

## ANNUAL STATEMENT ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY 2023-24

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The Concordat to Support Research Integrity requires employers of researchers to provide an annual statement outlining compliance with the Concordat for Research Integrity. The Annual Statement must be presented to the governing body, and subsequently be made publicly available, ordinarily through the institution's website.

<b>Name of institution:</b> Falmouth University
<b>Period under review:</b> 2023/24
<b>Date approved by governing body:</b> Friday 27 September 2024
<b>Date made publicly available:</b> Tuesday 22 October 2024
<b>Web address of statement:</b> <a href="https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/research-ethics-integrity">https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/research-ethics-integrity</a>
<b>Web address of institutional research integrity page:</b> <a href="https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/research-ethics-integrity">https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/research/research-ethics-integrity</a>
<b>Named contact points for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Questions/ information on research integrity:</b> Projects Officer, Research Culture &amp; Environment, Katy Shannon: <a href="mailto:katy.shannon@falmouth.ac.uk">katy.shannon@falmouth.ac.uk</a></li><li>• <b>Concerns about research integrity/ research misconduct:</b> Pro Vice-Chancellor Research &amp; Knowledge Exchange, Professor David Prior: <a href="mailto:pro-vc-rke@falmouth.ac.uk">pro-vc-rke@falmouth.ac.uk</a></li></ul>
<b>Date statement sent to Concordat Signatories via <a href="mailto:Rlsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk">Rlsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk</a>:</b> Monday 21 October 2024

## **ANNUAL RESEARCH INTEGRITY STATEMENT**

### **1. Summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support research integrity:**

Research and knowledge exchange (RKE) are core to Falmouth's academic culture and the University is committed to advancing and safeguarding the highest standards of governance in all its RKE activities.

A number of initiatives have been implemented in recent years to support the development of a research environment that helps to develop good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity, the key elements of which are honesty, rigour, transparency and the care and respect of all participants.

New activities undertaken in the 23/24 academic year include:

- Further research integrity & ethics training opportunities have been developed; including additional training and support for PGR students on research integrity and ethics, which has led to an increase in timely research ethics applications.
- A new 'Open Research Ethics Forum' is being piloted for researchers to convene to talk about research ethics outside of the formal committee structure;
- The membership of the Research Integrity & Ethics Committee was increased to include representation across all academic schools and departments;
- The academic governance framework was updated, with Research Integrity & Ethics Committee reporting directly to Academic Board to raise visibility, particularly around oversight of research ethics processes for taught programmes.
- The Research Integrity & Ethics Committee has adapted to its increasing workload by implementing a process of close (written) review by two members ahead of meetings to ensure applications are given full consideration in the time available.
- The Research & Knowledge Exchange (RKE) pages of the staff intranet are being updated to ensure a full set of toolkits to guide researchers in all aspects of RKE.
- Departmental RKE Plans are being refreshed for 24/25, incorporating focussed delivery plans.
- The institution's Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct is being updated in line with latest UKRIO guidance.

### **Governance**

the Research Integrity & Ethics Committee oversees the integrity of the University's research on behalf of the Academic Board. The Research Integrity & Ethics Committee annual report for 23/24 reviewed the business conducted over the year, confirming that all the terms of reference had been attended to.

The University's Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Knowledge Exchange (Professor Prior) oversees the University's Research Misconduct process. The Projects Officer, Research Culture & Environment (Katy Shannon), acts as the first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on research integrity matters.

### **Policy and Guidance**

The Research Integrity and Ethics Policy has integrated elements of the UK Research Integrity Office (UK RIO)'s checklist for researchers. This policy was revised in September 2021 to incorporate research ethics applications for postgraduate research students (formerly following protocols of research degree validating partner, UAL)

The accompanying Handbook to Support Research Integrity & Ethics for staff and postgraduate research students contains a comprehensive overview of the University's adoption of the five core principles of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

Falmouth became members of the UK Research Integrity Office (UK RIO) in 2019, giving access to guidance and externally run training opportunities for staff and RIEC members (with all RIEC members taking part in training in May 2021).

### **Training and development**

Support for researchers to understand research integrity and ethics and how it relates to their research practice are incorporated into the Research Student Development Programme, Research Supervisor Forum and Researcher Development Programme. Additionally, more in-depth research integrity training materials, created by the University of Dundee, are available via the University online learning platform.

Staff from across the institution have signed up to the UKRIO pilot of new online training materials, to be carried out in the 12 months from May 2024.

A new Open Research Ethics Forum is being piloted, as an opportunity for staff across the institution to meet and discuss research ethics matters with members of the Research Integrity & Ethics Committee outside of formal committee review processes.

**2. Statement on processes that the institution has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct:**

The University's Whistleblowing Policy outlines the policy and procedural framework of Falmouth University in respect of the reporting of concerns of wrongdoing in the public interest, and the investigation and management of such concerns.

The University's Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research outlines the process to be followed when allegations of misconduct in research are brought against a researcher in relation to research conducted under the auspices of the Institution. Falmouth University is committed to ensuring that investigations are thorough and fair and conducted in a transparent and timely way.

Working group updating in line with UKRIO updated template.

**3. High-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken:**

<b>Allegations during the period under review</b>	<b>Number</b>
Allegations received during the period under review	3
Allegations received during previous year/s that are concluded during the period under review	0
Allegations undergoing initial investigation/screening	0
Allegations undergoing full investigation	0
Allegations upheld in full after full investigation	3
Allegations upheld in part after full investigation	0
Allegations dismissed after full investigation	0
Allegations still under investigation at time of writing (whether received during the period under review or during previous years)	0

<b>Breakdown of allegations by type</b> <i>(see Commitment 4, Concordat to Support Research Integrity)</i>	<b>Number</b>
Fabrication	0
Falsification	0
Plagiarism	1
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	2
Misrepresentation (e.g. of data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0
Unknown at time of writing	0
Other	0

**4. Lessons learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken:**

N/A

**5. Statement on how the institution creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct: ...**

Awareness of the standards and behaviours expected of researchers is maintained through a suite of training and development modes. The Chair of the Research Integrity & Ethics Committee has produced a training video on undertaking a research ethics review, which compliments the Integrity and Ethics training sessions held within staff and PGR student programmes of researcher development.

The research governance structure at Falmouth was reviewed to ensure that policies relating to research, research integrity and researcher behaviour were implemented effectively. The Professoriate and research leads have key roles to play in supporting the Research culture and environment.

With these development opportunities and defined internal contacts for research integrity and ethics, Falmouth University aims to create and embed a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel informed and comfortable to report instances of misconduct.