

Annex 2: Concordat to Support Research Integrity – key employer and researcher requirements

Key researcher requirements

Researchers will:

- understand the expected standards of rigour and integrity relevant to their research
- maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in their work at all times
- ensure that all research is subject to active and appropriate consideration of ethical issues
- 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
- act in good faith with regard to allegations of research misconduct, whether in making allegations or in being required to participate in an investigation
- handle potential instances of research misconduct in an appropriate manner; this includes reporting misconduct to employers, funders and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies as circumstances require

Key employer requirements

Employers of researchers are responsible for:

- collaborating to maintain a research environment that develops good research practice and nurtures a culture of research integrity
- supporting researchers to understand and act according to expected standards, values and behaviours, and defending them when they live up to these expectations in difficult circumstances
- having clear policies on ethical approval available to all researchers
- making sure that all researchers are aware of and understand policies and processes relating to ethical approval
- supporting researchers to reflect best practice in relation to ethical, legal and professional requirements
- having appropriate arrangements in place through which researchers can access advice and guidance on ethical, legal and professional obligations and standards

- to maintain a culture that nurtures good practice. A research environment that helps to develop good research practice and embeds a culture of research integrity should, as a minimum, include:
 - clear policies, practices and procedures to support researchers
 - suitable learning, training and mentoring opportunities to support the development of researchers
 - robust management systems to ensure that policies relating to research, research integrity and researcher behaviour are implemented
 - awareness among researchers of the standards and behaviours that are expected of them
 - systems within the research environment that identify potential concerns at an early stage and mechanisms for providing support to researchers in need of assistance
- embed these features in their own systems, processes and practices
- work towards reflecting recognised best practice in their own systems, processes and practices
- implement the Concordat within their research environment
- identify a senior member of staff to oversee research integrity and to act as first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity
- have clear, well-articulated and confidential mechanisms for reporting allegations of research misconduct
- have robust, transparent and fair processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct that reflect best practice ensure that all researchers are made aware of the relevant contacts and procedures for making allegations
- act with no detriment to whistleblowers making allegations of misconduct in good faith
- provide information on investigations of research misconduct to funders of research and professional and/or statutory bodies as required by their conditions of grant and other legal, professional and statutory obligations
- support their researchers in providing appropriate information to professional and/or statutory bodies
- provide a named point of contact or recognise an appropriate third party to act as confidential liaison for whistleblowers or any other person wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research being conducted under their auspices. This need not be the same person as the member of staff identified to act as first point of contact on research integrity matters
- present a short annual statement to their own governing body that:

- provides a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues (for example postgraduate and researcher training, or process reviews)
- provides assurances that the processes they have in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation
- provides a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

Specific funder expectations spelt out in the Concordat

Funders of research expect:

- **researchers** to adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and integrity
- **employers of researchers** to have procedures in place to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with standards of best practice; systems to promote research integrity; and transparent, robust and fair processes to investigate alleged research misconduct
- where research is being conducted collaboratively, and particularly within interdisciplinary or international partnerships, there needs to be clear agreement on and articulation of the standards and frameworks that will apply to the work.
- **researchers** and **employers of researchers** who receive funding to conform to the ethical, legal and professional standards relevant to their research; this includes any specific codes of practice, legal requirements and other policies that the funder identifies as part of their conditions of grant.