University of London

Research Integrity Annual Statement 2021

1. Background

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. The 2021 Statement aims to recognise all departments within the University, which undertake research.

2. Governance

1. The University currently 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 policies 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; all academic bodies (see section 2.1 above) 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; all academic bodies are represented.
- The School of Advanced Study's Academic Quality and Standards Committee assures the quality of the teaching and supervision as well as the quality of the University of London degree for the School programmes;
- The University of London Worldwide's Academic Committee is responsible for ensuring that mechanisms are appropriately applied to assure the quality and 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 Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) regulation and oversight. ULIP Internal committees such as the Student-Staff Liaison Committee, its Learning and Teaching Committee, and regular Departmental and Research meetings, all feed into the ULIP Research Advisory Board.
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3. All Committees 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.

It should be noted that during 2021, the University approved a new governance structure which established an Academic Board and an Academic Quality and Assurance committee. These committees will be operational from 2021-22 and reported in the next Research Integrity Statement. The Research Committee and Research Ethics Committee remain in place, although their membership has been revised.

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 (Revisions approved in November 2020)
  - The **Process for investigating allegations of academic misconduct** : https://www.sas.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/Policies/Policy%20and%20procedures%20for%20responding%20to%20allegations%20of%20misconduct%20in%20research_2010.pdf is being revised.
  - **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
- **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 reviewed.
- **Social Media Policy**, not currently publicly available, due to revisions to address academic use of social media platforms.

Guidance on using online resources including social media when undertaking research has now be made public and is accessible here: https://www.sas.ac.uk/research/research-policies-and-protocols/research-ethics

- **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
- **A Safeguarding Policy** will be launched in 2021-22.

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 including review and approval by the 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 ways including:
     o Inclusion in staff and student handbooks;
     o Intranet communications and briefings;
     o Inductions and staff meetings;
     o Staff and Student training (face to face and online).

3. Statement for 2020-21

Below is the University of London Statement on its commitment to strengthening Research Integrity providing a response per each requirement of Commitment 5 of the Concordat.

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):*

The majority of the recommendations reported to the Board of Trustees in July 2018 on the institutional research integrity compliance self-assessment have been met. Where work is continuing this is outlined below:

1- The statement on misconduct in the Code of Good Practice in Research requires some revisions;

While, the revised Code of Good Practice in Research was approved in November 2020, the work to establish separate processes to investigate allegations of academic misconduct that cover Staff (and Consultants), Fellows and Students is being revised. We aim to finalise it all by the end of December 2021.

2- There is a need to strengthen internal monitoring systems;

Pending. Work will start again in 2022/23, after the research services department has been reorganised.

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

Further clarification is being sought from Human Resources as to the appropriate process for investigating and reporting allegations of misconduct. We aim to finalise it all by the end of March 2022.

The full report on the University Action Plan can be found below (appendix A).

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 is reviewing its current policy (as noted under a.1 above). We aim to finalise it all by the end of December 2021.

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 investigations have been undertaken, this is also noted;*

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

1. University of London Institute in Paris:
   - In 2020-21, ULIP reported 10 MA Urban History and Culture
   - No academic misconduct involving staff or students has been recorded.

2. School of Advanced Study:
   - In 2020-21, SAS recorded 126 Research Students, and 95 MA students.

- The School has introduced a mandatory training module for students on ethical matters in research. The system only allows progression in study when the module is complete i.e. for taught students assessment of the dissertation may be delayed and for research students movement to upgrade or examination status is prevented until completion is achieved.
- 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 potentially involves primary data collection. The Strategic Project module had 350 students registered in 2020-21
- No academic misconduct involving staff or students has been recorded for this module.

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 fellows in question. As a result of the investigations the School established a separate policy for dealing with the appointment and monitoring of the conduct of non-stipendiary fellows. The policy will be ratified by the end of December 2021.

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 consulted with 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.

14/10/2021
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 Academic Board on behalf of the University on 2nd December 2021.