

University of Warwick

Research Integrity Annual Statement 2017-18

The University of Warwick has a strong commitment towards research integrity that is embedded within institutional systems and cultures. As such, the University regularly reviews its internal processes to ensure these are evolving alongside the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

The recent formation of UKRI, and the growing opportunities for collaborative and inter-disciplinary research emphasizes the continued importance of research integrity across the UK research environment. The University welcomes the inclusion of 'integrity' as one of UKRI's four key values, and continues to play an active part in delivering high quality, ethical research from across our disciplines.

The University's Research Governance & Ethics Committee (RG&EC), chaired by the Deputy Pro-Vice- Chancellor (Research), Professor Stephen Jarvis, continues to provide leadership with regards to research integrity to the wider University community.

During the 2017/18 review period, this has included:

The provision of institutional oversight to the RG&EC sub-committees: the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, the Biomedical & Scientific Research Ethics Committee, the Animal Welfare & Ethical Review Body and Sponsorship Committee.

In addition, the RG&EC has undertaken a review of local ethical review processes, in partnership with its sub-committees, to ensure that systems are robust and fit for purpose. This has resulted in the creation of new risk based processes that will allow for projects to be assessed in line with risk and complexity going forward.

The RG&EC has also received and considered reports and updates from specialist areas, specifically within this period from the Designated Individual (Human Tissue Act) and the newly appointed institutional Data Protection Officer (DPO).

Dedicated Professional Services support is provided by the Research Governance & Quality Assurance Team, which was created in 2016 to provide additional expert resource to all aspects of research integrity. During the period, this Team has delivered a comprehensive training programme to a wide range of academic departments, including researchers and support staff, covering research integrity in its broadest and sense and has started to develop new internal information workshops relating to research data management in partnership with expert colleagues in the Library. The Team has also delivered several informal training sessions as part of a regular programme of information sharing within Research & Impact Services.

The University has continued to support the Research Governance & Quality Assurance Team to attend a series of external courses, relevant to both clinical and non-clinical research integrity matters and this year GDPR. This is to ensure that an 'up to date' knowledge of relevant regulatory requirements and relevant sector developments is present within the Team and is therefore available to all University researchers, and to the members of the relevant University Committees.

A deal of work has been progressed during 2017/18 to communicate and embed the Research Integrity Online Training within the University's research environment. This has included the development and launch of a proactive and engaging internal Communications Plan, initiating an innovative approach to Research Integrity training, via the development of a series of illustrated case studies and planning for face to face group training by internal academic ethics specialists.

The University is supportive of Research England's open access agenda and endeavours to increase its Academy's awareness of, and compliance with, REF OA policy as part of its annual research planning mechanism: the Research Excellence Group (REG). The REG panel is chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and provides academic departments with a forum in which they can discuss REF planning, research strategy, outputs, impact and environment. Whilst the current REF OA policy does not apply to monographs, book chapters, other long-form publications, working papers, creative or practiced-based research outputs, and only applies to outputs accepted for publication after 1 April 2016, the REG Group, in conjunction with the University's Library services, encourages academic staff to deposit all output types into the University's internal repository within the requisite timelines, irrespective of a given output's date of acceptance/publication and whether it was published elsewhere as Gold OA. Additionally, the University's REF planning team within Research & Impact Services is planning a 2018 campaign to meet with Departments during the summer period and into early autumn, to discuss the REF2021 OA requirements, and to offer support with regards to compliance and OA reporting.

A dedicated team in the Library facilitates open access through the use of the University's research repository, 'WRAP', through the management of block grants and the Library fund. This team works in partnership with Research & Impact Services, Research Finance and Academic Departments and feeds into the University's preparations for the next Research Evaluation Framework (REF) as well as ensuring our researchers meet the requirements of their funding bodies. The University's Open Access Policy is currently under review and will be presented to Research Committee in the 2018/19 academic year.

In light of the criticality of good research data management to principles of research integrity, the University recently extended the membership of its Biomedical & Scientific Research Ethics Committee and Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee to the Library's dedicated Research Data Manager.

A focus in this reporting period has been preparation for the requirements of GDPR; the University has launched a GDPR training module for all members of staff. The University's DPO has attended 2 of the 3 Research Governance & Ethics Committees in this reporting period. The ethics committees in consultation with the DPO have been reviewing its documentation to make any necessary adjustments for GDPR compliance to its application forms, approval letters and all participant facing documentation. Members of the DPO's team are invited to sit on the ethics review committees. The University has invested in a MetaCompliance tool that is used by departments to record their personal data processing activities. Returns have been completed within the MetaCompliance tool for all personal data processing activities carried out by the University research ethics committees. These have been submitted to the DPO.

The University's is an active member of the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum, which is active from a policy perspective and as such, the University responds in a timely and appropriate manner to ongoing sector development. In addition, the University continues to subscribe to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO).

The University's has a policy for the Investigation of Research Misconduct. With respect to the requirement to report investigations of research misconduct, the University can confirm that there have been 5 cases of research misconduct in this reporting period.

In summary, the University takes seriously its commitment towards the principles outlined in the Concordat, and in collaboration with its academic community has been able to deliver a number of key projects and initiatives during the review period.