



Annual Statement on Research Integrity November 2024

Foreword

1. Cardiff University's mission is to co-create and share new knowledge, to deliver a better world for future generations ([Our Future, together: Our Path to 2035](#)).
2. Research is a core part of our institutional identity, and the University aspires to be amongst the best in generating new knowledge and tools, facilitated by a vibrant and inclusive research environment.
3. In the 2021 Research Excellence Framework ('REF'), 90% of our research was confirmed as world-leading or internationally excellent and we secured our place as a top 20 University in the UK for the overall quality of our research. The University is seeking to enhance its position even further and embraces this challenge within an increasingly competitive international stage.
4. Research Integrity, ethics and open research is a critical part of our vision and the University is fully committed to upholding the principles of the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) ('Concordat') and to supporting our researchers to conduct research to the highest standards of integrity.

Purpose and context

5. To improve accountability and provide assurance that measures are being taken to support high standards of Research Integrity, the Concordat requires that all employers of researchers prepare and publish an annual statement on Research Integrity ('Annual Statement'), which provides:
 - 5.1. A summary of actions and activities undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of Research Integrity issues;
 - 5.2. Assurances that the processes in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, timely, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation;
 - 5.3. A high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including data on the number of investigations;
 - 5.4. A statement on what the University has learned from any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, including what lessons have been learned to prevent the same type of incident re-occurring; and
 - 5.5. A statement on how the University creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct.

6. This is the University's eighth Annual Statement. Once approved by relevant University groups and committees, the Annual Statement will be made publicly available on our website and a link provided to the Concordat Secretariat. The University's historic Annual Statements remain publicly accessible on our "[Research Integrity and Governance](#)" webpage.

Period covered by this Annual Statement

7. This Annual Statement summarises the actions and activities undertaken during the 2023/2024 Academic Year to strengthen Research Integrity. It also provides the required assurances and statements on research misconduct for the same time period.

Actions and activities (2023/2024 Academic Year)

During the 2023/2024 Academic Year, the University has undertaken a wide range of activities to help support and strengthen Research Integrity. Key activity during this period is summarised below.

8. Progressing our institutional 'Research Integrity Action Plan'
 - 8.1. In 2023, the University published its first public-facing [Research Integrity Action Plan](#). The Action Plan is the output of a detailed internal review and reflection exercise led by our Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics team ('RIGE'), utilising the [UKRIO Self-Assessment Tool](#).
 - 8.2. During the 2023/2024 Academic Year, progress against the Action Plan has been regularly reviewed and reported to our Open Research Integrity and Ethics Committee ('ORIEC'). In May 2024, and to improve transparency, the published Action Plan was also colour-coded to indicate which actions have been achieved and those where significant progress has been made.
 - 8.3. As at the date of preparing this Annual Statement, 75% of the actions that had a target date on or before September 2024 are complete or are in progress with completion expected shortly. It should be noted that 2 actions have had their target date extended to align with the standard review cycle for the relevant policy or procedure. There are 14 actions that were due for completion that have not yet commenced and/or have been paused. This is due to a range of internal and external factors, including:
 - the need to re-prioritise resource and support to other areas of activity, where required; and
 - pursuing collaborative opportunities that have arisen with internal and external stakeholders which may improve efficiency and produce better outcomes for our research community.
 - 8.4. ORIEC is satisfied with the progress made against the Action Plan to date and that the outstanding actions identified in the Action Plan do not undermine or qualify the assurance provided in this Annual Statement. ORIEC is proud that its staff engage regularly and actively with external stakeholders and are able to adapt to changing priorities and ensure that support is concentrated where it is most needed.

9. Research Integrity and Governance Code of Practice ('RI CoP')

9.1. the RI CoP is our institutional framework (policy) for Research Integrity. It applies to everyone involved in research at the University and is designed to promote good research practice throughout the research lifecycle and to help ensure that staff and students achieve the highest standards of Research Integrity. The RI CoP is subject to a 3-year review cycle, in accordance with the Policy itself and our RI Action Plan. The RI CoP was last reviewed, revised and published in 2023. The next review is due in 2026.

10. Research Integrity Online Training Programme ('RI Training')

10.1. During the 2023/2024 Academic Year, approximately 1100 members of staff and 2100 students (inclusive of PGR, PGT and UG students) completed the University's RI Training. As a reminder, completion of our RI Training is mandatory for all Academic Staff (unless exempted¹) and mandatory for all students undertaking Doctoral, MRes or MPhil programmes of study. Completion of the training is also a mandatory component of various other internal research processes and is highly recommended for anyone else involved in research.

10.2. As referenced in previous Annual Statements, securing completion of the RI Training by all individuals to which the training is mandatory (together with monitoring and reporting activity) is a challenge and represents a significant administrative undertaking. Internal discussions are ongoing as to how this can be improved, particularly given the University's size and structure.

10.3. There have been some updates to the RI Training content during the 2023/2024 Academic Year, most notably the following additions:

- "Raising a concern about Research Integrity";
- "Promoting Research Integrity" – guidance and suggestions for leaders/supervisors/managers around embedding a positive culture of Research Integrity;
- Artificial Intelligence;
- Learning points from School Research Ethics Committee applications;
- Trusted Research;
- Summary data and lessons learnt from recent Research Misconduct cases;
- Hot topics in publication ethics, namely: predatory journals, expectations when undertaking editorial functions and "contributorship"/CRediT.

11. Research Ethics

¹ The University has an exemption request process that can be used by Schools to request an exemption for specific staff on T&S contracts who have no involvement in research activity. There is a strict process that needs to be followed by Schools and all exemption requests are reviewed (and if appropriate, approved) by ORIEC.

11.1. There has been a large amount of activity aimed at evolving our approach to ethical review and better supporting our School Research Ethics Committees ('SRECs') and research community. Below are just some examples of relevant activity during the 2023/2024 Academic Year:

- **Pilot of new module-wide ethical review process for UG and PGT activity**

A pilot of the module-wide ethical review process 'Module Ethics Framework' has been underway throughout the 2023/24 academic year. The pilot will continue during the 2024/2025 Academic Year. Eleven (11) Schools, across all three Colleges, are engaged with the Pilot

Feedback received (from eight (8) of the Pilot Schools) on year one of the pilot is currently under review and shall be presented to ORIEC for consideration. Initial indications are that the Module Ethics Framework approach has facilitated better communication between students, supervisors and the School Research Ethics Committee (SREC), enhancing awareness of ethical review requirements and reducing the admin workload of the SREC. It is important to note that some challenges remain with regard to engagement and implementation for teaching (as opposed to dissertation) activities. The process and supporting documents will be refined over this second year of the pilot period, informed by any challenges during implementation and feedback from the research community.

- **Initial scoping of an online ethics system**

The Future Research Service project aims to improve the University's research and innovation systems. Worktribe, which is the sector-leading provider of research management software, has been procured to manage a range of research-related functions, including a module to manage research ethics applications. Worktribe modules will be implemented in a phased manner over two years, with the launch and rollout of the Ethics module currently estimated for Spring 2026.

- **Ethics and Publicly Available Data Task and Finish Group**

This Group was established to ensure the University's approach to the ethical review of projects using only publicly available information is appropriate and balances the need for a suitably robust ethical review system, whilst being proportionate to risk and the needs of the University. The Task and Finish Group developed the 'Framework for the ethical review of research using Secondary Data or Publicly Available information only', which received Council approval in July 2024. The new Framework and supporting documents, operational from the start of the 2024/2025 Academic Year, adopt a risk-based approach and are aimed at facilitating a more proportionate, effective, and efficient ethical review process.

11.2. Alongside the work conducted centrally, a significant amount of work has been conducted locally by SREC Chairs, Members and local support staff to help improve the University's existing ethical review systems and to

support researchers in achieving the highest ethical standards. Below are just some examples of activity that has taken place locally:

- Collation of feedback/responding to consultation exercises connected to the improvement of the University's ethical review systems.
- Providing volunteers to sit on various University Task and Finish Groups connected to the ethical review process.
- Creation of Ethics Protocols/Standard Operating Procedures for research projects meeting a specific "full review criterion".
- Implementation of a Group Application process for ethical review and/or piloting the new Module-wide ethical review process.
- Development of local and/or disciplinary guidance on the ethical review process and SREC expectations.
- Information/awareness-raising sessions for staff and students on the ethical review process and common ethical issues arising in the discipline.
- Engagement with teaching and learning colleagues to better understand the type of student projects conducted in the School, the risk associated with such projects and what ethical review options could be implemented locally to appropriately review these projects.

12. Research Misconduct

12.1 The University's Academic Research Misconduct (ARM) Policy for Staff was revised in 2023 and is available on the "[Academic Research Misconduct](#)" webpage. A Senior Compliance Advisor has been identified to support in implementing the ARM procedure (for staff), increasing capacity for supporting ARM work. In addition, the Compliance and Risk team has developed a number of template resources relating to various steps of the ARM procedure.

12.2 In 2024, the Compliance and Risk team worked with the Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics team to develop two case studies to include in the Research Integrity online training to assist individuals to understand the University's Policy and procedure for Academic Research Misconduct and responsibilities of researchers.

13. Clinical Research

13.1. The Cardiff Joint Research Office ('JRO')^[1], established in 2021, has governance and reporting structures well-established. In the 2023-24 period, the focus of the JRO has been on the development of its Quality Management Systems, including a joint Risk Register. A joint Audit Plan is being developed for the 2024-25 period. This work will continue over the next academic year.

13.2. Work to strengthen the University's oversight and stewardship of NHS Digital data has continued throughout the 2023-24 academic year, led by a working group of key stakeholders from across the University. The University submitted its annual NHS England (Digital) Data Security and

^[1] A partnership between Cardiff University and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, launched in September 2021.

Protection Toolkit (DSPT) return at the end of June 2024, and work will commence from January 2025 on preparing the University's 2024-25 DSPT submission. An SOP detailing the University's management and oversight of the central NHS Digital Information Asset Register (IAR) was finalised in April 2024. A further SOP detailing the University's expectations around how researchers manage their use of NHS Digital data assets is expected to be finalised by the end of 2024.

13.3. Priorities for the 2024-25 period include the development of improved project management and reporting systems, including the scoping of potential electronic Trial Master File (eTMF) systems; implementation of an Inspection readiness Task and Finish Group; continuous improvement of training provision for staff and students involved in clinical research and of existing guidance in key areas of clinical research governance and management (such as the management of non-compliances and issues in informed consent).

14. Human Tissue Act (HTA) Research and Governance

14.1 A review of the scope of the HTA Research Licence held by Cardiff University has taken place to better manage risk and reduce burden in the long term. Several options were considered by a dedicated task and finish group and approaches at other universities were reviewed. A recommendation to change the scope of the HTA Research Licence was submitted to the College of Biomedical and Life Sciences Board in September 2024 with actions to be taken forward in the 2024-2025 academic year.

14.2 Assurance reporting for compliance with the Human Tissue Act 2004 has been formalised for the three HTA Licences held by Cardiff University and for Licence-exempt research. The assurance report, based on the University template, will be reviewed at the first meeting of the Open Research Integrity and Ethics Committee each academic year.

14.3 The Register of Tissue Holdings, an in-house database that logs all collections of human tissue within the University, has undergone redevelopment with completion due in November 2024. The redeveloped database will contain additional information and functionality to streamline processes, link to other professional service teams and provide increased assurance.

15. Animal Research and Governance

15.1. Cardiff University is committed to the long-term principles of the "3Rs" in animal research aligned to replacement, reduction and refinement.

15.2. The 2022/2023 Academic Year saw considerable progress made in the improvement project for Biological Services. The aim of this project is to make improvements to facilities and the infrastructure that supports animal research. Phase one has seen the approval of £4.5M which will be used to purchase infrastructure that will link to new air handling units and to make

improvements to support this equipment and maintain an appropriate environment.

15.3. This academic year saw further progress in the governance and oversight of animal work that is not regulated by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 ('ASPA'). The University's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body Subgroup has amended its terms of reference to incorporate the ethical oversight of this work. Two specialists with expertise in non protected species and work in the wild have been formally approved as members of this committee to ensure the appropriate knowledge is available for non-ASPA ethical assessments to be conducted.

15.4. The 'Named Persons' listed on the procedural establishment licence, under the auspices of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, continue to support good practice together with the regulated community. This year has seen new policies (needle re-use) and guidance issued (colony management, animal movement and transport, weekend study plans).

15.5. In addition to considering a range of areas identified through the internal Research Integrity review and the subsequent Action Plan, the University has also formally endorsed (through its Biological Standards Committee and the Animal Welfare and Research Panel) a mid-term review of Project Licences for increased oversight of licenced work.

16. Research Culture

16.1 Several activities took place during the 2023/24 academic year to help Cardiff University build a positive, values-based research culture:

- The re-developed Research Culture Action Plan was launched In June 2024. This was a substantive, evidence-led piece of work, informed by our first research culture survey that was conducted across all our research community. The action plan is structured into five key themes including: Taking back Time; Getting Out of the Silo; Improving Systems to Support People; Recognising and Valuing Everyone; and Improving Job Security and Career Development.
- Twenty-six grassroots events were funded (under the 'Getting Out of the Silo' theme) to support community building activities, often interdisciplinary, that wouldn't have been supported through standard disciplinary-focused budgets. This competitive fund was enabled by access to c£80k for research culture activities, allocated for the first time by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). These same funds also enabled our inaugural Research Culture Week, which included a programme of nine short events across five days, focusing on key research culture issues linked to the action plan themes.
- Following the successful bid for research culture funding from the Wellcome Trust, a five-person team has been appointed, with planning for programme design, recruitment, evaluation and organisation beginning in earnest from February 2024. The programme launches in academic year 2024-2025.

17. Open Research and Transparency

17.1 The University remains committed to the Open Research agenda. The Open Research Operational Group ('OROG') continued to meet during the 2023/2024 academic year. The group is exploring a change of alignment towards Research Culture activity, reflecting that the regulatory aspects of Open Research are addressed elsewhere through other oversight groups.

17.2 OROG aims to develop ways in which the University can continue to support the research community in this area. The focus has been on creating an accessible platform that collates and signposts resources and information that is already available to the research community and that will improve awareness of the open research support that is available. The next phase will be to develop an appropriate communication plan and training that embed open research within the research community. Initiatives developed by the University's research community include a Research Reproducibility Reading and Discussion group for researchers at Cardiff University interested in learning more about transparent research practices.

17.3 The University Library Service has undertaken a range of activities aimed at strengthening Open Research and the support provided to the research community. For example:

- After procurement of the Figshare for Institutions system in 2023, the Library Service led activities around the implementation of the new [Cardiff University Research Data Repository](#). The service supports open research by allowing researchers to share their data with the world, in accordance with the FAIR data principles. Each published dataset is given a DOI, and datasets can be directly downloaded from the interface. There is also functionality to support the sharing of large or sensitive datasets.
- Following on from last year's Open Access project, which reviewed open access publication compliance rates, the compliance rates are actively reported each month directly to the PVC for Research, Innovation and Enterprise. Where a drop in compliance is identified, action is taken forward by the relevant College Deans for Research and Schools.
- Contribution to Research Culture Week with a presentation on "Predatory Publishing and Open Research". The Library Service has also provided a variety of tailored open access awareness sessions for Schools and provided open to all online sessions on topics such as "Open access explained" "Research data management" "Critical appraisal of a Systematic review" and "Preparing to Publish". This series of sessions has been reviewed, further expanded and will be advertised under an overarching programme "Library Look @" over the next year.
- The Rights Retention Pilot was extended to November 2024. Whilst initial results and feedback were promising, the original timeline did not

offer the flexibility necessary to accommodate all disciplines' publication cycles.

- Participating in JISC initiatives to facilitate sharing of information and experience on rights retention policies between UK institutions.

18 Trusted Research

18.1 The University remains committed to the “Trusted Research” agenda and has undertaken a number of activities in this area during the 2023/2024 Academic Year, supported by a new Research Integrity and Compliance Officer. Examples of relevant activity include:

18.1.1 Continued engagement with the Russell Group Trusted Research Forum, Higher Education Export Controls Association ('HEECA'), the Research Collaboration Advice Team ('RCAT') and the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) to discuss ideas and share best practice. The University engages with RCAT to discuss Trusted Research principles and practice.

18.1.2 Continued awareness raising and training sessions with various key internal groups/teams including, the Research and Innovation Services Contracts team, the International Office, International Strategy Group, School of Engineering Research Office, EPSRC Grant Club, Research Administrators Forum Conference.

18.1.3 Mapping of higher-risk research areas within the University to inform an effective and targeted Communication Plan for 2024/2025.

18.1.4 Meetings with researchers operating in higher-risk research areas to encourage engagement from their wider groups/teams and self-referrals to RIGE for Trusted Research assessments.

18.1.5 Establishment of the Trusted Research Oversight Group (TROG) with the first meeting to take place in autumn 2024. TROG will provide oversight of the Trusted Research Governance Framework at the University, ensuring that the University develops and maintains a risk management strategy that balances the benefits and risks of international research collaboration.

18.1.6 Implementation of a new, auditable and risk based, Trusted Review assessment process which provides standardised and consistent feedback to all staff who contact RIGE for a Trusted Research review or guidance.

19 Data management

19.1 Alongside business-as-usual activity to support good practice in research data management, including the provision of advice, training and support, there have been a number of specific activities to further support our

research community and/or improved governance during the 2023/2024 Academic Year. For example:

19.1.1 Support for the Ethics and Publicly Available Data Task and Finish group to produce a Framework for the Ethical Review of Research using Secondary Data and/or Publicly Available Information only. This included the creation of a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) template tailored specifically for scenarios where researchers will have difficulty in contacting the source(s) of the data.

19.1.2 Completion of a Legitimate Interest Test for situations where the university has to share minimal personal data with funding bodies when we receive complaints of Academic Research Misconduct.

19.1.3 The implementation of the new institutional Research Data Repository was completed (see section on 'Open Research and Transparency'), with a soft launch over the summer whilst migration of existing records from the Research Portal took place. There will be wider communications and promotion during the autumn, including visits to Schools to provide more information on the new service alongside advocacy around wider aspects of research data management.

20 External engagement and sharing best practice

20.1 The University has continued to engage with external groups and organisations to share best practice, explore effective governance arrangements and initiatives for the promotion of Research Integrity and to collectively influence policy and practice. In particular, the University continues to be an active member of UKRIO and the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum, as well as topic-specific groups such as the Russell Group Trusted Research Forum, UKRN, HEECA and the Association of University Sponsors.

Planned activities

21 Alongside the various activities already referenced in this Annual Statement as commencing or concluding during the next Academic Year, our Research Integrity focus and attention during the 2024/2025 Academic Year will be concentrated on progressing the actions contained in our Research Integrity Action Plan and advancing the following areas of work in particular:

- Research Ethics – continuing to support the pilot of our new ethical review channels for UG and PGT activity, planning for the implementation Worktribe, and a review of options for a risk-proportionate ethical review policy and procedure.
- Visibility, reward and recognition – seeking to ensure that demonstrating excellence in supporting and/or embedding Research Integrity is better reflected in the University's reward and recognition systems.

- Trusted Research - further development of the University's systems and tools to support researchers and to help ensure responsible practice in this area.

Dealing with allegations of Research Misconduct

22 The University is committed to ensuring that its processes for dealing with allegations of research misconduct are transparent, timely, robust, fair, and appropriate to the University's needs.

Allegations against Cardiff University staff

23 The University takes all allegations of Academic Research Misconduct seriously and has a dedicated procedure to deal with such allegations. The University's Academic Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure ('ARM Procedure'), together with a named contact, is publicly available on the University's [website](#).

24 There are three stages to the ARM Procedure. At each stage the allegation may be dismissed or may proceed to the next stage:

24.1 Stage 1 - A Preliminary Stage where the Named Person (or delegate) will review the allegation(s) to determine whether they fall within the scope of the University to address and, if so, what would be the most appropriate process to investigate or otherwise address them, with reference to the following criteria:

- a) Whether the Respondent (or Respondents) is conducting research under the auspices of the University, whether solely or in conjunction with others in the University or other bodies or in conjunction with other bodies;
- b) Whether the research project(s) to which the allegation relates are being conducted under the auspices of the University, whether solely or in conjunction with other bodies; and
- c) Whether the allegation(s) fall within the definition of Academic Research Misconduct described in the definition section of the Policy.

In carrying out the above review, the Named Person shall assess the evidence provided and any additional information they require.

On conclusion of the review, the Named Person will record the outcome of the review and whether allegations are: dismissed; warrant referral directly to another formal process (internal or external); are minor in nature and can be addressed via a non-disciplinary approach (e.g. training) or meet the definition of an allegation of academic research misconduct and will advance to the screening panel stage.

24.2 Stage 2 - A Screening Stage where a Panel of internal members of staff with relevant expertise and academic standing will conduct an evaluation of all relevant material relating to the allegation supplied by the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s). The decisions and recommendations of the panel will be recorded and will determine if a formal investigation is required.

- 24.3 Stage 3 - A Formal Investigation Stage where a Panel is set up, consisting of an impartial, independent Chair and two impartial members with appropriate expertise and seniority. The Chair and at least one of the two members should be external to the University, being neither a person employed by or contracted to the University. The internal member should not be a member of staff in the same School as the Respondent.

Allegations against students

- 25 The University takes all allegations of student misconduct during, or relating to, research seriously and has a range of policies and procedures to deal with such allegations. The exact policy and procedure to be applied will depend on the nature of the allegation/the alleged conduct and the level of programme on which the student is enrolled. The most relevant student misconduct policy in this specific context is the University's Academic Integrity Policy, and related Academic Misconduct Procedures. These are all contained within the University's Academic Regulations which are publicly available on the University's [website](#).
- 26 The University's Academic Integrity Policy sets out the overarching principles of what constitutes Academic Misconduct at Cardiff University, including a definition of 'Academic Misconduct in Research' which is aligned to the misconduct categories contained in the Concordat. The policy confirms that a relevant Academic Misconduct Procedure will be applied to any student alleged to have engaged in such conduct. The relevant procedures referred to are the University's Academic Misconduct Procedure (Research Degrees) and the University's Academic Misconduct Procedure (Taught Students).
- 27 The University's Academic Misconduct Procedures contain a fair and clear process for considering and investigating Academic Misconduct concerns. In respect of the Academic Misconduct Procedure (Research Degrees) in particular, there are three stages to the procedure as follows:
- 27.1 Stage 1 (Preliminary Review) - the Director of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of the Awards and Progress Committee (or an appropriate nominee), as applicable, conduct an initial review of the concerns. Depending on when the concerns were raised, the outcome of the Preliminary Review could be to dismiss the concerns, take remedial action or refer the concerns for a Stage 2 investigation.
- 27.2 Stage 2 (Formal Investigation) - the Head of School appoints a senior member of the school's academic staff to act as an Investigating Officer and to consider the concerns, meet with the relevant parties and produce a report. The Head of School considers the report and all available evidence and determines, on the balance of probabilities, whether Academic Misconduct has occurred. The Head of School may dismiss the concerns if they are unfounded or if there is insufficient evidence that Academic Misconduct has taken place, or they can determine that, on the balance of probabilities, Academic Misconduct has occurred. If it is determined that Academic Misconduct has occurred, the Head of School can refer the case to a Stage 3 Academic Integrity Panel or can determine that, due to the level of seriousness and/or other relevant circumstances,

the case does not warrant referral to Stage 3 and that specific remedial action can be taken instead.

27.3 Stage 3 (Academic Integrity Panel) - an Academic Integrity Panel is convened, comprising 3 members of academic staff from outside the School, to consider the case. The panel can dismiss the concerns or determine that, on the balance of probabilities, Academic Misconduct has occurred. If the panel determines that Academic Misconduct has occurred, it can impose one or more of a set of listed actions and sanctions which includes, by way of examples, a written apology, thesis amendment and other formal reprimands including exclusion from the University.

28 The University has a central Student Cases Team that has the following role in relation to Academic Misconduct cases:

28.1 To advise Schools on the steps required under the procedures;

28.2 To convene a panel, and support the panel process (where the earlier investigation determined that a panel was required); and

28.3 To record the outcome of an investigation whatever the outcome (including dismissal of concerns).

Statement on investigations of Research Misconduct

29 During the 2023/2024 Academic Year, eight (8) allegations/sets of allegations were received under the University's ARM Procedure (ARM 24.01 – ARM 24.08). The decisions in these cases were as follows:

29.1 ARM 24.01 - Allegation of misrepresentation (Authorship) - dismissed at Preliminary Review stage as the research article was in submission stage to a journal when concerns raised about proposed authorship. The relevant Head of School was able to resolve the concerns raised with the individuals involved via informal discussions.

29.2 ARM 24.02 – Allegation of Misuse of personal data (inappropriate sharing of data) – A Comprehensive preliminary review was carried out with specialist advice on Data Protection requirements from the University's Data Protection Officer. No evidence of misconduct was identified as part of the preliminary review. Evidence of correct procedures followed was provided by the research group.

29.3 ARM 24.03 – A Journal raised a query regarding comments relating to image manipulation on pubpeer. Cardiff University advised the journal that the matter had not been raised as an allegation of ARM with the University, however the relevant Head of School carried out a proactive review of the pubpeer comments. The review found that the paper was produced as a result of a collaboration between academics at Cardiff and another university, and the corresponding author was tasked with reviewing and responding to the specific issues raised on pubpeer with oversight from the relevant university partners.

Cardiff University also recommended and implemented lessons learned from the review, including ensuring training, sign-off and a rigorous process for manuscript generation with visiting researchers/fellows and collaborators during and after their visit to Cardiff University.

- 29.4 ARM 24.04 – Allegation(s) of authorship/ plagiarism – The Preliminary review identified that this matter related to a relevant category of ARM – Misrepresentation (denial of authorship) and that the research in question came under the auspices of Cardiff University. A Screening Panel was established and following a review of all relevant information/evidence, the Screening Panel dismissed both allegations. Three recommendations were made by the panel which have been shared with the relevant parties. The relevant Head(s) of School(s) have acknowledged receipt of the recommendations and will work with the respondents to implement.
- 29.5 ARM 24.05 – Authorship dispute raised with Cardiff University as corresponding author is CU academic. Preliminary review concluded that as the paper had not yet been published there had been no ARM. The Corresponding author is being supported by relevant Director of Research and is seeking to resolve this authorship issue prior to publication.
- 29.6 ARM 24.06 – Allegation of image manipulation. A preliminary review recommended that the allegation progress to Screening Panel. The Screening Panel acknowledged the response from the respondents, in which they stated that a mistake had been made and that an incorrect panel was in place. After careful consideration, the Panel concluded that this was a genuine error, as there was no evidence to suggest it was intentional, and the mistake did not significantly impact the overall findings of the paper. The matter was concluded at screening panel stage and a small number of recommendations were made by the panel – with the relevant Head(s) of School(s) responsible for oversight of the implementation of recommendations.
- 29.7 ARM 24.07 – Authorship dispute – Currently Ongoing- Screening Panel convened.
- 29.8 ARM 24.08 – Allegation of Misrepresentation of Involvement (Authorship dispute). The preliminary review identified that an investigation had been carried out by the lead University for the research. The Head of Compliance and Risk reviewed the investigation report and was satisfied that the correct procedure has been carried out to investigate the issues of authorship raised.

30 During the 2023/2024 Academic Year, there were three (3) reports of alleged Academic Misconduct in Research by PGR students. The outcomes in these cases were as follows:

- 30.1 Case 1 - Concerns were raised regarding a thesis submitted a for examination. The School Director of PGR (DPGR) conducted a preliminary review (stage 1 investigation) and concluded that the thesis

should be returned to the candidate for remedial work. A stage 2 investigation was not merited. The College PG Dean granted the student an extension of 2 months for the student to revise the thesis.

30.2 Case 2 - Concerns were raised by the internal examiner after the viva examination. The School Director of PGR (DPGR) conducted a preliminary review (stage 1 investigation). It was considered appropriate for the student to be given the opportunity to remedy the thesis ahead of a second submission and examination, and the DPGR would provide guidance. A stage 2 investigation was not merited.

30.3 Case 3 – Investigation is ongoing.

31 During the 2023/2024 Academic Year, there were no (0) Academic Misconduct in Research investigations concerning UG/PGT students that reached an Academic Integrity Panel.

What has the University learned from the investigations?

32 The following lessons have been learnt from the ARM investigations carried out during the 2023/2024 Academic Year:

32.1 That authorship remains the most frequent complaint under the Academic Research Misconduct (Staff) Policy. This has prompted the development of a scenario relating to authorship to be included in the Research Integrity online training module and clear information relating to resolving authorship disputes included in the policy/procedure.

32.2 That in connection with ARM24.02, it is valuable to engage with specialist advice early in the preliminary review (e.g. in this case University Data Protection Officer) as this can assist with resolving issues at review stage where compliance with the correct procedures can be scrutinized and evidenced.

32.3 That it remains challenging for universities and journals to decide when/if to take proactive action to respond to pubpeer comments when these have not been formally raised with the University as an allegation of misconduct and at times are poorly articulated/evidenced by an anonymous individual. This may be an issue that UKRIO may be able to provide further advice/guidance on to universities.

Creating and embedding a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct

33 The University is committed to fostering an environment in which all its staff and students are able to report misconduct and feel supported through this process. The University has several mechanisms and enablers for this including:

- The availability of advice and support from central University teams/contacts on a range of topics and themes including research

integrity, research ethics, research culture, responsible research assessment and whistleblowing.

- A named point of contact for ARM allegations.
- A network of School Research Integrity Leads and Ethics Officers (local points of contact).
- The University's Research Integrity Training which contains dedicated content on research misconduct reporting and signposts internal support and the availability of UKRIO as a source of external, independent advice.
- The delivery of bespoke research integrity and/or research misconduct training sessions to Schools where required or requested.

34 The University will continue to review and monitor its approach in this area and respond to any feedback received through the various channels noted above. It is anticipated that the University's work and initiatives relating to research culture will also help to ensure appropriate reflection in this area.

Preparation of this Annual Statement

35 Preparation of this Annual Statement was co-ordinated by RIGE. A draft of this statement was noted by the University's Executive Board on 25 October 2024 and was approved by ORIEC on 22 October 2024.

36 The Annual Statement was also approved by the University's Governance Committee on 20 November 2024 and noted by Senate and Council on 06 November 2024 and 26 November 2024 respectively.

Questions on this Annual Statement

37 Any queries regarding the content of this Annual Statement should be addressed to the University's Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics team (resgov@cardiff.ac.uk).

Professor Roger Whitaker

Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Enterprise

November 2024

Acronym key

ARM	Academic Research Misconduct
ASPA	Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986
CRedit	Contributor Roles Taxonomy
DORA	Declaration on Research Assessment
GW4	Great Western 4/GW4 Alliance
HEECA	Higher Education Export Controls Association
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
HTA	Human Tissue Act 2004
JRGG	Joint Research Governance Group
JRO	Joint Research Office
MRes	Master of Research
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
ORCA	Online Research @ Cardiff University (our institutional repository)
ORIEC	Open Research Integrity and Ethics Committee
OROG	Open Research Operational Group
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PREPARE	Planning Research and Experimental Procedures on Animals@ Recommendations for Excellence.
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
RCAT	Research Collaboration Advice Team
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RI	Research Integrity
RI CoP	Research Integrity and Governance Code of Practice
RIGE	Research Integrity, Governance and Ethics Team
RTS	Recast Transforming Services
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SREC	Schools Research Ethics Committee
UEB	University Executive Board
UG	Undergraduate
UK CORI	UK Committee on Research Integrity
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation
UKRIO	UK Research Integrity Office
UKRN	UK Reproducibility Network
WISERD	Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data