

# RESEARCH INTEGRITY STATEMENT 2018-2019

11/30/2017

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## **Research Integrity Statement 2018/2019**

**September 2018**

### **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.

In the period 2018/2019, Strathclyde has sought to improve on specific elements of provision and put in place the necessary structures to assist in gaining a better picture of research integrity activity at Strathclyde to inform plans for the next period.

### **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.

This year, changes have been made to the team, based in Research & Knowledge Exchange Services, that supports policy and strategy for Research Integrity. The re-establishment of a research policy function via a four- person-strong policy team working across research policy, including research integrity, under the leadership of the Research Policy Manager, will enable the activity planned for the next several years to be supported appropriately.

### **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](mailto: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**

As detailed in previous statements, Strathclyde has an award-winning PGR researcher development programme. This programme continues to be delivered by Faculties, Professional Services and external partners to offer the postgraduate research community 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. Specific research integrity training is delivered through PGR induction, via face to face workshops and as a 20 hour online resource available to all students. A full PGR lifecycle review is underway to ensure that provision for PGRS creates the best possible environment for the development of excellent researchers (Further details included in Section 6.X under Key Activities in the Current Year).

Training for Early- Career (including postdoctoral researchers, research fellows and research assistants), Mid-Career & Established Academics continues to be 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. Specific training on Research Integrity issues including research data management is available and provided to groups of researchers on request. In addition to the 20 hour online resource on research integrity, also available to students, a full research data management course available online via the Development & Training Gateway. In this period, additional courses related to RI have been provided by OSDU (as detailed in 6.2 under Key Activities in the Current Year).

## **5.2. Researcher Support Services**

The University continues to provide 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 including GDPR,
- 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**

In addition to a continued focus on ensuring that our policies and practices continue to be consistent with the latest advice and requirements, this year Strathclyde has sought to improve provision in targeted areas based on initial assessment of our provision. This work has included:

### **6.1. Instigation of full review of PGR provision**

In 2018, the Strathclyde Doctoral School was established to ensure a prominent and cohesive provision for postgraduate research students at Strathclyde. One of the key aims of the SDS is to support and nurture a dynamic, student-led, interdisciplinary research community that fosters good practice in research culture and PGR agency. The Strathclyde Doctoral School (SDS) Executive Board initiated a wholesale review of the PGR lifecycle from regulations to administrative processes and systems, with a view to creating an enhanced overarching approach that works for students and staff. A review of PGR induction will be conducted in May/June 2019.

## **6.2. Introduction of Additional Training for Staff Researchers**

Ensuring that cognisance of research integrity continues to be a feature of the life of our researchers as their careers progress is of crucial importance in maintaining a culture of research excellence. Strathclyde's OSDU has introduced a series of events this year to prompt conversations around research integrity among this audience and to test out the appetite for centrally organised events of this kind. Each semester in 2019, we have invited key speakers to come to Strathclyde to run sessions with our research staff:

February 2019: Sir Philip Campbell led a Round Table on Research Integrity and the publication process: authorship, reproducibility and other issues alongside Dame Anne Glover, Professor Sara Carter, and Professor Tim Bedford.

May 2019: Dr Irene Hames led two different events, a lecture and a workshop entitled 'Research Publication and Peer Review – Ethical Practice in an Increasingly Challenging and Complex world' and 'Research Publication and Peer Review – Ethical Issues and Moral Dilemmas'. These events were well attended and received excellent feedback. Individuals from a range of groups attended including those teaching research integrity at Undergraduate level.

Due to the increasing success of these events, OSDU will continue to provide events on research integrity topics at regular intervals (For further details see Section 7. Activities for the Coming Year).

## **6.3. Instigation of RKEC Short Life Working Group on Research Integrity**

At the second regular annual meeting of RKEC specifically focused on Research Integrity in September 2019, a short life working group focused on Research Integrity was approved. The aim of this subgroup is to map current research integrity activity across the institution and then to use this information to highlight areas of best practice enabling peer-to-peer learning and to inform the provision of improved central support in the form of policy and training. The group will consider best practice from other institutions, advice from UKRIO and means of encouraging and recognising involvement in RI training, events and activity.

## **7. Activities for the Coming Year**

### **7.1. Outcome of PGR training review**

A PGR training review is planned for 2019/2020. The outcomes will be reported to the Research Development Sub Committee and subsequently to RKEC. Any recommendations will feed into the analysis of RI provision being undertaken by the RKEC sub group detailed in 6.3 and 7.3.

### **7.2. OSDU Research Integrity Events**

While review of provision is ongoing, OSDU will continue to provide courses centrally. Following on from the high level RI events hosted in 2018/2019, events planned in 2019/2020 will focus on specific elements within RI:

- "Research Integrity in Practice" (SPIRAL Programme) – a half-day workshop to support staff understand and apply the principles of research integrity in their everyday work, explore how

misconduct may arise and ways to alleviate such pressures, as well as draw attention to Strathclyde's policies and processes in these areas.

- Research Integrity and Ethics (Strathclyde Supervisor Development Programme) – a half day workshop to support PGR supervisors consider their own understandings of good research practice, make informed choices based on the principles of research integrity and consider how they can embed a culture of integrity within and beyond their supervisory relationships.

Staff will be able to access the online suite of 'Research Integrity' workshops currently available to PGRs.

### **7.3. Research Integrity Short Life Working Group**

This sub group of Strathclyde's strategic Research & Knowledge Exchange committee will assess current provision as described under point 6.3 and will report findings and recommendations to RKEC by the end of 2019.

### **7.4. 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. We expect our membership of UKRIO to greatly assist in this aspect of our learning.

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

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 was endorsed by RKEC in November 2017 and formal Senate approval followed 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. Strathclyde's research quality depends upon a transparent and accountable research

culture and Strathclyde is committed to supporting the highest standards in research. As part of this commitment, activities for the coming year will include promotion of reporting mechanisms to ensure that researchers are able to raise questions and concerns about research conduct and practice and be confident that there are effective mechanisms in place to deal with any allegation appropriately.

This table details recent allegations of misconduct:

Date of Allegation	Nature of Allegation	Respondent Type	Status	Outcome
2016/2017	Failure to follow ethical guidelines	Staff	Formal Investigation Complete	Upheld