

Code of Practice - Responsible Conduct of Research

Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) The purpose of this Code is to provide an overarching framework for research integrity at the University to ensure trust and confidence in the quality of its research outputs.
- (2) This Code of Practice mandates the broad principles and behaviours that characterise the responsible conduct of research and an honest, ethical and conscientious research culture as defined by the Australian Research Council / National Health and Medical Research Council's [The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2018\)](#) (hereto referred to as "the Code") and [Australian Research Council Research Integrity Policy](#) or subsequent revision).
- (3) Compliance with the Code is a requirement for the receipt of funding by the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

Section 2 - Application & Scope

- (4) This Code of Practice applies to all Researchers (Staff and Students) conducting, or assisting with the conduct, of any research activity under the auspices of the University.

Section 3 - Statement

- (5) The University is committed to the provision of support for all Researchers (Staff and Students) to promote a culture of research integrity, that drives the responsible and ethical conduct of research.
- (6) Researchers (Staff and Students) should only participate in research activities which conform to accepted integrity, safety and environmental standards and which comply with all relevant legislation
- (7) This Code of Practice and the Code represent the core behaviours that characterise research integrity and the responsible conduct of research and should be read in conjunction with the supporting documents and guides cited above.

Section 4 - Principles of Responsible Research Conduct

- (8) The following principles are the hallmarks of research integrity and responsible research conduct:

Honesty

- (9) When Researchers (Staff and Students) are developing, undertaking and reporting on their research they must ensure that all information is presented truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting on research and that they can justify any claims or conclusions.

Rigour

(10) When Researchers (Staff and Students) are developing, undertaking and reporting on their research this must be underpinned with attention to detail and the application of a robust methodology, with strategies in place to avoid or acknowledge any bias.

Transparency

(11) When declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings Researchers (Staff and Students) must disclose and manage any conflicts of interest and reputational risks. They must also share and openly communicate research methodology, findings and knowledge openly, responsibly and accurately.

Fairness

(12) Researchers (Staff and Students) must treat fellow researchers and others involved in the research fairly and with respect. Researchers (Staff and Students) must apply appropriate references and citations when referring to the work of others and assign the appropriate credit and authorship to those who have contributed to the work.

Respect

(13) Researchers (Staff and Students) must treat all human research participants, communities and animals with care and respect. Appropriate consideration must be given to the needs of minority groups or vulnerable people.

(14) Any decisions and actions pertaining to the care and use of animals in research must be made with respect underpinning them and adverse effects on the environment as a result of research must be minimised.

Recognition

(15) Researchers (Staff and Students) must respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continual connection to country, and value diverse forms of culture, cultural expression and knowledges.

(16) When conducting research involving or affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and/or communities, Researchers (Staff and Students) must ensure that the research projects are collaborative, culturally meaningful and reciprocal. In all aspects of the research, Researchers (Staff and Students) should enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and/or communities to freely make decisions about the research purpose, design, and protocols, and the roles and responsibilities of participation.

(17) Researchers (Staff and Students) must acknowledge the sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ownership of the findings, with the outcomes reported to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Accountability

(18) Researchers (Staff and Students) are responsible for ensuring the development, undertaking and reporting of research complies with all relevant legislation, internal and external policies and guidelines. They must ensure good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research and consider the reputational risks, consequences and outcomes of research prior to its communication.

Promotion

(19) Researchers (Staff and Students) and institutions will promote the principles of responsible research practices and foster a culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research and ensures research trainees and early career researchers are mentored and supervised accordingly.

Section 5 - Roles & Responsibilities of the University

(20) The University has an obligation to encourage and support research integrity and responsible research conduct.

(21) The University is accountable to funding organisations and the Australian community for how research is conducted.

(22) The University must:

- a. establish good management practices and governance for responsible research conduct;
- b. identify and comply with relevant laws, regulations, guidelines and policies related to the responsible conduct of research;
- c. develop and maintain a suite of policies and procedures that are consistent with the principles and responsibilities of the Code;
- d. provide ongoing training and education for all Researchers (Staff and Students) and those that assist with research that promotes responsible research conduct;
- e. ensure Supervisors of research trainees have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources to undertake this role in accordance with the Code and the [HDR Supervision and Resources Procedures](#);
- f. identify and train Research Integrity Advisors (RIAs) who will assist in the promotion and fostering of the responsible conduct of research and provide advice to those with concerns about potential breaches of the Code;
- g. support the responsible dissemination of research findings and take action as required to correct records in a timely manner;
- h. provide access to systems and facilities for the safe and secure storage and management of data, records and primary materials, with appropriate access and reference;
- i. actively support a research and governance culture that facilitates the prevention and detection of potential breaches of the Code and this Code of Practice;
- j. provide mechanisms to receive concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code and this Code of Practice. Investigate and resolve any matters raised;
- k. ensure the procedures for managing and investigating concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code and this Code of Practice is timely, effective and in accordance with procedural fairness;
- l. support the welfare of all parties involved in an investigation of a potential breach of the Code or this Code of Practice; and
- m. base any investigation findings on the balance of probabilities and ensure any actions are commensurate with the seriousness of the breach.

Section 6 - Roles & Responsibilities of the Researcher (Staff and Students)

(23) Researchers (Staff and Students) must uphold the principles of the Code in all aspects of their research.

(24) Researchers (Staff and Students) will:

- a. support the culture of responsible research conduct at the University and in their research field;
- b. provide guidance and mentorship to other researchers or research trainees under their supervision and monitor their conduct where appropriate;
- c. undertake and promote education and training in the responsible conduct of research;

- d. comply with relevant laws, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics guidelines and institutional policies relating to responsible research conduct;
- e. ensure all appropriate approvals, notifications and registrations are in place prior to commencing their research and comply with any conditions specified in project permits, protocols and agreements during the course of their research. These include (but are not limited to) the following:
 - i. Research involving human participants requires written approval from a University Human Research Ethics Committee and compliance with the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) and all University Committee Standard Operating Procedures and Directives. Researchers (Staff and Students) must ensure the ethics principles of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence and respect are applied to human research.
 - ii. Research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or communities must also be in accordance with [Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities](#), the [Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies](#) and all other applicable regulations. Researchers (Staff and Students) must engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and respect their legal rights, local laws, customs and protocols.
 - iii. Consumer and community participation in research must be conducted in accordance with the [Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research 2016](#).
 - iv. Research involving animals requires written approval from the University Animal Ethics Committee and must comply with the [Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 8th Edition 2013](#) and all Committee Standard Operating Procedures and Directives. Researchers (Staff and Students) must consider the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) during all stages of their research involving animals and commit to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of the animals used in research.
 - v. Research which involves genetically modified organisms (GMOs) requires written approval from the Institutional Biosafety Committee and must be conducted in compliance with the [Gene Technology Act 2000](#), the [Gene Technology Regulations 2001](#), all other amendments, any other applicable regulations, and University Committee Standard Operating Procedures and Directives.
 - vi. Research involving the use or application of biological materials must comply with the relevant legislation including the [Biological Control Act 1984](#), the [Biosecurity Act 2015](#) and all other applicable legislation and regulations.
 - vii. Research which involves the provision of sanctioned goods and/or services to an individual, group, entity or country/region, as specified in the Autonomous Sanctions Regulations 2011, requires a permit to be granted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs authorising the provision of those goods and/or services. Internal University approvals are also required in accordance with the Autonomous Sanctions Procedure.
 - viii. Research involving and goods, materials, technology or software subject to export controls requires a relevant export controls permit in accordance with the [Defence Trade Controls Act 2012](#), [Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill 2015](#), [Customs Act 1901](#), [Weapons of Mass Destruction \(Prevention of Proliferation\) Act 1995](#), [Export Control Act 1982](#), and the [Defence Trade Controls Guideline](#).
 - ix. Research which involves a Foreign Arrangement must be notified to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in accordance with the [Foreign Relations \(State and Territory Arrangements\) Act 2020](#). Such notifications are coordinated by the Global Strategies Division and are required both at the stage of negotiating a Foreign Arrangement and when finalised.
 - x. Research which involves a researcher or the University agreeing to act on behalf of a foreign government, political party or related entity/person for the purpose of influencing Australian political or government outcomes may require registration in accordance with the [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018](#). Further information is available on the [Foreign Engagements website](#).
- f. adopt methods appropriate to the aims of the research and ensure conclusions are justified by results;
- g. retain clear and complete records of their research and research findings, inclusive of data and primary

- materials, and maintain the confidentiality of research data, records and primary materials in accordance with the [Research Data Management Policy](#). Access and reference to these materials by interested parties should be allowed where possible and in accordance with the University's [Open Access Policy](#);
- h. disseminate research findings responsibly, accurately and broadly, as appropriate, and when not subject to restrictions related to intellectual property, confidentiality or culturally sensitive data;
 - i. disclose and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in accordance with the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and any reputational risks in accordance with the [Research Sponsorship and Collaboration Policy](#);
 - j. publish research findings according to the requirements of the [Authorship Policy](#) and ensure the work of others is acknowledged, correctly cited, and used with permission:
 - i. all scholarly outputs must be recorded in the University Research Information System (RIS). This system is used for reporting research publications to the Government and for internal reporting purposes. Research publications in RIS are also made available online via Research Online, the University's institutional repository; and
 - ii. ensure any unintentional inaccuracy, or misleading statements or findings that are inadvertently released, are rectified as soon as possible;
 - k. participate in peer review in a manner that is fair, rigorous and timely and maintains confidentiality of the content.
 - l. take reasonable care for their personal health and safety and the health and safety of others. They must comply with all reasonable University instructions, policies and procedures including the [Workplace Health and Safety Policy](#); and
 - m. raise any concerns and report potential breaches of the Code or of this Code of Practice in accordance with the [Research Integrity Policy: Breaches, Concerns and Complaints](#).

Section 7 - Research Integrity Potential Breaches, Concerns and Complaints

(25) The University continually strives to strengthen and protect its strong research culture and values its researchers who uphold, demonstrate and promote the principles of research integrity that underpin the responsible conduct of research. It supports the prevention and detection of potential breaches of research integrity and is committed to providing mechanisms for receiving concerns or complaints and investigating and resolving those concerns or complaints.

(26) Researchers (Staff and Students) must comply with the Code and this Code of Practice. A failure to meet the principles and responsibilities detailed in these documents is regarded as a breach of the Code.

(27) A breach of the Code occurs on a spectrum ranging from minor breaches to serious breaches.

(28) Serious breaches are those carried out with intent or recklessness or negligence or are particularly egregious and may be referred to as "research misconduct".

(29) All Researchers (Staff and Students) of the University have a responsibility to uphold, demonstrate and promote research integrity at the University and report any concerns or potential breaches of the Code in accordance with the [Research Integrity Policy: Breaches, Concerns and Complaints](#).

(30) The [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Research Code Procedure](#) outlines the model used at the University to investigate and manage potential breaches and identify any corrective actions to ensure the integrity of the research is maintained.

Section 8 - Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
ARC	Australian Research Council
3Rs	Three principles that underpin a systematic framework to achieve the goal of humane experimental techniques. These are Replacement of animals with other methods, Reduction in the number of animals used; and Refinement of techniques used to minimise the adverse impact on animals.
Balance of Probabilities	The civil standard of proof, which requires that, on the weight of evidence, it is more probable than not that a breach has occurred.
Breach	Behaviour that fails to meet the principles or responsibilities of the Code or fails to comply with relevant policies or legislation. May be used to refer to a single breach or multiple breaches. (As defined by the Code")
Conflict of Interest	Exists where there is a divergence between the individual interests of a researcher and their professional obligation to the University such that an independent observer might reasonably question whether the professional actions or decisions of that person are influenced by their own interests or are for their own benefit. This refers to a financial or non-financial interest which may be a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest.
Foreign Arrangement	A foreign arrangement is a written agreement, contract, understanding or undertaking between an Australian State/Territory entity (including the University) and certain foreign entities (primarily foreign governments and agencies, including certain universities), whether or not there are any other parties to the arrangement and whether it is legally binding or not.
Foreign Influence	Foreign Influence occurs when Australian individuals or entities undertake certain registrable activities on behalf of a foreign principal (foreign governments, political parties and associated entities/persons) for the purpose of political or government influence.
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
Peer Review	The impartial and/or independent assessment of research or work by others working in the same or a related field.
Reputational Risks	Research Activities that damage or have the potential to damage UOW's good name or reputation, or give the impression that UOW's research outcomes are not independent and objective, or have not otherwise been achieved in compliance with best practice standards for the responsible and ethical conduct of research. Examples include being associated with people, organisations or industries known to engage in activities that are fraudulent, misleading, unethical, deceptive, illegal or that cause health, population or significant environmental damage or that exploit disadvantaged or vulnerable members of the community (eg. impoverished communities, children, alcohol, tobacco etc). It also includes presenting, or agreeing to present a research outcome in a way that could reasonably be viewed as: (a) endorsing a third party product, service, opinion or organisation, without disclosing the underlying commercial or other relationship between the University and the third party; (b) being not objective, unbiased or independent; or (c) involving a real or perceived Conflict of Interest.
Research	The creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.
Researcher	Staff or Student who conducts, or assist with the conduct of, research at or on behalf of the University.
Research Integrity	A broad set of principles and responsibilities that characterise an honest, ethical and conscientious research culture that provides the foundation for high quality research, credibility and community trust in the research endeavour.
Research Integrity Advisor (RIA)	RIAs are academic Researchers who are nominated, trained and supported by the University to promote the responsible conduct of research by providing advice on research practices and Researcher responsibilities as well as advice to those with concerns or complaints about potential breaches of The Code.

Word/Term	Definition
Research Misconduct	A serious breach of the Code which is also intentional or reckless or negligent.
Staff	All persons appointed as an academic or professional staff member of the University whether they hold full-time, part-time, casual, contract or conjoint appointments including Visiting Fellows, industry fellow, honorary and adjunct title holders, Emeritus Professors, occupational trainees and volunteers
Student	All students, including undergraduate, Honours, Masters, and Higher Degree Research registered for any course at the University and Visiting Students.
The Code	The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 (the Code)
The University	The University of Wollongong.
Visiting Fellow	Honorary and visiting fellows appointed by UOW to non-salaried, full-time or fractional positions titled "Associate Fellow", "Fellow", "Senior Fellow", "Principal Fellow", "Professorial Fellow", "Visiting Fellow", or "Research Fellow" who are not Visiting Students or Volunteers.
Visiting Student	A student who undertakes part of their research or training at UOW but who is not registered at UOW.
Volunteer	A person who is not a Fellow, Visiting Student, Staff Member or Student of UOW but is working on a UOW project in a voluntary capacity. An example of a Volunteer is someone who is undertaking unpaid work experience at UOW or is doing an internship at UOW. A collaborating colleague from another University or research institution is not a Volunteer.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	13th December 2023
Review Date	20th October 2028
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	13th December 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Eileen McLaughlin Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research and Sustainable Futures)
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