Research Integrity in UK Higher Education

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• Why does research integrity matter?
• The UK landscape
• The concordat to support research integrity
• The role of research funders
• The role of universities and research organizations
• Current conversations and next steps
Why does research integrity matter?
The UK Landscape

- The concordat
- Independent bodies
- Funders
- Higher education institutions
The concordat to support research integrity

• The concordat ‘seeks to provide a comprehensive national framework for good research conduct and its governance’.

• The concordat:
  • Applies to all fields of research
  • Emphasizes responsibilities and accountabilities
  • Complements existing frameworks
  • Recognizes the autonomy of employers
... the concordat continued

• 5 commitments:
  • To maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.
  • To ensure research meets appropriate legal, ethical and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.
  • To support a research environment underpinned by integrity and best practice.
  • To use robust, fair and transparent processes to address allegations of misconduct.
  • To review progress regularly and openly.
The role of funders

• Research England: compliance with the concordat is a condition of grant
• Research Councils: policy and guidance on governance of good research conduct
• UKRI: opportunity to consider and shape policies
The role of universities and research organisations

• No ‘one size fits all’ approach – a good research culture recognizes the diversity and autonomy of research organizations.

• Internal processes and policies e.g. for ethics approval and investigation of misconduct allegations

• Training and support for researchers

• Provision of information as laid out in the concordat and by funders’ terms and conditions
Current conversations and next steps

• Science and Technology Select Committee inquiry
  • Expected to report in summer 2018 with recommendations on strengthening integrity and comments on the nature of any misconduct issues in the UK

• Strengthening the concordat to support research integrity
  • Work underway among signatories

• REF 2021
  • Potential to incorporate integrity into environment statements