UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

COUNCIL *AND* RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE *AND*

UNIVERSITY ETHICS AND INTEGRITY COMMITTEE

October 2023

Annual Research Integrity Statement

The [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) requires employers of researchers to provide a short annual (publicly available) statement that must include:

- a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues (for example postgraduate and researcher training, or process reviews)
- a statement to provide assurance that the processes the institution has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, timely, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation
- a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, which will include data on the number of investigations. If no formal investigation has been undertaken, this should also be noted
- a statement on what the institution has learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including what lessons have been learned to prevent the same type of incident re-occurring
- a statement on how the institution creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct

This statement is drafted by the Research Integrity Working Group (RWIG) and addresses the above points.

Investigations of allegations of misconduct in research

This report covers 01/08/2022 - 31/07/2023

During the reporting period, <u>no formal investigations of Research Misconduct were conducted</u>.

Embedding a culture conducive to researchers understanding research integrity and reporting research misconduct

Policy

In the reporting period we undertook significant reviews of key University policies to support researchers understanding of research integrity and research misconduct. The following policies were updated:

- [Research Ethics Policy](#)
- [Research Code of Conduct](#)
- [Researching and Handling Sensitive, Extreme and Radical Material Policy](#)

In addition to this, the updated policies have been supported by updates to the Research Ethics Governance and Integrity (REGI) webpages which aim to guide researchers to operate to best practice and account for the

policy changes. Email and Sharepoint bulletins have also been utilised to ensure that researchers are aware of the policy updates.

Process

We plan to implement Infonetica as the new research management system to support enhanced compliance with ethical, legal and professional frameworks. Infonetica will be live from December 2023 and we can confirm the build has addressed all issues identified in our Gap Analysis and PWC audit of our Research Ethics Committees (REC). This provides us with assurance around our REC provision and quality of research projects. We have ensured that research integrity is at the heart of the design so that good research practice is built into projects from the start.

We drafted new Standard Operating Procedures for Investigating Cases of Research Misconduct. This work was completed in year and the Standard Operating Procedures are available to support complainants, respondents and those conducting investigations

Training

An online training module was developed for all staff undertaking research. It includes 3 rotating modules which research staff will complete each year as part of the University's Focal Training agenda embedded within the Personal Development Discussion process. The current modules are aimed at increasing understanding of research misconduct, irresponsible research practice and how to plan good quality projects.

All applicants to the Research Ethics Committees have to declare completion of the online training module before submission of their application.

Future Plans

Work is ongoing to further our commitment to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and over the next year we will look to align this with work on our Research Culture.