

## Assurance statement in compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2020/21

The statement is structured in accord with the Concordat's five commitments:

### **Commitment #1: We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.**

- The refreshed University Research and Innovation Strategy 2022-26 states, as a key priority, 'to maintain and develop an inclusive and respectful research culture'.

### **Commitment #2: We are committed to ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.**

- The [Research Ethics Policy](#) and the [Code of Good Research Practice](#), were reviewed and updated by the University Ethics and Integrity Committee in 2018, and have been implemented and rolled out across the institution. In comparison to the previous version, the Code of Good Research Practice is constructed as an independent document from the Research Ethics Policy, emphasising the principles that define the criteria for maintaining research integrity. Both documents have been amended during implementation and a full review will be carried out in 2022. Amendments have taken place, including the addition of a section relating to Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure [Trusted Research Guidance for Academia](#), to the Code of Good Research Practice.
- The [Research Data Policy](#), approved by the University Ethics and Integrity Committee and by the Research and Innovation committee in 2018, continues to be updated and a formal review will take place in 2022. This policy outlines good practice in research data management and open-access to research data as integral to high-quality research. The University introduced an updated mandatory GDPR e-learning compliance training for all staff with a requirement to complete a refresher session every two years.
- The Equality & Diversity and Unconscious Bias training continues to be mandated for all staff. The dedicated [Equality, diversity and inclusion](#) site continues to be updated and improved.

### **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.**

- The [Research Governance webpages](#) are continuously improved and updated. They maintain an emphasis on the user-oriented approach to the research integrity and ethics information. A section relating to Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure [Trusted Research Guidance for Academia](#) has been added to the Research Governance webpage. The section includes information on where to report research security-related risks. The University has recently updated its Export Compliance Statement to reinforce its overarching commitment to compliance.
- The University implemented new Terms of Reference and Membership for the University Ethics and Integrity Committee and Faculty Ethics and Integrity Committee committees in 2018. These emphasise the committees' obligations related to research excellence and integrity compliance and are continuously reviewed to ensure ongoing compliance and

appropriate membership. A review of Terms of Reference has been completed and is being implemented. The new Terms of Reference include specific reference to research international security risks.

- The University continuously provides and develops training programmes for Post-Graduate Researchers and staff. A review of the University's training offer has been undertaken and the training programme has been updated to respond to the survey findings. There were a number of research integrity, ethics and governance sessions delivered with the [Research Support Programme](#) as either sessions or Research Support Surgeries, as well as with the [Researcher Development Programme](#).
- An Online ethics application and compliance system has been implemented and a continuous review of the system has also been introduced. A series of training workshops have been provided to support staff and students using the system. The system is currently being rolled out for undergraduate ethics application within the Faculty of Health.
- The online survey tool has been implemented. It ensures compliance with our Research Ethics and Research Data policies.
- The University holds a register of independently ethically reviewed studies.
- Human Tissue Authority standard operating procedures have been reviewed and implemented in accordance with [HTA Codes of Practice](#).
- The dedicated Sponsor SharePoint site has been reviewed and updated. The resources includes – Health Research Authority application exemplars and links to all relevant internal and external training and information.

**Commitment #4: We are committed to using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise.**

- The [Code of Good Research Practice](#) clarifies the process of reporting and dealing with allegations of research misconduct.
- A dedicated [Research Misconduct](#) webpage explains the procedure of raising concern at the University.
- The University Ethics and Integrity Committee Secretary maintains a register of all raised allegations of research misconduct.
- There has been one informal investigation into research misconduct involving a staff member. There has been one formal investigation into research misconduct involving staff during the last year. Following the formal investigation, the Human Tissue Authority standard operating procedures were reviewed and a rapid reporting system for Human Tissue Authority concerns introduced.
- There have been no informal/formal investigations involving postgraduate research students during the last year.

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

- The process for reviewing and monitoring Health Research Authority sponsored research studies continues to be reviewed and strengthened. All Health Research Authority

applications receive UoP ethical approval prior to submission to Integrated Research Application System.