and national and international frameworks, all of which underpin research integrity. 'Integrity' refers to the core values of honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, care and respect, and accountability. These values are strengthened by our commitment to equality and diversity, which is emphasised throughout the Code. The specifications and principles of this Code apply to anyone conducting research on behalf of the University, or those using University facilities and/or premises. This includes all research undertaken by staff, postgraduate researchers (PGRs), students, visiting or emeritus staff and researchers, associates, honorary or clinical contract holders, contractors and consultants.

Key Elements

- The Code sets out the responsibilities of various parties with an emphasis on the fundamental responsibility of individual researchers to uphold research integrity, including the fulfilment of appropriate ethics procedures.
- Research which falls within the framework of the University's [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#) must undergo appropriate ethical review as set out in the Code, guided by the principle of 'avoidance of harm'. This refers to potential harm towards: humans (including the researcher(s)), [animals](#), the environment, cultural heritage, the community, and the reputation of the University as well as academia more broadly.
- Ethical review should be completed and approvals in place prior to the commencement of the research in question. In the case of research conducted outside the UK, additional ethics approval may be necessary and local regulations should be checked, and compliance ensured, before research begins. For more information, see the University [Guidance on Conducting Research outside the UK](#).
- All [personal data](#) and [special category data](#) must be collected, used, stored and disposed of in line with relevant legislation, in particular the [General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act, 2018](#). In addition, data must be managed in accordance with the University's [Research Data Management Policy](#) and [IT Security](#) guidance.
- Conflicts of interest should be addressed through declaration and/or special safeguards as far as possible, referring to the Head of Department and/or an ethics committee where the matter cannot be easily resolved. 'Conflict of interest' refers to situations in which a researcher's interest in pursuing or disseminating unbiased findings is potentially or actually compromised by their other interests, whether financial, institutional, academic, political, personal or otherwise.
- It is the position of the University that the practices of honorary authorship, dual submission and self-plagiarism are contrary to the principles of research integrity and thus not acceptable. All those contributing significantly to a piece of work should be credited. In cases of co-authorship or collaboration, all named authors are responsible for ensuring the integrity of the output.

- The University is committed to the promotion of [Open Access](#) research in the interests of accountability and transparency, and the Code specifies the importance of researchers being able to publish freely, with reference to contract arrangements where appropriate.
- It is the responsibility of all those within the University community to foster an environment which promotes integrity. Misconduct is taken very seriously and will be handled in a transparent, robust, and fair manner. The process is outlined further in the Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure, which applies wherever intentional and/or reckless behaviour or actions deemed to constitute research misconduct are alleged to have taken place under the University's auspices, and covers all researchers, including students and postgraduate researchers.

1. Introduction and scope

1.1. The University is committed to the highest standards in its research, underpinned by the quality of the research process, from conception through to dissemination and application. In this, it recognises its obligation to the wider research community and to society as a whole to uphold the integrity of academic research. The University also has a responsibility to ensure that the funds it receives are spent in accordance with the legitimate expectations of the funding providers and the law and in the public interest. This Code of Practice lays out the foundations for the proper conduct of research, and provides direction on the standards expected by the University and the various responsibilities of its members in upholding these standards.

1.2. All provisions listed in this Code of Practice apply to all those undertaking research under the University's auspices. This includes all research undertaken on the University's behalf, by staff, students and postgraduate researchers, visiting or emeritus staff and researchers (including at the postgraduate level), associates, honorary or clinical contract holders, contractors and consultants. It applies across all subject disciplines and fields of study. Those undertaking research on University premises using its facilities but not in the University's name are expected to abide by the standards outlined in this Code of Practice and to follow the University procedures applicable to the activity they are undertaking.

1.3. The University formally endorses the [UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity \(2019\)](#). In addition, this Code of Practice draws on a number of other sources of guidance within the sector, including the [RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct \(2013, rev. July 2015 & April 2017\)](#), the [Singapore Statement on Research Integrity \(2010\)](#), the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity \(2011, rev. 2017\)](#), and the [UK Research Integrity Office Code of Practice for Research: Promoting good practice and preventing misconduct \(2009\)](#).

2. Principles and frameworks

2.1. The University takes as its starting point the definition of research integrity provided by the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2012):

'Honesty in all aspects of research, including in the presentation of research goals, intentions and findings; in reporting on research methods and procedures; in gathering data; in using and acknowledging the work of other researchers; and in conveying valid interpretations and making justifiable claims based on research findings.'

Rigour, in line with prevailing disciplinary norms and standards, and in performing research and using appropriate methods; in adhering to an agreed protocol where appropriate; in drawing interpretations and conclusions from the research; and in communicating the results.

Transparency and open communication in declaring potential competing interests; in the reporting of research data collection methods; in the analysis and interpretation of data; in making research findings widely available, which includes publishing or otherwise sharing negative or null results as appropriate to recognise their value as part of the research process; and in presenting the work to other researchers and to the public.

Care and respect for all participants in research, and for the subjects, users and beneficiaries of research, including humans, animals, the environment and cultural objects. Those engaged with research must also show care and respect for the integrity of the research record

Accountability of funders, employers and researchers to collectively create a research environment in which individuals and organisations are empowered and enabled to own the research process. Those engaged with research must also ensure that individuals and organisations are held to account when behaviour falls short of the standards set by this concordat.

Concordat to Support Research Integrity (October 2019), p.6

2.2. Research must be conducted in accordance with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, including the [Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act \(1986\)](#), the [Human Tissue Act \(2004\)](#), the [Declarations of Helsinki](#), the [UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research](#), the [Data Protection Act \(1998\)](#) together with successor legislation - the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and Data Protection Bill (2018), and the [Health and Safety at Work Act \(1974\)](#). Research conducted overseas should also comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the country/countries in question, as well as University policy on [overseas research](#) and [safeguarding](#).

2.3.1. Together with the need to comply with legal and regulatory requirements, the University's [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#) sets out a framework of ethical principles which articulates shared professional standards and values within the higher education sector. All research should be designed and conducted within this framework. The emphasis of the Code is on key principles regarding:

- a) The need to safeguard academic freedom and the impartiality of research.
- b) Avoidance of harm to the welfare and interests of participants in and subjects of research; and to researchers, cultural heritage, the environment, the University and academia as a whole, and the wider community. Activities should not include practices which either directly or indirectly impose a risk of serious harm.
- c) The acquisition of informed consent for the research involving human participants.
- d) The use of non-human animals in academic work: this should be fully justified and the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) followed wherever possible.
- e) The need to act responsibly and sensitively in relation to cultural differences.
- f) The need to ensure that knowledge produced is relevant and useful to all those involved in the research, especially where it takes place in low and middle income countries.

2.3.2. All research should undergo the appropriate ethical review. The cornerstones for the management of ethical issues within the University are self-reflection, explicit discussion, institutional accountability, and proportionality. That is to say, individuals undertaking research in the University's name or on its behalf should take responsibility for actively considering whether their activities fall within the scope of the University's ethical framework, and where this is the case,

the activities should be formally considered and approved by the appropriate ethics committee(s) as set out in the University's Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance.

2.4. Within the above frameworks, researchers should observe the requirements and standards of practice set out in guidelines published by scientific societies, funding agencies and other relevant professional bodies, where available.

2.5. The University is committed to supporting and developing a healthy, inclusive research culture in which high-quality, diverse and ethical research can flourish. All researchers have a duty to the research community and to society as a whole to act according to the highest standards of research integrity, and the primary responsibility for this lies with the individual. The University has a responsibility to support researchers in this and promote a culture of research integrity, through its governance structures and policy frameworks, and through the provision of training and guidance. Roles and responsibilities in this respect are laid out in greater detail in Section 6 below.

2.6. The [University of York Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy](#) states that it is committed to creating a working, learning, social and living environment that will help enable all our staff and students to achieve their potential whilst they experience and celebrate diverse cultures, knowledge and identities, and are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the city, region and beyond. Researchers must take account of equality and diversity considerations in relation to the conduct of their research, and managing and supervising staff and PGRs.

3. Planning and conducting research

3.1. Practical planning

3.1.1. In devising a research project, researchers should have a clear justification for the study and address the key factors that will influence the success of the project. These factors may include the research design, necessary and timely permissions to access data or subjects, collaborations, analytical and statistical methods, assessment of resources required, and key milestones. Funding and other resources (e.g. space, staff, facilities, materials and clinical support) needed to ensure the viability of the research should be in place at the outset.

3.1.2. Where it is intended that individuals are paid for their participation in or contribution to research, this should be done in line with the University [Policy on the Payment of Individuals for Involvement with and Contribution to Research](#). Researchers should consider the legal, financial and ethical implications of payment, and ensure that all those involved in a project are fairly paid or compensated for their work.

3.2. Health and Safety

3.2.1. In planning and conducting research, researchers should be aware of and comply with the University's [Health, Safety and Welfare Policy Statement and associated Management Procedures](#), and any specific departmental policies and procedures relating to health and safety, as well as the basic legal requirements. Research leaders have an additional responsibility for those under their supervision, and should ensure that all members of the research team understand safety procedures, receive the necessary [training](#), and have access to appropriate equipment.

3.2.2. Where relevant, [risk assessments](#) should be carried out in relation to the researchers themselves and for those participating in the project or affected by its conduct. Where appropriate, issues concerning possible adverse environmental impacts of the research should be taken into account. Researchers should ensure that appropriate [insurance](#) is in place, liaising with the

University's Insurance Officer as necessary (via standard departmental procedures where these exist).

3.3. Regulatory approvals, licences and permissions

Where regulatory approvals (e.g. clinical trial authorisations), licenses (e.g. export control licences) and/or permissions (including [Material Transfer Agreements](#) in the context of access and compliance obligations of the [Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources](#)) are required in order to conduct research, these should be secured in a timely fashion prior to the commencement of the research and in accordance with the relevant University and/or departmental procedures. Further guidance is available from the [Research and Knowledge Exchange Contracts team](#).

3.4. Research ethics

3.4.1. Further to the principles set out in 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 above, ethical considerations remain relevant during the lifetime of the project. Ethical considerations should be addressed from the outset and be taken into account when planning the funding, conduct and dissemination of the research. Where appropriate, ethical considerations may also influence the design of the research. They should also inform any changes to the project as it develops. If circumstances change (e.g. significant amendments to the approved protocol for a project), additional ethical review/approval should be sought as necessary from the body/bodies which originally considered the proposal, and internal reporting requirements followed as set out in the University's Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance. Where in doubt or in need of further advice, researchers should seek guidance from [the relevant local ethics committee](#) in the first instance, referring on to the [Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee](#) (AECC) and/or the Chief Operating Officer (COO) for particularly complex or unusual cases. Guidance as to the proper implementation of the Prevent Policy is found in the [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#).

3.4.2. Where required, ethical approval from external bodies should be obtained. In particular, when planning research overseas, individuals should also take account of the ethical standards and processes of the country/countries where the research is to take place. The need for internal as well as external ethical scrutiny depends in part upon the scale of risk involved and the scope and rigour of the external ethical framework and process in question. Further guidance, including internal reporting requirements, is set out in Section 3 of the University's Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance, and in the supporting [Guidance on ethics governance requirements for research conducted outside the UK](#).

3.4.3. Special attention will be given to cases where an ongoing research project transfers into the University and falls within the scope of the University's ethical framework. Under such circumstances the York lead should inform the Chair of the relevant local ethics committee of the ethical scrutiny which the project has undergone, and the local ethics committee Chair should decide with reference to the above principles whether further scrutiny on behalf of the University is necessary.

3.4.4. All necessary ethical permissions must be obtained prior to the commencement of the activity/activities to which they apply.

3.5. Conflicts of interest

3.5.1. Conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived, can damage the credibility of an individual's research and related activities (such as peer review), and that of the discipline, the University and the research community as a whole. The University [Policy on declaring interests, managing conflicts of interest, and gifts and hospitality](#) requires staff to declare interests annually through their departmental Register of interests. Where staff are involved in significant decision-making on behalf of the University, this should be declared via completion of an annual return to the central Register within one month of the start of the academic year.

3.5.2. In relation to research or research-related activity, a conflict of interest can be understood as a situation in which a researcher's interest in pursuing unbiased findings is potentially or actually compromised by his/her other interests, or the interests of others involved – whether financial, institutional, academic, political, personal or otherwise. It is the responsibility of all researchers to identify and declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest, and to comply with funder requirements in this respect. Where a conflict of interest exists and cannot be avoided easily without detriment, it should be referred to the Head of Department in the first instance, and [the relevant local ethics committee](#) should be informed. Formal referral to a departmental/subject-level ethics committee should be pursued where necessary. Conflicts of interest should be satisfactorily addressed, through declarations and/or special safeguards where possible, before the relevant research activity commences. These measures should be considered explicitly as part of the formal ethics approval process. It is essential that the validity and integrity of the research or related activity is not compromised.

3.5.3. It is particularly important that funders' interests do not influence research findings. Further guidance on the procedures for handling issues relating to funding can be found in the University's [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#) and the University's [Framework for Ethical Consideration of External Funding](#).

3.6. Maintaining quality and consistency

3.6.1. Any research processes and procedures to be used should be clearly articulated and well understood by all those undertaking them. Where appropriate, written standard operating procedures should be completed for all routine methods and staff should undertake training as necessary.

3.6.2. The working environment must be appropriate for the maintenance of sample quality and integrity. Researchers should ensure that procedures are in place for equipment to be maintained and calibrated.

3.7. Research data and supporting records

3.7.1. Effective management of research data underpins the quality and integrity of research. It supports openness, and, where appropriate, enables the sharing and re-use of data within the research community. The University's [Policy on Research Data Management and associated guidance notes](#) articulate University policy in this area, including detailed definitions of what is understood by research data and supporting records. In addition, researchers are responsible for meeting specific professional and contractual requirements in relation to their research data. Where data sharing agreements exist with other institutions or data providers, the terms of data sharing should be followed.

3.7.2. Clear arrangements for data management should be in place from the outset of the research project, within the framework set out by the University Policy on Research Data Management. Where required by the funder or specified by the department, this will be in the form of a formal Data Management Plan.

3.7.3. Throughout their work, researchers should keep accurate, complete and reliable records of the research procedures or survey methods followed, and the results obtained. Records, samples and other experimental materials should be clearly, accurately, uniquely and durably labelled, and correctly stored, in line with regulatory requirements. The University expects all researchers undertaking laboratory work to keep laboratory notebooks. This practice is particularly important where the work may have commercial application. Further guidance is available in the University's guidance on [Keeping a laboratory notebook](#).

3.7.4. Supporting records should also be maintained by researchers with the support of their departmental administration in line with the University [Records Management Policy and associated guidance](#). This should include research proposals and plans, contracts, ethical and regulatory approvals, consents, licenses and permissions. In relation to ethical approval in particular, there should be a clear, well-documented and easily accessible audit trail, including the original protocol, ethics approvals and any subsequent modifications (see 6.5 below).

3.7.5. Research data and supporting records for all research undertaken under the University's auspices should be preserved for their lifespan (i.e. as indicated by the Policy on Research Data Management and the Records Management Policy and associated guidance) with appropriate labelling/metadata and shared access controls to ensure that the information is identifiable, retrievable and available when needed and not dependent on a single individual. University policy and guidance on arrangements for the archiving, maintenance and disposal of research data must be observed.

3.7.6. In line with the University's policies and procedures on [Information Security](#) and [Data Protection](#) and the Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance, particular care must be taken with handling and storing sensitive, classified and/or personal data or special category personal data. Such data should be kept securely, protected from unauthorised access, and there should be a clear and documented access control process for granting and revoking access to the data. Particular care should be given to ensuring that de-identified data cannot be linked back to individuals' details unless by authorised persons. It is essential that all sensitive, classified and/or personal or special category personal data are disposed of appropriately, securely and auditably at the end of their lifespan, in line with legal and ethical requirements. Further guidance is provided in the [Information Classification Scheme](#) and [the University's suite of Information policies](#). Any information security incidents should be handled under the [Information Security Incident Management Policy](#).

4. Publication

4.1. Openness

4.1.1. While recognising the need for researchers to protect their own interests in the process of planning and undertaking their research, the University encourages all researchers to be as open as possible in making their findings and methods widely available to other researchers and to the public. This is in line with the requirements of research funders to make research outputs [Open Access](#), and with Freedom of Information obligations to publish publicly funded research outputs

and data in a proactive manner.

4.1.2. The University values the right of authors and contributors to decide on the best avenue for publishing their research findings while encouraging publication in an open and accessible way and ensuring funder requirements are met. The University [Policy on the Publication of Research](#) provides direction on the publication process and facilitating access.

4.1.3. The above expectations need not conflict with the protection of proprietary interests in the results; the latter may be achieved through patent applications, retention of source code etc. Further guidance in this area is available from the Commercialisation Team. Although researchers may wish to retain research materials for further study, such retention should not be extended unreasonably. Authors are encouraged to seek to retain copyright and other reuse rights for research outputs in contracts with collaborators, funders and publishers. Further guidance is available via the Policy on the Publication of Research.

4.1.4. It is a fundamental principle of academic research that researchers should be able to publish their results freely. Funders may wish to impose restrictive clauses that allow delays in publication, for example to allow protection of intellectual property to capture commercial value. Where such clauses do not infringe the fundamental freedom of the researchers to publish their findings, they can be accepted: the University will seek to include provisions for work to be published with the minimum delays consistent with these considerations. In other cases (e.g. contract research for industry), funders may wish to make publication dependent on their consent. The University would expect these decisions to be made reasonably and without undue delay, but with appropriate regard for openness, transparency and the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

4.2. Authorship

4.2.1. Permission should be obtained from all those listed as an author on a research output. The University expects anyone listed as an author to accept personal responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the contents of the paper, and that they can identify their contributions to it. Contributions appropriate to authorship may include the origination of the research idea or design, undertaking a substantial part of the work or a significant contribution to the analysis, and writing of the research output. If an individual has made a contribution of this sort, they should be included as an author unless they have withheld their permission, in which case their contribution should be noted as appropriate in the acknowledgements. It is the University's view that the practice of honorary authorship, in which a co-author has not participated in any substantial way in the conception, execution, or interpretation of a significant part of the work described in the publication, is unacceptable.

4.2.2. It is the University's view that all authors listed on a publication carry a shared responsibility for the quality, accuracy and robustness of its contents, which should be checked by all named authors prior to submission for publication.

4.2.3. Researchers should comply with the definition of author and co-author as defined by the journal in question, and appoint a corresponding author to lead for communication on the work. Other authorship conventions tend to be discipline-specific. In order to prevent unfairness and disputes, the practice observed by particular research groups should be made explicit and adhered to. *Conversations* relating to publication and authorship should be initiated at an early stage of a project, recognising that roles and contributions may change in the course of the research. Decisions

on publication and authorship should be agreed jointly and communicated to all members of the research team.

4.2.4. Contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgements section.

4.2.5. Where there is dispute over authorship of a paper, the researcher should first take the issue to the Head of Department, and, in the event of failure to agree, thereafter to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research. Where disputes involve other institutions, the Head of Department should also contact the Research Strategy and Policy Manager in the first instance.

4.3. Dual submission and self-plagiarism

4.3.1. The practices of dual submission and self-plagiarism (i.e. failure to acknowledge prior publication as appropriate) are always unacceptable.

4.4. Maintaining the accuracy of the research record

4.4.1. If, following publication, genuine errors or potential for misunderstanding are subsequently revealed in the research data or their interpretation, steps should immediately be taken to ensure the accuracy of the research record, including the publication of corrections or retractions as soon as possible. Where this arises in relation to a group project, the group as a whole should take responsibility for addressing the situation. As stated in the UKRIO *Guidance for researchers on retractions in academic journals* (2010), 'an admission of honest errors in research should in no way be construed as misconduct; on the contrary, the reporting of genuine mistakes is in accordance with good practice in research and part of the duty of authors to take public responsibility for their work' (p.5).

4.4.2. Where a retraction or withdrawal of a submission/publication has occurred, the York lead author must inform the Research Strategy and Policy Office so that the University is in a position to fulfil funding reporting requirements in this area.

4.5. Peer review

4.5.1. Researchers who act as peer reviewers, whether internal or external, for research grant applications or outputs should apply rigorous objectivity, honesty and fairness in all assessments, and should identify and handle any potential or actual conflicts of interest as required by the requesting organisation (where applicable), and by University policy (see section 3.5. above). They should ensure that they have sufficient knowledge of what is required and should only accept assignments for which they have appropriate expertise.

4.5.2. Those undertaking peer review should treat the process, including the information provided and the opinions offered, as confidential, and should not take advantage of any new data or privileged information for their own gain, including furthering their own research. Improper conduct in the peer review process, whether this is the review of proposals, results or manuscripts, constitutes research misconduct (see 7.1, below).

4.5.3. Researchers should not take action, either directly or indirectly, to influence the review of their own work or that of others. Where an author considers there might be reasonable grounds for appeal against the outcome of peer review, it is advisable to discuss the matter with the Head of Department in the first instance.

4.6 Acknowledging contributions

4.6.1. The contributions of formal collaborators and others who directly assist or indirectly support the research, including funders and data providers, must be appropriately acknowledged when statements about the research are made, including provision of information about the nature and process of the research, and in publishing the outcome. Further guidance is provided in the [Policy on the Publication of Research](#).

4.7 Publication and citation data

4.7.1. Those evaluating the research of others using publication and citation data should be aware that the University has developed [nine guiding principles](#) for such work, in line with the [Leiden Manifesto](#) and the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#). Staff and postgraduate researchers should familiarise themselves with and abide by these principles.

5 Collaborative research

In forming research collaborations, particularly on an interdisciplinary or international basis, researchers should articulate, agree and adhere to the standards and frameworks that will apply to the work, including respective roles and contributions. These standards and frameworks should comply with the principles which underpin the University's policies and codes of practice, and also those of the collaborative partners. In advance of project commencement, the [Research and Knowledge Exchange Contracts team](#) in Research & Enterprise should be consulted, or prior to application in the case of large and/or complex projects.

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1. **The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research** is responsible for overseeing and leading on research integrity on behalf of the University, working with the University Research Committee and the Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee; and is the first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity and for the reporting of allegations relating to research integrity.

6.2. In line with its terms of reference, the [University Research Committee](#) is responsible for:

- a) Championing and promoting research excellence and integrity.
- b) Ensuring that University policy and procedures relating to research integrity are fit for purpose. The Committee has ownership of University policies with a specific research application, including this Code of Practice. The Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance is owned by the Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee; and University Research Committee and the Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee are jointly responsible for ensuring that it is fit for purpose in relation to research.
- c) Monitoring research integrity within the institution. This takes the form of an annual report to the Committee, summarising recent developments in support of research integrity and reporting any allegations and/or cases of research misconduct. As required by the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, a summary of this report, accompanied by assurances that the University's research misconduct policy and procedures are transparent, robust, fair and fit for purpose, should be presented to the University Council and [made publicly available on an annual basis](#).

6.3. **Heads of Department** are ultimately responsible for overseeing and leading on research integrity within their departments. In practice, responsibility for coordinating research activity in the department is delegated to the departmental research committee (see 6.4 below). Heads of Department are directly responsible for:

- a) Ensuring that, before research projects are undertaken, the necessary facilities, equipment, staff

and support structures are in place, in consultation with the project lead.

- b) Overseeing health and safety arrangements within the department.
- c) Overseeing good Equality and Diversity practice within the department.
- d) Handling personnel issues relating to research integrity, such as disputes over authorship, with reference to the Associate Deans (Research)/Faculty Deans/PVC(Research) as appropriate.
- e) Acting as a first point of contact in handling conflicts of interest and/or ethical issues relating to research funding, working with the relevant departmental or subject level ethics committee in accordance with the procedures outlined in the [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#).

6.4. **Departmental research committees** are responsible for fostering a culture of research integrity within the department, specifically through:

- a) Promoting awareness across the department of the University policies which underpin research integrity. In particular, departmental research committees should work with the relevant local ethics committees to help promote ethical awareness among staff and students. It is recommended that an appropriate representative from the ethics committee mostly closely associated with the department sits on its departmental research committee.
- b) Leading on implementation of this Code of Practice within the department. This may include developing departmental level policy and procedures as appropriate. Existing departmental procedures for planning and reviewing research (e.g. peer review) should incorporate explicit consideration of integrity issues, including ensuring as far as possible that ethical issues are identified and referral for ethical review takes place. A generic checklist is provided as part of the [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#).
- c) Promotion of training opportunities, particularly to those entering fields of research and/or research-related leadership roles which are new to them or who are in need of updating their skills and knowledge, in conjunction with line managers. Departmental research committees are encouraged to develop their own training and/or guidance on research conduct as appropriate, with reference to current best practice in the subject area.

6.5. **Local ethics committees** are responsible for the ethical scrutiny and signoff of research proposals, reporting to the Academic Ethics and Compliance Committee (AECC), including referring on complex or unusual cases where appropriate. They also facilitate discipline-specific training and guidance for staff and students within the relevant department(s), and are responsible for keeping abreast of the national and international requirements and standards for ethical review specific to their subject area and disseminating these appropriately. Full details of the University's governance structures for ethics, including terms of reference for local ethics committees are provided in the University's [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#). Local ethics committees should maintain clear, complete and easily accessible records of their decision-making on behalf of the University, including the original protocol, details of the terms of approval and any subsequent modifications.

6.6.1. **Individual researchers** (including postgraduate researchers) are responsible for:

- a) Maintaining the highest standards of integrity in their work at all times.
- b) Ensuring that they are aware of, understand and comply with all legal obligations, funder requirements and University and departmental policies relating to research, including [research misconduct](#), seeking guidance where necessary. In particular, they are responsible for identifying where research falls within the University's ethical framework, for referring it for review and approval as outlined in the University's [Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance](#), and for abiding by the decisions made by ethics committees.

c) Taking a proactive approach to their own training and development, to ensure that their needs are identified and addressed both in relation to their own research and also any roles they undertake in managing research.

6.6.2. Principal Investigators, research group leaders and project leads in particular are responsible for:

a) Working with the Head of Department to ensure that all necessary facilities, equipment, staff and support structures are in place before research projects are undertaken.

b) Taking the lead on compliance with legal obligations, funder requirements and University and departmental policies relating to research. In particular, as set out in the University's Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance, they are responsible for addressing and referring for review any ethical considerations arising from the research, and for ensuring that all necessary regulatory and ethical approvals are in place before commencement of the activities to which they apply.

c) Ensuring that any research procedures, processes and/or protocols (e.g. regarding authorship) are clearly communicated.

d) Providing appropriate direction and supervision of research for the group, particularly junior members.

e) Ensuring that all personnel associated with a project are competent to perform the tasks required of them, pursuing training where necessary (see 6.8 below).

Researchers involved in the supervision and development of other researchers should be aware of their responsibilities and ensure that they have the necessary training, time and resources to carry out that role, and request support if required.

f) Ensuring good equality practice, including undertaking University Equality & Diversity and Unconscious Bias training.

6.7 Supervisors of students undertaking research are responsible for ensuring that their students are aware of the legal obligations, funder requirements and University and departmental policies relating to their research and have a clear understanding of appropriate practice in line with these frameworks. Students undertaking research and their supervisors have a joint responsibility to ensure that any ethical issues are identified and appropriate ethical approval is obtained prior to the commencement of the activity/activities to which it applies, as set out in the University's Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance.

6.8 The University is responsible for:

a) Bringing this Code of Practice and the University's Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure (see below) to the attention of all those involved in research, in particular through induction provision for new staff and students.

b) Ensuring that there are adequate provisions made for training and development to enable staff and students undertaking research to attain the skills necessary for their role. In particular, the University should provide support for those in key leadership roles within the governance structure for research, including committee members, ensuring that they have access to the necessary knowledge and skills training in order to perform their role effectively.

(c) Demonstrating robust procedures for the handling of research integrity, including making sure that such procedures do not disadvantage those who need support.

(d) Working to ensure that organisations and partners funded by the University are able to demonstrate robust governance structures, taking steps to ensure that those with which the University collaborates or distributes funding to are aware of relevant University policies and procedures.

(e) Regularly reviewing research policies to ensure adequate support for research integrity, including consideration of the appropriateness of incentives used.

7 Research misconduct

7.1 As stated in the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) (2019), research misconduct ‘can cause harm to people and the environment, wastes resources, undermines the research record and damages the credibility of research’ (p.13) Failure to properly address allegations also constitutes research misconduct.

The University takes very seriously any breach of the standards of research integrity outlined in this Code of Practice, and is committed to using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct, and to taking appropriate and reasonable action when such allegations are upheld, particularly with respect to the research record, as set out in the University’s [Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#).

Alleged breaches of this Code of Practice which fall outside the definition of research misconduct set out in the Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure will in the case of staff be handled under the University’s [Disciplinary Procedure and Guidelines](#) and/or its [Capability Procedure](#) as appropriate. Under the Capability Procedure, line managers are responsible for addressing performance issues as early as possible and for setting in place support for researchers in need of assistance as appropriate. In the case of postgraduate researchers, this will be discussed by Research Student Administration with the Pro Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate Research School, and recommendations will be made to the Special Cases Committee regarding capability or competency issues.

Alongside the University’s internal procedures, any breaches of statutory or regulatory requirements will be handled as required by the statutory and regulatory framework. If details of the case suggest that a criminal offence has taken place, or is taking place, the matter should be referred to the Chief Operating Officer in the first instance, who will consider the need for legal involvement.

7.2 Each member of the University community has a responsibility to foster an environment which promotes intellectual honesty and integrity, and which does not tolerate misconduct in any aspect of research or scholarly endeavour.

Reporting concerns as a result of reasonable and honest suspicion is a service to the University and to the wider academic community, and the University will protect the interests of those who draw attention to possible misconduct in good faith and take reasonable steps to safeguard the exonerated

Staff and students should report any concerns relating to research taking place under the University’s auspices according to the procedure laid out in the University Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure. Instances of suspected misconduct solely involving researchers and/or organisations external to the University should be referred to the body or bodies directly involved (e.g. an academic journal), including the employer(s) of the researcher(s) involved.

7.3 Where research projects involve human subjects, participants and/or their representatives should be provided with details of a first point of contact through which any concerns can be raised. It is expected that this would usually be the Head of Department and/or the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research. Concerns relating to research conduct raised by others external to the University should be referred to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research in the first instance.

Status of this document

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