

## Research Integrity Annual Statement

<b>Action</b>	For approval
<b>History and previous circulation</b>	Submitted to Senate 22 October 2024 for information and discussion
<b>Author, job title</b>	Elpida Ahtaridou, Head of Research & Knowledge Exchange
<b>ELT Sponsor</b>	Prof Michelle Jones, Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost
<b>Date</b>	12 November 2024
<b>Document Type</b>	Report
<b>Status</b>	Research Integrity Statement for Publication on the website
<b>Executive Summary</b>	A statement of research integrity which is a requirement of the concordat to support research integrity is incorporated within the report.
<b>Communication and Culture</b>	The content of the report is being shared via other relevant committees.
<b>Reason for Paper</b>	Regular report to Senate. Research integrity statement requirement of Concordat for Research Integrity
<b>Risk</b>	The report mainly focuses on low-risk items.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	N/A

### Plymouth Marjon University Annual Statement on Research Integrity

#### Section 1: Key contact information

<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	Plymouth Marjon University
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>	Higher Education Institution

higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	
<b>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</b>	Scheduled 28/11/24
<b>1D. Web address of organisation’s research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="#">Research Ethics   Plymouth Marjon University</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Professor Michelle Jones Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost
	Email address: mjones@marjon.ac.uk
<b>1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity</b>	Name: Elpida Acharidou
	Email address: rke@marjon.ac.uk

**Section 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture.**

**Description of actions and activities undertaken**

<p><b>2A. Description of current systems and culture</b></p> <p>Please describe how the organisation maintains high standards of research integrity and promotes positive research culture. It should include information on the support provided to researchers to understand standards, values and behaviours, such as training, support and guidance for researchers at different career stages/ disciplines. You may find it helpful to consider the following broad headings:</p> <p>Policies and systems</p> <p>Communications and engagement</p> <p>Culture, development and leadership</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting</p> <p><i>Our research culture is heavily influenced by our mission, vision and values. As an organisation we intentionally embed our values; ambition, curiosity, independent and humanity in all we do. Our values are central to our People Strategy, Research</i></p>
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*and Knowledge Exchange Strategy and Research Ethics Policy. For example, all new staff participate in a 'living the values' session and our values are embedded in all aspects of academic review including probationary processes, performance and development reviews, and as part of academic promotion.*

*Our commitment to research integrity and a positive research culture is reinforced in the Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy, 'Building Knowledge Together' e.g. via the strategic intent of 'building knowledge capacity inclusively across our community, including students and the public, built on trust and integrity'.*

*The university has robust systems in place for ensuring high standards of research integrity. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the concordat to support research integrity, including the oversight of research policies, research governance and ethics, and training and development opportunities provided by the University to its staff and students. The Research Ethics Panel, which operates university wide, discharges a number of these responsibilities, overseeing applications for ethical review in line with our ethics policy.*

*The Research Ethics Panel is chaired by an active researcher received 19 new applications during 2023-24 and 74% of decisions were provided within 20 working days. All Research Ethics Panel members are required to complete ethics training. The Panel consists of five male and five female members including one PGR member. It is positive that the panel have felt sufficiently empowered to request minor and major amendments and offer unfavourable ethical opinion to ethical applications. The Research Ethics Committee is overseen by the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, and Senate.*

*Learning, training and mentoring opportunities are operated through a central research and knowledge exchange team, and through the Doctoral College for PGR students. Academic staff are managed by Deans and Associate Deans of School who support a culture of integrity in line with Marjon values. Several activities aim to support the research environment including a researcher development series to enhance rigour and promote understanding of the research integrity.*

*Plymouth Marjon University is an active member of a number of bodies including Guild HE Research, and Cathedrals Group Research and Enterprise group which help to ensure we remain up to date in terms of external frameworks.*

## **2B. Changes and developments during the period under review**

Please provide an update on any changes made during the period, such as new initiatives, training, developments, also ongoing changes that are still underway. Drawing on Commitment 3 of the Concordat, please note any new or revised policies, practices and procedures to support researchers; training on research ethics and research integrity; training and mentoring opportunities to support the development of researchers' skills throughout their careers.

### ***Research Mentoring***

*In 2022-2023 the research mentoring project for early career researchers was started. It aimed to co-create research mentor good practice guidelines, scope the training needs of research mentors, develop and implement research mentor training, test a process for allocating research mentor/mentee pairs and implement research mentoring and evaluate the experience from the perspective of mentors and mentees. In 2023-24 the programme was scaled up, embedded within processes and a research mentoring policy is under development.*

### ***Open Access Policy***

*The university's open access policy was reviewed and updated in 2023-24 and supporting guidance documents help Marjon researcher's find affordable and compliant routes to open access. The university believes that publicly funded research should be openly available at no cost and seeks to increase opportunities for discovery, re-use and impact of our research findings. The library staff provide Open Access training to academics and PGR students.*

### ***Development and Training***

*The evaluation of our training series has been systematised in terms of data collected on attendance. Data suggest improvement in engagement as part of our developing research culture. Attendees at our training opportunities have increased overall and in the case of one of our research series have doubled in most sessions compared to last academic year. Training in research ethics forms a regular part of this series.*

## **2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments**

This should include a reflection on the previous year's activity including a review of progress and impact of initiatives if known relating to activities referenced in

the previous year's statement. Note any issues that have hindered progress, e.g. resourcing or other issues.

*Progress is reported in 2B.*

*Our approach to Research Integrity and its governance will undergo changes as part of the university's renewed Marjon 2030 strategy. Research plays a key role in this strategy – with a focus on promoting an inclusive culture which values, supports, and celebrates ethical and impactful research and knowledge exchange. The new strategy reflects our commitment to adapting, evolving and improving in response to the changing landscape of higher education and research.*

*The University is also reviewing its research governance procedures in the light of a newly created cross-institutional role of Dean of Research and Knowledge Exchange who will work with Associate Deans of Research and Innovation who have been appointed in each school from 2024-25. These appointments, alongside our well-established Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange, will provide further dedicated direction, oversight and support for our research activities and play a crucial role in shaping, implementing and ensuring adherence to the highest of standards of research integrity. A key priority will be to start work on a REF Code of Conduct, updating work from the 2021 exercise in preparation for REF2029.*

*We also plan to conduct an independent comprehensive review of research integrity, related policies and governance structures. This review will ensure that our practices remain current, effective and efficient for our context and aligned with our new strategic direction. We will ensure that learnings are implemented to our policies, research governance framework, ethics procedures, and training opportunities for staff and students. As part of this review, our intellectual Property (IP) and data management policies will be updated.*

*Further work is underway to create online training and support packages for staff and PGR students. The packages will be easily accessible to all and will cover a range of different research related areas from research bidding to writing a PhD thesis and journal publications. These resources will complement and enrich those created previously for research delivery, with additional materials to be added over time.*

**2D. Case study on good practice (optional)**

Please describe an anonymised brief, exemplar case study that can be shared as good practice with other organisations. A wide range of case studies are valuable, including small, local implementations. Case studies may also include the impact of implementations or lessons learned.

*[Please insert response]*

**Section 3: Addressing research misconduct**

**3A. Statement on processes that the organisation has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct**

Please provide:

a brief summary of relevant organisation policies/ processes (e.g. research misconduct procedure, whistle-blowing policy, bullying/harassment policy; appointment of a third party to act as confidential liaison for persons wishing to raise concerns) and brief information on the periodic review of research misconduct processes (e.g. date of last review; any major changes during the period under review; date when processes will next be reviewed).

information on how the organisation creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct (e.g. code of practice for research, whistle-blowing, research misconduct procedure, informal liaison process, website signposting for reporting systems, training, mentoring, reflection and evaluation of policies, practices and procedures).

anonymised key lessons learned from any investigations into allegations of misconduct which either identified opportunities for improvements in the organisation's investigation procedure and/or related policies / processes/ culture or which showed that they were working well.

*The university is committed to ensuring research integrity across all levels and areas of the university. All research undertaken includes a statement about where contact can be made if there are concerns about research misconduct. The first point of contact in these cases would be the University Research Ethics Panel. The research ethics committee has the authority to take action if researcher misconduct is suspected and may, where necessary, recommend a further investigation in line with the university's disciplinary policy.*

*Plymouth Marjon has in place policies to deal with whistle blowing and bullying and harassment. Both of these are publicly available on our website.*

**3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken**

Please complete the table on the number of **formal investigations completed during the period under review** (including investigations which completed during this period but started in a previous academic year). Information from ongoing investigations should not be submitted.

An organisation's procedure may include an initial, preliminary, or screening stage to determine whether a formal investigation needs to be completed. These allegations should be included in the first column but only those that proceeded past this stage, to formal investigations, should be included in the second column.

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; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
<i>Other*</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<p><b>*If you listed any allegations under the 'Other' category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.</b></p>				
<p><i>[Please insert response if applicable]</i></p>				