PhD Induction Humanities and Social Science (HSS): Researcher Integrity

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What is research?

"Research" is defined as, "a process of investigation leading to new insights". It includes:

(i) work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors;

(ii) scholarship;

(iii) the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and

(iv) the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction'.

Source: Annex A, *The Concordat to support Research Integrity*

The importance of research integrity

- "Research conducted with a high level of integrity is more trustworthy – and trusted – by other researchers, by users of research and by society in general." (UKRI).

- It makes your research truly original, legitimate and reliable.

- Because it is the right and ethical thing to do!

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Research integrity scenarios

Can I use an editing service to help with my thesis?

I gave a presentation at a conference; can I use the feedback to develop my argument?

How do you respond to the external examiner at your viva who asks: "How did you approach the design and conduct of your PhD study to take account of ethical issues?"

I gave an interview to a magazine on my research on climate change, now it's been used by a political group I disagree with to further their agenda. Can I stop this?

What do I do in my thesis with lines of argument I find objectionable? Can I ignore them?

I'm a twin and my research focuses on understandings of twin bonds and rivalries in Norse mythology. Can I include my twin in my interviews?

The phases of research

What?

- Formulating your research hypothesis

  Determining and formulating your research question(s)

  Deciding on and implementing your methodology

  Writing up your research findings

  Publication and dissemination

Who?

- Yourself
- Research community

  eg supervisors, other PhD students, other scholars

- Funder(s) of your research
- Subjects of your research

  eg authors, individuals, groups

- Recipients of your research
- Users of your research

Key duties of the researcher

You are <u>responsible for</u>:

• understanding the expected standards of rigour and integrity relevant to your research; and

• maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in your work at all times.

You <u>must</u>:

•   comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and

standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, and by employers,

funders and other relevant stakeholders

• ensure that all your research is subject to active and appropriate consideration of relevant

ethical issues.

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Research integrity at Queen Mary: *Concordat* Principles

- **Honesty** in all aspects of research, including in the presentation of research goals, intentions and findings; in reporting on research methods and procedures; in gathering data; in using and acknowledging the work of other researchers; and in conveying valid interpretations and making justifiable claims based on research findings.

- **Rigour** in line with prevailing disciplinary norms and standards: in performing research and using appropriate methods; in adhering to an agreed protocol where appropriate; in drawing interpretations and conclusions from the research; and in communicating the results.

- **Transparency and open communication** in declaring conflicts of interest; in the reporting of research data collection methods; in the analysis and interpretation of data; in making research findings widely available, which includes sharing negative results as appropriate; and in presenting the work to other researchers and to the general public.

- **Care and respect** for all participants in and subjects of research, including humans, animals, the environment and cultural objects. Those engaged with research must also show care and respect for the stewardship of research and scholarship for future generations.

Research integrity at Queen Mary: Specifics

Queen Mary defines research misconduct as 'carrying out, attempting or planning any of the following (as well as any other examples that might reasonably fall within the remit of the policy and its documentation):

- The fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research;

- The deliberate, dangerous or negligent deviation from agreed formal protocols or regulations, including accepted professional standards of behaviour and conduct, in carrying out research, and the failure in that context to avoid risk or harm to humans, animals used in research, and the environment where appropriate The facilitation of misconduct in research or collusion in, or concealment of, such actions by others;

- The intentional and unauthorised use, disclosure of, removal of or damage to, research related property of another researcher. This may include, but is not limited to, intellectual property, writings, data, apparatus, materials, hardware, software, infringement of data protection or confidentiality requirements.

Misconduct in research can include acts of calculated omission as well as acts of commission. It excludes genuine errors or differences in interpretation or judgement in evaluating research methods or results, or misconduct unrelated to research processes.'

Research integrity at Queen Mary: Processes

- Reporting research misconduct – if you suspect it has taken place, you're obliged to report it:

  Eg to your supervisor, School Research Integrity Officer, DGS or Research Manager or the Deputy Dean (PGR)

- Detailed guidance is available on procedure; none of this is easy!

- There may be different explanations for what you perceive.

- In some cases an investigation may conclude 'that there has been no research misconduct but that there have been some deviations from recommended practice that may be remedied by actions such as additional training or mentoring (capability issue) or other disciplinary policy or procedure' (*Guidance on the investigation and resolution of research misconduct allegations*, 2.9)

Other relevant links

- https://www.ukri.org/our-work/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/research-integrity/

- https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf

- www.ukrio.org

- https://www.qmul.ac.uk/research/principles-strategy/policies/

Thank you

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