

Summary of key points:

- The governance structure for ensuring compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity has been further enhanced by the establishment of a Steering Group, which will carry out projects to develop the research integrity agenda as required.
- A new online research ethics application management system has been implemented. The system will ensure consistency, transparency and enhance the experience for applicants and research ethics committees.
- A review of research integrity and research ethics training provisions have been undertaken.
- No formal investigations of allegations of misconduct in research have been undertaken

## **1. Introduction**

City, University of London is committed to ensuring continued compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and to support and embed a culture of research integrity.

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity “seeks to provide a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance”. Universities UK developed the Concordat to Support Research Integrity with the funding and research councils, the Wellcome Trust and a number of government departments. It was launched on 11 July 2012. Compliance with the Concordat has been a prerequisite for receiving funding from the UK research councils and higher education funding councils since 2013.

Summary of the Concordat’s commitments:

- Maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research;
- Ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards;
- 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;
- Using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise;
- Working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.

Compliance with the Concordat requires institutions to produce a short annual narrative statement to their own governing body that provides:

- a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues (for example postgraduate and researcher training, or process reviews);
- assurances that the processes they have in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, 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.

The House of Commons Science and Technology Committee recently held an inquiry into research integrity in the UK (the report was published on 11 July 2018). The inquiry contacted institutions in November 2017 to seek information about the progress in implementing the Concordat. In particular, institutions were asked if the following recommendations outlined in the Concordat had been met:

- "Present a short annual statement to their own governing body that [...] provides a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken ... To improve accountability , and provide assurances that measures being taken continue to support consistently high standards of research integrity, this statement should be made publicly available";
- "Identify a senior member of staff to oversee research integrity and to act as first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity"; and
- "Provide a named point of contact or recognise an appropriate third party to act as confidential liaison for whistleblowers or any other person wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research being conducted under their auspices".

City was able to show compliance on all points.

This report covers the period 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018. The annual reports will highlight good practice and procedures as applicable to the year in question and will report on issues, developments and enhancements relevant to the institutional governance and operational framework for research integrity. The reports will be designed to be independent of previous years, and some repetition can therefore be expected in the reports. Note that in this report research ethics is treated as a subdivision of research integrity rather than as a component of it.

## **2. Governance of Research Integrity at City, University of London**

City expects its staff and students to seek to maintain the highest achievable standards in their research conduct. Support and guidance in achieving research integrity are provided through several routes:

- City, University of London Framework for Good Practice in Research

- Research Ethics Framework
- Research Governance through City's Research & Enterprise Committee, which is responsible for the strategic direction and oversight of research and development of City research policies
- School and Departmental Research and Research Ethics Committees
- Other City policies and guidance that relate to research, including in particular Conflict of Interest, Intellectual Property, Research Data Management, Data Protection and Information Compliance.

The Vice-President (Research & Enterprise) is the senior lead for research integrity at City, and is the institutional contact should anyone have concerns, comments or questions about research integrity at City. This information and the contact details for the Vice-President (Research & Enterprise) are clearly signposted on City's research integrity webpage.

The Vice-President (Research & Enterprise) is supported by the Research Integrity Manager within the Research & Enterprise Directorate. The Research Integrity Manager manages the Directorate's responsibilities in this area and provides support and advice to the Vice-President (Research & Enterprise) and the Chair of Senate Research Ethics Committee. The Research Integrity Manager also liaises with other professional service departments, including the Graduate School, and Schools as necessary on matters relating to research integrity and research ethics.

**i) Research & Enterprise Committee**

The Research & Enterprise Committee is an advisory Committee to the Vice-President (Research & Enterprise). It advises the Vice-President (Research & Enterprise) on the development and review of institutional policies and procedures in relation to research and enterprise and monitors their implementation. The Committee makes recommendations to Senate and reports, as appropriate and necessary, to the Executive Committee, Senate and Council. Research integrity is a standing item on the Research & Enterprise Committee's agenda to ensure that it is discussed at the appropriate levels of City's governance structure.

**ii) Research Integrity Steering Group**

In May 2017, a Research Governance & Integrity Committee was set up to promote good conduct and encourage consistency in matters relating to research governance and integrity across the institution. The Committee undertook a review of City's current compliance with the Concordat. The review was completed in June 2018. To better support City's aims to develop and support the research integrity agenda appropriately, the Committee is now being replaced by a Steering Group. The main difference between the Committee and the Steering Group is that the Group will be undertaking projects to support and further develop City's integrity agenda, whereas the Committee's responsibility was to advise on research integrity and governance policies. As the Research & Enterprise Committee is responsible for research integrity, it was also considered unnecessary duplication to have the additional committee.

The Steering Group will meet twice a year, with individuals attending additional project meetings throughout the year as appropriate. The Group will have a professional (the Research Integrity Manager) and an academic (professorial level) lead. The membership will include representation from each of City's Schools (more than one individual where and if appropriate), Human Resources, Research & Enterprise Directorate, and the Graduate School. Others will attend as required (e.g. Library, LEaD, Marketing, Chair of Senate Research Ethics Committee). At the time of writing this report, an advert to recruit members of staff to join the Group is being prepared.

The Steering Group will:

- Ensure that City provides an environment that supports good research practices and generates quality research.
- Recommend areas of improvements in relation to research integrity.
- Establish and undertake areas of work that need development.
- Set the agenda for upcoming projects related to research integrity.

The Group will report to the City Research & Enterprise Committee.

### **iii) Senate Research Ethics Committee**

Senate Research Ethics Committee (SREC) is ultimately responsible for research ethics across the institution and for overseeing adherence to the policies and procedures set out in its Framework for Delegated Authority by City's thirteen local committees located in Schools and Departments. The system of delegated authority was implemented across City in 2011, in order to develop a coherent and consistent approach. The institution does not insist on Schools setting up local sub-committees of SREC where the volume of research is minimal, but policies and procedures to address research involving human participants, materials and/or data not in the public domain must be in place and agreed with SREC. The local research ethics committees are required to submit copies of their minutes and approved applications to SREC as well as an annual report. The Chair is an ex-officio member of the Academic Governance Committee and Senate. The Academic Governance Committee approves minor amendments to the terms of reference and composition of SREC as well as scrutinising its regulations, policies and procedures ahead of approval by Senate. SREC reports directly to Senate. The previous chair of SREC stepped down in December 2017. Senate approved the appointment of the new chair recommended by the Academic Governance Committee at its meeting on 13 December 2017.

## **3. Developments and activities during 2017/18 to support research integrity**

### **Research ethics**

During 2017/18 the following projects have been undertaken to support research ethics at City:

**i) Online application management system**

The business case for an online research ethics workflow management system was approved by the Finance Committee in February 2018. A licence for a dedicated research ethics approval workflow management IT system has been acquired and the system is now being implemented. The system will help streamline the current practices across the university; provide the tools to audit the local RECs to ensure that best practice, legislation and university policies and procedures are followed; speed up the approval process for students and staff; and reduce the time burden on research ethics committee members, chairs and administrators. It will also ensure the appropriate standard of applications, by for instance requiring supervisor signoff for student applications. The risk level of applications will be determined based on the applicant's responses and will be automatically routed to the correct Committee. The system will be live across the institution from October 2018. Previous local versions of application forms and templates must no longer be used after the system is live. The system will be developed further by the company, Haplo, in the coming months.

**ii) Webpages**

A new research ethics micro-site on the central Research and Enterprise webpages went live in June 2018. The new pages have been developed to ensure there is consistency in information provided to staff and students. The pages include information about how to apply for approval; guidance on topics such as internet mediated research, research undertaken abroad and verbal consent; templates for flyers, consent forms and participant information sheets; and FAQs from across the institution. The pages give staff and students a single place for information about research ethics at City, with only local REC procedures available locally (pages due to go live in September in conjunction with the announcement of the new research ethics online system). The central pages will be developed further as necessary. Staff are invited to suggest areas/topics they would like guidance developed on and/or to contribute with content should they have experience in a specific area/topic.

**iii) Role profiles**

Role profiles for the Senate Research Ethics Committee Chair and Deputy-Chair, local Research Ethics Committee Chairs and Research Ethics Committee members (including external and lay members) have been created to ensure that responsibilities and expectations are clear. The creation of profiles follows best practice in the sector. At the time of writing the report, the profiles were scheduled to be discussed at the Senate Research Ethics Committee meeting on 26 September, before being discussed by the Academic Governance Committee.

**Advice and policy development**

During 2017/18 the following projects have been undertaken to develop advice and policy at City:

**i) Conflict of Interest**

The policy was approved by the Executive Committee in December 2017 and came into effect in January 2018. Academics are asked to complete a form annually to register any external interests, with the requirement to update the information should circumstances change during the year.

**ii) Peer Review**

The development of a policy on peer review is underway. The policy will replace the current guidelines and will ensure consistent processes across the institution. It is envisaged that the policy will be implemented in 2018/19 after consultation with Schools and approval by the appropriate institutional committees.

**iii) Intellectual Property**

The policy underwent a consultation in 2017/18. Revisions have now been completed. Final approval will be sought by Council in November 2018.

#### **4. Training**

The House of Commons Science and Technology Committee Report noted that some universities have made training in research integrity a mandatory part of doctoral studies and include it in their research supervisor training programme. At City, research integrity and ethics is included in the Research Supervision module run by LEaD. However, attendance is not mandatory across City so not all research supervisors attend the module. It also does not address training of more senior academics and this will need to be considered to ensure that staff are up to date with developments, changes to legislation and the internal and external landscape. The Research Integrity Manager will be working with the Graduate School to consider introducing mandatory research integrity training for doctoral students.

Before being disbanded, the Research Governance & Integrity Committee collected information from its School representatives about local training provisions. The intention is that the Steering Group will analyse the findings and identify any gaps where additional training is required before making recommendations to the Research & Enterprise Committee and at School/Departmental level on further provisions.

Although training on research integrity and ethics is provided both centrally and locally, it is recognised that further development and resources for training of both staff and students are required and that research integrity needs to be embedded into the existing research development training.

**Training activities provided in Schools/Departments:**

- **Cass Business School** provides workshops on research ethics and how to incorporate ethics into academic modules for all academic staff. Doctoral students receive training as part of their research methods modules.
- **School of Arts and Social Sciences** provides training on the taught programmes and for doctoral students on research methods. This includes research ethics and sessions on how to prepare a research ethics application.
- **School of Health Sciences** arranges sessions on research ethics and governance for staff and workshops on research ethics, research governance, as well as sessions on research ethics approval for doctoral and Masters students. In addition, numerous undergraduate programmes have sessions on research ethics, governance, professional ethics and law.
- **School of Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering** organises workshops on research ethics for doctoral students, with some training available in parts of the School for Masters students on research integrity and research ethics.
- **The City Law School** provides research seminars for doctoral students where issues around research integrity, ethics and academic misconduct are discussed. Online training resources are made available to doctoral students and staff. Masters and final year undergraduate students have access to similar training, particularly around research ethics where students are undertaking projects involving human participants.

#### **Provisions delivered by the Research & Enterprise Office**

- Overview of City's Good Practice in Research and research ethics processes at doctoral student induction.
- A research integrity half day facilitated by James Parry, Chief Executive UK Research Integrity Office and Anna Ramberg, Research Integrity Manager. The session explored the challenges involved in ensuring that research is high quality and of high ethical standards, discuss notorious cases of research fraud and provided an introduction to City's policies and procedures.
- Research integrity & research ethics session delivered to staff and doctoral students on the Research Supervision module, by Anna Ramberg, Research Integrity Manager.

#### **Upcoming training**

- Research Data Management and Open Access, scheduled for October 2018.
- The GDPR and its impact on research, three sessions will be held across 2018/19, with the first anticipated to be held in October 2018.
- Integrity and Ethics in publishing research to avoid misconduct, scheduled for October 2018.
- Research ethics workshop, scheduled for November 2018, for doctoral students.
- The replicability crisis in biomedical science: Issues and solutions, scheduled for November 2018.

## 5. Research Misconduct

Research misconduct is currently managed locally by Schools. A new procedure to ensure consistency, following the UK Research Integrity Office's procedure, is being developed and will be implemented in 2018/19. The new procedure will also take in to account the recommendations in The House of Commons Science and Technology Committee Report.

### **Allegations notified to the Research and Enterprise Directorate**

No formal investigations were undertaken in 2017/18.

## 6. Planned developments 2018/19

- City's Framework to Support Good Practice in Research will be reviewed and updated. This will include a section on environmental and social research ethics. In addition, work to improve the accessibility of the information and user experience of the current research integrity webpages will be undertaken.
- A research integrity strategy will be developed by the Research Integrity Manager. The strategy will be supported by an implementation plan.
- Development of a research data management policy.
- An induction handbook for new research ethics committee members will be developed.
- Further training will be developed. This will include both online resources as well as face-o-face training opportunities. raining/seminars, including:
  - Statistical ethics
  - Research integrity
  - Research involving children
  - Mental health research
- Meeting with the co-chairs of the UCL Rec to explore the possibility possibility of exchange between members of Senate Research Ethics Committee and UCL/IOE.

## 7. Committees, policies and guidelines supporting and promoting research integrity

Research Integrity <http://www.city.ac.uk/research/about-our-research/research-integrity>

Framework for Good Practice in Research <http://www.city.ac.uk/research/about-our-research/framework-for-good-practice-in-research>

Research Data Management <https://www.city.ac.uk/research/about-our-research/research-integrity/research-data-management>



Senate Research Ethics Committee <https://www.city.ac.uk/about/education/academic-services/academic-committees/senate-research-ethics-committee>

Research Ethics webpages <http://www.city.ac.uk/research/research-and-enterprise/research-ethics>

Policy on research involving animals

[http://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/180432/City,-University-of-London-Policy-on-Reserach-Involving-Animals-V1.pdf](http://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/180432/City,-University-of-London-Policy-on-Reserach-Involving-Animals-V1.pdf)

Intellectual property policy [http://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/77063/City-University-London-IP-Policy-v0.86-1410101.pdf](http://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/77063/City-University-London-IP-Policy-v0.86-1410101.pdf)

Whistleblowing policy and procedure

[https://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/358022/Whistleblowing-Policy-20170509.pdf](https://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/358022/Whistleblowing-Policy-20170509.pdf)

Data protection and information compliance

[https://intranet.city.ac.uk/staff/info\\_compliance/info\\_compliance.html](https://intranet.city.ac.uk/staff/info_compliance/info_compliance.html)

GDPR information (internal) <https://staffhub.city.ac.uk/information-governance-gdpr-awareness>

Copyright <https://www.city.ac.uk/library/support/copyright>

Conflict of interest [https://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/394924/Conflict-of-Interest-Policy-for-Academic-and-Research-Staff.pdf](https://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/394924/Conflict-of-Interest-Policy-for-Academic-and-Research-Staff.pdf)

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Research & Enterprise Directorate

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