

Board of Governors -

17th October 2017



Executive Summary

The Annual Statement is required as part of continued compliance with The Concordat to Support Research Integrity. The Concordat was ratified in 2012, with the objective of ensuring that research produced or in collaboration with the UK research community is underpinned by a culture of honesty and integrity.

Title	Outline Annual Statement in accordance with UEL’s commitment to The Concordat to Support Research Integrity, 2012
Author	Catherine Fieulleateau, Research Integrity and Ethics Manager
Date	17th October 2017
Status	To be approved
Strategic context	The University of East London adheres to its responsibility to maintain the highest standards of research integrity. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) implemented funding agreements and conditions for institutions in receipt of research grants from the Council, to provide assurances of compliance with the Concordat through the Institution’s Annual return.
Risk analysis	The University risks damage to its reputation, subsequently affecting our ability to obtain external research funding, should it fail to abide by the principles of the Concordat and confirm in the HEFCE Annual report that it is maintaining compliance.
Summary	<p>The University of East London conducts high quality, innovative research and is guided by the principles and standards specified in The Concordat to Support Research Integrity, 2012; the University’s Code of Practice for Research; Code of Practice for Research Ethics and the Procedures for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research, for both staff and students.</p> <p>In accordance with the Concordat, and to support consistently high standards of research integrity, the summary below will be made publicly available.</p>

Recommendation/ Decision	The Board of Governors are asked to approve the summary report
Resource implications	N/A
Consultation	N/A
Further actions/ deadlines	A review of research governance across the Institution took place to improve connectivity between the operations of the Schools, Institutes and support services. The University has undergone an organisational review and is now moving towards a Collegiate structure and the Schools are now formed in to Colleges. Research conducted in each College is devolved to the appropriate discipline and reviewed in accordance with their relevant principles and practices. An online application system for managing applications for ethical approval is being developed and will be implemented in Academic year 2017-18.

Outline Annual Statement on Research Integrity 2016-17

The University of East London conducts high quality, innovative research and is guided by the principles and standards specified in The Concordat to Support Research Integrity, 2012

1. Supporting and Strengthening Research Integrity

- 1.1 The University continues to review its research integrity and ethics policies and practices, to assist researchers to conduct their research to high standards of integrity and ethical conduct. The University raises awareness and highlights researchers' obligations to ensure that their research projects are aligned with appropriate legal, ethical and professional frameworks. The University supports the development of researchers by providing a Researcher Development Programme and research integrity and ethics training sessions are held regularly for all staff and students. The University also supports research governance and integrity by subscribing to the Oxford University Press online modules on research integrity.
- 1.2 The University appointed a new Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange and Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC), Dr Lisa Mooney, and a new research strategy will be launched in 2017-18. The University held a dialogues day to assemble research active Academics across the breadth of the University, to discuss possible themes and subject matters that would resonate across all disciplines, and create a focal point for interdisciplinary ideation and collaboration to take place.
- 1.3 Research Councils UK (RCUK) conducted an audit to ensure that the University was complying with RCUK Policy and Guidelines on the Governance of Good Research Conduct and RCUK's narrative statement in meeting the requirements of the Concordat. The University is compliant with RCUK's Policy and Guidelines on the Governance of Good Research Conduct. It was recognised that the University's policies and procedures provided assurance that its research environment is underpinned by a culture of high standards, rigour, and integrity, and is meeting the Commitments of the Concordat.
- 1.4 The University reviewed its obligations as sponsor for research projects involving the NHS, to ensure alignment with the Health Research Authority (HRA) regulations. There is clear guidance on the processes and procedures for obtaining sponsorship from the University for a NHS research project. A safeguarding procedure has been developed to ensure that the University has an appropriate reporting mechanism for protecting participants of research projects.
- 1.5 The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching created a programme assessment mapping tool, which is being piloted by the Applied Health and Communities and Professional Services Colleges. The assessment map provides an evidence base of good practice that can be shared across programmes to assist student engagement and progression and provide focused support for Academic staff. The University will continue to monitor its practices to maintain and improve their suitability and relevance in championing research integrity, and sustaining a vital and ethical research environment.

2. The University's Research Ethics Committees

- 2.1 The UREC Committee and associated Sub-Committees are all fully validated and approved and they collate and monitor the Annual reports of activity for all applications for ethical approval. An audit of the University's collaborative partners who conduct research with human participants or human data was also completed and continue to be monitored. The Sub-Committee's completion of Annual reports to UREC, detailing the activities of each of the research ethics Committee's demonstrates compliance with the Concordat.
- 2.2 The School of Psychology underwent a British Psychological Society (BPS) re-accreditation review. The School was commended for its programme teams' teaching of ethics, which is beyond that of just for the purpose of research, and the BPS complimented how ethics is embedded throughout the delivery.
- 2.3 UREC conducted an audit of a random sample of existing research projects for information on the progress of the study or its conclusion, and in addition, Committee members were given applications for ethical approval for moderation. The audit was to ensure that the research projects are being conducted in accordance with the conditions of ethical approval and the University's Code of Practice policies, and that UREC is providing consistent ethical reviews. Each Sub-Committee also sampled ethics applications for moderation. Overall, the research ethics Committees were consistent in their review of research ethics applications. However, the University strives for excellence and will continue to provide mechanisms to support its Sub-Committees and raise awareness of good research practice.
- 2.4 The University has engaged a company to develop an online research ethics application system for implementation in 2017-18. The intuitive system will provide a streamlined process for applicants to apply for ethical approval, easy access to all University research policies, transparent data reporting functions and a clear audit trail for monitoring and Annual reporting. The online application system will reduce the pressure on the University's Sub-Committees.

3. Training and External Engagement

- 3.1 The University continues to foster a culture of honesty in research to assist all researchers and partners in understanding their responsibilities and obligations, ensuring that they are equipped with the necessary skills to conduct high quality research.
- 3.2 The University held a Research and Knowledge Exchange Conference, which included sessions on Global Challenges, Data, Manipulation and Hacking and Risk. This Annual event allows academics and students to convene around important issues and topics, ensuring our communities of practice (including staff, students and professional support) are fully engaged personally and collectively in sharing best practice around ethical conduct.
- 3.3 The Research Ethics Development programme is available to all research active staff and postgraduate research students from all disciplines. The online Epigeum Research Integrity Modules continue to be a source of guidance and support for researchers whose studies involve human participants, human material or personal or sensitive data. All UREC Committee members including those external or new to

the institution, and Sub-Committee Chairs members are required to complete the online Research Integrity Modules before commencement of Committee duties.

- 3.4 It is mandatory for all new MPhil, PhD, Professional doctorates and Masters by research students to complete the Epigeum Research Integrity Modules, before being permitted to register their research project.
- 3.5 Research integrity and ethics training has taken place throughout the Academic year, including bespoke, discipline specific training sessions. Researchers are provided with comprehensive information, guidance and support on the University's Codes of Practice and ethics policies, national requirements for research integrity and ethics and best practice, HRA guidelines, and the University's application processes and procedures for obtaining ethical approval.

4. Processes in place for Research Misconduct

- 4.1 The University's Code of Practice for Research and Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research for staff and students were reviewed in the Academic year 2014-15. The University revised procedures to investigate allegations of misconduct in research by staff and a separate set of procedures for those involving students. The policies have been fully approved and made available on our internal research ethics website.

5. Investigations of Research Misconduct

- 5.1 For Academic year 2016-17, there were no formal cases of misconduct in research under the University's Procedures for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research. One informal investigation was conducted regarding possible research misconduct; however, the matter was resolved and did not require a formal investigation.

6. Equality impact assessment

- 6.1 The University has a statutory duty to pay due regard to the equality impact of developing, applying and monitoring its policies and procedures. The University's policies and procedures meet the University's duty on equality under the Equality Act 2010. An equality analysis has been completed to improve the transparency of processes and procedures and ensure accountability. The University continues to improve its equality assessment and an Annual report is completed which monitors the year's policies, targets and statistics.

7. Risk Assessment

- 7.1 The University continues to protect its interests and achieve good practice in risk management, while complying fully with the requirements of HEFCE. The University's Risk Management Policy and Procedure was updated in May 2015 and is currently under review for Academic year 2017-18.