

**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONCORDAT TO SUPPORT RESEARCH INTEGRITY**

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| <b>Name of institution: Manchester Metropolitan University</b>   |   |
| <b>Period under review: 2022/2023</b>  |   |
| <b>Date approved by governing body: 24/11/2023</b>   | <b>Date made publicly available: 01/12/2023</b> |
| <b>Web address of institutional research integrity page:</b><br><a href="https://www.mmu.ac.uk/research/research-integrity">https://www.mmu.ac.uk/research/research-integrity</a>  |   |
| <b>Named contact points for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Questions/ information on research integrity:</b> Professor Nick Brook, PVC Research and Knowledge Exchange: <a href="mailto:n.brook@mmu.ac.uk">n.brook@mmu.ac.uk</a></li><li>• <b>Concerns about research integrity/ research misconduct:</b> Sam Gray, Director of Research Environment <a href="mailto:s.gray@mmu.ac.uk">s.gray@mmu.ac.uk</a></li></ul> |   |
| <b>Date statement sent to Concordat Signatories: 30/11/2023</b>  |   |

## 1. Summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support research integrity issues

### *Human Tissue Authority Audit (HTA)*

The Human Tissue Authority conducted an audit of the University's compliance with the Human Tissue Act in February 2023. We are pleased to report that we passed the audit and fully meet the requirements of our HTA licence. This result underlined the hard work of a number of staff from across the University's academic and professional services community including the DP Professor Hans Degens and colleagues from Technical Services and RKE.

### *Ethical Approvals*

Within the academic year 22/23 the University has granted 6,772 applications for ethical approval (table 1):

| Application Route   | 2022/23  | 2021/22   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Full applications</b><br>(research projects led by staff and doctoral research students – signed off by two independent reviewers) | <b>724</b><br>274 staff<br>132 doctoral research<br>286 masters<br>32 taught | <b>621</b><br>236 staff<br>96 doctoral research<br>277 masters<br>12 taught |
| <b>UG/PGT applications</b><br>(research projects led by taught students – signed off by their supervisor)                             | <b>6015</b>  | <b>4346</b>   |
| <b>Unit approvals</b><br>(research activities embedded in a taught course – approval lasts for 3 years)                               | <b>33</b>  | <b>21</b>   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>6772</b>  | <b>4988</b>   |

*Table 1: Applications for ethical approval in AY 2022/23*

### *Highlights from Research Ethics and Governance Committee (REGC)*

REGC has met 3 times over the past academic year.

Aside from the usual business, the members have discussed the ethical and reputational implications of high-profile media reports on autoethnographic research carried out by a PhD student at the University of Manchester published in the Journal of Qualitative Research and actions associated with the Human Tissue Audit.

REGC has formed a working group that reports into the central Research Ethics and Governance Committee. Its remit is to process operational matters on behalf of the Committee.

Research Ethics and Governance Manager, Alison Lloyd has resigned from the Committee to take up a new post within the NHS. New Research Ethics and Governance Manager Gemma Hughes has joined the Committee.

We have appointed two independent lay members who will support the work of the Committee in the year ahead.

### ***Training***

Over this academic year, the central and faculty-based REG teams have continued to run numerous and varied training and development sessions to strengthen compliance with the Concordat. These are run regularly and are flexible to the needs of respective teams, audiences, and knowledge of research integrity. Training has been supplemented by Faculty Ethics Digests and the creation of short videos.

### **2. Assurance that our processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, timely, robust and fair, and continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation.**

The University's Procedure for the Investigation of Allegations of Research Misconduct (available here <https://www.mmu.ac.uk/research/research-integrity>) provides transparent, timely, robust and fair means of handling any alleged departure from the principle and practice of research integrity. To ensure continued relevance to the needs of the University, the procedure is currently under review.

### **3. Formal investigations of research misconduct**

Over this academic year, the University has received 2 allegations of research misconduct (one involving a staff member and the second involving a doctoral researcher). In the case related to a staff member, the investigation was abandoned at the preliminary stage of the process as the anonymous complainant did not provide a response when prompted for further information. In the case related to the doctoral researcher, the case was investigated, and the doctoral researcher did admit to attempted plagiarism and recommendations are being followed around training and progression reviews.

### **4. Learning from formal investigations of research misconduct.**

Our current procedure is compliant with the Concordat for Research Integrity, but the timelines associated with the formal investigation process are overly ambitious and will be revised as part of a review of the procedure that is planned to take place in 2023.

### **5. Statement on how the institution creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct**

The University has a central REG team ([ethics@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@mmu.ac.uk)) who support research integrity across the organisation, are the initial point of contact for research integrity queries. The

REG teamwork in close collaboration with the University's research integrity contact, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Research to ensure research integrity is considered at a senior level. The organisation has a clear research governance structure, policies, procedures, training, guidance and website where research integrity related information can be found. The REG team works collaboratively with staff, researchers and students in order to enhance channels of communication about research integrity and research misconduct concerns across the research environment.

#### **6. Information on periodic review of research misconduct processes:**

We will review the current research misconduct process by December 2023 including colleagues from HR, Library and Cultural Services and Research and Innovation as part of the working group.

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| <b>Contact details for queries:</b> | Sam Gray | s.gray@mmu.ac.uk |
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