

Annual Statement on Research Integrity 2016

Background

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity was published in July 2012 by Universities UK. HEFCE have included compliance with the Concordat as a condition of the HEFCE grant. The Concordat recommends that institutions should make an annual statement on research integrity which is made publicly available.

In accordance with this recommendation this annual statement provides details of activities undertaken to enhance research integrity within the University.

Summary of actions and activities undertaken to support research integrity

The University is committed to the principles outlined in the Concordat and research integrity has been given greater prominence within the Research Office website, which has been redesigned during 2015. Research integrity now features in a new section on Ethical Research.

Additionally research integrity is included within training sessions for academic staff on the research environment, e.g. Working in the Current Research Environment, and research ethics for research students, e.g. Ethical Thinking in Research.

The University carried out a review in 2013 of its procedures for ethical approval of research involving human participants to ensure that these were robust. Recommendations from that review have been implemented, including the recruitment of lay and co-opted members on to the Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee, and a process review of the approval procedures is being undertaken by the Research Office in consultation with the University's Change Team.

The number of Loughborough University research projects involving the NHS and requiring sponsorship is expected to increase in number and complexity due to the opening of the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine. Following discussions with University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL) it was agreed that Loughborough University would implement procedures to enable it to sponsor projects involving the NHS. Loughborough University has developed robust Standard Operating Procedures to meet the sponsor responsibilities, as defined in the NHS Research Governance Framework. LU has also joined the Joint Research and Development Support Office Management Group with UHL and University of Leicester in order to facilitate sharing of best practice and to ensure efficient support for Loughborough staff.

The University is a member of AfRE (Association for Research Ethics) and subscriber to UKRIO (UK Research Integrity Office).

Review of processes for dealing with allegations of research misconduct

The University has revised its previous Research Misconduct and Whistle-Blowing Policy and Procedure into two distinct policies. A separate Research Misconduct Policy has been developed to support the appropriate handling of allegations of research misconduct. The Research Misconduct Policy was approved by Senate and Council in November 2015. Informal advice on research integrity is available through the Research Governance Officer in the Research Office and formal reporting of allegations of misconduct is made directly to the PVC(R) or Chief Operating Officer following discussions with the School's AD(R) and Dean as appropriate.

Statement on formal research misconduct investigations

There have been no formal investigations of research misconduct by a research student or a member of staff during 2015.