Research Integrity Annual Statement 2022-2023

1.0 Key Information

Organisation Name	University of Central Lancashire
Organisation Type	Higher Education
Date statement approved by governing body	14/06/2023
Institutes research integrity web address	https://www.uclan.ac.uk/research/integrity
Named Senior Member of staff	Professor Duncan Sayer Chair of the Research, Knowledge Exchange and Governance Sub Committee OfficerForEthics@uclan.ac.uk
Named Point of contact	Emma Neil Head of Ethics, Integrity and Governance Unit: OfficerForEthics@uclan.ac.uk

2.0 Introduction

The University of Central Lancashire is strongly committed to fulfilling the principles of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity which was first published in July 2012 and revised and strengthened in October 2019. The principles and commitments include:

- Maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research

- Ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards

- 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

- Using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise

- Working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.

In compliance with the Concordat, the University is publishing a Statement on Research Integrity on an annual basis. This statement covers the period of September 2022 – August 2023 and has been prepared for the University's Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Ethics Committee to summarise how the University of Central Lancashire ensures compliance with the terms of the Concordat and meets the expectations outlined within this for both research institutions and individual researchers.

2.0 Summary of Activities to Promote Research Integrity
2.1 Policies and Procedures

The University sets out its commitment to research integrity in the [Code of Conduct for Research](#), further Strengthened by the [Ethical Principles](#) document which are reviewed annually by the Ethics, Approval or any amendments are made by the Academic Board via the Research, Knowledge Exchange and Ethics Committee.

The University [Policy for Misconduct in Research](#) outlines the process to be followed for investigation of allegations of research misconduct. Details of these policies are disseminated through the academic staff induction and the research student induction, as well as the training programme run throughout the year.

In addition to these polices, other documents are available below:
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Information Security Policy](#)
- [Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy](#) – available via Staff Intranet
- [Public Interest Disclosure Procedure](#) (Whistleblowing)
- [Research Data Management Policy](#)
- [Human Participant Research Data Management Policy](#) – available via Staff Intranet

2.2 Training and Development

A programme of training in relation to research integrity and ethics is managed through the Ethics, Integrity and Governance Unit in the Research and Enterprise Service (RES) which is further supported by the University mandatory training programme and other training provided by the RES service. Ethics Committees at Faculty and University level also reflect on case studies to identify and disseminate good practice at all levels.

The following training is available in research integrity and ethics:

- An Introduction to Research Ethics – staff and research students
- Research Integrity and Ethics at UCLan – academics and research students
- Lay Reviewer Training – Ethics committee members
- Chair and Reviewer Training – Ethics committee members
- Procedures for Ethics Applications – staff and students
- Research Supervisor Workshop: Ethics and Integrity - staff

- Research with Human Tissue (*in addition to this session staff and PGR students involved in research on human samples are also asked to complete the Medical Research Council's Research and Human Tissue Legislation online module and assessment*).
- Two bespoke online research ethics training modules (Ethics in 45 minutes and Ethics for Researchers) developed by Professor Doris Schroeder and Dr Kate Chatfield from the University's Centre for Professional Ethics.

The University remains a member of UKRIO (UK Research Integrity Office). The regular programme of webinars and events are publicised to staff, as are the resources available through UKRIO. Members of the Ethics, Integrity and Governance Unit regularly attend these webinars and disseminates best practice to colleagues.

In terms of additional training provided by RES, the University is also a signatory of the Researcher Development Concordat and the Impacts and Outputs Unit have developed a Personal and Professional Development Programme for Research and Knowledge Exchange to complement the Academic Research and Enterprise Induction Programme.

The Graduate Research School launched a new dedicated Personal and Professional Development Programme for Post Graduate Research students to provide an overview and full details of all workshops and developmental opportunities available each year including workshops on research methods, research governance and professional conduct.

The specific training in research integrity and ethics is underpinned by a mandatory training programme for staff members which is managed by the People Team. The following modules are mandatory; any anomalies in completion of the mandatory training programme is managed through Heads of Schools and Director of Services and the appraisal process.

- Data Protection (GDPR)
- Intellectual Property Essentials
- Information Security essentials
- Safeguarding Essentials
- Bribery Act Training
- Anti-Fraud Training
- Unconscious Bias
- Prevent Training

2.3 External Memberships

To ensure that the University keeps abreast of best practice in matters related to the Concordat and research integrity, it is a member of a number of external bodies including:

- UK Research Integrity Office
- Association for Research Managers and Administrators
- UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE)

- Laboratory Animal Science Association
- Understanding Animal Research

2.4 Committee and Working Groups Supporting Research Integrity

University Research, Knowledge Exchange and Ethics Committee (RKEEC)
The committee is responsible on behalf of the Academic Board for overseeing the development, implementation and monitoring of University strategies relevant to research, knowledge exchange and ethics. This committee, chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) and membership includes Academic representations from the various Faculties & Schools and representation from the Professional Services Units.

The following groups support the committee on matters relating to research integrity and ethics, and provide updates on matters of national or local significance:

- Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)
- Central Ethics Review Panels: HEALTH, SCIENCE and BAHSS (Business, Arts, Humanities and Social Science).
- Human Tissue Oversight Committee

The University will maintain oversight of the conduct of researchers through its Governance Framework (Figure 1) which is based upon a committee structure which reports to the Academic Board.
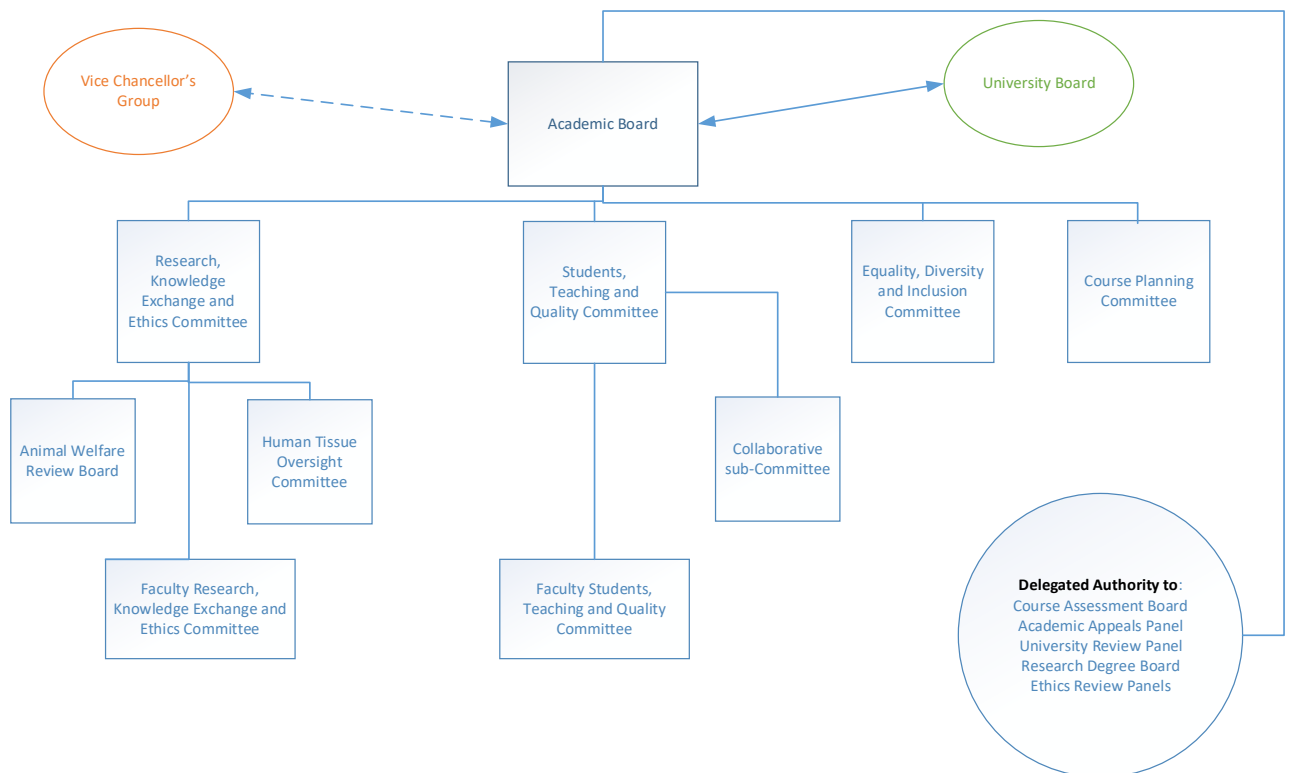

Figure 1. Diagrammatic representation of the Governance Framework at UCLan (Academic year 2022/23)

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3.0 Changes and Developments during the period under review

The University recognises the need to ensure standards and legislative requirements are met in a consistent and robust manner. In order to strengthen our governance in relation to research with human tissue, the University has now put in place a Quality Management System to manage compliance with the standards of the Human Tissue Act. The QMS includes a number of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and guidance documents which have been developed in line with the Human Tissue Authority Codes of Practice to ensure compliance with the act.

The Bioscience Service Unit (BSU) have developed a comprehensive governance framework in line with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act for any individual involved in scientific research which involves the use of animals. A series of SOPs have been devised and these are complemented by a series of new templates and Direct Observation Procedural/Practical Skills (DOPS). The DOPS are used to assess competence in performing a procedure/task defined by a SOP in a clear and consistent way.

In addition to the above listed actions to strengthen research integrity, and as reported in previous annual statements, the University continues to undertake considerable work to strengthen the processes and awareness around research ethics in the period under review. While distinct from research integrity, these form important aspects in the development of our research environment, governance and culture of research integrity. Actions undertaken this year included completion of the first audit of School ethics processes. In response the Ethics, Integrity and Governance Unit will develop an ethics application form specifically to be used by Undergraduate and Post Graduate Taught students. In collaboration with the People Team, developed a process to engage with staff who are joining or leaving the University to ensure arrangements / approvals are in place to allow for research to be continued seamlessly following the transfer.

4.0 Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

In 2022 we used the UK Research Integrity Office self-assessment tool for the Concordat to Support Research Integrity to review and strengthen UCLan's research integrity activity and in compliance with the Concordat. Using the UKRIOs self-assessment tool to evaluate our research integrity activities was useful in identifying the need to update our research policies so that they reflect current best practice and are relevant and beneficial for researchers.

The Head of Ethics, Integrity and Governance Unit will focus on the review and revision of UCLan's Policy for Misconduct in Research and will be guided by UKRIO's revised edition of its procedure for the investigation of misconduct in research published in March 2023. The new edition has undergone a comprehensive review based on developments within the research sector and in the research integrity.

4.0 Research Misconduct

The University Officer for Ethics and Integrity is a senior academic member of staff with significant experience of research and is responsible for working with the EIGU on key issues relating to Research Ethics and Integrity. The University Officer for Ethics and Integrity will also fulfil the role of the "Named Person" responsible for receiving allegations of research misconduct

The University requires that all research projects undertaken under the auspices of the University observe a commitment to good research conduct. The University is committed to creating a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct. The University Policy for Misconduct in Research includes various mechanisms to ensure any concerns about research misconduct can be raised with the Named Person confidentially, including the ability to raise concerns with the assistance of an intermediary such as a line manager, Trade Union representative, Guild advice service representative, or colleague. In addition, the Named Person will act as a confidential liaison for whistle-blowers or any other person wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research being conducted under the auspices of the University.

Details of how to raise concerns regarding research misconduct with the Named Person are clearly outlined on the external research integrity webpage. The process of raising concerns and reassurances around confidentiality are also part of the research integrity training.

Mechanisms to implement and communicate lessons learned from investigations of research misconduct have been incorporated into the University Policy for Misconduct in Research

4.1 Number of Reported Allegations of Research Misconduct 2022-23

In the academic year 2022/23, there were no formal research misconduct investigations at UCLan.

Type of allegation	Number of allegations			
	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number upheld in part after formal investigation	Number upheld in full after formal investigation
Fabrication	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	0	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement;	0	0	0	0

interests; qualification; and/or publication history)				
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
Other*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*
Total:	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**