

Research Integrity Annual Narrative Statement, October 2017

Policies and Procedures including processes for dealing with allegations of research misconduct

The University has policies and procedures in place relating to Research Integrity and Research Ethics. The *Framework for Research Governance* acts as an overarching tool for researchers and those supporting research and sign-posts to other related internal policies and guidance. The key documents for use are the University's *Code of Research Good Practice* (updated, August 2017) and the *Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research* (updated, August 2017). The *Code of Research Good Practice* underwent a significant revision in 2014 (approved Academic Council, October 2014) and the *Ethics Code* was revised and edited significantly for content in 2015 (approved Academic Council, June 2015). It is recommended that significant review of all research policies and codes occur every three years, or earlier if there is a need to reflect internal or external changes. The procedure for managing requests for Research Ethics considerations is dealt with under an established *University Research Ethics Committee* and devolved *Faculty Research Ethics Committees*. The University has invested in an online Research Ethics Review system, the 'Virtual Research Environment'. The University has an externally published *Procedure for Managing Allegations of Research Misconduct*, (approved, Academic Council, October 2017). The *Misconduct Procedure* was significantly revised to provide different procedures for staff and students.

University Research Framework public website and named contact details for receiving allegations of suspected research misconduct

The above mentioned research codes, and other related documents are available at:
<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research-framework> .

The *Procedure for Managing Allegations of Research Misconduct* is available at:
<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework/managing-allegations-of-research-misconduct>.

The operation of the *Misconduct Procedure* is overseen by Andrew Linn or Malcolm Kirkup who will act as the "Named Person" under the procedure. In the absence of the Named Person an Alternate will be nominated.

The University's *Research Data Management Policy* is also available at:
<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-data>

Dissemination of policies to staff, including new employees

The policies are disseminated to staff via email-lists, news items and through formal *Committee* channels from *University* through to *Faculty research committees*.

Following consultation with focus groups and direction from the *HR Excellence in Research Award Steering Group*, a researcher development webpage was developed. This page has now been launched and all links to *Research Ethics* and *Research Integrity* have been added together with descriptors for each section:
<https://myintranet.westminster.ac.uk/my-tools/researcher-development> (University log-in required).

Additionally at each *Welcome to Westminster* (induction) event new staff members are introduced to the *governance framework* and the relevant committees, and the *Virtual Research Environment*. They are also provided with links to the committee structures and related resources.

At the researcher development workshops on *Research Ethics and Integrity* attendees are introduced to the *Research Governance Framework* and *Virtual Research Environment*.

Work undertaken by the University to support and strengthen Research Integrity issues

The University established a *Research Integrity Group* to undertake a self-assessment on implementation of the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* using *UK Research Integrity Office's (UKRIO) tool-kit*. The University had identified areas which required strengthening e.g. an annual narrative statement. The University has provided a *Research Ethics Staff Development Programme* open to all staff facilitated by the *Association for Research Ethics (now under ARMA)*, these and related Research Ethics sessions are part of the University's *HR Excellence in Research Award Action Plan* (Award received January 2015). Further specific development in *Research Integrity* been rolled-out in the form of a *Publication Good Practice* session. Recent UKRIO guidance on *Publication Good Practice*, *Redactions*, and, *Internet-mediated research* has been disseminated via news to researchers.

The University also has a *Research Data Management Policy* in relation to the *RCUK Common Principles on Data* and the *Concordat on Open Research Data*.

Formal Investigations relating to researchers funded by or responsible for funding from Research Councils (including supervisors of Postgraduate awards)

There have been no formal investigations which relate to researchers funded or responsible for funding from Research Councils, including supervisors of postgraduate awards.

University arrangements for reviewing research funded by the Research Councils which is planned and conducted in accordance to high ethical standards

Research in receipt of funding or potential funding from Research Councils (and others, e.g. European Research Council, Wellcome Trust etc.) should be considered for ethical review. Where there are requirements of ethical assessment, this is carried out by the *University Research Ethics Committee* (senior internal ethical review body). The Principal Investigator (PI) is supported prior to application for funding via the *Research Development Team* who work closely with the *University Research Ethics Officer* to support the PI in addressing ethical issues which may arise. Following award the *University Research Ethics Committee* work together with the PI and *Post Awards team* in ensuring the terms and conditions of the grant awarding body are met, including research ethics, training, health and safety etc. The proposal must be provided to the *University Research Ethics Committee* for consideration and approval if appropriate and in line with the University's *Ethics Code*. Similarly work approved for ethical consideration by a Research Council or other funder is noted by the *University Research Ethics Committee* and further conditions are set if appropriate, with regards to compliance issues. PIs are required to report any changes to protocol for consideration and await approval prior to undertaking any further work. PIs must inform the Research Councils of progress via the *Progress Reports*. The University will use its own Codes, policies and guidance in research ethics as well as those of the Research Councils and other bodies to support the research and PI.