

Research Integrity Statement

January 2017

Introduction

As a signatory to the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) ('the Concordat') the University of Southampton ('the University') is strongly committed to fulfilling the principles of the Concordat to create a comprehensive framework for responsible research conduct and governance. In compliance with the Concordat, the University is publishing a statement on Research Integrity on an annual basis.

The following Research Integrity statement covers the period from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016 and summarises the University's status relative to the expectations of the Concordat. It outlines the actions and activities undertaken and framework in place in support of fostering a culture of research integrity, and provides a high-level summary of investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken by the University.

University's Commitment to fostering a culture of Research Integrity

The University of Southampton recognises the importance of undertaking its activities responsibly with the highest ethical standards. The [Simply Better Strategy](#) launched in May 2016 identified the University's core principles as collegiality, quality, internationalisation and sustainability. These fundamental principles are underpinned by the values of excellence, creativity, community and integrity. The University fully recognises its responsibilities to researchers and the wider community, and is strongly committed to fostering a culture and understanding of good research conduct and governance, and integrity and probity across the full spectrum of its research activities. This commitment can be demonstrated by the University's Research and Enterprise Strategy and the supporting operational plan.

Leadership on Research Integrity

The Vice-President Research and Enterprise has an overall responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Concordat including the responsibility for oversight of research and enterprise policies, research ethics, doctoral researcher development and research governance in general. The following groups and/or committees support the Vice-President on matters relating to research integrity:

- Research and Enterprise Executive Group (REEG)
- Research Integrity and Governance Committee (RIGC)
- University Ethics Committee (UEC)
- Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)

The Vice-President Research and Enterprise reports regularly to the University Executive Board (UEB), Senate and the University Council on matters of research integrity to ensure institutional oversight.

Deans of Faculties have an overall responsibility for the performance management of academics and researchers in their respective Faculties. The Deans are supported by Associate Deans Research who also represent their Faculty on REEG and RIGC and are responsible for championing research integrity and implementing research and enterprise policies within their respective Faculties. Each Faculty has a Faculty

Ethics Committee (FEC), or an arrangement with another Faculty's FEC, for the ethical review of projects undertaken by staff and students. FEC Chairs are members of the UEC.

The University's [Doctoral College](#) provides leadership on doctoral researcher development.

Named Person in accordance with the Concordat

Named Person in accordance with the Concordat is Professor Mark Spearing the Vice-President Research and Enterprise.

Queries or concerns about research integrity and/or reports of research misconduct should be made through the Research Integrity and Governance (RIG) team headed by Diana Galpin, Head of IP, Contracts and Policy, Research and Innovation Services.

Contact: researchintegrity@soton.ac.uk

Telephone: 02380 596846

Research and Enterprise Policies

The University has a number of policies and processes in place to meet the Concordat, which can be found [here](#).

To ensure that the University's policies and processes are up to date, and that new policies are developed if required, a Policy Action Plan has been maintained and regularly reviewed by the Vice-President Research and Enterprise in consultation with RIGC, UEC, REEG and AWERB.

Since March 2016 a number of research and enterprise policies have been going through a review process led by the RIG team. The priority has been to develop a Code of Conduct for Researchers which will supersede the current Research Integrity and Academic Conduct statement, and a new version of the Conflicts of Interest Policy. After a University wide consultation process, both documents are expected to come into force at the beginning of 2017. It is intended that all University's research and enterprise policies will be reviewed on a two year basis.

A rich environment promoting and supporting research integrity

The University has a number of academic lead groups, centres or initiatives which develop and support aspects of ethics, integrity and good research practices including:

- **Health Ethics and Law group (HEAL)** (established in 2005) is an interdisciplinary research group which explores the nature of health care law and its impact on society. It actively promotes engagement between academics, health professionals and policy makers, and makes substantive contribution to theory and practice. The group holds monthly events hosting external speakers on a variety of ethics topics which are widely attended by staff and post graduate research students (PGRs).
- **Southampton Ethics Centre (SEC)** (launched 2013/2014) brings together a large community of researchers including PGRs working on ethics and ethics related issues across the University. The Centre provides newsletters and information on national events and hosts events locally.
- **Clinical Ethics and Law (CELS) at Southampton** (established in 2010) is a multidisciplinary research group that explores the application of ethics and law in clinical practice through conceptual and empirical research, innovative teaching and public dialogue. It is actively engaged in national debates

through its work with groups such as ELSI Research Group, Institute of Medical Ethics (IME) and UK Clinical Ethics Network (UKCEN).

Research Integrity Activities carried out by University Faculties and Library

Each University Faculty is regularly organising various research integrity induction sessions, and training and awareness raising events for both staff and students. Examples of these include: research ethics and research governance, ethical issues in research with human participants, good clinical practice (GCP), good laboratory practice (GLP), animal research ethics, and academic integrity and research misconduct training. Information and advice, including online training modules, is available on Faculties' Intranets and most Faculties have an Ethics and/or Research Integrity Champion/Co-ordinator who leads on ethics, governance, and research integrity matters within the Faculty. Some Faculties already have, or are planning to introduce, a comprehensive ethics and governance checklist which needs to be completed by staff and students at the inception of every research study.

University's Library has developed wide-ranging [resources](#) offering advice and support on the University's [Research Data Management Policy](#) (RDM), and the [Open Access Policy](#). To promote and foster best practice among staff and research students, library staff have been holding regular lunchtime sessions, briefings and workshops on data management, research outputs storage and general compliance issues. These courses can be booked via Gradbook (open to Post Graduate Researchers) or Staffbook, and other bespoke training sessions and talks can be arranged on request.

External Memberships

To ensure that the University keeps abreast of best practice in matters related to the Concordat and research integrity, it is a member of a number of external bodies including:

- [UK Research Integrity Office \(UKRIO\)](#)
- [Association for Research Ethics \(AfRE\)](#)
- [Understanding Animal Research \(UAR\)](#)
- [Association for Research Managers and Administrators \(ARMA\)](#)
- [The Russell Group Research Integrity Forum](#)

Summary of key activities for the period January 2016 to December 2016

- Since December 2015, the recently established Research Integrity and Governance Committee (RIG Committee), have met three times to provide leadership on policy development and monitoring of implementation and compliance across the University. RIGC provides an oversight of the Policy Action Plan and has been consulted on the development of the Code of Conduct for Researchers and review of the Conflicts of Interest Policy. During its meetings it also considers the types and numbers of academic integrity (students) and research misconduct (staff) cases, and provides recommendations for areas of improvement and training needs. Its core responsibility is to foster and develop a culture of research integrity amongst the University's research community.
- The new Research Integrity and Governance (RIG) team within Research and Innovation Services (RIS) has been fully in place since March 2016. The RIG team is responsible for supporting the implementation of the Concordat, providing expertise on academic integrity and research misconduct matters and provision of training on ethics, governance and integrity matters across the University. Thanks to the increased capacity, the team has been able to undertake research integrity gap analysis and has been leading and facilitating review and development of research and enterprise policies and guidance, and standard operating procedures. It has been ensuring that any allegations of research

misconduct are investigated in a fair and timely manner in accordance with the University's [Procedures for Investigating Cases of Alleged Misconduct in Research](#) (applicable to staff), or passed to the relevant Academic Integrity Officer for investigation under the [Regulations Governing Academic Integrity](#) (applicable to all students). Since May 2016 the RIG team has been providing regular drop-in sessions to medicine and health sciences staff and students on all aspects of research ethics and research governance. The RIG team is also in the process of raising awareness and taking over the responsibility for the University's compliance with export controls.

- Through the University's online ethics review system ERGO (Ethics and Research Governance Online), the Faculty Ethics Committees have reviewed 3726 projects in 2014/2015 academic year and 3915 projects in 2015/2016 academic year, including both staff and student projects. This is an increase of around 5 %. In addition, since March 2016 till December 2016, the RIG team jointly with the Insurance Team approved over 600 ethics submissions and amendments of high risk/complex (Category A) research projects and University of Southampton sponsored studies.
- The RIG Team and the University's IT department have been actively working on the development of the next iteration of ERGO - ERGO II, which will further improve and streamline the ethics review process across the University. It will also broaden the scope of ethics review to other areas requiring ethical consideration such as cultural heritage, security sensitive research or environmental research.
- The [Researcher Portal](#) (Intranet) developed by Research and Innovation Services, and launched in 2015, continues to provide a one stop portal of information for staff and students on all aspects of the research lifecycle (from funding through to exploitation) with 'how to' guidance and signposting to important sources of information both elsewhere in the University and externally. It also contains comprehensive guidelines on all aspects of research integrity, ethics and regulatory compliance.
- The University revised its academic integrity regulations at the beginning of 2015/2016 to ensure, amongst other changes, that ethics and research misconduct are more clearly covered. There is now a single set of [Academic Integrity Regulations](#) applicable to all students whether undergraduate, post graduate taught or postgraduate research. This demonstrates University's commitment to raising awareness of research integrity issues and a need for ethics review among its student population.
- In November 2016 a decision was made that the University will sign up to the '[AllTrials](#)' initiative which calls for all past and present clinical trials to be registered and their full methods and summary results reported. 'AllTrials' campaign was launched in January 2013 and is consistent with the Declaration of Helsinki which states that every investigator running a clinical trial should register it and report its results.
- In November 2016 the University's annual Assurance Statements to President and Vice-Chancellor for the period of 1st August 2015 to 31st July 2016 were presented to the University's Audit Committee. The Assurance Statements are signed by Faculty Deans and by the Chief Operating Officer on behalf of the Professional Services. They cover a range of financial, legal compliance, health and safety, and environmental questions and specifically obtain assurance on matters of research integrity, ethics, research data management, conflicts of interest and information security.

Working across the sector and collaboration

- In 2004 the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) set up the [National Centre for Research Methods](#) (NCRM) at the University of Southampton, which it now run in partnership with the University of Manchester and the University of Edinburgh. The centre provides training and capacity building

activities in social science research methods which includes topics on good research practices and ethical issues. NCRM also works closely with WISERD in Wales, ARK in Northern Ireland, and the Department of Methodology at the LSE.

- The University is the lead for the [Administrative Data Research Centre for England](#) (ADRC-E) in collaboration with University College London, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Institute for Fiscal Studies and Office for National Statistics. ADRC-E is developing policies, procedures and guidance at a national level for safe and effective use of administrative data with specialisms in linking data and ensuring anonymity of data.
- Research and Innovation Services have been an active member of an Export Controls Working Group which developed a new set of [guidance](#) to promote and facilitate understanding of export control laws and compliance for Universities. Thanks to increased capacity, from 2017 the RIG team will oversee the University's compliance with export controls.
- The Research Integrity and Governance team actively participates in the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum, and is an active member of the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA) with the Research Integrity and Governance Manager volunteering as the ARMA Ethics Special Interests Group Lead, giving presentations and workshops on research integrity and ethics for ARMA, and volunteering as an adviser for the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO).

Summary of investigations of research misconduct

When investigating allegations of research misconduct, the University follows its [Procedures for Investigating Cases of Alleged Misconduct in Research](#) (applicable to staff), or [Regulations Governing Academic Integrity](#) (applicable to all students).

The table below sets out the high level details of investigations and findings in relation to research misconduct covering both staff and post graduate research (PGR) students.

	Number of allegations for which an investigation has been undertaken (Academic Year)			Number of allegations upheld (in whole or in part) (Academic Year)		
	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017 (August 2016 till the end of December 2016)	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017 (August 2016 till the end of December 2016)
Fabrication						
Falsification	0 (1)			0 (1)		
Plagiarism	0 (2)	1 (2)		0 (2)	1 (2)	
Misrepresentation						
Breach of Duty of Care		0 (1)				
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct.						
Other e.g. ethics/unprofessional behaviour		1 (4)			0 (4)	

*Staff and PGR students numbers are reported. Number outside of brackets reflects staff, and number within brackets indicate PGR students.

** Blank box indicates no cases.