

FALMOUTH

UNIVERSITY

COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONCORDAT TO SUPPORT RESEARCH INTEGRITY

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Summary

Compliance with the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) must be reported as part of the University's annual assurance statement. The minimum expectation for institutions to comply with the Concordat is as follows;

- Have a dedicated and discoverable webpage on research integrity
- Have a named point of contact for research integrity
- Have a publicly available annual narrative statement setting out the steps they have taken to promote a positive culture of research integrity.

The Research Integrity and Ethics Committee will conduct an annual assessment of compliance, and advise on priority areas for strengthening a research integrity culture.

1 CONTEXT

- The concordat has identified five key themes as follows:
 - Policies and systems
 - Dissemination
 - Culture and development
 - Addressing research misconduct
 - Monitoring and reporting
- From these themes, come the five commitments that form the basis of the compliance exercise, each with a series of subheadings and bullet-points to offer focus to the process. Below is a summary of the Concordat's commitments:
 1. Maintaining standards
Commitment #1: We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.
 2. Ethical and other frameworks
Commitment #2: We are committed to ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.
 3. Culture of integrity
Commitment #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. Research misconduct
Commitment #4: We are committed to using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise.

5. Strengthening integrity

Commitment #5: We are committed to working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.

2 ASSESSING COMPLIANCE

- 2.1 A number of initiatives have been implemented in recent years to support the development of a research environment that helps to develop good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity, the key elements of which are honesty, rigour, transparency and the care and respect of all participants. These include:
- The revised Integrity and Ethics Policy launched September 2019. The Integrity and Ethics Policy is supported by a revised process which has integrated elements of the UK Research Integrity Office (UK RIO)'s checklist for researchers
 - The accompanying Handbook to Support Research Integrity & Ethics for staff and postgraduate research students contains a comprehensive overview of the University's adoption of the five core principles of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.
 - New Integrity and Ethics training is currently being procured with the intention of making it mandatory for all substantive academic staff. Integrity and Ethics training is included within the Researcher Development Programme and Core Academic Training (CAT) in 2020;
 - Programme Lead for the Design for Health and Wellbeing Programme, Anna Mankee-Williams has been nominated as the lead for Research Integrity and Ethics and will be the research representative at the Equality and Diversity Group.
 - Falmouth became members of the UK Research Integrity Office (UK RIO) in 2019, giving access to externally run training opportunities for staff and RIEC members.
 - The University website page for Integrity and Ethics has been revised to ensure that it reflects details of the new Integrity and Ethics Policy.
- 2.2 Assessing compliance is an iterative process, with the observations included herein serving as a starting point for a more thoroughgoing analysis of Falmouth's Research Ethics and Integrity. The UK RIO [self-assessment tool](#) available from the UK RIO website will be used in further iterations of assessment for continuous improvement.
- 2.2 This exercise has identified that we can comfortably respond to three out of the five commitments, offering evident best practice in relationship to points one, two and four. Where there is still work to be done is in relationship to points three and five:
- 2.3 Commitment 3: Culture of integrity**
A broad commitment to research integrity exists across the piece. Research integrity is an integral part of a strong and vibrant research culture, which the Research & Innovation Strategy 2030 seeks to cultivate. While we have a commitment to building a robust training environment, and have made significant steps along this road, there is scope to improve access to training, and to monitor both need and take up.
- 2.4 Commitment 5: Strengthening integrity**
A more robust system of for monitoring whether researchers have in all cases engaged with the ethical process in terms of training and review. By utilising existing systems,

specifically the addition of a series of short yes / no questions to the existing PDR framework, we can begin a simple monitoring process that will be triggered once a year.

- 2.5 As suggested at the outset of this short document, we recognise this process to be iterative, and we can assure Academic Board and the Board of Governors that we broadly comply and are developing plans for continued improvement.

3 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- a) This paper seeks approval for a proposed course of action or policy which affects the day-to-day experience of staff and/or students: **No**
- b) The author has checked [here](#) to confirm whether an Equality Impact Assessment is required and confirms that:
- An Equality Impact Assessment is **not required**.
 - An Equality Impact Assessment **is required and has been completed**.