



Annual Report on Research Integrity 2018/19

The University of Worcester is committed to uphold the principles of the ***Concordat to Support Research Integrity***. That commitment includes an obligation to submit to Academic Board and the Board of Governors an Annual report on Research Integrity, which should be published by the University following approval by the Board. This report has also been considered and approved by its Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

Concordat to Support Research Integrity

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity was published in 2012 by Universities UK to provide a 'comprehensive framework for good research conduct and its governance'. The signatories and supporters of the concordat, which include HEFCE, HEFCW, Research Councils UK, and the Department for Employment and Learning, committed to five principles detailed in the report below.

The intention of the Concordat is to help ensure that research carried out by or in partnership with the UK research community is undertaken to the highest standards of rigour and integrity.

The five principles of the Concordat are:

1. To maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research
2. To ensure that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.
3. To support 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. To use transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise
5. To work together to strengthen the integrity of research and reviewing progress regularly and openly.

Research Governance

Research Governance falls under the remit of Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. Its Research Ethics sub-Committee takes operational responsibility for research governance. This sub-Committee is chaired by the University's Research Integrity Champion, Professor Erica Bowen.

There are a number of policies and procedures which govern research as follows:

- Ethics Policy
- Policy for Effective Management of Research Data
- Guidelines and Procedures for Good Research Conduct (including procedures for Investigation of Research Misconduct).

Implementation of the Concordat

The University completed a gap analysis against the Concordat in 2012 and established an action plan which is reviewed on an annual basis by Research Committee. Core to this action plan are the following:

- Regular review and update of policies, procedures and guidance relating to research integrity to ensure they reflect best practice
- Raising awareness of research integrity
- Providing appropriate training and guidance for researchers around research integrity

Developments in Policies and Procedures

The University implemented a new academic structure in 2018/19, organising its academic schools into 3 Colleges. An Ethics Panel was established for each College, each chaired by a Senior Researcher, which oversees review for all staff and students in the College. This restructure required some revision of the Ethics Policy and associated processes as set out in the Standard Operating Procedures for ethical review bodies.

Training & Guidance

The University continues to offer a full programme of training around research governance as part of its Researcher Development Programme for staff and research students.

Research Students are required to undertake the following workshops:

- Research Integrity
- Research Ethics
- Research Data Management

Optional workshops include:

- Undertaking Ethical Research
- Demystifying the Ethics Review Process
- Avoiding Misconduct
- Open Data

Research Ethics & Integrity is also built into induction for new staff.

The University has also developed extensive online support for researchers on research ethics and integrity through Blackboard, its Virtual Learning Environment.

Instances of research misconduct

There were no investigations of research misconduct in 2018/19.