

# 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 should be made publicly available, and it is the intention that the University's Statement will be made public on its webpages relating to research integrity.

#### Statement for 2013/14

1. During 2013, the University's Research Strategy and Policy Office (RSPO) undertook a review of the University's structures, policies and other provision in support of research integrity in relation to major stakeholder requirements (including the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity*), practices at comparator institutions and guidance available within the sector as a whole. The following actions and activities have been undertaken in 2013/14 in response to the review's findings and recommendations, involving University Research Committee, University Ethics Committee, the Registrar, Human Resources, and other colleagues in support services responsible for providing training and/or guidance in relation to research integrity issues:
  - (a) Review and revision of the University's *Code of Practice on Research Integrity*, its *Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance* and its *Research Misconduct*

*Policy and Procedure* to ensure that these documents are clear and reflect current expectations and standards within the sector;

- (b) Strengthening of the governance structure in support of the ethical review of research. The Research Grants and Contracts Office has also recently undergone an internal audit including in relation to management of ethical review, and an action plan has been developed in response.
  - (c) Development of a programme of training and guidance in support of research integrity for 2014/15, focusing on early career researchers and those staff involved in decision making and providing advice; and enhancing provision for postgraduate research students through current development of an online research integrity tutorial;
  - (d) Planning of a cross-campus information and awareness campaign, to be launched over the summer vacation into the start of the autumn term 2014.
2. The above review of the University's *Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure* has ensured that the University's processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct are robust and fair, and continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation.
3. (a) There have been no cases of academic misconduct by a research student during 2013/14.
- (b) There was one case of alleged academic misconduct reported to the PVC for Research, which was originally reported as under investigation in 2012-13. No deliberate misconduct was found in this case, but issues did arise with a related PhD dissertation, which are now under investigation.

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

**PROFESSOR DEBORAH SMITH  
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