

Annual Report on Research Integrity 2020/21

Introduction

The revised concordat, published in 2019, represents a renewed ambition to further strengthen the Concordat to support research integrity. It provides the principles and commitments to ensure that research produced by, or in collaboration with, UK universities, research institutes and others undertaking research is underpinned by the highest standards of rigour and integrity.

Glyndwr University is committed to upholding the principles of the Concordat: maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research:

- uphold the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research
- ensure that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards
- support 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
- use transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to handle allegations of research misconduct when they arise
- work together to strengthen the integrity of research

In compliance with the final commitment of the 2019 Concordat, the University's Board of Governance publish an annual report of research integrity, which has been considered and agreed by the University Research Committee and by the Academic Board before being published publicly on the University's external webpages.

Key Contacts and Named Person

The University's Research Committee oversee the integrity of the University's research on behalf of the Academic Board. The Research Committee meet three times a year and a standing agenda item is 'Review of Research Misconduct Policy and Cases'. The Research Committee agreed in October 2021 to change this standing item to include, 'Review of Promoting Research Integrity' to further embed and implement the concordat to support research integrity.

The University's Named Person for Research Integrity is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, Professor Richard Day. The University recognises that concerns relating to research integrity can be complex and highly sensitive which can impact the emotional and mental wellbeing of those involved. Any person wishing to raise, in confidence, concerns about the conduct or integrity of research conducted under the auspices of the University can do so by contacting the Named Person for research integrity, Professor Richard Day or the named contact point, Head of Research Services, Frances Thomason.

Concerns can also be raised initially at a local level via the Deans of each academic Faculty.

Policies and Procedures

The University has policies and procedures in place to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with standards of best practice and to the highest levels of ethics and integrity. The University understands the importance of providing clear transparent policies,

procedures, and guidance following standards of best practice. The University has recently reviewed their 'Regulations on Research Practice' which applies to all members of the University involved in research, including staff, students and those working under the University's auspices or research facilities. The policy outlines the principles that all researchers are expected to adhere in accordance with good research practice following the UK Research Integrity Office's Code of Practice for Research. The Regulations on Research Practice also outlines the University's definitions of research misconduct and the procedures to be followed when there is an allegation of misconduct in research.

The Code of Practice on Ethical Standards for Research applies to undergraduate and postgraduate students, and staff members, engaged in research. The code of practice provides a framework of ethical responsibilities and is equipped with a set of principles for guiding their conduct.

The University's Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Procedure provides a mechanism under which genuine concerns made in good faith can be raised internally without fear of repercussions to the individual.

Research Integrity Activities and Development

The University is committed to ensuring and maintaining a research environment that develops good research practise and embeds a culture of research integrity. It is recognised that multiple initiatives must be adopted to strengthen the understanding of research integrity across the University.

The University acknowledges that training is essential in embedding research integrity and research ethics within the research environment. Information regarding the Concordat is including in new starter packs and welcome emails. The Postgraduate Research Student and Supervisor Handbooks include references 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 are 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.

Research Misconduct

Responsibilities for monitoring research misconduct at the University lies within the Research Office reporting to the Research Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for research. 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 Integrity Procedure or Suitability for Practice Procedure, as appropriate. Related procedures have appropriate principles and mechanisms to ensure investigations are thorough and fair, carried out in a transparent and timely manner, and protected by appropriate confidentiality.

No Cases of Research Misconduct were reported in 2020/2021.

This report was endorsed by the University's Board of Governors on 26th November 2021.