ENCOURAGING A
POSITIVE RESEARCH CULTURE
Research thrives when researchers feel that they are part of a stimulating, fair, and inclusive environment in which colleagues help each other to succeed.

This statement describes the initiatives we have undertaken to promote and support a positive research culture, and our future plans. The statement is addressed to all our staff and students who are involved in research activities at the University of Glasgow, those who might be thinking of doing so in the future, those who fund our research activities, and those who collaborate with our research community. It is an expression of how we expect our research to be done.

By publishing this statement – our first – we are being open about our plans, so that others can challenge, query, or enhance them.

**What do we mean by culture?**
Culture spans the way in which we evaluate, support, and reward excellence in research, how we recognise varied contributions to a research activity, and how we support the careers of our researchers.

It’s about valuing not only the research that is done, but how it is done.

A positive culture is one in which colleagues (i) are valued for their varied contributions to a research activity, (ii) help each other to succeed, and (iii) are supported to produce research that meets the highest standards of academic rigour.

Advancing our culture is about recognising the practical changes we can make to the way we do things and embedding these in all our policies and procedures. The actions described in this statement show our community what we are doing, and what we have planned. The statement also helps to align and focus the various activities in the University.

**Excellence through culture**
Culture is not a substitute for excellence; it is what enables more of us to excel.

Ambitious research goals – those that excite us because they make a difference to our knowledgebase and to society – result from different talents collaborating with each other in an environment of trust, openness and support.

In the new, challenge-led research environment, it will be necessary for research staff and students to come together collaboratively with colleagues – be they other researchers, technicians, administrative staff, or external partners – to find creative solutions to the large-scale problems facing our world.

Dr Tanita Casci  
Professor Miles Padgett  

University of Glasgow  
15 December 2019
INITIATIVES AND PLANS TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT A POSITIVE RESEARCH CULTURE

Our actions aim to further the following five priorities:

- Collegiality
- Career Development
- Research Recognition
- Open Research
- Research Integrity

Helping each other to succeed
COLLEGIALITY

Creating an environment in which colleagues support each other to succeed.

What we have done

• Promotion criteria. Revised our professorial promotion criteria (applicable from 2019/20) to include a requirement to demonstrate (i) collegiality in each of our seven qualifying performance dimensions (ii) a commitment to open research practices.
• Research culture awards. Launched Research Culture Awards to celebrate individuals or teams who contributed to a positive research culture. Four prizes were awarded in June 2019.
• Dialogue with the community. Arranged visits by the Vice Principal (Research) and Head of Research Policy to each research unit in the University, to discuss the culture projects so far delivered and seek input to a future strategy for making the University of Glasgow the best place in which to pursue a research career.

What we will do

• Remove barriers, including financial ones, to collaboration between our organisational units.
• Develop digital support for networking, video conferencing, and virtual meeting attendance.
• Provide financial and technological support for more agile collaborative research networks.
• Increase the visibility of new starts to the University research community.

How we will monitor progress

• Report on the implementation of the new professorial promotion criteria.
• Collate examples of good practice for supporting culture, drawn from the culture award nominations and elsewhere, and share them widely.
• Monitor feedback on support for virtual workshops and conferences.

Reading and resources

• University of Glasgow Academic Promotion Criteria
  glasgow.ac.uk/media/Media_497802_smxx.pdf

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

We aspire to support colleagues to succeed in their chosen career path – not only academic paths. This pillar is especially relevant to Research-only staff, in line with the objectives of The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers; however, the processes developed to support the Concordat (e.g. tracking destinations) will benefit other staff and student groups.

What we have done

• Specialist career tracks. To support collegiality and recognise the contributions of different career paths to a research endeavour, we created job tracks for Research Scientists and for Technologists. The initiative has been commended by The Academy of Medical Sciences.
• Authorship. Embedded the CASRAI CRediT taxonomy in our institutional outputs repository (Enlighten), allowing authors to record publicly their contribution to a publication. The CRediT taxonomy had been included in our institutional policy on good research practice since 2017. Glasgow is the only institution to be a formal signatory to CRediT.
• Institutional coordination. Established a University-level Research Culture and Careers Group, to support the University’s ongoing aspirations to strengthen its positive research culture, and lead on consultation.

What we will do

• Align activities to The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. Seek support from our Senior Management Group to become a signatory to the Concordat, then develop and communicate the institutional implementation plan for the Concordat. The action plan will be centred on: improved and consistent induction processes; evaluating engagement with training and professional development; increasing capacity and expertise to support post-academic careers; tracking the career destinations of PGRs & Research Assistants; and helping and incentivising PIs to support the career development of others towards academic or post-academic roles.

How we will monitor progress

• Support and monitor the implementation of the Concordat by strengthening communications, leadership, and by championing ECRs.
• Develop and track measures to mark progress with implementing the Concordat.

Reading and resources

• Code of Good Research Practice in Research
  glasgow.ac.uk/media/Media_490311_smxx.pdf
• The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
  www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat
• Giving credit for contributions to research outputs
  glasgow.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/headline_698071_en.html
RESEARCH RECOGNITION

Measuring what matters: developing and embedding clear and fair approaches to evaluating research quality. Recognising and valuing different roles and contributions to a research endeavour.

What we have done

• Research assessment. In 2017, we developed a university policy on the use of quantitative indicators in research assessment. The policy is compliant with San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), the Leiden Manifesto, and The Metric Tide. It is formally aligned to the Leiden Manifesto, as noted here. We have aligned our academic promotions forms and the application forms for our institutional strategic recruitment schemes to this policy: applicants are requested to select their four best outputs, describe the significance of each output to the field (without relying on impact factors), and indicate the author’s contribution. Applicants are also asked to describe their commitment to open research.
  • Parity of credit for outputs and impact. Our promotion criteria are based on a preponderance approach: candidates need only meet the necessary criteria in 4 out of the 7 review dimensions. This approach allows focus and provides clarity of expectation to staff. From 2019/20, professorial promotion criteria explicitly state that one of the four qualifying criteria should be either outputs or impact, thus acknowledging the value to the institution of societal impact.
  • Research reviews. We undertook external, panel-based reviews of the research environment of each of our subjects, one outcome of which was an articulation of what quality means in each discipline.
  • Research culture survey. Ran our first research culture survey in summer 2019 in order to understand awareness and identify areas for action. We had 1,200 responses and 1,500 free-text comments (we also published a report). The survey question set is available for other institutions to use. We will run the survey again in 2020.

What we will do

• Identify research culture leads in each organisational unit, and support local leadership to develop local action plans for culture.
• Explore new approaches and procedures for recruiting talent (as done, for example, with the LKAS fellowship schemes) and evaluating performance.
• Continue to develop awareness of what research excellence means in each discipline and how it is assessed.
• Ensure that our communications to promote research achievements reflect diverse contributions to research excellence, e.g. different outputs types, career stages or career tracks, and team-based endeavours.

How we will monitor progress

• Specific questions in the research staff survey will highlight the effectiveness of these measures in each discipline, e.g. awareness of how research quality is measured; the value of quality over quantity.

Reading and resources

• Statement on the Use of Quantitative Indicators in the Assessment of Research Quality glasgow.ac.uk/media/555903.smxx.pdf
• Research culture survey: question set glasgow.ac.uk/media/myglasgow/ris/researchculture/researchculturesurvey/
• Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics www.leidenmanifesto.org
SUPPORTING TRANSPARENCY IN RESEARCH

SPACE TO BE CREATIVE

internal view of the new Research Hub building
OPEN RESEARCH

Supporting transparency, rigour, and reproducibility by facilitating early sharing of e.g. research data, software, code, and materials to a wider audience. Valuing different research output types.

What we have done
• Research data management. Our research data management team provides advice, training, data storage, and support for depositing data in public repositories, including our own. Data records are given a DOI and linked to publications as appropriate. Datasets are visible on staff webpages alongside other outputs (e.g. see this example).
• Open access. Provided one-step support for making publications open access, as a result of which Glasgow is the institution with the highest proportion of open access outputs worldwide, among institutions with >10K outputs (Leiden Ranking, 2014–2017).

What we will do
• Help researchers to enhance their digital footprint (e.g. through the Research Jigsaw seminar series), thus enhancing the visibility of research and researchers.
• Embed planning and costing for data management, storage and sharing at grant submission stage.
• Identify open research stewards with defined job role to provide leadership.

How we will monitor progress
• Specific questions in the research staff survey will highlight awareness of best practice for open research and open access, and of the available support.
• Track % of staff with an ORCID, % of projects with a data management plan logged online (e.g. in PGR progress reviews); % of outputs that are open access; % outputs with data availability statements; number of open data records in outputs repository (Enlighten); % items with a CRediT record in Enlighten.

Reading and resources
• Concordat on Open Research Data www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/concordatonopenresearchdata-pdf
• What is research data? glasgow.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/newsarchive/2019/26august/headline_667962_en.html

RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Supporting research that is conducted to the highest standards of academic rigour, to increase the quality of, and trust in, the research record.

What we have done
• Leadership. Systematically reviewed our entire provision for research integrity in 2015, including training, leadership, and policies. We have embedded >30 integrity champions and advisers in Colleges, Schools and Institutes to provide support and address concerns. Our support structure has been recognised by UKRIO and the Royal Society as an example of good practice in the sector, and role descriptors for the advisers have been shared more widely.
• Training. Led on a guidance document for research integrity training that is being agreed as a common framework by the Russell Group.
• Expertise. Created a new, centrally located staff position. Since January 2019, a Researcher Development and Integrity Specialist has expanded the capacity for integrity support, and enabled more tailored training, new delivery formats, and access to a more diverse audience.

What we will do
• Enhance integrity training provision that is adapted to discipline, career level, staff group, work location.
• Review the role descriptor for integrity champions and advisers, and reinforce communications in academic units.
• Conduct external 5-year review of processes, leadership, communications & training.
• Communication campaign to encourage reflections on failure, in order to promote open conversations about research practice.

How we will monitor progress
• Increased training uptake for integrity and research data management, continued tailoring of content and delivery format of integrity training, and its expansion to additional staff groups (academic staff, research technicians, research administrators).
• Feedback from integrity workshops, and from briefing sessions with College-based integrity champions and advisers.
• Traffic on the integrity webpages. Unique hits on the integrity homepage increased by >600% – to –2,000 – in the past year; access; % outputs with data availability statements; number of open data records in outputs repository (Enlighten); % items with a CRediT record in Enlighten.

Reading and resources
• Annual Statement on Research Integrity (since 2014) glasgow.ac.uk/myglasgow/ris/researchpolicies/researchintegrity/about
• The Concordat to Support Research Integrity www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf
• UKRIO/Royal Society: Integrity in Practice Toolkit ukrio.org/integrity-in-practice-toolkit
COORDINATION AND LEADERSHIP

The institutional activities to further our research culture are led collaboratively by Professor Miles Padgett (academic lead) and Dr Tanita Casci (administrative lead), supported by the Research Culture and Careers Group.

We monitor the effectiveness of our activities throughout the year through our research culture survey and through the feedback we receive from consultations on our policies, or from presentations at roadshows and group-specific discussion fora.

We will continue to engage with the sector and, where relevant, drive discussions with a view to sharing good practice and ensuring better coordination. In September 2019, we hosted a workshop around research culture. The event (see the report at https://f1000research.com/documents/8-1697) brought together funders, publishers, societies, and policy makers with research managers and academics with the aim of identifying practical actions that would make Glasgow the best place in which to develop a research career.

Based on the information gathered from this culture event, from the 2019 research culture survey, and from visits by the Vice Principal (Research) and Head of Research Policy held in spring 2019 to each School and Institute, we have developed an institutional 2020–2025 action plan for research culture.

If you have a question on the statement or on research culture in the University, please contact researchculture@glasgow.ac.uk or your College representative on the Research Culture and Careers Group.

For more information please see our webpages (glasgow.ac.uk/myglasgow/ris/researchculture), research policies, and a recent blog (https://blog.f1000.com/2019/11/01/reimagining-research-culture).

This statement was approved by the Senior Management Group of the University of Glasgow on 18 December 2019.