SRUC

Annual Statement on Research Integrity

2023–2024

Research Integrity & Research Culture at SRUC

SRUC is committed to the highest standard of research practice and scientific publishing, and upholds all commitments made under the Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity. In upholding this, SRUC expects all staff and students engaged in research activities to observe the highest standards of good research conduct, in accordance with internal, national, international and funder standards, guidelines, legislations, policies, and practices.

Summary of Actions and Activities Undertaken in 2023-2024

The Good Research Practice Manual:

[The Good Research Practice Manual](#) (GRPM), an institution-wide policy that defines the expectations regarding research conduct across SRUC for individuals engaging in research, was launched in summer 2023. In 2023-2024, the GRPM has been circulated institutionally and has been made available on SRUC's Research Integrity SharePoint site. The GRPM is shared with all new starts who join SRUC. The policy was reviewed in September 2024 and will be reviewed and updated annually where necessary, to remain aligned to good research practice standards for higher education institutions.

Research Integrity Training Course:

SRUC introduced a Research Integrity Training Course in 2022-2023, to further promote good research practice and integrity institutionally. Engagement with the training continues to progress institutionally and was initially rolled out to academic research active staff and students. It has now been expanded to include commercial and consulting staff who engage in research periodically. The Research Integrity Training Couse has also been made available and promoted to staff working in professional services at SRUC. Since the introduction of the Research Integrity Training Course, 70% of research active academic staff have completed the training at the end of August 2024.

The Research Operations and Strategy department at SRUC supports and co-ordinates all activities for the Research Integrity Training Course and have a wider objective of supporting activities that promote good research practice institutionally. To support these activities, several members of the Research Operations and Strategy team are members of UK Research Integrity Office, through which they frequently attend Research Integrity Webinars and participate in forum discussions on good research practice and research integrity. Webinars and training sessions relating to research integrity and good

research practice that are offered by the UK Research Integrity Office are also shared institutionally on SRUC's Research Integrity SharePoint site.

SRUC's Research Ethics Committees:

SRUC requires the ethical pre-approval and post-award approval of research proposals. The Social Science Ethics Committee (SSEC) and the Animal Experiments Committee (AEC) continue to operate and oversee ethics relating to research involving human participants and research that involves animal experiments. Between September 2023 to August 2024:

- The SSEC engaged in both pre-submission ethics checks and post-award ethical reviews. The SSEC reviewed and approved 59 pre-submission ethics checks. 60 post-award ethical reviews were circulated by the SSEC. 57 were approved by the SSEC, and 3 had already received approval from the Human Ethical Review Committee (HERC) and were submitted to the SSEC as it is required that SRUC has oversight of all social science research that SRUC staff and students are involved in.
- The AEC also engaged in both pre-submission ethics checks and post-award ethical reviews. During this year, the AEC circulated and approved 62 pre-submission ethics checks. 23 post-award ethical reviews were circulated and approved by the committee. The AEC also circulated 35 borderline animal experiment proposals for review, research proposals that do not involve invasive experimental procedures on animals but involve some engagement with animals or animal tissue. 32 of the 35 borderline animal experiment proposals were approved.

Summary of Planned Developments

SRUC will continue to promote the Good Research Practice Manual across the institution. SRUC is also committed to promoting and encouraging engagement with the Research Integrity Training Course until full completion rates are obtained.

Statement on Procedures and Processes Relating to Research Misconduct

Misconduct in research can have serious consequences for individual researchers, employers, funders, research participants, and the wider public, and can damage public trust in research, as well as harming the reputation of individual researchers and/or their research institute. Research misconduct is a spectrum rather than a hard and fast line. SRUC's Disciplinary Procedures further detail the behaviour that is not accepted by the institution, typically referred to

as questionable research practice, and provides a guidance on investigation and disciplinary procedures to be followed in such instances.

All stakeholders involved in research, including all academic staff, technical support staff, administrative support staff and students, have responsibility for reporting any suspicions of research misconduct. Allegations of research misconduct should be made, as the person making the allegation deems appropriate, to the Provost and Deputy Principal, Professor Jamie Newbold (Jamie.Newbold@sruc.ac.uk). Details of the allegation and investigation procedure are outlined in SRUC's Whistleblowing Policy, and include information on Protection, Confidentiality, Malicious Allegations, Anonymous Allegations, and Retraction of Allegations.

SRUC also has internal policies and guidelines pertaining to the internal Complaint's Handling Procedures, SRUC's Intellectual Property Policy, and the handling of Conflict-of-Interest situations.

Summary of Formal Investigations Relating to Research Misconduct During 2023-2024

During the 2023-2024, there were no formal investigations relating to research misconduct in the academic departments.

Contact Information

To report possible instances of research misconduct by a member or affiliate of SRUC, please email the Named Person responsible for receiving any allegations of misconduct in research, Provost and Deputy Principal, Professor Jamie Newbold, at Jamie.Newbold@sruc.ac.uk.

If the Named Person is deemed to be unsuitable or is absent, please contact the Nominated Alternate Named Person, Professor Eileen Wall (Head of Research), Eileen.Wall@sruc.ac.uk.

If for any reason either of these is deemed to be inappropriate, the allegation should be made to the Chair of the SRUC Board.

The Executive Member with responsibility for Research Integrity is Professor Jamie Newbold (Provost and Deputy Principal), Jamie.Newbold@sruc.ac.uk.

The Institute's Information Governance Officer is Devon Taylor (Company Secretary), Devon.Taylor@sruc.ac.uk

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