

Responsible Conduct of Research (Employees) Procedures

1. COMPLIANCE OBLIGATION SUPPORTED

[Research Management Policy](#)

[Curtin University Enterprise Bargaining Agreement](#)

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#)

2. PROCEDURAL DETAILS

These procedures are based on and will be read in conjunction with [the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(The Code\)](#) and the [Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (the Guide) and the [Curtin University Enterprise Bargaining Agreement](#) (the Enterprise Agreement).

These procedures outline the steps for managing complaints about the responsible conduct of research and assessing, investigating and reporting potential breaches of The Code, and set out the criteria for what conduct may constitute a breach.

2.1. Concerns about research conduct

- 2.1.1. Anyone who has a concern about the conduct of research may make a formal complaint. A formal complaint will be lodged through the Complaints Portal as outlined in section 2.3.
- 2.1.2. If the person with a concern about the conduct of research is an employee they will, within a timely manner, discuss their concern with their line manager to determine whether a formal complaint needs to be made.
- 2.1.3. If the person with a concern about the conduct of research is a HDR student, they will, within a timely manner, discuss their concern with their supervisor.
- 2.1.4. If the employee or HDR student believes that a line manager or supervisor has a conflict of interest they may discuss the concern with a Research Integrity Advisor or the Manager, Research Integrity.
- 2.1.5. Research Integrity Advisors are a first point of contact on initial advice on accepted research practices, The Code, the Guide, University policies and procedures and other applicable codes of conduct that apply to research. A Research Integrity Advisor may help in considering:
 - a) whether a concern may be related to a potential breach;
 - b) what other internal processes may be accessed if a concern is not related to a potential breach of The Code; and
 - c) how to make a formal complaint about a potential breach of The Code, in accordance with these procedures.
- 2.1.6. If a Research Integrity Advisor has been approached for advice, their role will not extend to the assessment or investigation of that complaint.
- 2.1.7. Where a Research Integrity Advisor considers a concern needs to escalate through a formal complaint process, they will seek advice from the Manager Research Integrity and provide all relevant information to the Manager, Research Integrity, or the Integrity and Standards Unit.

2.2. Lodging a complaint

- 2.2.1. Complaints about the conduct of research will be lodged online through the Integrity and Standards Unit Complaints Portal and in accordance with the [Complaints Procedures](#).

- 2.2.2. Once a formal complaint about the conduct of research is made through the Complaints Portal, the Manager Research Integrity will be notified and will take relevant steps to deal with the complaint.

2.3. Managing complaints

- 2.3.1. Complaints about the conduct of research will be processed, assessed and investigated in accordance with the [Complaints Procedures](#), the process described in The Code and Guide, and where relevant the University's [Enterprise Bargaining Agreement](#) (Enterprise Agreement).
- a) An investigation conducted under The Code and Guide constitutes an investigation under the Enterprise Agreement.
- 2.3.2. The principles of procedural fairness apply to managing and investigating potential breaches of The Code.
- 2.3.3. The Manager Research Integrity is responsible for providing subject matter advice, conducting and coordinating research integrity assessments and investigations under The Code and the Guide, and advises researchers, students and employees of their responsibilities under The Code.
- 2.3.4. The Manager Research Integrity reports directly to the Designated Officer to ensure the Designated Officer is briefed in relation to any preliminary assessments and/or investigations under The Code and the Guide.

2.4. Breaches of The Code

- 2.4.1. Breaches of The Code occur on a spectrum from minor/less serious to major/more serious/repeated breaches.
- 2.4.2. Breaches of The Code include the following:
- Not meeting required research standards.
 - Failure to obtain ethics approval (or confirmation of exemption) or failure to conduct research in accordance with ethics approval.
 - Failure to obtain necessary permits, licences, agreements or approvals to conduct research.
 - Fabrication, falsification, misrepresentation.
 - Plagiarism, including duplicate publication and self-plagiarism.
 - Failure to appropriately maintain research records.
 - Inappropriate destruction of research records, research data and/or source material.
 - Inappropriate disclosure of, or access to, research records, research data and/or source material.
 - Failure to provide adequate supervision.
 - Failure by a supervisor to provide adequate guidance or mentorship on the responsible conduct of research to researchers for research trainees under their supervision.
 - Failure to acknowledge the contributions of others fairly.
 - Misleading ascription of authorship including failure to offer authorship to those who qualify or awarding authorship to those who do not meet the requirements.
 - Failure to disclose conflicts of interest.
 - Failure to conduct peer review responsibly.
- 2.4.3. The seriousness of a breach is based on a number of factors including:
- the extent of the departure from accepted practice.
 - the extent to which research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment are, or may have been, affected by the breach.

- the extent to which it affects the trustworthiness of research.
- the extent of which the breach affects the public interest function of research.
- the level of experience of the researcher.
- whether there are repeated breaches by the researcher.
- whether institutional failures have contributed to the breach.
- any other mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

2.5. Reporting complaints to external parties

2.5.1. Where applicable, the Manager Research Integrity will report to regulatory bodies and other agencies, including the National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian Research Council and the US Office of Research Integrity, in accordance with their policies.

2.6. Correction of the research record

2.6.1. If an assessment or investigation process under The Guide results in a determination that the research record be corrected, action may be undertaken by the Research Integrity Office to correct the research record and inform relevant parties of any outcomes pertaining to the complaint.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to any responsibilities set out in section 2.

- 3.1 The Designated Officer has overall responsibility to ensure the appropriate management of complaints about the conduct of research or potential breaches of The Code.
- 3.2 The Designated Officer assigns a suitably qualified Assessment Officer, oversees the preliminary assessment and decides whether a complaint is referred to an investigation, resolved without need for investigation, referred to other institutional processes (including local resolution), or dismissed.

4. SCOPE OF PROCEDURES

- 4.1. These procedures apply to all employees, adjuncts, and University Associates in any location or campus, whether in or outside of Australia.
- 4.2. These procedures do not apply to students as matters related to student conduct are addressed under [Statute 10 – Student Discipline](#).

5. DEFINITIONS

(Note: Commonly defined terms are located in the [Curtin Common Definitions](#). Any defined terms below are specific to this document)

Breach of the Code

Is a failure to meet the principles and responsibilities of the Code or associated Guides and may refer to a single breach or multiple breaches (as defined per The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research).

Designated Officer

A senior professional or academic institutional officer or officers nominated as a decision-maker in complaints about the conduct of research or potential breaches of The Code and to oversee the management of preliminary assessments and investigations, where required. The Designated Officer is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or appropriate delegate.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS/FORMS

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#)

[Complaints Procedure](#)

[Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for](#)

[Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(HESF\): Standards 4.1.1, 4.1.2](#)

[Statute 10 – Student Discipline](#)

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REVISION HISTORY (*filled out by Risk, Compliance and Audit*)

Version	Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Date	Committee / Board / Executive Manager	Approval / Resolution Number	Key Changes and Notes
New	Approved	25/07/2016	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research	EM1630	Unconditional
	Approved	11/12/2020	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research	EM2087	Includes name change
	Approved	29/05/2026	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research	EM2611	On condition of approval of <i>Research Management Policy</i> (AB 56/2026). Includes name change