
Statement of Compliance with the Concordat for Research Integrity (2020/21)

In 2012 Universities UK published the Concordat to support research integrity, containing five commitments that set out the UK's commitment to maintaining high standards of rigour and integrity in research. The Concordat was later revised, and the current version was published on 25 October 2019.

- [Concordat to support research integrity 2019](#)

UCA supports research integrity through the University's [Research Ethics Code of Practice](#) which sets out *'the guiding principles, responsibilities and procedures for the development and conduct of research in an ethical manner within the formal academic framework of the University.'*

The 2019 revision of the Concordat requires that the University should present a short annual statement of compliance to its governing body, which should subsequently be made publicly available, ordinarily through the website.

14th September 2021

UCA Statement of Research Integrity 2020/21

This statement forms part of the University's commitment to outline the work undertaken further to strengthen the integrity of the University's research.

The University requires that all research projects undertaken under the auspices of the University observe a commitment to good research conduct as laid out in the [Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#).

The University's [Research Committee](#) oversees the integrity of the University's research on behalf of the Academic Board. The University's Head of Corporate Governance (Sam Weir) oversees the University's Research Misconduct process. The Director of Research, Professor [Victoria Kelley](#), acts as the first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on research integrity matters.

Policies and procedures

UCA has policies and procedures to ensure that research is conducted to the highest levels of ethics and integrity, and these are available on the [myUCA Research Integrity webpage](#). The University recognises the importance of clear policies and guidelines in embedding a culture of integrity and ethics within research practices, and these are available on the [Research Governance and Ethics webpage](#). Such documents support researchers and are applied to all research at all stages according to expected standards, values and behaviours.

The University Code of Practice for the Investigation of Research Misconduct (currently under review) sets out detailed procedures for investigating misconduct in research. This procedure has appropriate principles and mechanisms to ensure that investigations are thorough and fair, carried out in a transparent and timely manner, and protected by appropriate confidentiality. Details of any recent research misconduct investigations can be found later in this statement.

The UCA Research Ethics Code of Practice (updated in 2020) defines the scope of the University's Research Ethics. It sets out the guiding principles, responsibilities and procedures for the development and conduct of research in an ethical manner within the formal academic framework of the University. In addition, the Guidelines on Good Research Conduct set out the framework of good research practice, covering issues of integrity, accountability, IP rights, and conflict of interest.

These policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the requirements of an evolving global research portfolio. Furthermore, communications on research ethics and research integrity processes are made through the [Research Service](#) newsletter and specific research ethics

induction material for new academic staff. Research ethics and research integrity is a standing item on the University's Research Committee.

Scheduled consultations and policy reviews:

- The University Code of Practice for the Investigation of Research Misconduct (currently under review for updating by the end of 2021).

For Students, information about the University's research-related policies and procedures is generally disseminated at induction via departmental and course programme handbooks. Postgraduate Research students are introduced to research ethics and integrity policies and procedures at induction. Induction for postgraduate research students also includes guidance on avoiding plagiarism (information accessible via the [Student Portal](#) and in [myUCA Research Degrees](#)).

Research integrity activities

The University seeks to ensure that all researchers are aware of and understand the policies and principles relating to research ethics and research integrity. It is recognised that multiple initiatives must be adopted to strengthen the understanding of and engagement with ethical and integrity issues.

The myUCA research integrity module outlines best-practice, and can be accessed by all researchers (staff and students) across all schools. In addition, the training framework and induction module are designed to guide researchers throughout their careers, ensuring that they have the requisite information to conduct research with rigour. Training on research integrity and ethics has been delivered to Ph.D students and supervisors and to staff researchers in several webinar sessions throughout the year (recordings all available on myUCA) as part of the Research at UCA program. This is open to academics, researchers, and students from across the University to provide an informal setting for intellectual debate, sharing ideas and collaboration in all research areas, including research integrity. Further research ethics and integrity training is delivered to PGR students as part of the Advanced Research Methods training programme.

Research ethics processes

The University's research ethics process provides rigorous safeguards and reduces harm wherever possible for all those involved in the research process by ensuring that the research project is subject to active consideration of the ethical issues that may arise. The research ethics

framework provides a mechanism for researchers to demonstrate engagement with ethical issues, and the process supports researchers in designing research to a high ethical standard.

Research ethics applications are logged via the University's VLE and reported as a standing item to the Research Committee, responsible for research integrity and reporting to the Academic Board. Projects deemed to pose more than minimal risk require full consideration and approval by the Research Committee. For Postgraduate research students, projects deemed to pose more than minimal risk are sent to the University's research degree validating partner, UAL, for consideration and approval.

The University's Research Committee continues to undertake improvements to further optimise and strengthen the research ethics process. During the previous year, this has included:

- regular updates to enrich the [myUCA research integrity learning model](#)
- action to integrate the Tier 1 ethics decision tool with the internal funding application assessment process
- the implementation of discipline-based initiatives aimed at embedding awareness and expertise in research ethics across the institution.

Research Misconduct

Through The Code of Practice for the Investigation of Research Misconduct, The University is committed to supporting researchers in observing the highest standards of rigour and integrity whilst conducting research. The Code is signposted from the myUCA ethics and integrity module.

Research Integrity and Ethics workshops are delivered to educate and advise managers, researchers, PhD supervisors and students on research ethics, governance, and integrity issues. The Research Office provides an 'on-demand advisory role to support staff and students. The University also provides training and induction sessions and workshops covering: Research Data Management; Data Management Plans; Introduction to UCA Research Repository; Introduction to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR); GDPR for Researchers; Integrity and Plagiarism.

No allegations of research misconduct have been raised within the University in 2020/21, and therefore no formal investigations of research misconduct have been undertaken. As no investigations have been undertaken, the University has not had the opportunity to learn from such investigations or to apply lessons to formulate preventative actions.

University policies on research

- [UCA Research Ethics Code of Practice](#)
- [Guidelines on Good Research Conduct](#)
- Code of Practice for the Investigation of Research Misconduct (currently under review)
- [UCA Research Data Management Policy](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

To improve accountability and provide assurances that measures being taken continue to support consistently high standards of research integrity, this Statement will be made publicly available at:

- [UCA Commitment to Research Integrity](#)

The key contact for all matters relating to research ethics is **Dr Amer Alwarea, Research Manager**.

The key contact for any person wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research at UCA is the University's Head of Corporate Governance, Sam Weir.

These contacts are signposted on the relevant pages of UCA's external and internal websites.