

Annual Report on Research Integrity 2019/20

Introduction

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity was published in 2012 by Universities UK to provide a 'comprehensive framework for good research conduct and its governance'. The intention of the Concordat is to help ensure that research carried out by or in partnership with the UK research community is supported by high standards of rigour and integrity. The Concordat recognizes the different responsibilities of researchers, employers of researchers and funders of research, as well as the vital role that organisations, who are engaged with supporting research and researchers, play in reinforcing research integrity. The Concordat applies to all fields of research, emphasizes responsibilities and accountabilities, complements existing frameworks and recognizes the autonomy of employers.

Glyndŵr University is committed to upholding the principles of the Concordat:

1. maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research
2. ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards
3. 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. using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise
5. working together to strengthen the integrity of research and reviewing progress regularly and openly

The University's Board of Governors publish an annual report on research integrity, in line with the expectations of the Concordat. This report has been considered and agreed by the University's Research Committee and by Academic Board prior to publication by the Board of Governors.

Implementation of the Concordat

The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research is responsible for oversight of research integrity; enquiries about research integrity should be addressed to the Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Research integrity and the University's Regulations on Research Practice are overseen by the University's Research Committee on behalf of Academic Board; a standing item on its agenda is "Review of Research Misconduct Policy and Cases". Allegations of research misconduct involving the University's staff or students are dealt with according to the provisions of the University's Disciplinary Procedure for Staff and/or the Disciplinary Procedure for Students, Academic Misconduct Procedure or Suitability for Practice Procedure, as appropriate. Allegations of research misconduct involving researchers conducting research under the auspices of the University but who are neither staff nor students will be reported to the Pro Vice-Chancellor in the first instance and referred to the Dean of an academic Faculty for investigation.

No cases of research misconduct were reported in 2019/20.

In accordance with the Concordat, the University makes provision for any person to raise concerns about the integrity of research being carried out under the auspices of the University. The arrangements are set out in the Third Party Complaints Procedure and the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy.

The Research Ethics Sub-Committee reviews and develops processes to ensure the effective review and authorisation of application for ethical approval of research projects at all levels, and considers individual cases which meet relevant criteria.

The Postgraduate Research Student and Supervisor Handbooks include reference to the responsibilities of researchers in relation to the Concordat.

The University's support for the development of researchers is coordinated by the Researcher Development Tutor. Research integrity itself forms an important element of researcher development and is included in initial research supervisor training. Generic and subject specific training and awareness sessions on research ethics are delivered throughout each academic year.

Research may take place at all levels of study and career development, and support and advice is available for all members of the WGU community. Postgraduate research students have ongoing support from members of their supervisory team in addition to regular formal supervisory meetings. Students in taught programmes are supported by their personal tutors, and dissertation supervisors and/or module leaders. The Associate Deans for Research (one of whom is also the Researcher Development Tutor) and Head of Research Services provide information and advice to staff as requested.

This report was endorsed by the University's Board of Governors on 20 November 2020.