

Annex 2: Concordat to Support Research Integrity – key employer and researcher requirements

Key researcher requirements

Researchers will:

- understand the expected standards of rigour and integrity relevant to their research
- maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in their work at all times
- comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, and by employers, funders and other relevant stakeholders
- ensure that all their research is subject to active and appropriate consideration of ethical issues
- take responsibility for keeping their knowledge up to date on the frameworks, standards and obligations that apply to their work
- collaborate to maintain a research environment that encourages research integrity
- design, conduct and report research in ways that embed integrity and ethical practice throughout
- act in good faith with regard to allegations of research misconduct, whether in making allegations or in being required to participate in an investigation, and take reasonable steps, working with employers as appropriate, to ensure the recommendations made by formal research misconduct investigation panels are implemented
- handle potential instances of research misconduct in an appropriate manner; this includes reporting misconduct to employers, funders and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies as circumstances require
- declare and act accordingly to manage conflicts of interest
 - maintaining a research environment that develops good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity, as described in commitments 2 to 5
 - supporting researchers to understand and act according to expected standards, values and behaviours
 - defending researchers when they live up to the expectations of this concordat in difficult circumstances
 - demonstrating that they have procedures in place to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with standards of best practice; systems to promote research integrity; and transparent, robust and fair processes to investigate alleged research misconduct

Key employer requirements

Employers of researchers are responsible for:

- maintaining a research environment that develops good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity, as described in commitments 2 to 5
- supporting researchers to understand and act according to expected standards, values and behaviours
- defending researchers when they live up to the expectations of this concordat in difficult circumstances
- demonstrating that they have procedures in place to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with standards of best practice; systems to promote research integrity; and transparent, robust and fair processes to investigate alleged research misconduct
- having clear policies on ethical review and approval that are available to all researchers
- making sure that all researchers are aware of, and understand policies and processes relating to ethical approval
- supporting researchers to adopt best practice in relation to ethical, legal and professional requirements
- having appropriate arrangements in place through which researchers can access advice and guidance on ethical, legal and professional obligations and standards
- embedding the features of a culture of research integrity (as set out in Commitment 3) in their own systems, processes and practices
- reflecting recognised best practice in their own systems, processes and practices
- implementing the concordat within their research environment
- participating in an annual monitoring exercise to demonstrate that the institution has met the commitments of the concordat
- promoting training and development opportunities to research staff and students, and encourage their uptake
- identifying a named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity and ensure that this information is kept up to date and publicly available on the institution's website
- identifying a named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity, and ensure that contact details for this person are kept up to date and are publicly available on the institution's website
- having clear, well-articulated and confidential mechanisms for reporting allegations of research misconduct
- having robust, transparent and fair processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct that reflect best practice. This includes the use of independent external members of formal investigation panels, and clear routes for appeal (see the references section of the Concordat)
- ensuring that all researchers and other members of staff are made aware of the relevant contacts and procedures for making allegations

- acting with no detriment to whistle-blowers who have made allegations of misconduct in good faith, or in the public interest, including taking reasonable steps to safeguard their reputation. This should include avoiding the inappropriate use of legal instruments, such as non-disclosure agreements
- taking reasonable steps to resolve any issues found during the investigation. This can include imposing sanctions, requesting a correction of the research record and reporting any action to regulatory and statutory bodies, research participants, funders or other professional bodies as circumstances, contractual obligations and statutory requirements dictate
- taking reasonable steps to safeguard the reputation of individuals who are exonerated
- providing information on investigations of research misconduct to funders of research and to professional and/or statutory bodies as required by their conditions of grant and other legal, professional and statutory obligations
- supporting their researchers in providing appropriate information when they are required to make reports to professional and/or statutory bodies
- providing a named point of contact or recognise an appropriate third party to act as confidential liaison for whistle-blowers or any other person wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research being conducted under their auspices. This need not be the same person as the member of staff identified to act as first point of contact on research integrity matters, as recommended under commitment 3
- taking steps to ensure that their environment promotes and embeds a commitment to research integrity, and that suitable processes are in place to deal with misconduct
- a 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
- producing a short annual statement, which must be presented to their own governing body, and subsequently be made publicly available, ordinarily through the institution's website. This annual statement must include:
 - a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues (for example postgraduate and researcher training, or process reviews)
 - a statement to provide assurance that the processes the institution has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, timely, 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, which will include data on the number of investigations. If no formal investigation has been undertaken, this should also be noted

- a statement on what the institution has learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including what lessons have been learned to prevent the same type of incident re-occurring
- periodically review their processes to ensure that these remain fit for purpose