

Annual Statement on Research Integrity 2022/23

The University of Chester is committed to fulfilling the principles of the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) in order to create a framework for responsible research conduct and governance. In compliance with the Concordat, the University is publishing a statement on Research Integrity on an annual basis. This Research Integrity statement covers the period from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023.

Activities to Promote Research Integrity

The University is committed to supporting high quality institutional research and to meet the requirements of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. The activities shown in the table below have taken place during the 2022/23 academic year with the aims of:

- embedding a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable in reporting instances of misconduct;
- working to support a culture of high standards of rigour and integrity; and
- ensuring there is clear leadership supporting staff and driving the development of research integrity across the University.

Activities	Reference to Concordat commitment
Research Ethics Advisory Board continues to monitor the ongoing action plan arising from the external review of the operation of the Faculty Research Ethics Committees	1
Research Ethics Advisory Board agreed to incorporate compliance with the Concordat and enhancement of research integrity at the University within their Terms of Reference so that this continues as a core area of responsibility rather than that of a sub-group	1, 2
Research Ethics Advisory Board discussed whether further action could be taken to enhance the processes whereby all members of our community should feel comfortable reporting matters of concern	3
Research & Innovation Office reviewed compliance with the concordat	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Provision of research integrity training via Epigeum to staff and PGR students	1, 3
Director of R&KE responded to specific enquiries relating to integrity/misconduct, directing matters to the appropriate route (e.g. academic integrity procedure for students) and providing appropriate feedback	4
Events and Newsletters to inform and embed a culture of rigour and integrity amongst staff and PGR students including the Research & Knowledge Exchange festival, R&KE Newsletter, PGR conference and PGR Newsletter	1, 3, 5
Successful 10 year renewal of the HR Excellence in Research Award to support understanding, awareness and development in relation to research integrity and supporting the research environment	2,3
Research Ethics Advisory Board and Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee received and discussed the annual research integrity report	5

The Commitments in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity are as follows:

1. We are committed to upholding the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.
2. We are committed to ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.

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.
4. We are committed to using transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.
5. We are committed to working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.

The Named Person in accordance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity during the period of this review was Professor Paul Bissell, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) p.bissell@chester.ac.uk

Research Misconduct

Responsibility for monitoring cases of research misconduct in relation to staff and PGR students lies with the Research and Innovation Office (RIO) who also publish the [Research Governance Handbook](#).

Allegations of research misconduct are dealt with according to the UKRIO [Misconduct Investigation Procedure](#). Occasionally RIO also receives enquiries – about procedural matters or policies – which do not always lead on to allegations and investigation. Enquirers are reassured that the first stages of the procedure are informal resolution and screening, and thus where there are concerns, the appropriate step is to submit their concern according to the procedure. Cases arising from the conduct of students on taught programmes fall under the remit of the academic integrity procedures (see [Handbook F governing the assessment of students](#)).

The Named Person in relation to the UKRIO Misconduct Investigation Procedure is Ian Britton (Academic Registrar) i.britton@chester.ac.uk (or, in their absence or where there may be a conflict of interest, a Faculty Dean will be appointed by the Strategic Executive Team). Queries or concerns about research integrity and/or misconduct may also be made through the Research & Innovation Office (who will liaise with the appropriate Named Person where appropriate) to:

Dr Elizabeth Christopher (Director of Research & Knowledge Exchange) e.christopher@chester.ac.uk or Marie-Anne O'Neil (Deputy Head of RIO) m.oneil@chester.ac.uk

Learning from our investigations

The small number of enquiries and investigations, and nature of the allegations only serve to highlight the need to continue to emphasise to students and staff the importance of maintaining high standards of integrity in research activities.

Summary of investigations of research misconduct

The table below sets out the broad categories of queries, investigations and findings in relation to research misconduct procedures in the previous 3 academic years, covering staff, postgraduate research (PGR) and postgraduate taught (PGT) students. An investigation may involve more than one respondent. There were no external reporting requirements arising from the cases reported in 2022/23.

	No. of enquiries not leading to an allegation or resolved via the informal resolution/screening process			No. of allegations for which an investigation has been undertaken			No. of allegations upheld (in whole or in part)		
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Research without appropriate ethical approval	1	1	1	1			1		
Misrepresentation of authorship		1							
Commissioning									
Plagiarism									
Reuse of material previously submitted for an academic award									
Falsification of research data					1			1	
Misrepresentation of author affiliation			1						

Public Interest Disclosure Policy ("Whistleblowing")

Members of the University or public wishing to 'blow the whistle' on suspected malpractice or impropriety should contact the University Secretary, though they may if they wish contact directly the Chair of the Audit & Risk Management Committee or the University's internal auditors (RSM). Their contact details are:

TITLE	NAME	TELEPHONE / EMAIL ADDRESS
President of the University Council	Meredydd David	Contact via the University Secretary universitysecretary@chester.ac.uk
Academic Registrar	Ian Britton	01244-512834 i.britton@chester.ac.uk
Internal Auditor (RSM)	Lisa Randall	0844 8797340 lisa.randall@rsmuk.com
Chair of the Audit & Risk Management Committee	Dr Angela Seeney	Contact via the University Secretary universitysecretary@chester.ac.uk
University Secretary	Laura Gittins	01244-512982 universitysecretary@chester.ac.uk

Statement prepared by: Dr Elizabeth Christopher, Director of Research & Knowledge Transfer, Sept 2023

Approved by the Audit and Risk Management Committee: 12.10.23

Publicly available at: <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/research/research-environment/research-governance-ethics-and-integrity> from 2/11/23

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