

Board of Governor's Meeting					
Title of paper:	Annual Research Integrity Statement 2021-22				
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VCG sponsor:	Professor Linda King, PVC Research and Global Partnerships				
Status of Paper:	Open	X	Confidential		Strictly Confidential
Status of Appendices:	Open		Confidential		Strictly Confidential

Presented for: <i>(*Please highlight in bold)</i>	Approve	Discussion	Noting	Information
Executive summary:	The PVC for Research and Global Partnerships makes a statement to the Board of Governors each year on actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues.			
Recommendation:	The Board is asked to receive and approve the Annual Research Integrity Statement 2021-22. Subject to Board approval, the statement will be published on the University's Research Integrity website as required by our signatory to the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity.			

Previously considered by: <i>Considered and approved by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee on 17 May 2022</i>
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Compliance / regulatory requirements (if applicable)	UK Research Integrity Office UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity
Resource Implications (if applicable)	N/A
Consultation	ORIGIN Subgroup of RKEC University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

Annual Research Integrity Statement 2021-2022

1. General context

- 1.1. Oxford Brookes University is committed to maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research, ensuring that our research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, as set out in the Universities UK Concordat to support research integrity. This concordat provides a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance, underpinned by best practice and support for the development of researchers. It also sets out expectations that Universities will have transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise.
- 1.2. The University already has policies covering academic integrity and how to deal with reports of misconduct which can be found, along with other support policy documents at: <https://intranet.brookes.ac.uk/research-support/policies-procedures-and-codes-of-practice/>
Policies relating to research involving human participants, including security-sensitive research: <https://intranet.brookes.ac.uk/research-support/research-ethics/>
Codes of conduct for staff:
<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/human-resources/working-here/employment-policies/code-of-conduct-for-staff/>;
Student Conduct Regulations and Procedure:
<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/appeals-complaints-and-conduct/c1-2/>.
The Annual Research Integrity Statement is reported to the Board of Governors each year, and the University also publishes it on its dedicated Integrity webpage.
- 1.3. This Research Integrity Statement covers the academic year 2021-2022 and summarises the University's status relative to the expectations of the Concordat. It outlines actions and activities undertaken in support of fostering a culture of research integrity, and provides a high-level summary of investigations (if any) of research misconduct that have been undertaken by the University.
- 1.4. The Pro Vice Chancellor, Research and Global Partnerships, is responsible for institutional oversight on matters relating to research integrity. She reports to the University's Board of Governors on an annual basis on any reports of misconduct (last report made in July 2021). She

works closely with staff across the University ensuring that appropriate standards of academic integrity are maintained.

- 1.5. In addition to processes relating to staff, research students are introduced to the University's academic integrity policies and procedures during their mandatory induction - which is run three times a year - and receive instruction about the University's stance on attribution and plagiarism in academic writing. As part of the Research Degrees Committee's Annual Progress Monitoring process, research students' work is reviewed to ensure they are working within the scope of the University's regulations and policies covering academic integrity. All students are required to submit a chapter of their thesis or piece of academic writing through Turnitin during the annual monitoring process. A training session on data management, storage, archiving and sharing is run annually and is open to all research students. In addition, as part of the formal Registration process, all research students are required to provide details of how their data will be stored and managed during the course of the programme, and how it will be archived on completion of the degree.
- 1.6. The University has a well-established research ethics process (see also more details below), which adheres to the principles of the UKRI and ESRC ethics in research guidelines. As part of this process, all staff and research students are offered research ethics training and support both at faculty and university level. The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) membership is made up of a Chair, appointed by the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC); the Research Ethics and Integrity Officer; Research Ethics Officers with expertise from each of the faculties; a Research Ethics Officer to oversee applications from the Directorates, an internal expert on data protection and information compliance; a PhD student representative and external lay members from the local community with no links to the University.

2. Named contact for Academic Integrity issues

- 2.1. The named contact for any initial issues concerning research integrity is Sarah Taylor, Research Support Director, who liaises with the Pro Vice Chancellor, Research and Global Partnerships on the appropriate way to respond to the concern, invoking the agreed procedures where necessary.

3. Updates this year

- 3.1. The University reviewed its requirements in line with changing government directives. Researchers who needed to conduct face-to-face or in-person research must complete a Covid risk assessment form, discuss the project with their research line manager, comply with any local Covid related policies, and on occasion get approval from the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Global Partnerships to conduct the research. This updated policy process applies to research on-site, off-site and overseas.

3.2. The Research Integrity webpage is being maintained, so that staff and research students can access the Academic Integrity policy and these statements:

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/research/research-integrity-statement/>

The 'Research Integrity Resources' web page pulls together a range of internal and external policies, codes of practice, guidelines and other information on issues such as data management, finance, referencing and plagiarism:

<https://intranet.brookes.ac.uk/research-support/policies-procedures-and-codes-of-practice/research-integrity-resources/>

This resources web page was formally reviewed by the The Open Research, Integrity and Governance Improvement Nexus (ORIGIN) steering group in Semester 1, 21/22. ORIGIN made a number of recommendations:

- Reorganising the format from a long list, into grouped sub-heading concertina menus, to make the contents clear at first glance;
- Making the source of each resource stand out more;
- Adding a new category on Communications (Social media guidelines and News & media relations);
- Updating the procedure on accessing Good Clinical Practice Training at OBU;
- Adding the link to Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) under the section on Peer Review;
- Adding a new category on Open Data (to include a link to our Research And Digital Assets Repository (RADAR) and the UKRI's Concordat on Open Research Data)
- Adding a new category on Open Methods (to include the OBU Position Statement on Research Transparency, Registered Reports (Center for Open Science) and Registered Reports: what are they and why are they important? (Royal Society)).

All recommendations were incorporated and the web page revisions went live in November 2021.

3.3. A Review of Research Support was undertaken between May-December 2021, led by a senior academic in the University. This has led to the decision to take forward a new Directorate of Research, Innovation and Enterprise as a focal point for all activities of this kind. It is intended that the new structure be in place by August/September 2022. This will provide an opportunity to strengthen support for research governance, through the appointment of a lead for research culture and practice, and ethics (see below).

3.4. The review of UREC processes have been conducted over the academic year 2021-2022. The final recommendations will see the creation of two cross-faculty sub-committees that will be responsible for the reviewing of applications. UREC will retain oversight of these, be responsible for providing University guidance and as a final point of reference for complex or sensitive applications.

- 3.5. The University subscribes to the UK Research Integrity Office and the Research Ethics and Integrity Officer attended the virtual annual UKRIO conference on 25th and 26th May 2022.
- 3.6. IT Services continue to provide their mandatory online training in data security and data protection for all staff, which includes sections on research data. The University achieved the globally recognised information security certificate ISO/IEC 27001 in June 2019.
- 3.7. In our 2019-2020 statement we reported that the University had agreed to licence a series of online modules on research integrity, some of which were being updated by the supplier to reflect new legislation. However, as the UKRIO is committed to providing similar provision for the sector, we have decided to wait for that provision instead and will roll that out as mandatory training for all research-active academics, research-only staff and research students. We are still waiting for the provision of this training from UKRIO.
- 3.8. The Open Research, Integrity and Governance Improvement Nexus (ORIGIN) continues to meet. This is chaired by a senior academic with responsibility for Research Integrity and Improvement and who has a seat on the University's RKEC. He is also the University's representative to the UK Reproducibility Network. ORIGIN is looking at ways to foster good research conduct through open research practices and strong research integrity, and to encourage openness and consistency in research governance across the institution. It meets twice a semester and its members are taken from existing support mechanisms (IT, Library, Research Support Office, UREC) as well as others interested in developments in these areas. ORIGIN has also taken on the responsibility for progressing work on Responsible Metrics.
- 3.9. The University had committed to resource a new post to support Research Data Management but this had to be put on hold as resources were needed to support other aspects of research in response to the pandemic, and then initial recruitment efforts were unsuccessful. It is hoped the post will be filled for the next academic year. The Research Data Manager will sit in the Research and Business Development Office (moving to the new Directorate from August 2022) working closely with the Library, IT Services, UREC and the ORIGIN group to support academic staff in their research data management and training needs.
- 3.10. The University Library intends to appoint a Research Liaison Lead whose role will include the promotion of good research practice and conduct, such as Open Access, Open Data, Responsible Metrics, and the reuse of 3rd-party copyright materials in research publications. They will also offer training sessions on these topics for the University's postgraduate research students.

3.11. The University continues to licence Studyline, a project and portfolio management software developed specifically for the management of clinical studies. The licence enables the maintenance of studies, as well as overall oversight, for all partners involved in those studies.

4. Events

4.1. The University's training programme for research-active academics and research-only staff, sits under the umbrella accredited training programme, 'EXPLORE@Brookes' (EXcellence in Promoting Leadership Of Research and Education). The following six mandatory University Research & KE training sessions have a focus on integrity and run annually:

- 1) 'University Research Induction' - Covers internal and external integrity policies, concordats, ethics and misconduct.
- 2) 'Applying for External Research Grants' - Includes information on costing the project budget and support.
- 3) 'Managing an External Research Grant' - Focuses on the responsibilities of the Principal Investigator in managing the project and managing staff. It covers where to find post-award support, including open access and publishing, research ethics, data management, contracts and information on financial management of the project budget, auditing and reporting.
- 4) 'Navigating the Research Ethics Approval Process' - This session is mandatory for new starters whose research involves human participants, human material or personal data and is open as a refresher to all research-active staff. Covers procedures for obtaining research ethics approval from the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and who can help at Faculty and University levels.
- 5) 'Open Research and Research Integrity' - Covers open and transparent research, responsible metrics and research integrity. For 21/22, the content for this session was expanded to include: An Introduction to Research Integrity for Research Staff (covering the OBU Code of Practice for Academic Integrity, including procedures for investigating allegations of misconduct in research and how this applies to *all* research-active staff); and brief overviews of the Concordat on Open Research Data, Concordat to Support Research Integrity and DORA.
- 6) 'Data Management' - Covers data protection, data sharing and open access publishing and IT resources for research data management.

4.2. The Graduate College training delivered in the 21/22 academic year included the following sessions for research students and supervisors:

- Copyright for research students: RADAR and submitting the electronic version of your thesis (students)
- Supporting your research students to manage their research records and make a data management plan (supervisors); Publishing your research data, with particular focus on Oxford Brookes' institutional repository RADAR (students)

- Training to Enable Supervisors and Research Students to Develop Applications for Ethical Approval (students and supervisors)
- Managing your research records and your data management plan (students)
- Research integrity at Brookes - a brief guide to general principles (students)

5. Misconduct report

5.1. There were no on-going investigations from previous years.

5.2. At the time of writing, there were no new investigations initiated in 2021-22.

Professor Linda King

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04-05-2022