RESEARCH INTEGRITY STATEMENT 2016-2017

Research Integrity Statement 2016/17

November 2017

1. Introduction

The University of Strathclyde is committed to excellence in research and fully supports the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity. Research integrity is an essential element of research excellence and Strathclyde expects its researchers, students and staff to act with integrity at all times. Striving for excellence entails a constant pursuit of improvement and as the research environment evolves, Strathclyde will make positive adjustments in its approach to integrity to ensure the highest standards are adhered to.

2. Leadership

In recognition of the seriousness of its commitment to research integrity, the Associate Principal with responsibility for Research has designated responsibility for ensuring that the University responds to and upholds the Concordat. This responsibility extends to research and knowledge exchange policies, ethics, postgraduate research development and research governance. The Associate Principal is supported in this work by the Deputy Associate Principals with Research and Knowledge Exchange portfolios in addition to the following groups and committees:

- Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC)
- University Ethics Committee (UEC)
- Animal Welfare Ethical Review Board (AWERB)
- Researcher Development Sub-Committee (Responsible to RKEC)

The committee structure enables cohesion and consistency of communication at a senior level across the faculties. This information is then communicated within the faculties via staff and student structures as follows:

- Responsibility for Research Integrity is distributed through the Academic Faculties via the Vice-Deans with responsibility for Research in each Faculty who represent their Faculty on RKEC. Agreement made at committee level is disseminated via faculty, departmental and school management structures.
- Student representatives participate in The Researcher Development Sub-Committee to ensure involvement in decision-making and communication of information into the wider student community. Expectations, information and guidance are also delivered to research students via their supervisors and postgraduate administrators in order to ensure that they are fully informed of best practice in research.

3. Named Person

The Named Person responsible for Research Integrity at University of Strathclyde is the Associate Principal responsible for Research. Any queries related to research integrity, research misconduct or other related matters should be directed to research-integrity@strath.ac.uk.

4. Policies

The University of Strathclyde has a range of Academic Policies and procedures aimed at clearly setting expectations for the standards of conduct of staff and students. The Research Code of Practice (for staff) and the Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Study in addition to the Code of Practice on Investigations involving Human Beings, are all documents that are designed to demonstrate the behaviours and attitudes that researchers and other staff should engender in pursuit of research integrity and research excellence.

5. Actions & Activities to Support and Strengthen Research Integrity

The University prides itself on serving research students with the highest standard of education and preparing its students and staff for their future careers in research through a combination of subject area knowledge and practical skills and experience. Knowledge and understanding of Research Integrity is essential for excellent research and so forms a core part of the researcher development experience wherever appropriate. The University delivers and demonstrates research integrity via three main routes: training, support and recognition.

5.1. Researcher Training

Early Career (PGR/PDRA/ECR) Researcher development is an integral part of our research strategy throughout the University. Strathclyde's Researcher Development Programme (RDP) is delivered by Faculties, Professional Services and external partners to offer the research community (including postgraduate research students, postdoctoral researchers, research fellows, research assistants and early academics) a range of opportunities to continue their personal, professional and career management skills development. Established through utilisation of Research Council's 'Roberts' funding, and now institutionally supported, provision is designed to help researchers enhance their generic skills, attributes and competencies for future employability both inside and outside of academia. RDP provision is mapped to the UK's Researcher Development Framework and Statement (RDF/S), which articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers.

Training for Mid-Career & Established Academics is delivered by our Organisational Staff Development Unit. In particular, the Unit's SPARK and SPIRAL programmes aim to deliver appropriate content to our researchers: SPARK's specific Researcher Development programme aims to empower staff, by providing them with the skills, experiences and understanding to reach their full potential, whilst at the same time providing the University with a means of assuring and enhancing quality in its research at all levels. Meanwhile SPIRAL focuses on developing and strengthening leadership across research and knowledge exchange. Both programmes contribute significantly to the culture of research integrity at Strathclyde.

5.2. Researcher Support Services

The University provides dedicated support in a number of areas in addition to structured training programmes to assist researchers in the fulfilment of their research responsibilities. Colleagues from across Professional Services provide specialist advice on topics with research integrity implications such as:

- Information Governance,
- Ethics in Human and Animal Research,
- Records Management,

- Data Management,
- Open Access and Open Data, and
- Cyber security.

This provision is often delivered via cross-disciplinary/departmental groups involving specialists from Strategy & Policy, Information Services and Research & Knowledge Exchange Services working with academics wherever appropriate.

6. Key Activities in the Current Year

Strathclyde has focused on ensuring that our policies and practices continue to be consistent with the latest advice and requirements. This work has included:

6.1. Updated version of the Research Code of Practice

Prior to the introduction of the Concordat on Research Integrity, the University of Strathclyde governed research practice through a Research Code of Practice (hereafter referred to as 'the Code'). In 2017, the Code was reviewed in order to ensure ongoing alignment with the principles of the Concordat. The existence of the Concordat greatly simplified the University's ability to articulate its existing stance on Research Integrity via the provision of a single point for justification. In addition to new references, the updated Code includes links to further policies and guidance that will assist researchers in producing research and research records that are transparent and robust. The Code has been endorsed by RKEC and Senate approval will be sought in early 2018.

6.2. Introduction of a person responsible for RI policy

With the appointment of the new senior officer role of Associate Principal (Research & Innovation), we have clarified that this individual has the institutional responsibility for research integrity including ensuring that all matters related to research integrity are highlighted and given an appropriate response. Alongside this role, a Research Integrity & Compliance Manager, based in Research & Knowledge Exchange Services, will ensure that the University sets appropriate policy in Research Integrity areas and in 2017 has worked with colleagues including those in Human Resources and Strategy & Policy on the Research Code of Practice and Process for Research Misconduct.

6.3. Intro of new RI training for PGRS

The University of Strathclyde has provided Research Integrity training for its postgraduate researcher students since the inception of its PGR development/training function. The content was previously provided in a group format by one of the University's Vice-Deans however this course was limited by the numbers who could attend and was based on the Glasgow campus which became increasingly restrictive. For this reason, Strathclyde purchased an online Research Integrity course developed by the University of Dundee and has embedded this into the RDP programme as an excellent means of delivering content to all our research students based on the Glasgow campus and around the world. The effectiveness of this approach in reaching and communicating appropriate content to our students will be reviewed in the coming year.

7. Activities for the Coming Year

7.1. Annual Research Integrity meeting of RKEC

From November 2017 the introduction of a regular annual meeting of RKEC specifically focused on Research Integrity will enable the committee to view and focus on all activities related to Research Integrity as a cohesive programme. The meeting will focus on identifying where review of relevant policies or activities are required as well as planning those reviews and any subsequent follow up activity.

The University Ethics Committee (UEC) is responsible to RKEC and its Annual Report and any reviews of The Code of Practice on Investigations Involving Human Beings will be aligned with the annual Research Integrity meeting of this committee. Any matters arising from the UEC annual report will be monitored via RKEC. The annual meeting will provide a focal point for review of training provision for researchers delivered via the PGRS Researcher Development Programme (governed by the Researcher Development Subcommittee) and the staff researcher training delivered via the Organisational Staff Development Unit (OSDU).

7.2. Continuous Improvement

In the coming review period, Strathclyde will undertake the following actions to ensure that our research integrity activity continues to be of the highest standard and meets the needs of the University:

- Monitor sector & government guidance for recommendations or guidance that provide an opportunity for improvement.
- Act upon lessons learned from any misconduct allegations and from reports prepared by UEC & AWERB.
- Seek out examples of best practice from other HEIs and research organisations.

8. Transparent, Robust, Fair, and Appropriate Processes for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct

8.1. Introduction of new misconduct process and its inclusion in the code

In 2016/17 the University took the opportunity to formalise and make public its process for investigating research misconduct by including the process as an Annex to the Code. The process was updated to reflect the UKRIO best practice in handling such allegations. Clear responsibilities are outlined for senior members of staff in handling allegations. Internal processes and guidance have been created to ensure that any allegations made receive high quality management in adhering to standards of integrity but also in ensuring fairness for both the complainant and respondent.   The result is a more robust and transparent process that enables the collection and reporting of the types of information that our research funders require to fulfil their own obligations as detailed below. The Code has been endorsed by RKEC and Senate approval will be sought in early 2018.

9. Formal investigations of research misconduct

The University of Strathclyde takes very seriously any allegations of misconduct including in relation to research.

Academic year 2017/18 will be the first year in which the University has collated information related to research misconduct in the format specified below.

In the period 2016/17, the University received 1 allegation of research misconduct (of the type: *failure to follow ethical guidelines*). Of this total, one was formally investigated and the allegation was upheld.

In future Strathclyde will report on any investigations undertaken in regard to allegations of research misconduct.

Type of Researcher (e.g. staff, student)	Type of Allegation (e.g. fabrication, falsification)	Informal Allegation	Formal Allegation	Stage 1	Stage 2