



## **Statement on Research Integrity 2018/2019**

As an outstanding UK research-intensive university, the University of Exeter recognises that the highest standards of scientific, scholarly and professional integrity must be maintained and promoted. We aim to give due consideration to the ethical, social and environmental issues arising from our activities and are actively working to ensure that research integrity is embedded in the University's research culture and environment.

We are committed to acting in accordance with the principles described in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and have developed a policy framework which aims to maintain the safety, rights, welfare and dignity of all members of the University and their research participants, and to maintain public trust:

- Ethics Policy
- Research Ethics Framework
- Policy on working with animals
- Code of Good Practice in the Conduct of Research
- Misconduct in Research
- Codes of Conduct
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy

In 2018/19, actions undertaken to promote and embed research integrity included the following:

- Additional training, templates and guidance on data protection for researchers were provided and promoted, along with the provision of data management plan review for individual research projects where required.
- Active involvement in national networks and events to share best practice and promote research integrity, for example as part of the Russell Group research integrity forum and national research integrity forum.
- A local group of the UK Reproducibility Network was formed at Exeter and a successful workshop on reproducibility was held.
- University groups on the responsible use of metrics, researcher development and open research continue to develop proposals to enhance the research culture at the University.
- Regular training sessions for research and CPD students, early career researchers, academic and professional services staff were further developed and delivered, alongside introductory online training modules and bespoke sessions for groups of taught students. Feedback was sought on all sessions delivered and remains very positive.
- The annual training day for research ethics committee members was successfully delivered and was found to be useful for attendees

- The University Ethics Committee and the Dual Assurance portfolio on Research Integrity, Ethics and Governance continues to provide oversight of activities and assurance for the University's governing body
- Ongoing implementation of improved research governance and regulatory compliance processes, particularly on health research sponsorship, clinical trials, human tissue and animal research.
- The Research Ethics and Governance Team continue to work with colleagues across multiple departments and teams on, for example, compliance and quality assurance frameworks.
- Resource for research governance and compliance is provided on a recurrent basis

During 2018/19, a number of allegations of research misconduct were received:

1. An allegation of plagiarism was made against a member of staff in regard to work undertaken at a previous institution. A formal investigation was undertaken, followed by disciplinary action taken against the member of staff which included a requirement for additional training and mentoring.
2. An allegation of plagiarism was received about a member of staff in regard to a published paper. A formal investigation was undertaken but concluded that research misconduct had not taken place.
3. At time of writing, a preliminary review is taking place on an allegation of research misconduct relating to a PhD thesis. The outcome of the investigation will be included in the next annual report.

Advice and support has been provided in response to a number of researcher queries, for example in relation to authorship practice. The procedures for investigating and reporting misconduct are considered to be transparent, robust and generally appropriate to the needs of the organisation. The Code of Good Practice in the Conduct of Research and the Misconduct in Research process will be reviewed again in detail when the strengthened Concordat to Support Research Integrity is published.

A programme of ongoing improvement is in place to ensure that continued progress towards our all our goals is maintained. Developments, risks and progress are regularly monitored by the Dual Assurance Research Integrity, Ethics and Governance portfolio and by the University Ethics Committee.

For further information on research integrity at the University of Exeter, please contact the [Research Ethics and Governance Team](#)

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