

Annual Statement of Compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2021-202

UK Reproducibility Network senior academic representative and local network lead: the former is the institutional lead for the UKRN and external stakeholders, while the latter leads on internal networks of researchers.

The Research Engagement Team provides Open Research services with the purpose of increasing the accessibility, transparency and re-usability of research produced at the University. Support is provided for Open Access publishing, effective management, preservation and sharing of research data, and responsible use of metrics. The team is instrumental in delivering

Champions Programme.

- 2.3 Policies relevant to the Concordat are listed in Appendix 1, along with weblink addresses. The CORRI reviews the research integrity element of all policies over a 3-year cycle. A guidance note on preventing harm in research, with associated training, and guidance for responsible evaluation of research are currently being developed. In addition, we have established a working group on Risk and Security in Research charged with developing policies to ensure compliance with the Trusted Research agenda. The current locations of the policies within the University website are somewhat dispersed and not clearly linked to the research integrity pages; there is ongoing work to move policies, check links between them, and check which policies should be available externally in conjunction with a major University website rebuild, which will be completed ahead of the next academic year.
- 2.4 The revised UKRIO self-assessment tool contains a significant amount of new detail about what policies should include and how they should be cross-referenced, reviewed against external standards, be accessible by members of the public and participants in research, and potentially aligned with standards and regulations set out by the Office for Students and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. It was agreed by CORRI that this would be taken into consideration as part of the normal cycle of review of policies relating to research integrity and reported back to CORRI each time a relevant policy is revised.
- 2.5 The Code of Good Practice in Research was last updated in June 2020 and is available on the research integrity pages of the website ([Research integrity \(reading.ac.uk\)](https://www.reading.ac.uk/research-integrity)). The next update will be informed by new joint guidance on research ethics from the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and the Association for Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA).
- 2.6 In line with the revised UKRIO self-assessment tool, the Head of Quality Assurance in Research is reviewing the research ethics web pages and identifying gaps in current practice relating to the operation and governance of ethics committees in order to make recommendations to the CORRI on how to address them. Key areas of focus are (i) consideration of formal, systematic feedback from stakeholders, (ii) communication between local and central ethics committees to strengthen common practice, and (iii) monitoring and auditing of compliance with institutional and external requirements.
- 2.7 The CORRI is committed to improving the availability of existing resources and guidance relating to research integrity and is developing a communications plan to support understanding of the Concordat, the legal/ethical frameworks and standards and behaviours relating to research integrity, and to raise awareness about support for researchers in need of assistance and processes for staff to raise concerns. The plan is being aligned with a wider piece of work supporting research culture.

3. Supporting and strengthening research integrity, including research culture and leadership

- 3.1 While research integrity is a core element of the University research strategy (section 1.5) and the CORRI has strategic and operation oversight of research integrity, communication about the Concordat and a healthy research culture has, to date, not been extensive. The allocation of ring-fenced QR funding from Research England specifically for research culture affords the opportunity to address this. We have embarked on a research-led process to understand perceptions of desirable research culture amongst our community and to co-produce a vision of positive research culture and an action plan to achieve it. Accompanying this piece of work will be a communications plan, which will specifically reference the Concordat to Support

Research Integrity, and plans to elicit feedback. Our work on research culture has already begun with some focus groups and will be inclusive of participants across the research ecosystem, including professional services, addressing the need to consider equality, diversity and inclusion. In addition, as part of the Open Research Action Plan, surveys on software practices and engagement and understanding of open research have been conducted by the Research Data Manager and a team of Open Research Champions respectively. These surveys have provided valuable insight into what is working well and areas where improvement is required, which will be followed up by the Committee for Open Research and Research Integrity.

- 3.2 Recognising that training and development of good practice in research is relevant through all career stages, the CORRI conducted an audit of current training provision with a research integrity element and investigated the nature of research integrity training across the sector. It

**Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation
Vice-Chan**