



Annual Statement on Research Integrity

2019

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity requests that employers of researchers should present a short annual statement to their own governing body and subsequently make publicly available through the institution's website. The 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
- 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

The Annual Statement on Research Integrity is included at Annex 1.



Annual Statement on Research Integrity 2019

In 2014, Cranfield University adopted the Universities UK's policy "The Concordat to Support Research Integrity". This Concordat was subject to review earlier this year and following a consultation process, an updated [Concordat](#) was published at the end of October 2019. Cranfield University continues to uphold the principles of the revised Concordat.

By acting in accordance with the Concordat, members of the research community can demonstrate that they:

- Uphold the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research
- Ensure that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards
- 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
- Use transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise
- Work together to strengthen the integrity of research and to review progress regularly and openly

The University annually reviews its policies and procedures regarding ethics and integrity including:

- Research Integrity Policy Statement
- Research Ethics Policy
- Process for Implementing and Monitoring Research Integrity Policy

The Research Committee is responsible for reviewing these policies and processes and reports the outcomes into Senate, including providing assurance that the processes the University has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, timely, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to Cranfield's needs. The process includes the opportunity for staff and students to make allegations through different channels to ensure they feel as comfortable as possible in speaking out. They are informed of the action taken to address their concerns and the outcome of that action to ensure they feel that their allegation has been taken seriously and dealt with.

The University recognises the importance of supporting its researchers to understand and act according to the expected standards, values and behaviours and following the publication of the revised Concordat in October 2019, Cranfield is now reviewing the above policies to ensure they remain current and fit for

purpose, including considering combining ethics and integrity policy statements. A review of the current research integrity training material available for staff and students has also commenced.

The following activities were undertaken in the last 12 months to support our staff and students and raise awareness of research ethics and integrity:

1. The University continues to be a member of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), which offer advice on research integrity
2. The Cranfield University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) held two meetings in 2019, attended by both staff and external members to review current practices and suggest improvements as required.
3. Research student representatives were invited and have attended CUREC meetings during the year to offer feedback from the student community.
4. Regular communications to both staff and students have been made to remind the research community of the requirements for ethical approval for all research projects.
5. Regular communications have been made to all students reminding them of the requirement to complete online ethics and integrity training prior to submitting their research for ethical approval.
6. Auditing of our Ethics System (CURES) takes place throughout the year with 10% of applications approved each month at levels 1 and 2b which are given automatic approval being audited to ensure the level of risk assigned is appropriate.
7. The user guide for the University's Research Ethics System (CURES) was been updated to reflect changes made to the ethics application process.
8. A new user guide for reviewers was created to support our community of ethics reviewers.
9. Evidence of ethical approval will now be required as part of the thesis submission for our research students.
10. A consultancy checklist has been implemented to ensure that work undertaken as consultancy is subjected to ethical review when appropriate.
11. The Vice-Chair of CUREC stepped down in 2019. The position was advertised internally and Dr Jim Nixon, Senior Lecturer in Human Factors, was appointed as the new Vice-Chair. The appointment is for an initial 5-year term with the option to renew for a further 5 years.

Plans for 2020

1. A working group has been established to review the current training material available to staff and students regarding research integrity following the publication of the revised Concordat. The plan is to develop the current online module on research integrity, with the following Intended Learning Outcomes:
 - define Research Integrity
 - carry out your research with Research Integrity
 - identify where other bodies have their own Research Integrity Standards
 - include/apply the above external standards in any collaborative research
 - state the possible penalties for non-compliance
 - locate the University reporting route for any possible cases of non-compliance
2. CUREC undertook a review of the ethics application form at the latter end of 2019 and as a result a number of changes will be made to the application form in early 2020 to improve the user experience.
3. The University has recently taken the decision to move to a single Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform. The current ethics and integrity online training module will be moved to the new platform during 2020. This will enable more detailed monitoring of training completion rates for our students.
4. A new internal intranet page offering more detailed guidance relating to participant consent has been developed and will be launched in early 2020.

One matter of research misconduct was reported to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Research and Innovation at the end of 2019. The complaint is currently under investigation in line with the Process for Implementing and Monitoring Research Integrity Policy.