1. General update

Recalling last year's report, we planned improvements around the advice and training provided to PhD students and researchers and planned to bring disparate information together in a coherent Code of Practice.

We put the Code of Practice on hold as there were a number of new papers and policies emerging from key funders such as UKRI and Wellcome Trust on research and innovation culture (integrity is only one feature of these new policies – see other considerations). The intention remains to develop the Code and make it publically available but the work will commence now the landscape has stabilised.

The Doctoral College began work with the QM Academy to introduce a programme of online self-directed Researcher Integrity Training that students must complete as part of their Year 1 PhD progression, alongside other mandatory courses like Equality and Diversity. The training will cover issues such as replica table evidence and experimentation, plagiarism, proof reading services and expectations for the completed thesis. All students beyond Year 1 progression point will also be expected to complete the training by 1st January 2023. Student participation in this training will be recorded and auditable.

We are dedicating additional resource in response to the changing external landscape, with a renewed focus on Trusted Research (i.e. ensuring due diligence in international partnerships) and development of a new Research Integrity Committee that supports our work on ensuring Research and Innovation processes and dealing with cases of alleged Research Misconduct. We are piloting new training on Export Control regulations and declarations, plus wider aspects of Trusted Research.

The last year has seen a review of how our research ethics committee operates and a significant refresh of membership. The main changes have been simplification, a consideration of UKRI's position regarding responsible innovation and a greater promotion of the need for school based leads on ethics and creation of review panels for minimal risk research (mainly student led projects). The school based research panels approach and the Queen Mary Ethical Research Committee approves documentation before being put to use.

2. Summary of research misconduct investigations (2020-21)

Cases of potential research misconduct reported to the end of July 2021: Three

In February 2021, we were contacted about unspecified concerns related to publications from a number of colleagues in the School of Medicine and Dentistry. On consideration, no new issues were raised and the complainant was written to confirming previous allegations had been investigated under our procedures and no further action would be taken on the new complaint.

In April 2021, a complaint was raised about data being used for publications without consent. An investigation was initiated and has yet to conclude, though a draft report has been prepared and shared as per our policy.

In May 2021, the funder alerted us to a study where ethical approval was not granted by an overseas authority. They asked for assurance that we had given ethics approval for the work, and carried out our safeguarding responsibilities to the researcher, who was based overseas. The issue was investigated covering our safeguarding responsibilities and concluded that we had ensured the researcher was safe and in regular contact with the university. We also investigated whether our ethics policy was followed, and the issue was one of timing rather than not in line with our policy. It is usual for ethics approval to start in the country where the research would take place as well as be submitted for QMUL's consideration. There was a regime change in the country where the research was due to be conducted, which led to ethics approval being quickly denied, and the researcher informed the funder and did not update QMERC. The issue was positively resolved with the funder.

One case has remained under investigation over the whole of the reporting year. This is clearly much longer than we would want to have an open investigation but factors such as availability of the technical expertise required to support the investigation has been a driver of the timeframes. The investigation has concluded with the misconduct being upheld and a range of recommendations made for the researcher to follow. We have met our contractual obligations as regards funder's policies over research misconduct. A disciplinary hearing is planned for the end of September. The

case has stress tested our current Standard Operating Procedure and Policy and a review and redraft is nearing completion to address the areas where our policy did not fully support the process. We have updated the Research and Innovation Risk Register to capture this activity, and are engaging with the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) over our updated policy and scoping a new Research Integrity Committee to provide more resilience and capacity to investigate allegations of Research Misconduct.

Cases with continuing ramifications: Two, one that has continued from the 2019/20. The other is hoped to conclude shortly.

3. Other considerations

Updating on the main issues I alerted the Committee to last year (funder requirements for information sharing on misconduct allegations and Trusted Research agenda). Little has changed regarding the need to report allegations of misconduct to some funders. However, responding the Commons Science and Technology Committee **report of an inquiry into research integrity (PDF, 1.2MB)**, UKRI has begun the process of establishing a national research integrity committee. The committee will champion research integrity in the UK, working closely with other organisations like UKRIO and the Concordat to Support Research Integrity Signatories Group, developing, identifying and sharing good practice. We will look with interest at the work of this Committee and keep our policies open to further change based on information shared around best practice.

The Trusted Research agenda has also changed when The National Security Investment Act came into force over July 2021 that strengthened UK Government powers to scrutinise transactions on grounds of national security. The list of mandatory sectors the Act applies to (Annex A) have significant overlap with our research and innovation portfolio. We are having a training session for c. 30 colleagues drawn from key academic schools and professional services support to update our understanding of Trusted Research and wider Research integrity policies from Government and funders. This will inform further training plans through the QM Academy.

Annex A - National Security and Investment Act 2021

LIST OF MANDATORY SECTORS
- Advanced Materials
- Advanced Robotics
- Artificial Intelligence
- Civil Nuclear
- Communications
- Computing Hardware
- Critical Suppliers to Government
- Cryptographic Authentication
- Data Infrastructure
- Defence
- Energy
- Military and Dual Use Technologies
- Quantum Technologies
- Satellite and Space Technologies
- Suppliers to the Emergency Services
- Synthetic Biology
- Transport