

Conduct of Research Guidelines

Approved by	Director, Research
Contact	Executive Officer, Research
Related documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research• National Statement on ethical Conduct in Human Research
Date effective	May 2015
Date of next review	May 2016

Purpose

These guidelines articulate the commitment and approach to the responsible conduct of research expected of all Persons Engaged in Research at or through Swinburne University of Technology.

Scope

These Guidelines apply University-wide, including Sarawak campus.

Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Advisors in Research Integrity	As defined in the Misconduct Guidelines .
Australian Research Code	Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)
Authorship	Authorship must be based on substantial contributions in a combination of conception and design of the project, analysis and interpretation of the research data and drafting significant parts of the work or critically revising it so as to contribute to the interpretation.
Conflict of interest	As defined in the People, Culture and Integrity Policy
Human research	Human research is defined as “that conducted with or about people, or their data or tissue” (National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research , p.8).
Near relatives	Spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or sibling, an in-law or step-relative, in one of these relationships.
Peer review	The impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.
Persons Engaged in Research	Staff including research leaders, supervisors, and workers, general, technical and other professional and support staff; students, research trainees, engaged in research under the auspices of the University.
Plagiarism	Plagiarism has the meaning given to it in regulation 5 of the Student Academic Misconduct Regulations 2012. That definition applies to all persons, including staff and students.
Research	Original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight. “...includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce,

	<p>industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research”</p> <p>(British Research Assessment Exercise, p.28, cited in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007, p.1-2).</p>
Researchers	Includes those engaged in research at or through Swinburne, but is not limited to Swinburne staff, adjunct staff, honorary appointments and visiting scholars.
Research breach	As defined in the Misconduct Guidelines .
Research misconduct	As defined in the Misconduct Guidelines .
Research trainee	Early career researchers (for example 0-5 years post PhD researchers)
Students	As defined in the Swinburne University of Technology Act (2010)

Legislative context

Name	Location
Gene Technology Act	http://www.ogtr.gov.au/internet/ogtr/publishing.nsf/Content/legislation-2
Health Records Act (Victoria) 2001	http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc/legislation.htm
Information Privacy Act (Victoria) 2001	http://www.privacy.vic.gov.au/privacy/web2.nsf/pages/information-privacy-act
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act	http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/agriculture-and-food/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-legislation/prevention-of-cruelty-to-animals-legislation
Privacy Act (Commonwealth) 1988	http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/pa1988108/
Swinburne University of Technology Act (2010)	http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/num_act/suota20104o2010468/s3.html
Whistleblower Protection Act (Victoria) 2001	http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/LTObject_Store/LTObjSt4.nsf/d1a8d8a9bed958efca25761600042ef5/912fa900f9e65fb4ca257761002dd0b7/\$FILE/01-36a021.pdf

Relevant codes

Name	Location
Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (8 th Edition, 2013)	https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/ea28
National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)	http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/e72-jul09.pdf
Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)	http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/r39syn.htm

Guidelines

1. Application

1.1	Persons Engaged in Research conducted under the auspices of the University must familiarise themselves with these Guidelines and ensure that its provisions are observed.
1.2	Persons Engaged in Research should comply with these Guidelines and the Australian Research Code, even when their research is conducted outside Australia.
1.3	Failure to comply with the provisions of these Guidelines may be grounds for disciplinary action.
1.4	Where Persons Engaged in Research are in doubt about the applicability of provisions of these guidelines or the appropriate course of action to be adopted, particularly with regard to possible or actual breaches of these Guidelines or instances of research misconduct, advice should be sought in the first instance from any of the Advisors in Research Integrity appointed by the University.
1.5	Generally, where there is a variation between Swinburne's Conduct of Research Guidelines and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, the higher standard will prevail.
1.6	Unless otherwise detailed, the relevant section in the Australian Research Code will provide the guiding standard.
1.7	Matters pertaining to the management of research data and primary materials, and research breaches and misconduct as covered in the Australian Research Code are not dealt with under these Guidelines. These Guidelines must be read in conjunction with applicable regulations and closely-related Swinburne guidelines including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Research Data Guiding Principles • Misconduct Guidelines • Research Training Statement of Practice • Student Academic Misconduct Regulations 2012

2. Guiding Principles

2.1	The University assumes that its Persons Engaged in Research are committed to high standards of professional and ethical conduct.
2.2	The responsibility of the research community to the public and to itself is acknowledged. This responsibility is particularly important where professional practice or public policy may be defined or modified in light of the research findings. Where public and professional resources have been used for research purposes, careful stewardship and proper accountability are expected.
2.3	Dissemination of research results is an important part of the research process, passing on the benefits to other researchers, professional practitioners and the wider community. Adherence to standards of scholarly rigour and intellectual honesty, including accuracy and validity in the collection and reporting of data and findings is paramount.
2.4	Quality and originality in research are significantly emphasised. Competitive pressures on increasing research output should not act to distort sound research practice. Consistent and prolonged publication of multiple research outputs based on the same research results is not acceptable nor must an author submit substantially similar work to more than one publisher unless this is disclosed to the publishers at the time of submission.
2.5	Communication between research collaborators, maintenance and reference to research records, the responsible dissemination of research findings, publication of results, including the important element of independent peer review, and the possibility that investigations will be repeated or extended by other researchers, all contribute to the intrinsically self-correcting and ethical nature of research.
2.6	In the conduct of research, Persons Engaged in Research should take care not to deliberately misrepresent their experience, skills or competence.
2.7	Persons Engaged in Research have a duty to ensure that their work enhances the good name of the University, the academic discipline and/or profession to which they belong.
2.8	Both the institution and Persons Engaged in Research are responsible for promoting and maintaining an environment that fosters responsible and ethical behaviour in research.
2.9	The University will establish and promote an appropriate governance framework which demands compliance with Australian laws, regulations, guidelines and codes of practice governing the conduct of research and through which research is assessed.
2.10	A safe environment within which the research projects are conducted, training in research matters and the promotion of mentoring and supervision are also the responsibility of the University.
2.11	Persons Engaged in Research must maintain high standards of responsible research, and only participate in work that conforms to accepted ethical standards and which they are competent to perform. When in doubt, assistance with their research should be sought from Faculty Research Advisors, or their colleagues/peers. In the pursuit of research activity, researchers, research trainees and students will respect humans, animals, the environment and the wider community by designing and undertaking projects which prevent or minimise any adverse effects. They must acknowledge that special responsibilities apply in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and ensure that there is appropriate consumer involvement in research where appropriate.
2.12	Established guidelines issued by regulatory bodies for research involving humans, animals or

	the environment are to be closely followed. Where research procedures require approval by a human research ethics committee, an animal ethics committee, a bio-safety or other validly constituted regulatory committee, research must not proceed without such approval. Where approval is granted, the research must be conducted in line with that approval.
2.13	Any Person Engaged in Research or research participant who considers that deviations from the standards of good research conduct have occurred must act in a timely manner, having regard for the University's policies. Advice should be sought from Research Integrity Advisors.

3. Authorship of Research Outcomes

			Responsibility
3.1	3.1.1.	The University's criteria for authorship of research outcomes reflect the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.	
	3.1.2.	Attribution of authorship to some extent is dependent on the given discipline, but in all cases, authorship must be based on substantial intellectual contribution and responsibility for at least part of the work contributed in any combination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conception and design of the project; and/or • Analysis and interpretation of research data; and/or • Drafting significant parts of the work or critically revising it so as to contribute to the interpretation. 	
	3.1.3.	Any part of an article critical to its main conclusion must be the responsibility of at least one author. An author's role in a research output must be sufficient for that person to take public responsibility for at least that part of the output in that person's area of expertise.	
	3.1.4.	Authorship should not be offered to those who do not meet the requirements set out in 3.1.1. None of the following contributions, in and of themselves, justifies including a person as an author: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being head of department, holding other positions of authority, or personal friendship with the authors. • Providing materials, have made the measurements, or provided routine technical support but no other intellectual input to the project or publication. • Providing routine assistance in some aspects of the project, the acquisition of funding, or general supervision of the research team • Providing data that has already been published or materials obtained from third parties, but with no intellectual input. 	
3.2	3.2.1.	Authorship of a research output is a matter that should be discussed between Persons Engaged in Research at an early stage in a research project, and reviewed periodically.	Persons engaged in research

	3.2.2.	Authorship provisions also apply to web-based publications and to published conference abstracts and similar publications.	
3.3		Where there is more than one author, one author should be nominated by agreement as the executive author for the whole research output. The executive author should take responsibility for record-keeping regarding the research output and to manage communication about the work with the publisher.	Persons engaged in research
3.4	3.4.1	The Executive author must ensure that authorship is offered to all people, including research trainees and students, who meet the criteria for authorship listed in 3.1.1. No author (consistent with the definition) can be excluded without their permission.	Persons engaged in research
	3.4.2	Those offered authorship must accept or decline in writing and include a brief description of the author's contribution to the work. Where individuals are to be named, their written consent and signature must be obtained. Where it is not practical to obtain an original signature, it is acceptable to use faxed or emailed consent.	
	3.4.3	Consents must be lodged with the Faculty of the Executive author using proformas where prescribed.	
	3.4.4	If an author is deceased or cannot be contacted, the publication can proceed provided there are no grounds to believe that the person would have objected to being included as an author.	
3.5		Where the research relates to the study of Indigenous Australians, the contribution of the relevant communities to the data shall be properly recorded as authors or participants as appropriate.	
3.6	3.6.1.	Where the research is published, including electronically, all co-authors of a publication must acknowledge their authorship in writing in terms of, at least, the minimum acceptable definition at Procedure 3.1.1, above.	Persons engaged in research
	3.6.2.	A signed Authorship Declaration Form should be used. It must specify that the signatories are the only authors according to the definition in 3.1.1. It must state that the signatories have seen the version of the paper submitted for publication.	
	3.6.3.	The executive author must ensure that all authors acknowledge their authorship in writing using the authorship cover sheet.	
	3.6.4.	This written record should be kept in the executive author's faculty for a period of no less than five years from the date of publication.	
	3.6.5.	Where it is not practical to obtain an original signature, it is acceptable to use faxed or emailed consent. This also applies to published conference abstracts and similar publications.	

3.7	The authors must ensure that others who have contributed to the research, such as research assistants and technical writers are properly acknowledged. Those providing materials or facilities should also be acknowledged. Where individuals are to be named, their written consent must be obtained.	Persons engaged in research
3.8	Where conflicts arise through disputes about authorship, those concerned should seek advice from an appointed Advisor in Research Integrity.	Persons engaged in research

4. Publications and Dissemination of Findings

		Responsibility
4.1	All relevant parties to the research must be made aware of the nature and scope of confidentiality agreements.	Persons engaged in research
4.2	Sponsors of the research must be made aware of the importance of publication in research and must be encouraged not to delay publication beyond the time that is needed to protect intellectual property and other relevant interests.	Persons engaged in research
4.3	Persons Engaged in Research should comply with the University's Media Policy when communicating research findings through the media.	Researchers
4.4	When reporting collaborative research findings all partner institutions and sponsors must be acknowledged.	Persons engaged in research
4.5	<p>Researchers have a responsibility to disseminate a full account of their research as broadly as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The account should be complete, and where applicable, include negative findings and results contrary to their hypotheses; • Publication activities must take account of any restrictions relating to intellectual property or culturally sensitive data. • An appropriate summary of the research results must be provided to research participants, where feasible. 	Persons engaged in research
4.6	As a general principle research findings should not be reported in the public media before they have been reported to peer experts in the field of research - preferably by publication in a peer-reviewed publication, except where there is a contractual arrangement.	Persons engaged in research
4.7	For certain issues of public concern or policy, where timely advice is critical, the findings may be reported in the public media in advance of peer reviewed publication, but the advice must be tendered first to the public or professional authorities responsible for the area covered by the findings, and the non-peer reviewed status of the findings disclosed at the same time.	Persons engaged in research
4.8	Where there is private reporting of research that has not yet been exposed to open peer-review scrutiny, especially when it is reported to prospective financial supporters, authors have an obligation to explain fully the status of the work and, where applicable, the peer-review mechanisms to which it will be subjected.	Persons engaged in research

4.9	Sometimes the confidentiality agreements of a sponsor can prevent or delay peer review until after the research results are delivered to the sponsor. In such cases, the author must explain to the sponsor that the work has not been subject to peer review.	Persons engaged in research
4.10	Any restrictions on communications that are agreed with the sponsor must be in keeping with the general principles of responsible research set out in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.	Persons engaged in research
4.11	Publications must include information on the sources of financial and in kind support for the research as specified by the sponsor or funding agency.	Persons engaged in research
4.12	Deliberate inclusion of inaccurate or misleading information relating to research activity in curriculum vitae, grant applications, job applications or public statements, or the failure to provide relevant information, is a form of research misconduct. Accuracy is essential in describing the state of publication (in preparation, submitted, accepted), research funding (applied for, granted, funding period), and awards conferred, and where any of these relate to more than one researcher.	Persons engaged in research
4.13	All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that published reports, statistics and public statements about research activities are complete, accurate and unambiguous. If researchers become aware of misleading or inaccurate statements about their work, they must correct the record as soon as possible.	Persons engaged in research
4.14	Persons Engaged in Research must ensure that they cite other relevant work appropriately and accurately when disseminating research findings.	Persons engaged in research
4.15	Where the results of the research have been published elsewhere, Persons Engaged in Research must take all reasonable steps to obtain permission from the original publisher before republishing research findings.	Persons engaged in research
4.16	Persons Engaged in Research must register clinical trials with a recognised register to promote access to information about all clinical trials. This should occur before the start of the clinical phase of the trial.	Persons engaged in research
4.17	Persons Engaged in Research should submit their publications to an open access repository (for example, Swinburne Research Bank) to make their research more widely available, subject to any conditions imposed by the publisher.	Persons engaged in research

5. Disclosure of Actual, Potential and Perceived Conflicts of Interest

		Responsibility
5.1	This section should be read in conjunction with the University Policy on Conflict of Interest .	
5.2	Persons Engaged in Research must make appropriate disclosure of affiliation with, or financial involvement in, any organisation or entity with a direct interest in the subject matter or materials of researchers. Disclosures cover the full range of potential interests, including the	Persons engaged in research

		direct benefits such as sponsorship of the investigation, or indirect benefits such as the provision of materials or facilities or the support of individuals such as provision of travel or accommodation expenses to attend conferences. Disclosures should cover any situation in which the conflict of interest may, or may be perceived to affect any decision regarding other people.	
5.3		Persons Engaged in Research must not be involved in the admission, supervision, assessment or examination, recruitment, promotion, reclassification, evaluation or grievance process concerning current or prospective near relatives.	Persons engaged in research
5.4		Where the circumstances constitute a conflict of interest, or may lead people to perceive a conflict of interest, the person concerned must not take part in the decision making.	Persons engaged in research
5.5		<p>Persons Engaged in Research frequently have a conflict of interest that cannot be avoided. Decision making processes in research often require expert advice, and the pool of experts in a field can be so small that all the experts have some link with the matter under consideration.</p> <p>In order to manage this process, Persons Engaged in Research are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand these Guidelines, the University's People, Culture and Integrity Policy, Conflict of Interest and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. • Complete a conflict of interest Declaration form where they believe or there is a likelihood that others may perceive that a conflict may arise. • When invited to join a committee or equivalent, review current activities for actual or apparent conflicts and bring possible conflicts of interest to the attention of those running the process. • Disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest as soon as it becomes apparent. 	Persons engaged in research
5.6	5.6.1	Appropriate disclosure of potential conflicts of interest must be made to editors of journals, to the readers of published work, and to external bodies from which funds are sought.	Persons engaged in research
	5.6.2	Persons Engaged in Research have an obligation to disclose at the time of reporting or proposing research (for example, in a grant application), any conflict of interest which has the potential to influence research and investigations, publication and media reports, grant applications, applications for appointment and promotion.	

6. Peer Review

		Responsibility
6.1	Research proposals or findings should, where possible, be subject to appropriate peer review to enhance research merit and integrity and responsible reporting of research findings.	
6.2	Participants in peer review should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fair and timely in their review • Act in confidence and not disclose the content or outcome of any process in which they are involved • Declare all conflicts of interest, and not permit personal prejudice to influence the peer review process, and not introduce considerations that are not relevant to the review criteria. • Not take undue or calculated advantage of knowledge obtained during the peer review process • Ensure that they are informed about, and comply with the criteria to be applied • Not agree to participate in peer review outside their area of expertise • Give proper consideration to research that challenges or changes accepted ways of thinking. 	Persons engaged in research
6.3	Researchers whose work is undergoing peer review must not seek to influence the peer review process or outcomes.	Persons engaged in research
6.4	Researchers in receipt of public funding have a responsibility to participate in peer review processes.	Persons engaged in research
6.5	Researchers have a responsibility to assist research trainees and students in developing the necessary skills for peer review and understanding their obligation to participate.	Persons engaged in research

7. Collaborative research across institutions

		Responsibility
7.1	For joint research projects across institutions, an agreement should be reached between partners on the management of the research. Generally, agreements should be in writing and cover issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual property; • Confidentiality and copyright; • Sharing of commercial returns; • Responsibility for ethics and safety clearances; • Reporting to the appropriate agencies; • The dissemination of research outcomes; • Management of primary research materials and research data. • Disclosure of conflict of interest in line in 3.3. 	Persons engaged in research
7.2	Persons Engaged in Research who are involved in joint research projects must be aware of, and comply with all policies and written agreements	Persons engaged in research

	affecting the project, including the Management of Research Data Guidelines.	
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8. Research Supervision

		Responsibility
8.1	Supervisors should guide the professional development of research trainees and students. This involves providing guidance in all matters relating to research conduct, and overseeing all stages of the research process. This includes identifying the objectives and approach, obtaining ethics and other approvals, obtaining funding, conducting the research, and reporting the research outcomes in appropriate forums and media.	Supervisors
8.2	Supervisors of research trainees and students should ensure that training starts as soon as possible in their research careers. Training should include discipline-based research methods and other relevant skills such as the ability to interact with industry and to work with diverse communities.	Supervisors
8.3	8.3.1 Supervision includes oversight of the research outcomes from those under supervision.	Supervisors
	8.3.2 A supervisor must be satisfied that the research methods and outcomes of research trainees and students under their supervision are appropriate and valid.	
8.4	Supervisors must ensure that research trainees and students receive appropriate credit for their work.	Supervisors
8.5	Research trainees and students must demonstrate a professional attitude towards the research. Frequent sessions with their supervisor are important, requiring the cooperation of both parties. Research trainees and students should not wait until approached by their supervisor but should play an active part in maintaining an appropriate schedule of meetings.	Research trainees and students
8.6	Research trainees and students should complete all induction and training courses as soon as practical after starting research at the University.	Research trainees and students

Version control and change history

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
5	May 2015	Director, Research	Reviewed, renamed (formerly Policy) and put into new template
4	30 August 2012	Council	Updated the policy to align with the new statutes and regulations.
3	11 October 2010	University Council	Reviewed and updated policy to reflect the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
2	2 June 2009	Director, Governance and Policy Unit	Reviewed Policy and put into new template
1	12 August 1999	Joint Planning and Resources Committee	