

Higher Degree Research (HDR) Responsible Conduct of Research Policy

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Policy Owner	Dean
Responsible Officer	Associate Dean, Research and Scholarship
Approving Authority	Academic Board
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Related Documents	HDR Supervision Policy HDR Ethics Policy HDR Responsible Conduct of Research Policy HDR Candidature Policy Academic Integrity Policy HDR Guide for Ethical Use of GenAI HDR GenAI Policy
HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021	1.4.1; 1.4.2; 1.4.3; 1.4.4; 4.1.1; 4.1.2; 4.1.3; 4.1.4; 4.2.1; 4.2.2; 4.2.3; 4.2.4; 5.2.1; 5.2.2; 6.2.1; 6.2.2; 7.2.1.
Policy Visibility	Public

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the principles, responsibilities and procedures for ensuring the responsible conduct of research by Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates, supervisors and associated staff at the Institute, in alignment with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) and complementary Institute HDR policies.

2. Scope

Applies to all HDR candidates, supervisors, advisors, research support staff and visiting scholars engaged in HDR-related research under the auspices of the Institute, across all campuses and delivery modes.

3. Principles

- Honesty: present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.
- Rigour: apply robust methodology, critical analysis and avoid bias.
- Transparency: declare interests and share data, methods and findings responsibly.
- Fairness: treat all research participants and collaborators with equity and respect.
- Respect: uphold the dignity, rights, culture and confidentiality of humans, animals and the environment.
- Recognition: engage with and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, or any other disadvantaged or maligned groups, in research affecting them.
- Accountability: comply with relevant legislation, standards and Institute policies, ensuring stewardship of resources.
- Promotion: foster a culture that supports responsible research conduct through mentoring, training and leadership.
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4. Definitions

Definitions for terms such as Research Integrity, Breach, Research Misconduct, Research Data, Researcher, Responsible Executive Officer and Designated Officer are provided in the Institute Glossary and the Australian Code.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Institute Responsibilities

- Maintain governance frameworks that promote research integrity.
- Provide access to training, resources and mentors to support responsible conduct.
- Ensure secure systems for research data management and retention.
- Investigate alleged breaches of this policy in line with procedural fairness.

5.2 Researcher Responsibilities

- Uphold the eight principles of responsible research in all activities.
- Obtain all required ethics, biosafety and regulatory approvals prior to commencing research.

- Manage and store data in accordance with the Research Data Management Guidelines.
- Disclose and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Acknowledge authorship only where substantial scholarly contribution is made and agree authorship order.
- Disseminate findings responsibly and correct the record promptly if errors are discovered.
- Participate constructively in peer review and mentor research trainees.
- Report suspected breaches of this policy via established channels.

5.3 Supervisor Responsibilities

Model and mentor research integrity:

- Demonstrate honesty, rigour, transparency, fairness, and respect
- Discuss these principles with candidates during supervision
- Provide ongoing guidance on the Australian Code, Institute policies, GenAI use, and discipline-specific norms

Support compliance and candidate training:

- Ensure timely preparation and submission of ethics and regulatory approvals before research begins
- Monitor and record completion of mandatory training in integrity, ethics, safety, and sustainability, ensuring alignment with institutional policies and national guidelines

Manage authorship and publication practices:

- Establish and revisit authorship agreements based on substantial contributions
- Review manuscripts and creative outputs for accuracy, citations, funding acknowledgement, and GenAI disclosure
- Coordinate the dissemination of progress updates and confirm task completion milestones

Oversee data and records management:

- Ensure secure storage, retention, sharing, and disposal of research data
- Maintain data privacy
- Maintain supervision records, including meeting notes, ethics approvals, authorship, and data updates
- Submit annual progress reports to the Director of Research (DR)

Identify and report risks or breaches:

- Disclose and manage actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest
- Report suspected breaches of policy to the DR and support candidates who raise concerns in good faith
- Cooperate confidentially in assessments or investigations

Promote an inclusive and respectful research culture:

- Foster an environment free from discrimination, harassment, or exploitation
- Value diversity and respectful collaboration

Engage in ongoing professional development:

- Complete supervisor induction and biennial refresher training
- Stay current with emerging research integrity issues

6. Breaches of the Policy

6.1 Definition

A breach is failure to meet the principles or responsibilities in this policy or the Australian Code. Breaches range from administrative oversights to serious research misconduct.

6.2 Reporting and Preliminary Assessment

Concerns may be raised with your lecturer or supervisor, who will take the matter to the Director of Research (DR) on your behalf, or directly to the DR. The DR conducts a preliminary assessment to determine whether the matter proceeds to investigation, is referred to another process, or is dismissed.

6.3 Investigation

Where warranted, the DR appoints an independent panel to investigate. Investigations follow principles of procedural fairness, confidentiality and timeliness. Findings are decided on balance of probabilities and reported to the Dean for determination.

6.4 Outcomes and Actions

Outcomes may include: No Breach, Minor Breach (corrective action), Serious Breach (disciplinary action) or Referral to External Authorities. The DR ensures actions are proportionate to breach severity and communicates outcomes to relevant parties. Support and welfare arrangements are offered to complainants and respondents.

6.5 Appeals

Parties may request an appeal within 20 working days to the DR. External appeal avenues remain available after internal options are exhausted.

7. Research Data and Publications Reporting

- All Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates and academic staff must ensure that research outputs, such as theses, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, or other published works, are reported and deposited in accordance with institutional requirements.

The Director of Research shall maintain a centralised and secure Research Outputs Register, capturing:

- Final versions of approved theses
- Staff and HDR student publications
- Conference presentations and creative works where applicable

Supervisors are responsible for guiding candidates to submit their outputs promptly upon acceptance or completion. This record will be maintained to support institutional reporting, quality assurance, and compliance with HESF Standard 4.1.3.

The Director of Research will annually audit the register to ensure currency and completeness. In addition, the Institute and the Director of Research are responsible for ensuring that appropriate technological infrastructure and secure digital systems are in place to facilitate the long-term storage and accessibility of research data records. Research data and associated records must be maintained for a minimum of five years following the completion of the research project, in line with national best practices for research integrity and management.

The responsibility for uploading and maintaining accurate research data records lies with the principal supervisor and the HDR candidate. They must ensure that datasets, methodologies, and documentation relevant to the research are securely stored and made available for audit, replication, or re-use as appropriate.

Authorship is offered to all who made substantial intellectual contributions and to no others. Publications must cite sources accurately and include Institute affiliation and funding acknowledgements. Researchers must correct the scholarly record if errors or misconduct are identified.

8. Training and Awareness

HDR candidates and supervisors must complete research integrity training within six months of enrolment/appointment and refresh every three years.

For HDR candidates: training provided within orientation materials

For HDR supervisors: training provided within HDR Supervisor Induction Program

9. Legislation & Standards Alignment

This policy aligns with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018), Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Code (2018), NHMRC and ARC policies, AIATSIS Code of Ethics (2020), Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, and relevant Commonwealth and State legislation.

10. Version Control

Version	Authored by	Brief description of change	Date Approved	Effective Date
2025.1	Dean	Initial release of HDR Responsible Conduct Policy.	06 August 2025	07 August 2025