Code of Conduct for Research

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Contacts	policy@imc.edu.au		
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1 PURPOSE

The Institute is committed to maintaining responsible research practices in an environment that fosters integrity and professional conduct.

This policy is based on the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007* (*Australian Code*). It should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures in the Institute's policy framework and is subject to legislative requirements.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for ethical research practices and to outline the processes for dealing with breaches of the Code and research misconduct.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all the Institute's staff, students and honorary appointments.

3 DEFINITIONS

Australian Code refers to the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)* which is a code developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Universities Australia.

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (Australian Code) is a code developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council and Universities Australia. (file:///C:/Users/TOP%20IT/Downloads/The-australian-code-for-the-responsible-conduct-of-research-2018%20(1).pdf)

Authorship is a designation given to a researcher who makes a substantial intellectual or scholarly contribution to a research output and accepts responsibility for that contribution.

Breaches of the Australian Code are actions or omissions that are a violation or an infraction of the *Australian Code*, but are lacking intent, deliberation, recklessness or negligence, and serious consequences associated with research misconduct.

Higher Degree, Research and Scholarship Committee (HDRSC) is the principal advisory committee of the Academic Board on issues of research. HDRSC has responsibilities for two key areas at the Institute: research; and higher degree research and training.

Human research is any research with or about human participants, including their data or tissue. Examples of human research most likely to be relevant to research activities at the Institute include: surveys and questionnaires; interviews; focus groups; access to individuals' information; and behavioural testing and observation.

National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (National Statement) is a statement released by the Australian Research Council and National Health and Medical Research Council. (https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018)

Research is defined in the Australian Code as "original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight".

Research misconduct is a breach of the code with intent and deliberation, recklessness or gross and persistent negligence.

Research trainee refers to a Higher Degree Research student, any student undertaking research activity or an early career researcher.

4. RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH CONDUCT

4.1 General Principles of Responsible Research

4.1.1 The Insittute undertakes to:

- establish a research governance framework which promotes compliance with all guidelines, legislation and policies and procedures, relating to the ethical and professional conduct of research;

- provide induction and on-going training for research staff and students in responsible research practice;

- support appropriate supervision and mentoring of researchers and research trainees;

- encourage mutual cooperation with open exchange of ideas between peers and respect for freedom of expression and inquiry;

- provide a safe working environment in which research may be conducted and endeavor to ensure the safety of all associated with the research; and

- establish and communicate processes for managing allegations of breaches and research misconduct.

4.1.2 Researchers are required to:

- foster and maintain a research environment of intellectual honesty and integrity, with scholarly rigour;

- respect the rights of those affected by their research;

- manage conflicts of interest so that ambition and personal advantage do not compromise ethical or scholarly considerations;

- adopt methods appropriate for achieving the aims of each research proposal;

- follow legislative and policy requirements for proper practices for safety and security;

- cite awards, degrees conferred and research publications accurately, including the status of any publication, when giving information about themselves;

- report and disseminate research findings responsibly;

- adhere to legislative requirements, policies, guidelines and procedures for responsible research;

- report perceived breaches or perceived research misconduct in a timely manner as directed by this policy.

4.1.3 Researchers must be aware of and conduct research in accordance with the *Australian Code,* this policy and other relevant policies and guidelines, including any bodies from which they are receiving research funds.

Research involving human participants must meet provisions for ethical research practice as prescribed in:

- the *National Statement on Ethical conduct in Human Research (2007);* and

- The Institute's *Human Research Ethics Policy*

In addition, researchers undertaking research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should also consult:

- Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (https://aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethical-research/guidelines-ethical-research-australian-indigenous-studies).

4.2 Management of Research Data and Primary Materials

During and after the completion of the relevant research, researchers must comply with the *NSW State Records Act* and the Institute policies and procedures pertaining to the management of research materials and data, including *Research Materials and Data Management Policy.* Compliance with these documents includes:

- appropriate recording and referencing of research data;

- retention of research data for a minimum required period;

- maintenance of confidentiality in a manner consistent with ethical and legal requirements; and

- accessibility of material and data related to publications.

4.3 Supervision of Research Trainees

Research trainees include Higher Degree Research candidates, other student researchers and early career researchers. The Institute requires that all research trainees:

- are provided with appropriately qualified and trained supervisors for mentoring at all stages of the research process;

- receive induction and training which includes ethics, OH&S and best practices for conducting research; and

- become familiar with, and seek guidance to ensure they meet requirements of, the *Australian Code*, this policy, relevant legislation, guidelines, policies and procedures relating to responsible research.

Supervisors must ensure research is conducted in accordance with this policy, the *Australian Code* and the Institute's *Research Higher Degree Registration and Roles of Supervisors Policy*.

4.4 Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings

Research findings may be disseminated by formal publication in academic journals and books as well as professional and institutional repositories and non-refereed publications such as web pages, films etc.

4.4.1 The Institute promotes the responsible dissemination of researcher findings by:

- establishing an environment of honesty, integrity and responsible dissemination of research output;

- ensuring that researchers and research sponsors are informed of the nature and scope of confidentiality agreements and contractual arrangements that may restrict, delay or limit publication;

- ensuring that research sponsors recognise the importance of publication in research so that publication is not delayed beyond the time needed to protect intellectual property and other relevant interests; and

- supporting wide communication of research findings by accommodating open access to output and providing guidance to researchers on publication options.

4.4.2 Researchers are expected to:

- give a complete account of research findings, ensuring accurate reporting;

- account for any restrictions due to knowledge asset, intellectual property, cultural sensitivity or legal constraints relating to sponsorship, on publication activities;

- seek peer review before public release of research findings;

- acknowledge other work accurately and appropriately;

- acknowledge contributions made by participants and sponsors;

- declare conflicts of interest;

- provide details of research results to research participants and parties impacted by the research prior to publication;

- obtain permission from the original publisher before republishing research findings; and

- when submitting substantially similar work to more than one publisher, disclose this at the time of submission.

4.5 Authorship

The Institute requires that researchers comply with its *Authorship of and Access to Research Outputs Policy* ensuring that:

- the criteria of authorship are met and a *Statement of Authorship Form* is lodged with signatures of the author/co-authors of the publication;

- no person, including research trainees, who meets the conditions of the definition of 'authorship' is excluded as an author without their written permission;

- collaborating researchers agree on authorship of a publication; and

- written consent is obtained from those individuals named in acknowledgement as contributors to the research.

4.6 Peer Review

The Institute supports peer review through the impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.

The Institute encourages its researchers to take part in peer review, as both reviewers and subjects of review.

Researchers participating in peer review should:

- be suitably qualified with appropriate expertise;
- be fair, timely and respect confidentiality;
- declare all conflicts of interest;

The Institute requires that researchers whose work is undergoing a peer review must not seek to influence the process or outcome.

4.7 Conflicts of Interest

In accordance with integrity and good research practice, the Institute requires that its staff members comply with its *Conflict of Interest Policy*, and that all perceived conflicts of interest are disclosed, recorded and managed appropriately.

Researchers are required to:

- maintain records of activities that may lead to conflicts, including those arising from collaborative research, and ensure that other research activities are not impacted by these; and
- disclose the existence of any actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as it becomes apparent.

4.8 Collaborative Research Across Institutions

The Institute supports collaborative research across institutions nationally and internationally. Prior to the commencement of collaborative research, there must be written agreement between the partners on the management of the joint research project. The agreement should follow the general principles of the *Australian Code* and include:

- ownership of intellectual property, confidentiality and copyright, sharing commercial returns, and responsibility for ethics and safety;
- the identification by each collaborating institution of a person from their institution who is to manage research data, primary materials and other items to be retained at the end of the project; and
- the protocols to be followed by partners when disseminating the research outcomes, and the management of primary research materials and research data.

5. BREACHES AND RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

5.1 Research misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- fabrication or falsification of data;
- plagiarism;

- breach of confidentiality;

- intentionally omitting reference to the relevant published work of others for the purpose of inferring personal discovery of new information;

- deliberately misleading ascription of authorship;

- misrepresentation through statement or omission resulting in the presentation of material or significant falsehood;

- interference with any research related property or data of another person; and

- deliberate inclusion of inaccurate or misleading information, or the failure to provide relevant information, relating to research activity in curriculum vitae, grant applications, job applications or public statement.

5.2 Breaches of the Code

Research misconduct does not include honest errors or honest differences in interpretation or judgements of data. These errors are referred to as Breaches of the Code and are generally remedied within the School.

5.3 Roles and Responsibilities

- The Provost is the designated member of the Senior Executive to whom allegations are to be escalated.

- On recommendation from the Academic Board, the Institute will appoint an investigative committee consisting of: Provost; two research active staff members; one HDR student; and/or other members as considered appropriate.

- The role of the Principal in dealing with allegations of a breach of the Code or research misconduct will be restricted to employment conditions.

5.4 Complaints and Allegations

- Anyone who is concerned that a researcher has not acted responsibly must take action in a timely manner, in accordance with this Code and other relevant policies, or they may be deemed to be complicit.

- Persons considering making allegations of a breach of this Code or of research misconduct should initially consult the Dean, who may be approached in confidence for advice and an explanation of options.

- It is preferable that complaints and allegations are initially dealt with at the School level, especially if the complaint concerns a simple breach of the Code.

- If the complaint cannot be handled at the School level to the satisfaction of the complainant, the subject of the complaint should be lodged with the Provost.

- On receipt of a written allegation, the Provost must advise the Principal whether, in their opinion, a prima facie case exists, and how to proceed.

Options include:

- dismissing the allegations;

- instructing the department on how to deal with the allegations;

- dealing with the complaint under provisions unrelated to research misconduct;

- investigating the matter further through a research misconduct inquiry.

5.5 Investigation of Allegations

- Under normal circumstances and notwithstanding that legal requirements may override this, allegations against a staff member of a breach of this Code or behaviour constituting research misconduct must be considered and investigated in accordance with the relevant staff enterprise agreement or equivalent contract.

- Under normal circumstances and notwithstanding that legal requirements may override this, allegations against a research trainee of a breach of this Code or behaviour constituting research misconduct must be considered and investigated.

- If the Provost considers that a research misconduct inquiry is needed, he or she must decide whether to use an internal institutional research misconduct inquiry, or to refer the matter to the police.

- Should the allegations of research misconduct be of such seriousness in terms of impact, it may be necessary for the Institute to refer the matter to an external independent tribunal for investigation and determination. In this case, the Institute will consult relevant parties in order to meet as closely as possible, the requirements for external investigation as set out under the *Australian Code.*

- Upon completion of the research misconduct inquiry, the Principal must be informed of the inquiry's findings and recommendations.

- The Principal must then determine the actions to be taken, consistent with relevant enterprise agreements or equivalent and/or with the Institute's policies.

- Wherever possible any investigation into research misconduct shall continue even if the person accused of such misconduct resigns from the Institute. Distortions of the research record must be rectified, whether or not the person involved remains at the Institute.

5.6 Procedural Fairness, Natural Justice and Confidentiality

Staff or students, who are the subjects of allegations of a breach of this Code or research misconduct will be treated consistently with legal requirements and principles of procedural fairness and natural justice, and in a manner respectful of cultural sensitivities.

Confidentiality will be maintained and privacy respected. Where there has been public awareness of allegations and investigation of research misconduct and the allegations have been shown to be unfounded, the public record should be corrected.

5.7 Other Interested Parties

The responsible officer for the investigation shall consider whether action is required to try to protect the interests of other interested parties external to the Institute such as journals and other media reporting research, research funding bodies and the public. Subject to the requirements of privacy legislation, if a case for consideration of research misconduct is found to exist, advice of this mist be given to the secretary of any funding agency directly supporting the person involved, in accordance with the notification rules of the agency.

5.8 Appeals

Appeals that are based strictly on process may be lodged with the Australian Research Integrity Committee (https://www.arc.gov.au/policies-strategies/strategy/australian-research-

integrity-committee-aric). Grounds for review will include that the Institute's process allegedly:

- involved a breach of natural justice; or
- was carried out in an untimely manner that compromised procedural fairness; or
- was affected by fraud; or
- deviated from the process defined in Part B of the *Australian Code* and/or the Institute's documented processes.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

i. Research Higher Degree Registration and Roles of Supervisors Policy

ii. Authorship Policy

iii. Conflict of Interest policy

iv. Human Research Ethics Policy

v. Research Materials and Data Management Policy

7 Version Control

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2019.06	Academic Board	27 June 2019