

September 2022

Introduction

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity was launched in 2012 and revised in 2019 with support from the Government, Research England and major research funders such as UKRI.

Commitments

BU upholds the commitments detailed in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (Concordat) and is committed to fulfilling the principles of the Concordat by providing a framework in support for good research conduct and its governance.

1. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.
2. We are committed to ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.
3. We are committed to supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers.
4. We are committed to using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise.
5. We are committed to working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.

In accordance with the Concordat, this annual statement outlines the activities in support of the highest standard of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research undertaken at BU during the 2021/22 academic year.

Policy framework:

- Research Ethics Code of Practice
- BU Code of Good Research Practice
- Research Misconduct: Policy and Procedure
- Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedures
- Research Data Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health & Safety in Research
- BU Risk Assessment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Information Classification Policy

- Code of Practice for Research Degrees
- Code of Practice for the Employment and Development of Research Staff
- RKE Development Framework Policy

During 2021/22 the following activities continued to support research integrity:

- Training workshops for research students were delivered online under the Doctoral College's Research Development Framework Programme.
- Training workshops for supervisors were delivered online under Supervisory Training by the Doctoral College.
- Training workshops for Researchers (staff and postgraduate research students) were delivered under the Research and Knowledge Exchange Development Framework (RKEDF) by Research Development & Support (RDS).
- Online ethics e-modules continue to be mandatory for all those carrying out research under the auspices of BU.
- The Research Ethics Committee (REC) continued to provide oversight of activities and assurance on behalf of Senate:
 - The Science, Technology & Health and Social Sciences & Humanities Research Ethics Panels (REPs), continued to ensure best ethical practice by reviewing research ethics applications for Staff and PGR (high risk).
 - Faculties and Departments continue to manage the review process of ethics submissions for UG, PGT (low and high risk) and PGR (low risk).
 - Carried out an annual review of the Research Ethics Code of Practice
- The University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust's status recognises the close working relationship with BU and includes research collaboration, placement support and recruitment and training opportunities. A BU-UHD Partnership Steering Committee now meets regularly in support of these activities.
- BU subscribes to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) (Commitments 1 and 3).
- The Clinical Governance Adviser (CGA) has recently been appointed a volunteer advisor for the UK Research Integrity Office. This role will include responding to questions and concerns about the conduct of research that UKRIO receive. There will also be the opportunity to develop some of UKRIO's published guidance; assist with the development or delivery of their education and training; or volunteer on institutional misconduct investigation panels.

Ongoing activities

- The CGA continues to oversee the processes by which BU ensures all NHS-related research complies with relevant legislation. All research activity taking place in the NHS requires a Sponsor which is overseen by the CGA supporting Researchers through the Health Regulatory Authority process. This also requires undertaking ongoing monitoring. Ethical review of such research is undertaken by an appropriate NHS Research Ethics Committee.

- The Science, Technology & Health and Social Sciences & Humanities Research Ethics Panels (REPs), continue to review research ethics submission for Staff (both risk levels) and PGR (high risk).
- Faculties/Departments are responsible for the review of UG/PGT and PGR (low risk) ethics submissions.
- BU's Research Integrity week took place during May 2022 which included an opening session from Keynote Speaker, James Parry, UKRIO with practical workshops themed around understanding honesty and dishonesty and retaining integrity (research practice, working with the NHS, publications and open access, diversity, accessibility & inclusivity).

Planned activities

- To review our existing RKEDF framework, RDS (Research Excellence and Governance Teams) will work together to ensure all training opportunities offered through the RKEDF embed the behaviours required to ensure our research outputs are of the highest standards on integrity and to explore future one day events. Some of the practical sessions delivered during Integrity Week will now be embedded in the RKEDF.
- Launch a new Sharepoint Knowledge Base (Research Integrity) to bring together guidance for researchers.
- Launch new research comms related to research governance and integrity to purvey key messages.

Addressing research misconduct

BU has policies and procedures to respond to research misconduct; namely

- Research Misconduct: Policy and Procedure
- Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards
- Code of Practice for Research Degrees
- Research Ethics Code of Practice: Policy and Procedure
- Code of Good Research Practice
- Academic Appeals: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards
- Academic Appeals: Policy and Procedure for Research Awards
- Student Disciplinary: Procedure
- Third Party Involvement: Procedure
- Dignity and Respect (Harassment) Policy and Procedures
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Grievance Procedure
- Staff Suspension Procedure
- "Whistleblowing" (Disclosure in the Public Interest) Policy and Procedures
- Conflicts of Interest Policy and Procedures
- Data Protection Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy and Procedures
- Investigation Procedure

The Research Misconduct policy applies to staff and postgraduate research students undertaking research under the auspices of the University. It also applies to undergraduate and postgraduate taught students in relation to suspected cases of a serious breach of research ethics.

In 2021/2022 there were:

- no reported cases of allegations relating to a serious breach of research ethics made against any UG or PGT students.
- there were no reported cases of allegations relating to research misconduct made against any PGR student.
- There was one reported staff case logged under the Research Misconduct policy.

| Type of allegation | Stage reached | Investigation result |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Non-compliance of research governance | preliminary stage | minor infractions which do not constitute research misconduct |

Recommendation

That this statement is approved as BU's 2021/22 annual report on research integrity and be made publicly available on the research website.

This statement has been approved by the Research & Professional Performance Committee.

Anyone with comments, concerns or questions regarding research integrity at Bournemouth University should contact Mrs Julie Northam, Head of Research Development & Support by email to researchintegrity@bournemouth.ac.uk