Research Integrity Policy

Policy Code: RS1501

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Purpose

To ensure research conducted under the auspices of Federation University Australia incorporates the values of the University (as stated in The Charter) and conforms to the requirements of The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

Scope

This policy applies to all research conducted by Federation University Australia.

This policy applies to:

• All staff, including sessional staff, employed by the University or any controlled entity,
• All former staff of the University or any Controlled Entity, where such former staff have been engaged in activities in any way connected with conduct that is the subject of, or related to the subject of, an allegation of misconduct in or in connection with research conducted while a member of staff;
• All persons, including adjunct staff, honorary staff, visitors or volunteers, engaged in research under the auspices of the University or any Controlled Entity including research that is conducted in conjunction with another entity whether in the public or private sectors, undertaken as a representative of the University;
• All students, including past students, of the University who engage or have engaged in research and/or research related activities, related to their studies, while enrolled at the University.

Definitions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorship Plan</td>
<td>An agreement between eligible authors as to potential publications and associated roles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Collaborative research is an umbrella term applied to researchers and or research institutions working together for a specified goal.</td>
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<td>Conflict of Interest</td>
<td>Exists where there is a divergence between the individual interests of a person and their professional responsibilities such that an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of that person are unduly influenced by their own interests (The Code, Section 7).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Entity</td>
<td>A company over which the University has control within the meaning of section 3 of the Audit Act 1994 (Vic) and which has adopted this Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyright</td>
<td>Copyright is a legal right given to the authors or creators of works. Under copyright law, the copyright owner has a number of exclusive rights including the right to publish the work, control copying, prepare derivative works and perform of their work as well as the right to make the material available online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Agreement</td>
<td>Agreements made at an enterprise level between employers and employees and their union, about terms and conditions of employment. They can also be made by more than one employer, with a group of employees.</td>
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<td>ERA</td>
<td>Excellence in Research for Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Author</td>
<td>Senior or corresponding author carrying responsibility for liaison with publishers, communication with all authors and contributors and the maintenance of all records concerning authorship.</td>
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<td>HERDC</td>
<td>Higher Education Research Data Collection</td>
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<td>Intellectual Property</td>
<td>Intellectual Property (IP) is a term that describes the application of the mind to develop something new or original. IP can exist in various forms; a new invention, brand, design or artistic creation. IP can be protected in law by a range of instruments including patents, copyright and trademarks, which enable people to earn recognition or financial benefit from what they invent or create.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Review</td>
<td>The impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.</td>
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<td>Research Breach</td>
<td>Minor deviation from The Code or University Policy and Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Integrity</td>
<td>Integrity in research includes a commitment to the search for knowledge and understanding, to the recognised principles of research conduct, to the honest and ethical conduct of research, and to the honest and open dissemination of results.</td>
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<td>Research Integrity Advisor</td>
<td>An experienced senior staff member appointed by the Vice-Chancellor or delegate to provide independent and informed guidance to university staff regarding research integrity and associated courses of action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Misconduct</td>
<td>Serious or deliberate deviation from The Code and / or University Policies including negligent or intentional (i) fabrication or falsification of data; (ii)</td>
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<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<td>plagiarism; (iii) misleading or inadequate ascription of authorship; (iv) breaches of the university’s Research Integrity Policy.</td>
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<td>Research Trainees</td>
<td>An individual who is enhancing their research skills through formal study and/or who works under the formal supervision of an independent researcher, including:</td>
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<td>• A coursework student engaged in research activities</td>
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<td>• A Higher Degree by Research candidate</td>
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<td>• An early career researcher, such as a postdoctoral fellow or newly appointed member of academic staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Code</td>
<td>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research</td>
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<td>The Charter</td>
<td>Federation University Charter 2015</td>
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### Policy Statement

The University adheres to the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), (The Code), and requires all researchers and research managers to be familiar with, and abide by its provisions and to conduct their research and related tasks in accordance with these provisions and all other relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements.

### General Principles of Responsible Research

The University operates in accordance with the principles of a strong research culture as stated in The Code, and will foster an environment where individuals:

- Conduct and manage research with honesty and integrity;
- Respect human research participants, animals and the environment;
- Demonstrate good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research;
- Appropriately acknowledge the role of others in research; and
- Communicate research results responsibly.

In line with Section 4 of the Higher Education Standards Framework, the University will ensure that research is conducted or overseen by staff (including Honorary, Adjunct and Visiting appointments) who have qualifications, research experience and skills relevant to the type of research undertaken in their role.

### Conscientious objection principle

The University recognises the right of researchers who conscientiously object to conducting research with, including but not limited to, human embryos, fetuses, embryonic or fetal tissue, or animals shall not be obliged to participate in such research, nor shall they be put at a disadvantage because of their objection.

The University requires all research projects and practices to comply with all ethical and safety standards, including relevant legislation, regulation and associated University policies and procedures, such as:

- Research Ethics Policy
- Human Research Ethics Procedure
- Animal Research Ethics Procedure
Management of research data and primary material

The University requires that data and materials, which provide the basis of research outcomes, be preserved and managed in compliance with the standards set out in Section 2 of The Code and with consideration of the following Federation University policies and statutes:

- Research Data Management Procedure (in draft)
- Information Security Policy
- Records Management Framework
- Statute 8.2 – Intellectual Property

Supervision of research trainees

The University requires, and has a responsibility to ensure, that research trainees be developed, mentored and supported through, and their contributions be appropriately attributed, in accordance with The Code and University policies and procedures, including, but not limited to:

- Authorship Procedure
- Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy
- Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Procedure
- Appointment of Higher Degree by Research Supervisors Procedure
- Higher Degree by Research Candidature Management Policy
- Higher Degree by Research Candidature Management Procedure
- Regulation 5.1
- Ethical Research Policy.

The University encourages research trainees/graduate students to seek guidance and requires their participation in induction and training in the responsible conduct of research, which is to include information regarding the address of conflicts of interest and the handling of allegations of breaches and research misconduct, as specified in University directives:

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Responsible Conduct of Research: Breaches and Misconduct Procedure.

Publication and dissemination of research findings

The University supports the wide dissemination of research data and research outcomes, subject to privacy, contractual and intellectual property considerations.

The University encourages researchers to consider multi-channel dissemination strategies for all research projects, and to incorporate these in their Authorship Plan. The University requires adherence to corporate Branding Guidelines and Media Relations Guidelines when executing dissemination strategies.
The University requires that all reasonable steps be taken to ensure that published accounts related to research activities, performances and exhibitions are complete and accurate.

The University requires that publication information relevant to research performance be submitted in accordance with the requirements as per HERDC/ERA published guidelines.

The University requires the accurate citation of the work of other authors, in accordance with the provisions in Section 4 of the Code and University policies and procedures:

- Authorship Procedure
- Copyright Procedure
- Data Management Policy
- Research Funding Policy
- Statute 8.2 – Intellectual Property

**Authorship**

The University endorses the provisions in Section 5 of The Code which specifies that authorship eligibility is meritorious and dependent upon a researcher making a substantial scholarly contribution to the work, for which they are able to take responsibility.

The University holds that authorship eligibility is based upon the demonstration of substantial contribution, in a combination of:

- conception and design of the project
- analysis and interpretation of research data
- drafting significant parts of the work or critically revising it so as to contribute to the interpretation.

The University holds that the right to authorship is not tied to position or profession, and does not depend on whether the contribution was remunerated or voluntary in nature. The offer of authorship must be made to all eligible people, including research trainees, who meet the criteria for authorship as specified in The Code.

In accordance with Section 5 of The Code, the University requires that authorship be confirmed for all research outputs, irrespective of the medium, that appropriate authorship be attributed to these outputs and that associated authorship records be maintained.

The Code requires all researchers to provide acknowledgement of all contributions to the research, as outlined in the **Authorship Procedure**. In the case of individuals to be named, this acknowledgement is subject to their written consent.

Federation University Australia must be attributed as the institution of affiliation by all Federation University staff, students and volunteers, and by conjoint, Adjunct and Honorary appointments where appropriate.

The University requires researchers to be knowledgeable of Federation University policies and procedures contained in:

- Authorship Procedure
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Copyright Procedure
- Responsible Conduct of Research: Breaches and Misconduct Procedure
- Statute 8.2 – Intellectual Property

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Peer review

Federation University recognizes the role played by independent assessment and comment in the research process and acknowledges the importance placed upon peer review.

The University encourages researchers to seek and participate in peer review for the purposes of contributing to the emerging dialogue in their respective field/s of enquiry through the provision of informed comment and the identification of irrelevant findings, unwarranted claims, unacceptable interpretations, and personal views.

The University instructs staff, whose work is the subject of peer review, not to attempt to influence the process.

The University endorses Section 6 of The Code and requires researchers to be knowledgeable of their responsibilities when undertaking the role of a peer reviewer, including being impartial in their contributions, maintaining confidentiality, declaring conflicts of interest, responding in a timely manner, not taking undue or calculated advantage of knowledge obtained during the review process and adhering to University directives contained in:

- Authorship Procedure
- Conflict of Interest
- Responsible Conduct of Research: Breaches and Misconduct Procedure
- Statute 8.2 - Intellectual Property

Conflicts of interest

In accordance with the provisions in Section 7 of the Code and the University’s Conflict of Interest Policy, the University requires the disclosure of any perceived or actual conflicts of interest in the course of any and all research conducted.

A conflict of interest is deemed to occur where there is a divergence between the individual interests of a person and their professional responsibilities such that an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of that person are unduly influenced by their own interests.

The University recognises that conflicts of interest in the research area are common and may occur throughout the research process.

The University requires staff to be aware of and be knowledgeable about their obligations under The Code and relevant University policies and procedures.

Collaborative research across institutions

The University strongly supports participation in collaborative research, including interdisciplinary investigation, within the University, and between institutions nationally and internationally.

The University acknowledges that collaborations will take different forms, be of varying magnitude and duration and will utilise diverse instruments of agreement.

In every form of collaboration, and in line with the Higher Education Standards Framework (6.1 Corporate Governance) and Section 8 of The Code, the University requires that the policies and operations of proposed collaborators be consistent with the University’s directives. In the event that differing research practices exist between proposed collaborators and/or their institutions, the University requires that:

- researchers comply with The Code, with any proposed deviation needing University approval prior to participation;
• research integrity and accountability be maintained (as required by Higher Education Standards Framework Section 5.2 (4)).

Where collaboration involves formal contractual agreement, the University requires that staff proposing such collaborations to:

• Notify and consult with the University
• Ensure negotiations are undertaken by authorized and suitably experienced staff
• Ensure proposed agreements are reviewed by Legal Services prior to sign-off
• Ensure all agreements are documented and accessible.

External collaborative agreements must give consideration to intellectual property, confidentiality and copyright issues, sharing commercial returns, responsibility for ethics and safety clearances, managing conflicts of interest, authorship criteria and reporting to appropriate agencies. These considerations will be subject to compliance with Section 8 of the Code and relevant University policies and procedures.

Breaches of the Code, misconduct and the framework for resolving allegations

The University values the integrity of its researchers and that of the research they undertake.

The University demonstrates its commitment to research integrity through of its adherence to Section 1 of The Code and the involvement of Advisors in Research Integrity in the research process as specified in Section 11 of The Code.

The University views seriously the potential for actions which diminish actual and/or perceived research integrity and endorses preventative action be taken to:

1. Mitigate foreseeable risks to research integrity including misrepresentation, fabrication, cheating, plagiarism and misuse of intellectual property, and
2. Inhibit the recurrence of associated breaches or misconduct.
3. The University acknowledges the potential for allegations and complaints to be made regarding deficiencies and/or lapses in research integrity such as:
4. Failure to implement: failure to take responsibility for achieving prescribed standards
5. Breaches: minor omissions or less serious deviations from The Code and/or University directives which are not considered to result from wilful, reckless or repeated disregard and may be appropriately remedied within the University
6. Research misconduct: serious breaches of The Code and/or University directives which warrant formal allegation, investigation and denial or admission, and which, if proven, require formal redress.

In accordance with The Code, the University supports the detection of deficiencies or lapses in research integrity and will provide a framework that enables the timely address of allegations and the remedy of the situation. In responding to allegations related to research integrity, the University will:

• Be timely and consistent
• Ensure procedural fairness to all concerned
• Be transparent and promote confidence (internally and with the public)
• Ensure maximum opportunity for improvement

The University requires all staff to be aware of their obligation to report breaches and suspected misconduct in a timely manner and in accordance with Section 9, Section 10, Section 11 and Section 12 of The Code. The University requires staff to be knowledgeable of their respective responsibilities and the relevant courses of action.
relating to breaches of The Code, the Staff Code of Conduct Policy and suspected Research Misconduct. This includes a working knowledge of relevant University policies and procedures.

**Responsibility**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) holds overall responsibility for ensuring research is undertaken in accordance with The Code, this Policy and the accompanying Procedures.

Others who have responsibility for ensuring compliance with this Policy include:

Federation University Australia Research Committee
- Deans
- Associate Deans of Research
- Research discipline leaders and Research Directors
- Research Services

Deans are responsible for the conduct of research within their Faculties and for the observance of this policy and related policies and procedures. In particular, this means having clear, documented processes for managing research work and ensuring any associated health and safety, environmental, business or financial risks are identified and managed. This includes research undertaken at any location substantially controlled by the University even though it may not be a University owned site.

All researchers (including student researchers) must comply with the requirements of their discipline for quality research, and with the University requirements for safety, privacy, risk management, financial management and ethical acceptability and with any governing codes and legislation.

**Legislative Context**

The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

Protected Disclosure Act 2012 (Vic)

[Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 – Disclosures – Procedure](#)

Higher Education Standards Framework

**Associated Documents**

- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Higher Education Standards Framework
- Enterprise Agreements
- [Affiliate Institutes Policy](#)
- [Authorship Procedure](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- [Research Data Management Policy](#)
- Funded Research Policy
- [Project Management Framework Policy](#)
- Statute 8.2 – Intellectual Property
- [University Collective Agreement](#)
The Responsible Conduct of Research Policy will be implemented throughout the University via:

1. A Announcement Notice under ‘FedNews’ on the ‘FedUni’ website and through the University Policy - ‘Recently Approved Documents’ and ‘Policy Search’ webpages to alert the University-wide community of the approved Policy,
2. Inclusion on the University's online Policy Library,
3. Circulation to all Fed Uni research staff (academic and professional).