

Research Integrity Annual Statement 2018-19

Background - The *Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity* (2012) requires each signatory to submit a short annual report to their governing body, demonstrating how the principles and ethos of integrity are embedded within the governance framework, and how compliance with the Concordat is achieved. The UCLan Annual Statement of Integrity for 2018/19 covers the following: 1) policies and procedures, 2) training and development, 3) research malpractice / complaints, and 4) ongoing review and oversight. Any queries in relation to this statement should be addressed to the University Officer for Ethics and Integrity at the following email address officerforethics@uclan.ac.uk.

1 Policies and procedures

The University has a [Code of Conduct for Research](#) and an [Ethical Principles](#) document which are reviewed annually by the Ethics and Integrity team within Research Services. Approval for any amendments are made by the Academic Board via the Committee for Ethics and Integrity. Research malpractice has a [Code of Practice for the Investigation of Allegations of Research Malpractice](#). In addition to these policies, other documents are available below:

- a) [Data Protection Policy](#)
- b) Safeguarding Guidelines – available via Staff Intranet and to externals on legitimate authorisation
- c) [Information Security Policy](#)
- d) [Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy](#)
- e) [Public Interest Disclosure Procedure \(Whistleblowing\)](#)

The Academic Governance Review took place during 2017/18 and was approved by the University Board in July 2018 for implementation in September 2018. The purpose of the review was to ensure that Governance Framework was fit for purpose. Consequently, Ethics Review Panels have operated with delegated authority from Academic Board since September 2018. Governance has been strengthened with the introduction of Faculty Ethics Committees; and the University Ethics Committee has been reconstituted as the Committee for Ethics and Integrity (CEI). The Governance Structure in place since September 2018 is shown in **Figure 1** (Section 4).

The University currently has a centrally based digital e-Ethics **Sharepoint** system for post-graduate research students and academic staff. The Ethics and Integrity Unit is responsible for the digital platformⁱ. Ethics reviews are processed digitally through one of three Ethics Review Panelsⁱⁱ, each of which is constituted from academics of those subject groups, in addition to independent lay members recruited from the independent community. Reports on each Ethics Review Panel outcomes, total number of applications, and matters of national or local significance are provided to the Committee for Ethics and Integrity (CEI).

The CEI meets three times annually and the five Faculty Ethics Committees meet three times annually. The three Ethics Review Panels meet two times per annum. In addition, they come together once annually to share views and perspectives in a broader inter-disciplinary context.

In addition to formally constituted Faculty Ethics Committees, Faculty Research and Innovation Committees also exist. These consider research related business at a local level and report to the Academic Board via the University Research and Innovation Committee.

2 Training and development

The University recognises that the ultimate responsibility for personal and professional development of researchers lies with the individuals themselves and the University provides training and opportunities for engagement in a supportive environment. Ethics Committees at Faculty and University level also reflect on case studies to identify and disseminate good practice at all levels. The University benefits from membership of the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) and Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA). The latter has absorbed AfRE (Association for Research Ethics) and benchmarks all development opportunities against the RDF (Researcher Development Framework) and other sector standards, where appropriate.

The Researcher Development Unit within Research Services, alongside Human Resources and Legal Services have designed training opportunities to support research integrity. Courses such as those listed below are mandatory to all staff. There are also discipline and subject specific mandatory training courses. The training courses utilise a variety of teaching methods and modes that appeal to different learning styles.

- a. Data Protection (GDPR)**
- b. Intellectual Property Essentials**
- c. Information Security Essentials**
- d. Safeguarding Essentials**
- e. Bribery Act Training**
- f. Anti-Fraud Training**
- g. Ethics and research integrity**
- h. Procedures for ethics application – staff and student**
- i. Lay reviewer training – Ethics committee members**
- j. Chair and reviewer training – Ethics committee members**
- k. Unconscious Bias**
- l. Prevent Training**

All mandatory training compliance is monitored by HR- reported to line managers; and any anomalies or failed completions addressed through the annual appraisal process. In addition to the training programme provided by UCLan, staff also have access to Epigeumⁱⁱⁱ which further supports learning and development. The licence for Epigeum was renewed in 2017 and is subject to a three-year review prior to any future renewal.

3 Research malpractice / complaints

The University has a [Code of Practice for the Investigation of Allegations of Research Malpractice](#). The University Officer for Ethics must be notified of any suspected incidences of malpractice as outlined in the document. All reported instances are investigated according to the procedure within the Code, and findings recorded. Where research misconduct as opposed to research malpractice is identified there is the potential to invoke the relevant [HR Disciplinary Procedure](#). This Code will be reviewed and updated during 2019/2020.

3.1 Number of Reported allegations of Research Misconduct 2018-2019 (Sep 18 – May 19)

During the period 1st September 2018 to 31st May 2019, there were no new allegations of Research Misconduct reported to the University Officer for Ethics.

However, further information was requested by the complainant of an allegation of misconduct which was investigated during 2017/2018 reporting period. This request is being dealt with by the University Officer for Ethics.

4 Ongoing Review and Oversight

The University will maintain oversight of the conduct of researchers through the Governance Framework as described and illustrated in **Figure 1** below. This will be supported by ongoing provision of a comprehensive and current professional development programme.

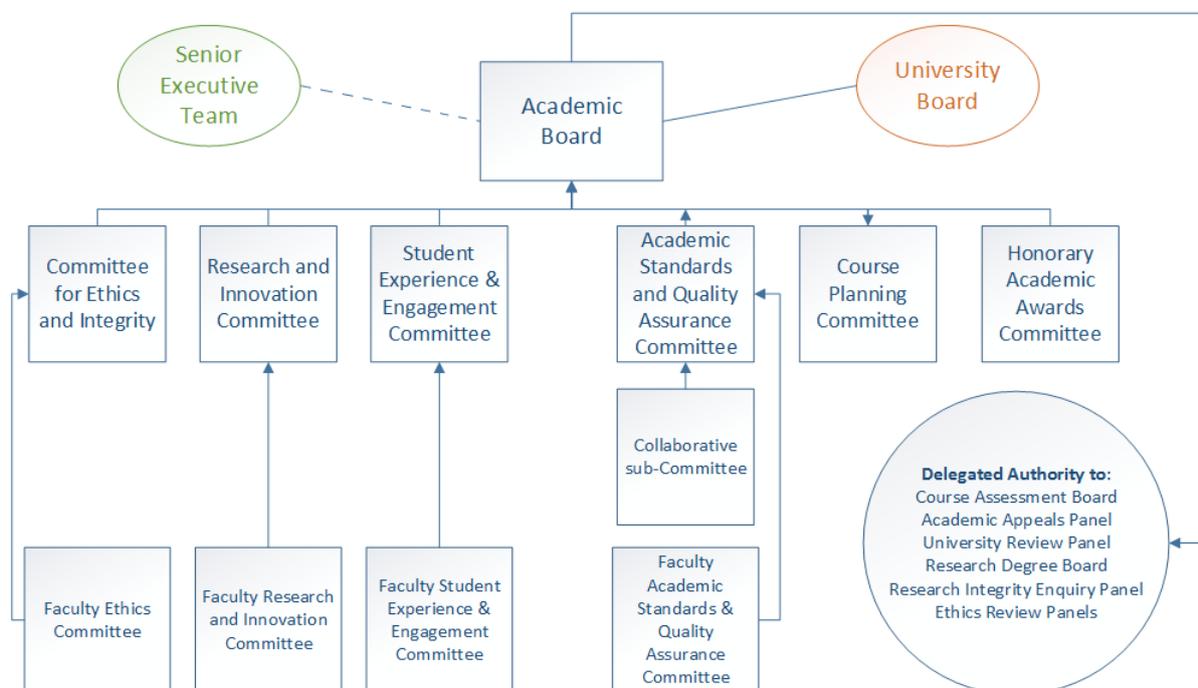


Figure 1. Diagrammatic representation of the Governance Framework at UCLan.

ⁱ Nominated for a THE award in Innovation in Information Communication Technology after its launch in 2012

ⁱⁱ Business, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (BAHSS); Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Health (STEMH); Psychology and Social Work (PSYSOC)

ⁱⁱⁱ Epigeum – Epigeum is the leading provider of exceptional online courses designed to help universities and colleges transform their core activities – in teaching and development, research, studying, and support and wellbeing. Courses are developed through global collaboration of experts and partner universities and shared by subscription. They are produced by an in-house team of editorial and online professionals and used by leading institutions across the world.

During 2019/2020 the University will actively promote the regulations and processes surrounding Ethics and Integrity to Staff and Students.