

Research Integrity

- This paper provides the Committee with an update on research integrity. The Committee will also receive an oral update from UKRI on development of a national Research Integrity Committee and next steps from the Research Integrity landscape study.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to:

- Note the update on research integrity.
- Note and discuss the presentation from UKRI on development of a national Research Integrity Committee and the landscape study.

Financial implications

- There are no financial implications

Research Integrity

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Committee with an update on research integrity. The Committee will also receive an oral update from UKRI on development of a national Research Integrity Committee and next steps from the Research Integrity landscape study.

Background

2. In [September 2019](#) the Committee discussed both proposed revision of the Concordat to support research integrity and SFC's position in relation to UKRI's proposed Research Integrity Committee.
3. The Committee supported the proposed strengthening of the Concordat however noted the challenges of engaging with the UKRI Research Integrity Committee from the perspective of the devolved responsibilities of SFC.

Concordat to support research integrity

4. SFC, in common with other significant UK funders of research and Universities UK (UUK), is a signatory of the [Concordat to support research integrity](#).
5. The Concordat was developed by UUK in collaboration with the funding and research councils, the Wellcome Trust and various government departments. It sets out five commitments intended to provide assurances to government, the wider public and the international community that research in the UK continues to be underpinned by the highest standards of rigour and integrity. The revised and strengthened Concordat was published in October 2019.
6. Scottish HEIs are required as part of their Outcome Agreements to provide "evidence of compliance with the principles set out in the Universities UK Concordat to support research integrity".
7. UUK will, on behalf of the signatories, be asking institutions this autumn to submit evidence of compliance with a couple of main indicators, namely public availability of contacts details and an annual statement. The signatories have also undertaken to publish an annual statement and to hold an annual forum.

UKRI update

8. The UK House of Commons Science and Technology Committee undertook an [enquiry](#) into Research Integrity in 2018. Recommendations included:

- UKRI should commission research to better understand what incentives and effects there are in the UK research and funding system that influence researcher and institutional behaviour in the context of research integrity.
- Establishment of a new independent body to monitor compliance and advise on any sanctions.

Research Integrity Landscape study

9. UKRI commissioned [Vitae](#), working with [UK Research Integrity Office \(UKRIO\)](#) and the [UK Reproducibility Network \(UKRN\)](#), to conduct a study into the effects of incentives in the research system on researcher behaviour. The study, overseen by an expert advisory group, was conducted through an extensive literature review, a survey, researcher workshops and interviews, collectively reaching over 1500 researchers and representatives of stakeholder organisations.
10. The [study](#) was published in June 2020.

UKRI Research Integrity Committee

11. UKRI took forward consideration of establishing this new independent body and following wide engagement and legal advice, it was announced that this new independent body would be a national research integrity committee which would be set up under UKRI auspices and would focus on providing enhanced assurance for **UKRI-funded** research, as well as championing research integrity and producing an annual report on the state of research integrity.
12. UKRI have continued to engage with the sector and to develop proposals, they hope to consult on their proposals early next year.
13. It is proposed that the Committee will have two main aims 1) to **champion** research integrity and 2) to **review** whether research organisations have effective policies and processes in place for managing and investigating allegations of research misconduct, and whether they follow them.
14. UKRI will provide an oral update to the Committee.

Risk assessment

15. There are no risks associated with this update paper.

Equality and diversity assessment

16. There are no equality and diversity issues associated with this paper

Financial implications

17. There are no financial implications associated with this paper.

Recommendations

18. The Committee is invited to:

- Note the update on research integrity.
- Note and discuss the presentation from UKRI on development of a national Research Integrity Committee and the landscape study.

Publication

19. This paper will be published on the Council website

Further information

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