

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

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Review	1 year from date of Approval		
Code	ARP004		
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2024.11	Academic Board	20 November 2024	30 September 2025

1. PURPOSE

The Australian National Institute of Management and Commerce (the Institute or IMC), supports and promotes ethical conduct in all research activities. This policy provides the principles and practices relevant to the design, review and conduct of research involving human participants.

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity regarding the assessment of research risk and benefit, and ethical review processes.

This Policy complies with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant documents in the Institute's Research Policy Framework (see related documents in Section 5).

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all the Institute's staff, students and honorary appointments conducting research that involves human participants, including joint research projects with other institutions or organisations. It also applies to members of the RC, and to other staff members involved in ethical review processes.

3. DEFINITIONS

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (Australian Code) means the code developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council and Universities Australia.

Human research includes any research with or about human participants and their data. 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) means a statement released by the Australian Research Council and National Health and Medical Research Council.

Research has the meaning provided in the Australian Code p. 5: The concept of research is broad and includes the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

Researcher means a person who systematically investigates and studies materials, sources, or data to establish facts, advance knowledge, and/or develop new insights in their chosen field. In the context of higher degrees and university research, this includes students enrolled in research programs, academic staff, and other contributors who engage in scholarly inquiry, applying appropriate methodologies to produce original research outputs, contribute to existing knowledge, and adhere to ethical research standards.

Research Committee (RC) means a committee of Academic Board that is a managerial and governance body responsible for IMC's higher degree research programs oversight, research training, research ethics and other research activities.

Research Misconduct means a breach of the Australian Code that is intentional, reckless, or negligent. Research misconduct may include, but is not limited to, fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those commonly accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest errors or differences in interpretation or judgment of data.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 Principles of Ethical Human Research

The Institute requires that human research design be based upon sound approaches and methodologies, and that research be conducted by researchers who have the requisite skills, knowledge, experience, resources and facilities.

Researchers, and those involved in review processes, must be aware of the ethical values and principles in the *National Statement* and should address these directly in the design, review and conduct of human research. The four values and principles are:

- **Research merit and integrity** – to justify the involvement of human participants, the research project must have merit and researchers must have integrity
 - **Justice** – human participants must be treated fairly and not have any undue burdens placed upon them
 - **Beneficence** – researchers must reflect on the social and cultural significance of their research and consider the benefits to participants and their communities
- Respect** – research must respect and value each participant and this value must inform all interactions with participants.

It is expected that researchers at the Institute will apply these values and other guidance material such as the Institute's *Code of Conduct for Research* and the *Australian Code* in a manner that is mindful of the welfare of participants.

4.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

Institutional responsibilities

The Institute is required to:

- Provide induction and continuing education to staff and students on human research ethics
- Establish and monitor relevant review bodies which are required to consider applications and report on the conduct of human research activity as stipulated by the *National Statement*
- Have processes for managing conflicts of interest; monitoring research; handling complaints; and ensuring accountability

Researcher responsibilities

Staff and students conducting research are required to:

- Conduct research ethically, in accordance with the *National Statement* and the Institute's Policies and Codes
- Seek and obtain approval for all research activity involving humans and comply with conditions of the approval
- Notify the appropriate review body of any adverse events or unexpected outcomes arising from human research activity; and
- Ensure records of research activities are maintained and regular reports are provided to the relevant review body.

Supervisor responsibilities

Additional information regarding the responsibilities of supervisors can be found in the IMC's Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy, Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure and Supervision of Industry Engaged Research Procedure.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- i. *Human Research Ethics Procedure*
- ii. *Code of Conduct for Research*
- iii. *Code of Conduct for Students*
- iv. *Higher Degree Research Confirmation of Candidature and Progression Review Policy and Procedure*
- v. *Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy*
- vi. *Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure*
- vii. *Supervision of Industry Engaged Research Procedure*
- viii. *Higher Degree Research Assessment and Assessment Appeals Policy*
- ix. *Higher Degree Research Assessment and Assessment Appeals Procedure*
- x. *Research Materials and Data Management Policy*
- xi. *Guidelines on Minimum Resources for Higher Degree Research Students*

6. VERSION CONTROL

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The Deputy President (Education) oversees the implementation and compliance of this policy. Please contact the Deputy President's office via - policy@imc.edu.au for any enquiries or clarifications related to this policy.