Annual Statement on Compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2015/16

The University of Glasgow is a broad-based research-intensive University with over 4,500 research-active staff and students. The Vice Principal for Research is responsible for ensuring that standards of good research practice are maintained and is supported in this role by a team of staff within the Research Strategy and Innovation Office (RSIO). The activities of the team include co-ordinating investigations into alleged research misconduct, updating and disseminating the Code of Good Practice in Research[1], and ensuring that appropriate training and other measures exist to support a culture of research integrity.

In summer 2015, the University reviewed its efforts in this area. As a result, a cross-University working group recommended a programme of activity for implementation during 2015/16 that included: a review of policies and procedures, the appointment of local integrity 'Advisers' and 'Champions', enhanced training opportunities, and improved communication and visibility of research integrity.

A brief progress review of these activities is outlined below, noting that embedding change takes time and that it will be important to evaluate and monitor progress annually. We are developing a strategy for the longer-term evaluation of the impact of our new measures and will continue to seek out best practice from other organisations.

Academic Leadership: Research Integrity Champions and local Research Integrity Advisers have been appointed in each of our Colleges, Schools and Research Institutes (28 posts in total[2]). Newly devised role descriptions highlight the remit of champions and advisers in promoting good research practice within the relevant disciplinary context, as well as acting as a source of advice and first point of contact for any concerns about research integrity. During 2015/16, we have developed this network by offering members the required training or support as well as learning from their expertise and making use of this in our training and communication. We are also investigating opportunities for more junior members of staff to participate in this network and 'shadow' advisers, in order to cascade learning.

Acknowledging that promoting a culture of research integrity is a key part of academic leadership, additional guidance has been included in annual staff appraisal forms, inviting staff to highlight their contributions to School, Institute or research group culture in this area.

Training and Development: Research students attend compulsory research integrity workshops that are organised through their Graduate Schools. Integrity training for staff is available from HR through Organisational and Employee Development; training is particularly recommended to new research staff at induction. Training in research data management (RDM, see here[3] for the current list of workshops) is also available and is strongly recommended for both staff and students; the Graduate School in the College of Science and Engineering makes this training mandatory.

Participation levels and feedback on research integrity training, and outcomes of attendance at training, are carefully monitored by Graduate Schools and RSIO. In 2016, the University-level Researcher Development Committee reviewed the suitability of training and agreed to purchase research integrity podcasts to complement the existing face-to-face training and webpages. The online learning provision has received positive feedback. Throughout the year, the content and structure of the face-to-face sessions has been developed to respond to feedback and most our Postgraduate Researchers expressed a preference for attending workshops over (or in addition to)

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[1] http://www.gla.ac.uk/research/aims/ourpolicies/
[2] http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/rsio/researchstrategypolicies/researchintegrity/advisers/#/collegeofmedicalveterinary&lifesciences,collegeofscience&engineering,collegeofsocialsciences
[3] http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/datamanagement/training/

online learning. During 2016/17 we will seek opportunities to embed discussion of research integrity within other training programmes, leadership or supervisor development and local meetings.

Ensuring Best Practice: Glasgow works extensively with other partners and institutions to share approaches and learning in the area of research integrity, both formally and informally. This included UofG staff being invited to speak at the UKRIO annual conference, which was also attended by several RSIO staff, the Chair of the UofG Ethics committee and two of our Research Integrity Champions.

Changes to Policies and Procedures: As described above, a cross-University working group was convened to review our institutional procedures relating to research integrity and to identify practical measures to implement the Universities UK 'The Concordat to Support Research Integrity'[4]. The recommendations of the working group were implemented on 20 January 2016. We list here some salient changes to our integrity policies and procedures:

– Integrity champions and advisers have been appointed in each College and School/Institute, to provide increased visibility for good research practice and a local contact point for questions about research integrity;
– There is a revised procedure for investigating allegations of research misconduct, including an expanded definition of research misconduct, flowcharts that outline the steps involved in an investigation, and the introduction of an 'Integrity Council' to arbitrate on decisions at key stages;
– Comprehensive guidance relating to research integrity, including resources related to the developments listed above, has been collected on a new website[5].

Research Data Management Service: The University has an RDM Service to support researchers in implementing good data management practices and meeting funder requirements. The service comprises three staff members with responsibility for service coordination, technical coordination, and staff training and support. An institutional research data repository and registry can be used for the long-term storage and appropriate sharing of data that underpin research publications. The service also provides training on all aspects of RDM for students and staff, as well as tailored support.

Misconduct Investigations, 2015/16: The Table below summarises the nature and status of active formal investigations into alleged misconduct conducted over the past year (August 2015–July 2016). A formal investigation is conducted by a panel to examine and evaluate all relevant facts to determine whether there are sufficient grounds for proceeding with the allegation under the Staff Disciplinary Procedures or Student Code of Conduct.

Respondent(s)	Nature of allegation	Status	Outcome (where available)
Postgraduate Research Student (PGR)	Plagiarism	Formal investigation complete	Corrected thesis to be resubmitted
PGR	Plagiarism	Formal investigation complete; conduct committee investigation ongoing	N/A
Staff and PGRs	Falsification of Data	Formal investigation ongoing	N/A

[4] http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/research-concordat.aspx
[5] http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/rsio/researchstrategypolicies/researchintegrity/