

Research Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

Purpose

(1) This Policy sets out how the University conducts its research activities to achieve the highest standards of research quality and integrity.

(2) This Policy supports compliance of research activities with the following legislation, regulations and guidelines:

- a. [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#)
- b. AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research 2020
- c. [Animal Research Act 1985](#) (NSW)
- d. Animal Research Regulation 2021 (NSW)
- e. Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013
- f. Australian Research Council Research Integrity Policy
- g. Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020 (Cth)
- h. [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011](#) (Cth)
- i. [Copyright Act 1968](#) (Cth)
- j. [Defence Trade Controls Act 2012](#) (Cth)
- k. [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018](#) (Cth)
- l. [Gene Technology Act 2000](#)(Cth)
- m. Gene Technology Regulations 2001 (Cth)
- n. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) (Cth)
- o. [National Health and Medical Research Council Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy](#)
- p. National Health and Medical Research Council's Ethical Conduct in Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities: Guidelines for Researchers and Stakeholders
- q. [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) 2023
- r. [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Cth).

Scope

(3) This Policy applies to anyone who conducts, supervises or supports research as a member of the University community or on behalf of the University, including:

- a. All staff, adjunct appointees (including visiting, emeritus and conjoint appointees), students, or visitors to the University;
- b. Consultants, contractors; and
- c. Staff, students, consultants and contractors of partner organisations.

(4) For the purposes of this Policy:

- a. research includes research training; and
- b. researcher means anyone involved in conducting, assisting, supervising or supporting research.

Section 2 - Definitions

(5) The [Definitions \(Academic\) Policy](#) applies to this Policy.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(6) The University uses robust and efficient systems to support research of the highest ethical, scientific and scholarly standards, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and the training of future researchers.

(7) Research is conducted with the highest levels of research integrity, including in any arrangements with collaborators or other third parties, enabling staff, students and the broader community to have trust and confidence in the University's research and its results.

(8) The University adopts the principles in, and is committed to upholding and responding appropriately to breaches of, the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#). In the event of any inconsistency with University Rules, Policies and Procedures, the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) at its supporting guidelines will prevail.

(9) The University is committed to upholding the principles of academic freedom, as set out in its Statement on Academic or Intellectual Freedom. Nothing in this policy should be interpreted as impinging upon or restricting the application of these principles.

(10) The quality, standards and integrity of research conducted by the University is supported through application of the following principles:

- a. Principle 1: Research activities are planned, conducted and managed with academic rigour and accountability, using good business practice
- b. Principle 2: Research is conducted ethically, with integrity, and respectfully
- c. Principle 3: Research is conducted and reported responsibly and honestly
- d. Principle 4: The University supports and fosters alignment of research activities with its strategic interests, directions and capabilities
- e. Principle 5: The University supports and fosters research activities to produce high quality outcomes with positive impacts for society
- f. Principle 6: Research standards, quality and integrity are assured and continuously improved by systematic monitoring and review

Section 4 - Research Principles

Principle 1: Research activities are planned, conducted and managed with academic rigour and accountability, using good business practice

(11) Research is developed, undertaken and reported with intellectual rigour and in accordance with accepted scholarly standards, by attention to detail and robust methodology, avoiding or acknowledging biases.

(12) Research activities, including research teaching and training, are conducted and overseen by staff with appropriate qualifications, expertise and experience.

(13) Higher Degree Research courses are:

- a. designed by appropriately qualified staff in accordance with the [Curriculum Policy](#); and
- b. delivered and administered in accordance with the [Student Academic Experience Policy](#) and the relevant Rules Relating to Awards to ensure a high quality, engaging and supportive academic experience that enables students to succeed in their studies.

(14) Higher Degree Research students are supervised for the duration of their candidature by a team consisting of a Principal Supervisor and one or more Co-Supervisors, at least one of whom will have current and demonstrable expertise in the proposed Group-Level Field of Research, in accordance with the processes set out in the [Higher Degree Research Register of Supervisors Policy](#).

(15) Eligibility to supervise Higher Degree Research students is determined based on the criteria set out in the Requirements for Higher Degree Research Supervision Schedule, following the processes set out in the Higher Degree Research Training and Supervision Procedures.

(16) Research activities and any associated applications, proposals, contracts or agreements will be planned, costed and managed to ensure good stewardship of University and public resources used to conduct research, and in accordance with the University's financial management policies and procedures, following the processes set out in the Research Management Procedures.

(17) Research activities will be approved in accordance with the [Delegations Rule](#).

(18) Higher Degree Research courses will be developed and approved in accordance with the Course Unit and Approval Authorities.

Principle 2: Research is conducted ethically, with integrity, and respectfully

(19) Researchers will act honestly and transparently in proposing, conducting and reporting research by presenting all relevant information truthfully and accurately and communicating research methodology, data and findings openly, responsibly and accurately.

(20) Researchers will honestly and transparently disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest (as defined in the University's Code of Conduct) in accordance with the Research Management Procedures.

(21) Researchers will treat other research participants and the broader community fairly by:

- a. accurately and appropriately referencing and citing the work of others;
- b. appropriately acknowledging everyone who contributes to a research activity;
- c. recognising and respecting intellectual property in accordance with the [Intellectual Property Rights Policy](#);
- d. ensuring that authors of research outputs are all those, and only those, who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to research and its output, and that they agree to be listed as an author, in accordance with the [Research Publication, Authorship and Dissemination Procedures](#); and
- e. participating in peer review of other researchers' work in a way that is fair, rigorous and timely and maintains the confidentiality of the content.

(22) Research is conducted with respect for research participants and the wider community by:

- a. treating human participants and communities that are affected by research with care and respect, and appropriately considering to the needs of minority groups or vulnerable people;
- b. adopting a participant-centred approach in research involving humans that includes meaningful engagement with, respect for and protection of participants' rights;

- c. applying the ethics principles of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence and respect to human research, as set out in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023;
- d. recognising, valuing and respecting the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- e. engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in relation to research that affects or is of particular significance to them prior to research being undertaken, so that they freely make decisions about their involvement; and
- f. reporting to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the outcomes of any research that affects or is of particular significance to them.

(23) Research activities conducted with or about people, or their data or tissue, as defined in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023, must be:

- a. designed, reviewed and conducted in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023;
- b. assessed and approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) (or its delegate) with respect to the principles set out in clause 21 and in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023; and
- c. conducted ethically and in compliance with any conditions of approval required by the HREC (or its delegate).

(24) Research activities conducted with or about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (including but not limited to human research as set out in clause (23), archival research and re-use of data, formal evaluation, and research activities relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections), must be designed, reviewed, conducted and reported in accordance with the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research 2020.

(25) Research is conducted with respect for animals by:

- a. only involving animals in research when such research has scientific or educational merit and aims to benefit humans, animals or the environment;
- b. replacing the use of animals in research with other methods wherever possible;
- c. minimising the number of animals used in research;
- d. supporting the wellbeing of any animals used in research;
- e. avoiding or minimising adverse impacts, including pain and distress, on any animals used in research at all stages of research.

(26) Research activities involving animals must be:

- a. designed, reviewed and conducted in accordance with the [Animal Research Act 1985](#) (NSW), Animal Research Regulation 2021 (NSW) and Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013;
- b. assessed and approved by the University's Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC) (or its delegate) with respect to the principles set out in clause 24 and in accordance with the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013; and
- c. conducted ethically and in compliance with any conditions of approval required by the ACEC (or its delegate).

(27) Research is conducted with respect for the environment by:

- a. identifying, assessing and minimising the risk of adverse effects of research on the environment as part of the risk assessment process set out in clause 29;

- b. complying with any relevant legislation related to environmental protection, including the [Gene Technology Act 2000](#) (Cth) and Gene Technology Regulations 2001 (Cth).

Principle 3: Research is conducted and reported responsibly and honestly

(28) Research activities will comply with all relevant legislation, University policy, and contractual obligations, including (but not limited to):

- a. legislation, regulations and guidelines listed in clause (2);
- b. the [International Security Sanctions and Compliance Policy](#);
- c. funding agreements; and
- d. collaboration agreements.

(29) Risks associated with all research activities (including but not limited to safety, financial, legal, insurance and reputational risks) will be identified, assessed and managed in accordance with the [Risk Management Policy](#) and following the processes set out in the Research Management Procedures.

(30) The risk assessment conducted under clause (29) will specifically include an assessment of the risk of foreign interference, including (but not limited to) risks to compliance with the Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020 (Cth), [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011](#) (Cth), [Defence Trade Controls Act 2012](#) (Cth), and [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018](#) (Cth), as set out in the Research Management Procedures.

(31) Research will be conducted safely and in accordance with the University's policies and procedures relating to Workplace Health and Safety, including (but not limited to) the [Work Health and Safety Policy](#), [Outdoor Fieldwork Safety Policy](#), [Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#), [Remotely Piloted Aircraft \(Drone\) Policy](#), [Volunteer Policy](#) and associated [procedures](#).

(32) Research materials and records must be stored securely and managed responsibly in accordance with the [Research Data Management Policy](#), the [Information Technology Conditions of Use Policy](#), the [Records Management Policy](#), the [Copyright Policy](#) and any additional requirements specified in a research contract or agreement.

(33) The University ensures responsible conduct of research, as set out in the [Research Integrity Procedures - Staff](#) and [Research Integrity Procedures - Students](#), by:

- a. maintaining clear and effective processes to receive concerns or complaints relating to responsible conduct of research, including potential breaches of this Policy or the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#);
- b. maintaining rigorous, fair, effective and efficient processes for investigating and resolving suspected breaches of research integrity that support the welfare of all parties involved, base findings of investigations on the balance of probabilities, and result in remedial or disciplinary actions that are commensurate with the severity of the breach; and
- c. regularly monitoring and reporting on the responsible conduct of research, as set out in clause (45).

(34) The University additionally promotes and fosters a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research by:

- a. clearly identifying relevant roles and responsibilities for supporting responsible conduct of research, including maintaining a network of appropriately trained Research Integrity Advisors to facilitate provision of guidance and mentoring on responsible research conduct, as set out in the [Research Integrity Procedures - Staff](#) and [Research Integrity Procedures - Students](#); and

- b. providing regular training, education and mentoring for all researchers and those in other relevant roles, as set out in the [Research Integrity Training Guidelines](#).

(35) Researchers must support a culture of responsible conduct of research by:

- a. undertaking and promoting education and training in responsible research conduct, including guiding, mentoring and monitoring (if appropriate) other researchers or research trainees under their supervision on responsible research conduct, as set out in the [Research Integrity Training Guidelines](#); and
- b. reporting suspected breaches of breaches of this Policy or the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) as soon as practicable in accordance with the processes set out in the [Research Integrity Procedures – Staff](#) and [Research Integrity Procedures – Students](#).

Principle 4: The University supports and fosters alignment of research activities with its strategic interests, directions and capabilities

(36) The University respects and upholds the freedom of all academic staff and students to conduct research and to engage in intellectual inquiry, to express their opinions and beliefs, and to contribute to public debate in relation to their research, but it is not obliged to provide support for research activities that do not align with its strategic interests and directions.

(37) The University supports and fosters alignment of research activities with its teaching and engagement activities.

(38) Research activities may only be conducted when appropriate infrastructure, facilities, expertise and other necessary support are available to ensure that the requirements of this policy, and any associated legislation, can be demonstrably met, in accordance with the Research Management Procedures.

Principle 5: The University supports and fosters research activities to produce high quality outcomes with positive impacts for society

(39) The University supports and fosters the development of high-quality research training opportunities to contribute to the development of future researchers, including by:

- a. developing and offering high-quality Higher Degree Research courses;
- b. incorporating research opportunities into coursework courses;
- c. offering research placements, internships and exchanges for researchers from other institutions and industry; and
- d. monitoring and regularly reporting on the effectiveness of research training.

(40) The University supports and fosters Higher Degree Research students to succeed by:

- a. only admitting students who have the appropriate preparation needed to participate and progress in their studies, as set out in the [Student Academic Experience Policy](#) and the relevant Rules Relating to Awards;
- b. only admitting students when the University has the necessary supervision expertise, facilities and resources required for their project, in accordance with clause (38), the [Student Academic Experience Policy](#) and the relevant Rules Relating to Awards;
- c. providing them with an induction to research that outlines their obligations under this Policy, prior to commencing research activities, as set out in the [Higher Degree Research Candidate and Supervision Policy](#);
- d. clearly defining the rights and responsibilities of students and their supervisors, as set out in the [Higher Degree Research Candidate and Supervision Policy](#);
- e. providing them with training and guidance on the nature of research misconduct and the development of good practices in maintaining research integrity, as set out in clause (34);

- f. ensuring they have opportunities to provide feedback on the quality of their supervision and research training environment throughout their studies, as set out in the [Higher Degree Research Candidate and Supervision Policy](#); and
- g. regularly monitoring their progress and offering them appropriate additional support if needed, as set out in [Student Academic Experience Policy](#) and the relevant Rules Relating to Awards.

(41) The University assures the quality of assessment in Higher Degree Research by specifying in the relevant Rules Relating to Awards that major assessable research outputs, such as theses, dissertations, exegeses, creative works or other major works arising from the student's research:

- a. are assessed by at least two examiners:
 - i. who have international standing in the field of research;
 - ii. who are independent of the conduct of the research;
 - iii. who are competent to undertake the assessment;
 - iv. who do not have a conflict of interest; and
 - v. of whom at least one is external to the University in the case of a master degree, or of whom both are external to the University in the case of a doctoral degree;
- b. contribute to the advancement of the field of research, practice or creative field and, in the case of doctoral degrees, demonstrate a significant original contribution.

(42) The University supports and fosters the development of high-quality research partnerships and collaborations that align with the strategic interests and directions of the University to increase the quality, reach and impact of its research by:

- a. facilitating development of researchers through training opportunities and sharing of knowledge and ideas;
- b. enabling access to expertise, techniques and facilities that would not otherwise be available at the University;
- c. supporting opportunities for student placements and exchange;
- d. increasing the reach and impact of research activities and outcomes in industry, the community, and other end-users.

(43) Research partnerships and collaborations will maintain the highest levels of research integrity, enabling people to have trust and confidence in the research and its results, by:

- a. ensuring all partnerships and collaborations comply with the provisions of relevant legislation including (but not limited to) the Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020 Cth, [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011](#) (Cth), [Defence Trade Controls Act 2012](#) (Cth) and [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018](#) (Cth), in accordance with the [International Security Sanctions and Compliance Policy](#);
- b. ensuring all partnerships and collaborations comply with all other provisions of this policy;
- c. adhering to best practice as set out in Collaborative Research: A guide supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research;
- d. entering into formal agreements to confirm such arrangements wherever possible; and
- e. monitoring and regularly reporting on the performance of such arrangements.

(44) Research materials, data and outputs will be open to review and shared as widely and accessibly as possible, to the extent allowable by ethical, privacy, legal, Intellectual Property (IP) or confidentiality limitations, in accordance with the Research Management Procedures.

(45) Research outcomes and outputs must be shared responsibly and accurately, considering the consequences and outcomes of research prior to its communication in accordance with the [Research Publications, Dissemination and](#)

[Authorship Procedures](#) and the [Media Policy](#) and any errors must be corrected as soon as practicable.

(46) Research will be incorporated, when appropriate, into relevant publications, policies and practice and provide impact beyond the University that meets the needs of our community and stakeholders.

Principle 6: Research standards, quality and integrity are assured and continuously improved by systematic monitoring and review

(47) All research outcomes and outputs are systematically recorded in the University's Integrated Research Management Application (IRMA) system and the Research Portal repository, in accordance with the Research Management Procedures.

(48) Research standards and integrity are assured through maintaining rigorous and transparent processes for:

- a. reporting and investigating potential breaches of research integrity, as set out in clause (33);
- b. reporting on the performance of research collaboration arrangements; and
- c. reporting and analysis of research integrity breaches to enable regular review of success in managing risks to research integrity, continuous improvement of processes to further strengthen defences, and rapid response to significant trends and incidents, as set out in the [Research Integrity Procedures – Staff](#) and [Research Integrity Procedures – Students](#).

(49) The quality of research training is assured by monitoring and review processes, as set out in the [Higher Degree Research Candidate and Supervision Policy](#); that are:

- a. referenced against national standards;
- b. informed by student feedback and performance data including student progression, attrition and completion rates;
- c. applied across all student cohorts and delivery locations and against external reference points; and
- d. acted upon to improve future research training outcomes.

(50) The outcomes from research training monitoring and review processes, including recommendations for corrective action, will be regularly and systematically reported to Academic Board and its relevant sub-committees.

(51) Monitoring and review of research quality occurs through the Research Quality Indicators (RQI) reporting process set by the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor.

(52) The RQI process will:

- a. evaluate the quality of research outcomes and outputs with respect to the Research Quality Indicators and Thresholds set by Academic Board;
- b. report on the outcomes of any monitoring or corrective actions required from the previous RQI reporting process; and
- c. recommend any actions required to further monitor or correct unsatisfactory research performance.

Section 5 - Associated Documents

(53) Rules:

- a. [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 7 - Masters by Thesis Awards](#)
- b. [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 8 - Professional Doctorate Awards](#)

- c. [Rules Relating to Awards - Rule 9 - Doctor of Philosophy \(PhD\) award](#)

(54) Policies:

- a. [Curriculum Policy](#)
- b. [Student Academic Experience Policy](#)
- c. [Copyright Policy](#)
- d. [Intellectual Property Rights Policy](#)
- e. [Media Policy](#)
- f. [Remotely Piloted Aircraft \(Drone\) Policy](#)
- g. [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)
- h. [Outdoor Fieldwork Safety Policy](#)
- i. [Personal Protective Equipment Policy](#)
- j. [Risk Management Policy](#)
- k. [International Security Sanctions and Compliance Policy](#)
- l. [Volunteer Policy.](#)

(55) Procedures:

- a. Research Management Procedures [Proposed new set of operational procedures owned by Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor - Under Development]
- b. [Research Integrity Procedures - Staff](#)
- c. [Research Integrity Procedures - Students](#)
- d. [Research Publications, Authorship and Dissemination Procedures.](#)

(56) Guidelines:

- a. [Research Integrity Training Guidelines](#)
- b. [Research Integrity Training Guidelines for HDR Candidates and Supervisors](#)

Status and Details

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Effective Date	22nd July 2024
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