University of Huddersfield

2014-15 Research Integrity Annual Report

During academic year 2014-15 the University confirmed its compliance with the Concordat to support research integrity. The Concordat is published at (http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/highereducation/Documents/2012/TheConcordatToSupportResearchIntegrity.pdf)

The University's on-going commitment to the five elements of the Concordat is reflected below.

Commitment 1: We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research

The University of Huddersfield subscribes to the principles of the Concordat and is committed to excellence in all aspects of research. As an employer of researchers, the University acts in accordance with the commitments and the related responsibilities for employers of researchers as outlined in the Concordat. This includes fulfilment of the expectations held by funders of research for employers of researchers.

Commitment 2: We are committed to ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards

In order to strengthen its commitment to research integrity the University Senate approved the establishment of a new University Research Ethics and Integrity Committee (UREIC) in February 2015 to replace the University Research Integrity Committee (URIC). URIC did not have the optimum membership or remit to formally establish robust policies and procedures for the University as a whole, including its undergraduate, post graduate and staff researchers. UREIC reports to Senate and is responsible for ensuring that the governance and policy context for the undertaking of research within the University is optimal i.e. up-to-date with current legislation, ethically appropriate and fit-for-purpose.

UREIC has established a formal Research Ethics and Integrity Policy and a Code of Practice for Research which can be found on the University website at:

http://www.hud.ac.uk/research/strategyandpolicy/concordattosupportresearchintegrity/

The website also names the senior member of staff who oversees research integrity at the University and acts as the first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity. This is Professor Andrew Ball, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise.

The Policy and Code provide an overarching framework for the University's Academic Schools, which have delegated responsibility for research integrity and ethics. School Research Committees report to UREIC in connection with their oversight of matters relating to research integrity.

Each School has its own approval processes for research proposals, information about which can be accessed from each School's research webpages e.g. for the School of Human and Health Sciences at http://www.hud.ac.uk/hhs/research/governance-and-ethics/. Schools approve proposals based on the knowledge of discipline specific ethical, legal and professional frameworks. Proposals for which unresolved issues remain after review within School are escalated to the UREIC.

Each School's Director of Research, supported by a named Research Integrity Champion, is responsible for the communication of and continuous improvement in policy, procedures, support and information for staff and student researchers within their Schools.

Research activities which require NHS Integrated Research Approval System (IRAS) formal ethical approval have grown beyond the programmes within the School of Human and Health Sciences (SHHS), where an established approval hierarchy has been embedded for many years. As a result approvals for non-SHHS activity are now routed through the Director of Research and Enterprise prior to submission through IRAS.

The University's School of Applied Sciences (SAS) is the largest user of human tissue in its research activities and has a Human Tissue Committee which oversees wider compliance with the Human Tissue Act across the University. Specific research activity planned within SAS requires a Human Tissue Licence and an application has been submitted.

The University's Legal team supports researchers and UREIC with addressing any legal obligations associated with research activities.

Commitment 3: We are committed to supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers

The University has programmes of training and support for research staff and students, which include the following Epigeum modules available via the University's Unilearn on-line portal:

- Research Integrity
  - Arts and Humanities
  - Biomedical Sciences
  - Engineering and Technology
  - Natural and Physical Sciences
  - Social and Behavioural Sciences
- Research Skills
  - Research Methods
  - Research Ethics

Face to face training for PGRs is also provided in the following areas:

- Research Ethics
- Managing research data
- Open Access Publishing
- Introducing data protection and freedom of information: your rights and responsibilities
- Disclosure and confidentiality

The content and scope of the centrally provided programmes are reviewed at least annually by Research and Enterprise and the Head of Staff Development. A member of R&E staff will be participating in a UKRIO Research Integrity Training Workshop on 16th September 2015 with a view to identifying new approaches for the University to consider.

Discipline specific mentoring, support and training are provided within Schools. Schools utilise annual research audit processes to capture compliance with integrity and ethics policies. In 2015-16

a programme of School-wide audit and monitoring led by Directors of Research will be established to identify further action that could be taken. UREIC will coordinate the sharing of best practice across the University and in particular identify elements of induction and training that could be made compulsory.

Commitment 4: We are committed to using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise

The University's procedure for identifying how allegations of misconduct in research are reported and investigated is documented in the staff handbook. The procedure follows UKRIO guidance:

http://hr.hud.ac.uk/downloads/policies/pdf/1000297.pdf

The named person for receiving allegations of misconduct is Professor Tim Thornton (Deputy Vice Chancellor).

Misconduct in research by students is covered in Section 4 of the Student's Handbook of Regulations, specifically Assessment Regulation 9 - Research misconduct for candidates registered on an approved course of supervised research at https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/universityofhuddersfield/content2013/services/registry/Assessment%20Reg%209%202014%20V3.pdf

The University's Whistleblowing Policy is available on the university website at http://www.hud.ac.uk/hr/policies/policymenu/?id=1000102).

Commitment 5: We are working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly

This is the University's second annual statement. The University annual statements are publically available through the website at http://www.hud.ac.uk/research/strategyandpolicy/.

The University is a member of the UKRIO and in May 2015 its Deputy Director of Research and Enterprise attended the annual conference in London. We will continue to participate in UKRIO workshops and events to enable us to identify improvements to our processes and procedures and to share best practice.

The University participated in a project conducted by UKRIO in March 2015 involving a survey of annual statements to review the formats that were being used, the type of information they contained, and where they were being published. Further guidance from UKRIO will be provided once the analysis is complete.

Formal investigations of research misconduct

There were no formal investigations of research related misconduct associated with staff or students in the 2014-15 academic year.

Dr Tracy Turner
Deputy Director, Research and Enterprise
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