

University of London

Research Integrity Annual Statement 2020

1. Background

1. In July 2012, Universities UK published the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (July 2012), a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance.
2. In October 2019, Universities UK published a revised concordat to support research integrity, which responds to recommendations set out in the Science and Technology Committee's report on research integrity, published in July 2018. Compliance with the Concordat is a condition of government funding.
3. The Concordat's 5th commitment requires in particular that the University should present a short annual statement to its governing body that provides:
 - a) 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);
 - b) 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;
 - c) 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;
 - d) 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;
 - e) 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.
4. 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 here <https://sas.ac.uk/research/research-office/research-integrity-policy>. This link to the statement will be sent to the secretariat of the signatories to the concordat.
5. The 2020 Statement aims to recognise all departments within the University, which undertake research.

2. Governance

1. The University has three departments, which undertake research and studies, called Central Academic Bodies (as noted in Ordinance 11):
 - The School of Advanced Study
 - The University of London Institute in Paris
 - The University of London Worldwide
2. Review of research policy is undertaken via the University governance structure as follows:

- The School of Advanced Study's Research Committee, which acts on behalf of the University of London, reviews and develops research policies on behalf of the University;

It should be noted that all academic departments, including University of London Worldwide are represented.

- The School of Advanced Study's Research Ethics Committee, which also acts on behalf of the University of London, reviews and develops policies on behalf of the University and reports to the School Research Committee;

It should be noted that all academic departments, including University of London Worldwide are represented.

- The School of Advanced Study's Academic Quality and Standards Committee which assures the quality of the teaching and supervisory experience for the School;
- The University of London Worldwide's Academic Committee is responsible for ensuring that existing quality assurance mechanisms are appropriately applied to assure the standard of the University of London award for the University's online and distance learning programmes and reviews reports on allegations of assessment offences;
- Programmes taught at the University of London Institute in Paris are subject to QMUL regulation and oversight. Internal committees such as the Student-Staff Liaison Committee, a Learning and Teaching Committee, and regular Departmental and Research meetings, all feed into the Research Advisory Board.

3. All Committees report to the Board of their respective Central Academic Body, which all in turn report to the Collegiate Council of the University of London. The annual integrity statement is approved by the Vice-Chancellor and is presented to the Board of Trustees.
4. The University has a set of Ordinances which apply to support the research integrity framework, including:
 - Ordinance 17 (Code of Student Discipline)
 - Ordinance 20 (Academic Staff)
 - Ordinance 21 (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)
 - Ordinance 23 (Public Interest Disclosure)

5. The relevant institutional policies for research integrity are as follows:

- **Code of Good Practice in Research**, publicly-accessible here: <https://www.sas.ac.uk/research/research-office>

The Policy, including the process for investigating allegations of academic misconduct by staff and non-staff, is being revised to include aspects of the updated Concordat to support research integrity.

- **Student Academic Misconduct Policy**, publicly available here: <https://www.sas.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/Policies/Academic%20Misconduct%20Policy.pdf>

- **Research Ethics Policy** , publicly-accessible here: <https://www.sas.ac.uk/research/research-office/research-ethics>
- **Data Protection and Academic Research Policy**, publicly accessible here: <https://www.sas.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/UoL%20Data%20Protection%20and%20Academic%20Research%20policy%20v01.pdf> (approved February 2020)
- **Data Protection Policy**, publicly accessible here: <https://london.ac.uk/about-us/how-university-run/policies/data-protection>
- **Open Access Policy**, publicly accessible here: <https://www.sas.ac.uk/research/research-policies-and-protocols/open-access-policy>
- **Research Data management policy**, publicly accessible here: <https://sas.ac.uk/research/research-office>

The Policy is being revised. A new policy on preservation and archives is also being written.

- **Social Media Policy**, not currently publicly available, due to revisions to address academic use of social media platform.

Guidance has however been agreed and will soon be made available to staff and students.

- **Employment Policies**, publicly available here: <https://london.ac.uk/about-us/how-university-run/policies>
- **Guidance for Students on Preventing and Responding to Harassment**, publicly available here: <https://london.ac.uk/sites/default/files/governance/University-of-London-Guidance-for-students-on-preventing-and-responding-to-harassment.pdf>
- **Safeguard Policy. New addition**

6. Those policies set out the standard of expectations for all researchers working under the auspices of the University.

- The policies are reviewed formally every three years or when new governmental or funders' policy dictates earlier revision.
- Any revision of these policies is done through consultation. The policies are reviewed and approved by relevant internal committees. Employment policies are reviewed by the Human Resources (HR) Department and are subject to consultation by recognised trades unions.
- Communication of these policies is done in several way including:
 - o Staff and student handbooks,
 - o Intranet communications and briefings,
 - o Inductions and staff meetings,
 - o Staff and Student trainings (face to face and online)

3. Statement for 2019-20

- a) 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);
 We continue to implement the recommendations reported to the Board of Trustees in July 2018 on the institutional research integrity compliance self-assessment. The recommendations were:

- 1/ The need for cross-referencing between all existing policies;

Consultation across all relevant departments on revisions of the policies as noted above is still ongoing;

- 2/ Additional material and resources are required to increase awareness of policy and procedure to students and supervisors – the Research Ethics Committee has recommended the use of the Virtual Learning Environment platform for this;

The Research Ethics Module is being finalised. All materials on our VLE are being updated.

- 3/ Additional roadmaps of our practices will be made publicly available and will be circulated to cover ethical approval, as well as relevant practice related to the new data protection regulations (GDPR);

Additional guidance has been published on our website, here <https://www.sas.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/Guidance%20on%20data%20protection%20and%20research%20v1.pdf>

- 4/ The statement on misconduct in the Code of Good Practice in Research requires some revision;

Complete. The work to establish separate processes to investigate allegations of academic misconduct that cover Staff (and Consultants), Fellows and Students is underway.

- 5/ The statement on penalties, if ethical approval is not sought, requires further clarification;

Complete. Guidance has now been made clearer and will come into force from the 2020-21 academic year. All of our terms and conditions of studies have also been adjusted as a result. This will also be explained on our research-training module.

- 6/ There is a need to strengthen internal monitoring systems;

Pending.

- 7/ The School should review how to communicate individual details on allegations of misconduct when/if funders require such information;

Ongoing. Some initial investigation on the processes took place with our HR department and by consulting colleagues in the University. More work is required.

The full report on the University Action Plan can be found below.

- b) 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;

The University has policies for staff and students to deal with [allegations of misconduct](#) that are transparent, timely, robust and fair, but is reviewing its current policy for staff and has decided to establish a separate one for fellows.

- c) 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;

Academic misconduct is reported annually. Each department's statement is as follows:

1. University of London Institute in Paris:

- 12 undergraduates enrolled in the dissertation module (C329) and 9 graduates enrolled in the MA in Urban History and Culture
- No academic misconduct involving staff or students has been recorded.

2. School of Advanced Study:

- The 2019-20 report indicates that 227 students were registered (93 PGT and 134 PGR);
- It should be noted that the School has drafted a code of conduct for research degrees, which is currently being taken through the governance process.
- No academic misconduct involving staff or students has been recorded.

3. University of London Worldwide

- The University of London Worldwide's Academic Committee considers the University of London Assessment offence report, which includes students attending the School's distance learning programmes as well as programmes led by Member Institutions within the Federation. This Report focuses on students registered to the University of London and its own departments only.
- The Global MBA programme commenced in April 2017, with four intakes per calendar year (January, April, July and October). The Strategic Project [BAM900] module is the only part of the programme that may involve primary data collection. The Strategic Project module had 100 students registered from July 2019 to April 2020.
- No academic misconduct involving staff or students has been recorded.

- d) 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;

There were two investigations of alleged research misconduct concerning non-stipendiary research fellows, who were investigated using the existing academic misconduct policy. As a result of the investigations, the School suspended the fellowships in question. The School is in the process of drafting an appropriate policy for dealing with the appointment and monitoring of conduct of non-stipendiary fellows.

- e) 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.

The creation and cascade of policies and procedures covering all research active staff has taken place and is reinforced regularly. The School has enhanced its policies

relating to research integrity for students and cascaded them through the student body. The School reviews and updates practice and policies as and when required and is confident that this enhances the research environment of the University of London.

10/7/2020

Head of Management Information and Research Services.

Statement was approved by Chair's action, Professor Jo Fox, on behalf of the Research Committee.

Statement was approved by the Board of the School on behalf of the University