

Executive Summary Paper

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Committee: | Court | | |
| Title | Research Integrity Annual report | | |
| Sponsored by | | | |
| Author (if different from sponsor) | Professor Cam Donaldson, PVC Research | | |
| Please tick ✓ as appropriate) | For information | | For discussion |
| | For noting | | For approval |
| | For endorsement | | |
| | | | ✓ |

1. Purpose of the Paper and Summary of Key Issues and Information

The University is committed to meeting the Commitments of the Universities UK *Concordat to support Research Integrity*. As part of that commitment the PVC Research, as the University's designated point of contact for research integrity matters, presents the annual report on research integrity to the University Court which:

- provides a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues
- 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
- provides a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

The report will be published on the University's Research Integrity webpage.

2. Recommendations

Court is invited to approve the report.

3. Freedom of Information

Unless you specify otherwise, this paper will be deemed available for unredacted release under the

Freedom of Information (Scotland) 2002 Act. If some, or all of the paper, should not be released, briefly explain the reason. Examples include: commercial sensitivity, personal information.

This paper is deemed available for unredacted release under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) 2002 Act.

4. Consultation undertaken/required

| | |
|--|---|
| Who have you consulted when developing the paper? | Department of Governance, RIE, Chair of Research Ethics and Integrity Subcommittee, |
| Have you already submitted this paper to any other committee for discussion and/or approval? If yes, please state which committee | No |
| Will you require to submit this paper to any other committee following its consideration/approval at this meeting? If yes, please state the committee and date of meeting[s.] | No |

5. Promulgation of Decision/Actions and Implementation

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Who will be responsible for ensuring the decision taken by the Court/Senate/committee and/or actions arising from the meeting are promulgated to the relevant people for implementation? | PVC Research |
| Who will be responsible for overseeing any resultant changes or implementation plan as a result of the decision taken or actions arising from the meeting? | PVC Research |

Research Integrity Annual Statement 2017-18

Introduction

The University is committed to meeting the Commitments of the Universities UK *Concordat to support Research Integrity*. As part of that commitment the PVC Research, as the University's designated point of contact for research integrity matters, will provide an annual report on research integrity to the University Court which will:

- provide a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues
- provide 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
- provide a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

Key Activities in 2017-18

The following summary outlines actions and activity undertaken to support research integrity during session 2017-18:

1. The University *Research Integrity Policy statement* was refreshed to take into account feedback from UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) on the draft policy statement and to update referencing (URL links) as a result of changes to the University intranet and a number of University policy updates.
2. The University's *Code of Good Practice for Researchers* was updated, changing the title from *Code of Good Practice for Research Staff* to reflect the wider applicability already contained within the Code, to take into account structural and role changes in the University and take account of changes to Research Councils UK (RCUK) Policy requiring that the relevant research council should be notified of an allegation of research misconduct at the stage it is decided to undertake an informal inquiry, that RCUK may seek observer status in relevant cases and stating a requirement for external representation on investigating panels.
3. *Procedures for investigating Academic Misconduct in Research Degrees* (also referenced in the *Code of Good Practice for Researchers*) were updated to better mainstream these procedures by moving them from a section within the general research degree regulations (under Graduate School) to within the student conduct regulatory framework under Department of Governance. In addition the timescales for investigatory procedures were revised to bring these into line with the University's *Code of Student Conduct*.
4. A new *Research Data Management Policy* was developed to address external compliance and good practice requirements relating to research data management, including storage, archiving, public access and curation. A research data management working group was convened to develop guidance, training and standard templates for research data management and investigate the provision of a secure and robust IT infrastructure to support the entire lifecycle of research data from creation and storage, through accessing and sharing, to destruction or archiving.

5. A review of researcher development was undertaken and a Research Development Steering Group was reconstituted to review the staff opportunities planned for 2018 onwards and engage with staff across the University in order to identify the academic and service staff experts to build a pool of staff who can contribute to the delivery of a wide range of workshops.
6. Development of GDPR/Data Protection Guidelines for Researchers was initiated for provision to GCU staff via the GCU intranet.
7. All of the above items will be reviewed in 2018-19, with oversight being taken by the University Research Committee and its subcommittees (Research Degrees Committee and Research Ethics and Integrity Committee), to ensure that processes and procedures continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation, are cross referenced appropriately with other updated policies and procedures and are promulgated widely through the web, intranet, at induction and through provision of researcher development and information opportunities.

Ongoing and Future Activity

1. Continue to update and review the *Universities Regulations for the Award of Master of Philosophy, Professional Masters, Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate* including *the Regulations for the Award of PhD by Previous works* with a view to integrating this separate regulatory document within the regulations for research degrees.
2. Undertake a review of the University's *Research Ethics Principles and Procedures Handbook* and provision of information related to ethical procedures (at University and School level) on the website and intranet.
3. Complete a review of *Authorship Guidelines* which was initiated with a proposal to adopt UKRIO guidelines *Good practice in research: Authorship* integrated with the good practice identified in the existing GCU Authorship guidelines, particularly in the area of authorship in student work.
4. Continue the review of PGR Student guidance with a view to developing an updated and robust guidance framework with appropriately up to date cross referencing to University Policy, Procedure and Support and, via research networks, the Graduate School and Research Degrees Committee, identify enhancements to PGR training provision in research integrity and key areas related to research integrity (research ethics, research data management, authorship)
5. A Research Web Group has been established to review, update and maintain web content related to research, including areas relating to research integrity. The Group will seek to make relevant documentation more accessible to the public via more explicit placement on the University website and review published policy and procedure to ensure that they are consistent and web content is up to date.
6. Publicise and disseminate policy, procedures and research integrity principles through a series of workshops devoted to researchers.
7. Review the extent to which all policies and procedures address the broad areas of the Concordat to support Research Integrity using the UKRIO Self Assessment Tool including the

extent to which research misconduct policies, the *Code of Good Practice for Researchers* and the *Code of Student Conduct* are in line with the research integrity criteria.

8. Seek feedback from School Research Committees on the overall policy statement and whether it raises specific subject-area issues that require addressing, as well as advising on reporting mechanisms.
9. Change the name of the Research Ethics Subcommittee to include 'Research Integrity'.
10. Review PGR Student induction and devise a curriculum strategy to embed research integrity (further) within other researcher development and PGR education activities, such as the MRes.
11. Explore means of capturing wider research integrity data for annual review and implement this in AY 2018- 19.

Formal investigations of research misconduct

- No cases of research misconduct in 2017-18.
- No new cases of research misconduct by postgraduate research students in 2017-18; 1 ongoing

Procedures for Allegations of Misconduct

The *Code of Good Practice for Researchers* outlines procedures to be followed in cases of academic misconduct.

Other procedures relevant to staff:

- Conduct & Capability Policy - applies to current staff (but note that the University may continue the investigation to its natural end regardless of the complainant and/or the respondent resigning or otherwise withdrawing from the process; the complainant withdrawing his/her allegation; and/or an admission of guilt on the part of the respondent)
- Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing)
- Anti-Bribery Policy
- GCU Financial Regulations

Other procedures relevant to students:

- Procedures for Academic Misconduct in Research Degrees (as referenced in *Code of Good Practice for Researchers*)
- Code of Student Conduct (also referenced in *Code of Good Practice for Researchers*)
- Student Attendance & Engagement Policy (Research Students)

Research Integrity in the Curriculum

Currently there is module content delivered in the MRes Research Design Module on Ethics and Research integrity which is also integrated into teaching on the MSc Citizenship and Human Rights and part of an online ethics paper that is available to Dissertation students on the BA (Hons) Social

Sciences. Further work will be undertaken in 2018-19 to identify research integrity coverage in the curriculum and develop strategies for further roll out.

