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9 September 2015

Mr Ben Ryan  
Senior Manager, Research Outcomes  
Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council  
Polaris House  
North Star Avenue  
Swindon  
SN2 1ET

Dear Ben

**Re: Complaint by Bill Courtney**

I am writing in response to your email and attachments of 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and to follow up our telephone conversation on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015. You raised the matter of the concerns registered by Mr Bill Courtney in respect of the investigation conducted by the University of Manchester ("**University**") which examined his complaints in relation to the PedSALi research project and related work conducted c.1999-2004 ("**Investigation**").

As you are aware, it is the University's responsibility to conduct investigations in response to complaints involving research integrity and it does not normally discuss these with third parties, not least for the protection of those concerned. We have a published Code of Practice for Dealing with Complaints of Misconduct in Research ("**Code**") and pursue all complaints in a rigorous manner. We are unusual among universities in having a dedicated Associate Vice-President with responsibility for research integrity. However, in view of the importance of our partnership with EPSRC, I am providing a more detailed response than would normally be the case. We have already shared with you the report of the Investigation itself and, as your email to Mr Courtney indicates, that report dealt specifically with each point raised by Mr Courtney.

In respect of the process, I would like to make the following points:

- Mr Courtney's complaint, dated 25th October 2008, was investigated under the procedures contained within the Code. A copy of the Code was provided to Mr Courtney. The Code conformed to the UK Research Integrity Office ("**UKRIO**") requirements for procedures for investigating allegations of research misconduct;
- the Code allowed for a process of review. Mr Courtney could, under paragraph 8.1 of the Code, have requested a review of the decision of the panel on the grounds of procedural irregularities, unfair treatment or if he had uncovered new evidence in relation to the case which had come to light after the panel had reached its conclusion. The request for review had to be made in

writing to the Registrar and Secretary (now Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer) within 10 working days of receiving the report of the panel. Mr Courtney made no such request and there were no further routes of appeal open to him under the Code.

In view of this, there are no grounds for re-opening a concluded investigation. It is also worth noting that this concerns events which took place some 15 years ago which makes the likelihood of any relevant new evidence emerging extremely low.

The University is aware that Mr Courtney has been conducting a long campaign on this matter consisting both of letters to many eminent people and operating a website. It is our view that the website contains defamatory material, but we have, up to now, chosen not to take action against an individual. We will, however, prepare a statement to be put online and to which recipients of Mr Courtney's correspondence may be directed.

Yours sincerely



Professor Luke Georghiou  
Vice-President for Research and Innovation

Cc Andrew Lewis

### **Courtney comments for the webpage reader**

The UKRIO Code and 10 day rule assume that the formal enquiry process is honest and valid.

The EPSRC call for the integrity of the enquiry process itself to be investigated constitutes an entirely new case.

Formal enquiry fraud is not a dragonfly that dies after 10 days. –It lives until it is corrected.

If Professor Georghiou's excuse for refusing to investigate evidence of formal enquiry fraud is accepted, it will be a disaster for British science. Our reputation for honest science diligently built up since the days of the Enlightenment will be destroyed.