

ANNUAL STATEMENT ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY 2022-23

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity requires employers of researchers to provide an annual statement outlining compliance with the Concordat for Research Integrity. The Annual Statement must be presented to the governing body, and subsequently be made publicly available, ordinarily through the institution's website.

Name of institution: Falmouth University
Period under review: 2022/23
Date approved by governing body: 29/09/2023
Date made publicly available: 10/11/2023
Web address of statement: https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/research-ethics-integrity
Web address of institutional research integrity page: https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/research-ethics-integrity
Named contact points for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions/ information on research integrity: Projects Officer, Research Culture & Environment, Katy Shannon: katy.shannon@falmouth.ac.uk• Concerns about research integrity/ research misconduct: Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Knowledge Exchange, Professor David Prior: david.prior@falmouth.ac.uk
Date statement sent to Concordat Signatories via Rlsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk : 10/11/2023

ANNUAL RESEARCH INTEGRITY STATEMENT

1. Summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support research integrity:

Research and knowledge exchange (RKE) are core to Falmouth's academic culture and the University is committed to advancing and safeguarding the highest standards of governance in all its RKE activities.

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.

New activities undertaken in the 22/23 academic year include:

- Commissioning a report evaluating Open Research culture within the institution, in order to understand strategic priorities for development;
- The Concordat to Support Research Integrity has been added to the Institutional Compliance Risk Register, raising the profile of research integrity as a key element of a strong research culture;
- A review of academic governance including proposals to strengthen governance structures overseeing research ethics review within undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes;
- A new online research review process facilitating swift review of staff research ethics review categorised as low and medium risk under the Falmouth research Integrity & Ethics Policy;
- Internal funding staff support schemes introduced drawing on research England QR funds to support particular research activity, including participatory research, policy support, enhancing research culture and dedicated support for emerging and early-stage researchers;
- A new role has been introduced within the RKE team of a 'Projects Officer, Research Culture & Environment' focussed on supporting academic staff across the institution with research and fostering a strong and vibrant research culture.
- RKE Environment Plans have been developed in consultation with academic staff across the academic year to articulate strategic research priorities, identify synergies and develop further mechanisms for supporting the research culture.

Governance

The University's Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee oversees the integrity of the University's research on behalf of the Academic Board, principally through delegation to the Research Integrity & Ethics Committee. The Research Integrity & Ethics Committee annual report for 22/23 reviewed the business conducted over the year, confirming that all the terms of reference had been attended to.

The University's Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Knowledge Exchange (Professor Prior) oversees the University's Research Misconduct process. The Projects Officer, Research Culture & Environment (Katy Shannon), acts as the first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on research integrity matters.

Policy and Guidance

The Research Integrity and Ethics Policy has integrated elements of the UK Research Integrity Office (UK RIO)'s checklist for researchers. This policy was revised in September 2021 to incorporate research ethics applications for postgraduate research students (formerly following protocols of research degree validating partner, UAL)

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.

Falmouth became members of the UK Research Integrity Office (UK RIO) in 2019, giving access to guidance and externally run training opportunities for staff and RIEC members (with all RIEC members taking part in training in May 2021).

Training and development

Support for researchers to understand research integrity and ethics and how it relates to their research practice are incorporated into the Research Student Development Programme, Research Supervisor Forum and Researcher Development Programme. Additionally, more in-depth research integrity training materials, created by the University of Dundee, are available via the University online learning platform.

While we have a commitment to building a robust training environment, and have made significant steps along this road, there is scope to improve the number of researchers engaging with training.

We recognise this process to be iterative, and we can assure Academic Board and the Board of Governors that we comply and are developing plans for continued improvement.

2. Statement on processes that the institution has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct:

The University's Whistleblowing Policy outlines the policy and procedural framework of Falmouth University in respect of the reporting of concerns of wrongdoing in the public interest, and the investigation and management of such concerns.

The University's Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research outlines the process to be followed when allegations of misconduct in research are brought against a researcher in relation to research conducted under the auspices of the Institution. Falmouth University is committed to ensuring that investigations are thorough and fair and conducted in a transparent and timely way.

3. High-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken:

Allegations during the period under review	Number
Allegations received during the period under review	0
Allegations received during previous year/s that are concluded during the period under review	0
Allegations undergoing initial investigation/screening	0
Allegations undergoing full investigation	0
Allegations upheld in full after full investigation	0
Allegations upheld in part after full investigation	0
Allegations dismissed after full investigation	0
Allegations still under investigation at time of writing (whether received during the period under review or during previous years)	0

4. Lessons learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken:

N/A

5. 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: ...

Awareness of the standards and behaviours expected of researchers is maintained through a suite of training and development modes. The Chair of the Research Integrity & Ethics Committee has produced a training video on undertaking a research ethics review, which compliments the Integrity and Ethics training sessions held within staff and PGR student programmes of researcher development.

The research governance structure at Falmouth was reviewed to ensure that policies relating to research, research integrity and researcher behaviour were implemented effectively. Research Programme Leads have been allocated lead roles in key areas of the Research environment. Lead for the Design for Health and Wellbeing Programme, Anna Mankee-Williams, has been nominated as the lead for Research Integrity and Ethics and is the research representative at the Equality and Diversity Group.

With these development opportunities and defined internal contacts for research integrity and ethics, Falmouth University aims to create and embed a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel informed and comfortable to report instances of misconduct.