

Research Committee (RC) Terms of Reference

Policy Category	Academic
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Policy Owner	Dean
Responsible Officer	Director of Research
Approving Authority	Academic Board
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Related Documents	GOV-HE-04 Governance Charter; GOV-HE-01 Quality Assurance Framework; ADM-HE-41 Internal Compliance Review Policy and Procedure; HDR Supervision Policy; HDR Examination Policy; HDR Ethics Policy; HDR Responsible Conduct of Research Policy; HDR Candidature Policy; HDR Guide for Ethical Use of GenAI; HDR GenAI Policy; ACA-HE-12 External Moderation and Benchmarking Policy and Procedure; ACA-HE-02 Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure; ACA-HE-01 Staff Scholarly Activity and Professional Development Policy and Procedure .
HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021	1.3.1; 1.3.2; 1.3.3; 1.3.4; 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; 6.3.1;
Policy Visibility	Public

1. Purpose

The Research Committee (RC) is a standing sub-committee of the Academic Board that oversees, promotes, and assures the quality, integrity, and strategic alignment of research activities conducted under the auspices of Australian Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd (AIH). The Committee supports AIH's mission to foster impactful, ethical, and sustainable research outcomes aligned with national and international standards.

2. Principles

- Academic Excellence: Promote high-quality, original, and rigorous research.
- Integrity: Uphold honesty, transparency, and accountability in all research activities.
- Equity & Inclusion: Ensure fair treatment and recognition of diverse research communities and methodologies.
- Collaboration: Encourage interdisciplinary, cross-sector, and international research partnerships.
- Capacity Building: Support Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates, staff, and supervisors in developing research capabilities.
- Compliance: Ensure alignment with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018), the HESF (2021), and relevant legislation.

3. Scope

These terms apply to all AIH staff, Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates, supervisors, research staff, visiting scholars, and partners engaged in research activities undertaken at, by, or on behalf of AIH, including multi-institutional collaborations where AIH is a lead or contributing institution.

4. Details

4.1 Governance & Reporting

The RC operates with delegated authority from the Academic Board. It provides:

- Quarterly reports to the Academic Board via the Director of Research; and
- An annual report covering research performance, capacity building, compliance (including research integrity and ethics), risks and strategic initiatives.

The RC receives quarterly summary reports from the HDR Ethics Committee on low-risk approvals and referrals to external Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs).

4.2 Functions & Responsibilities

- Develop, monitor, and review research strategy and policy and procedures.
- Assure compliance with institutional, national, and international research standards.
- Monitor research integrity and oversee training in responsible research conduct.
- Endorse major research initiatives, funding applications, and partnerships prior to Academic Board noting/approval as required.
- Monitor HDR progression, supervision capacity, and research outcomes; escalate risks to Academic Board.
- Oversee the dissemination, visibility, and impact of research outputs.
- Provide advice to the Academic Board on research trends, risks, and opportunities.

4.3 Composition & Membership

The RC shall comprise a minimum of eight voting members:

- Director of Research (Chair)
- Dean and Director of Teaching and Learning
- Associate Dean, Research and Scholarship (Deputy Chair)
- HDR Supervision Coordinator
- External research-active members (x2) (as defined in ACA-HE-01 Staff Scholarly Activity and Professional Development Policy and Procedure)
- One HDR candidate representative
- Quality and Compliance Coordinator (Secretary)

Appointments and tenure: Members are appointed by the Academic Board. External members and the HDR representative serve staggered terms to ensure continuity.

4.4 Meetings & Quorum

- Meets at least four (4) times annually.

- Quorum is a majority of voting members (50% + 1), including either the Chair or Deputy Chair.
- Decisions by consensus; otherwise by majority vote, with minority views recorded.
- Out-of-session matters may be decided by circular resolution and noted at the next meeting.

4.5 Decision-Making Protocols

The RC may recommend, endorse, or withhold approval on research matters. All outcomes must be documented and communicated within 14 days.

4.6 Monitoring & Compliance

The Committee monitors institutional compliance with relevant codes and standards. Annual progress and completion reports must be submitted by HDR supervisors and research project leads.

4.7 Complaints & Appeals

- Complaints about research processes are investigated by the Associate Dean, Research and Scholarship.
- Appeals may be escalated to the Dean and, if unresolved, to the RC.

4.8 Records & Confidentiality

AIH maintains a secure register of research policies, approvals, and committee decisions for at least seven (7) years. Members must sign annual confidentiality and conflict-of-interest declarations.

5. Legislation & Standards

- Higher Education Standards Framework (2021)
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)
- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (NHMRC, 2018; updated 2025)
- AIATSIS Code of Ethics (2020)
- TEQSA and ARC Research Guidelines

6. Version Control

The RC reviews its performance annually and its Terms of Reference every three years, or earlier if required by legislative, regulatory or organisational change.



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Version	Authored by	Brief Description of Change	Approval Date	Effective Date
2025.1	Dean	Initial release of Research Committee ToR	04 September 2025	05 September 2025