



POLICY ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Date	Purpose of Issue/Description of Change	Equality Impact Assessment Completed
14 th January 2022	Initial Issue	
28 th July 2023	Update Policy Officer and Senior Responsible Officer	

Policy Officer	Senior Responsible Officer	Approved By	Date
Senior Research Governance and Policy Officer	Head of Legal Services	Chair, Research Governance & Ethics Committee	24 th May 2022

This Policy will be reviewed in 3 years

2. Responsibilities

a) Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) is responsible for the overall management of research.

b) Deans of College / Heads of School / Research Institute Directors

Deans of College, Heads of School and Research Institute Directors are responsible for local research integrity arrangements, and periodically reviewing integrity processes within Research Institutes and Schools, to ensure these remain fit for purpose. They must ensure

- i. A summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and the application of research integrity issues (for example postgraduate and researcher training, or process reviews);
- ii. A statement to provide assurance that the processes the institution has 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;
- iii. A high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken, which will include data on the number of investigations. If no formal investigation has been undertaken, this should also be noted;
- iv. A statement on what the institution 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;
- v. A statement on how the institution creates and embeds a research environment in

- sharing negative or null results to recognise their value as part of the research process; and in presenting the work to other researchers and to the public.
- iv. **Care and respect:** for all participants in research, and for the subjects, users and beneficiaries of research, including humans, animals, the environment and cultural objects.
 - v. **Accountability:** of funders, employers and researchers to collectively create a research environment in which individuals and organisations are empowered and enabled to own the research process.
- B. Research:**
shared... It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and
- C. Researchers:** are defined as individuals who conduct research (this includes for example research employees, independent contractors, consultants, research students, staff on joint clinical or honorary contracts, research staff visiting from other organisations).
- D. Employers of researchers:** are any bodies or organisations that conduct or host research; employ, support or host researchers; teach research students; or sponsor and/or support research.
- E. Funders of research:** can be public, third or private sector. Funders may also be employers of researchers, and they may also commission research, and/or provide block grants or hypothecated funds. The definition includes organisations that provide financial sponsorship for research and/or researchers.
- F. Other organisations:** a diverse range of other organisations are involved in supporting the integrity of research and may include professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; academies and learned societies; professional and subject-specific representative bodies; journals and publishers; third sectors (e.g. charities such as Cancer Research UK); and organisations offering advice, guidance and support, such as the UK Research Integrity Organisation (UKRIO).

These core elements of research integrity apply to all aspects of research carried out at Bangor University, including the preparation and submission of grant and project proposals, the publication and dissemination of findings, and the provision of expert review on the

proposals or publications of others (that is, peer review). Researchers have full autonomy in their academic choices but must also accept responsibility for the decisions that they make. Responsibility for acting in accordance with the principles of research integrity in all aspects of research work, including peer review, therefore lies with the individual.

4. Related Policies

Services) list current versions of policies that are relevant to research integrity. These will be reviewed and revised regularly as part of the routinely done as part of a course module or other coursework. This is covered by the Academic Integrity Procedure.

a) Research Ethics Policy

The Concordat requires that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards. The Research Ethics Policy sets out the processes required to determine whether researchers need to obtain ethical approval for their research, and if so, how this is undertaken. The University Research Ethics Policy can be found on the Governance Services web pages⁵.

b) Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing)

This Policy provides avenues for members of the University to raise serious concerns, disclose information in circumstances which the individual believes shows malpractice (including breaches of research integrity), and receive feedback on any action taken without fear of adverse repercussions. The University Policy on Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing)⁶ can be found on the University web pages.

c) Policy on Declarations of Interest

Conflicts of interests are relevant to research misconduct when they are not properly disclosed or managed during a research project or during an investigation of research misconduct. A conflict of interest is defined as an action or situation, actual, potential or perceived, which could lead an individual to be influenced by considerations of personal

responsibilities in relation to the conduct of high-quality research. The University Policy on Declarations of Interest⁷ can be found on the University web pages.

5. The Five Commitments of the Concordat on Research Integrity

Bangor University policies to meet the commitments outline in the Concordat on Research Integrity are as follows:

- a) **Commitment 1: Maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.**
 - i) Researchers are responsible for understanding the expected standards of rigour and integrity relevant to their research as well as always maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in their work.
 - ii) Deans of College, Heads of School and Research Institute Directors are responsible for maintaining a research environment that develops good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity as well as supporting researchers to understand and act according to expected standards, values and behaviours. This responsibility extends to supporting researchers in living up to the expectations of this research integrity policy, especially in challenging circumstances and demonstrating they have procedures in place to ensure research is conducted in accordance with standards of best practice. This includes systems to promote research integrity; and transparent, robust and fair processes to investigate alleged research misconduct.
 - iii) Where research is being conducted collaboratively, and particularly within interdisciplinary or international partnerships, researchers should ensure that there is clear agreement on, and articulation of, the standards and frameworks that will apply to the work. *The Montreal Statement on Research Integrity in Cross-Boundary Research Collaborations* (2013)⁸, and *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity* (2017)⁹ provide helpful advice on this requirement.
- b) **Commitment 2: Ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.**
 - i) Researchers must comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, and by employers, funders and other relevant stakeholders. Researchers must ensure that

⁷ <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/governance-and-compliance/governance.php.en>

⁸ <https://wcrif.org/montreal-statement/file>

⁹ <https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>

A named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity and ensure this information is kept up to date and publicly available on the University website. The individual undertaking this role is the Deputy Secretary / Head of Governance Services;

A named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity and ensure contact details for this person are kept up to date and are publicly available on the University website. The individual undertaking this role is the Senior Research Governance and Policy Officer within Governance Services.

d) Commitment 4: Using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct should they arise.

i) Academic autonomy is fundamental to the production of excellent

standards of ethics, research scholarship and research integrity

Taking reasonable steps to safeguard the reputation of individuals who are exonerated.

Providing relevant information on investigations of research misconduct to funders of research and to professional and/or statutory bodies as required by their conditions of grant and other legal, professional and statutory obligations.

To improve transparency, a link to the statement will be sent to the Universities UK Secretariat of the Signatories to the Concordat.

8. Appeal Process

- a) A researcher is entitled to appeal against a decision of the Investigation Panel to an Appeals Panel.