

# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCH POLICY

<b>Category</b>	Policy		
<b>Review</b>	3 years from date of Approval		
<b>Code</b>	ARP-009		
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<b>Version</b>	<b>Approval Authority</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
2026.04	Academic Board	16 April 2026	16 April 2029

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## 1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out a code of conduct regulating the conduct of research at the Australian National Institute of Management and Commerce (IMC), or under the auspices of IMC. Further, it sets out IMC’s approach to managing breaches of the code.

This policy is based on the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (Australian Code)*<sup>1</sup>. It should be read in conjunction with the *Human Research Ethics Policy* and the *Human Research Ethics Procedure*, and is subject to legislative requirements which may change from time to time.

## 2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, students, honorary appointees, and any others engaged in research at IMC or under the auspices of IMC, including in joint research projects with other institutions or organisations. Further, the policy applies to members of committees and governance bodies that are involved in the approval, management, or review of research.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

**Authorship** means a status given to a researcher who makes a substantial intellectual or

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018>

scholarly contribution to a research output and accepts responsibility for that contribution.

**Human research** means research conducted with or about people or their data or biological material, including utilising surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, accessing people's information or data, and behavioural testing and observation.

**Research** means 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. (*Australian Code*)

**Researcher** means a person who conducts, or assists with the conduct of, research.

**Research Misconduct** means a breach, or breaches, of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018*, relevant IMC policies or procedures, or relevant legislation, that is or are, also intentional, reckless, or negligent.

## 4 RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH CONDUCT

### 4.1 General Principles

#### 4.1.1 IMC must:

- establish a research governance framework that ensures compliance with all national and state guidelines and legislation, as well as all IMC policies and procedures, relating to the ethical and responsible conduct of research;
- provide a mandatory comprehensive induction covering ethical and responsible research, and research integrity, for persons commencing research at IMC or under the auspices of IMC;
- provide, at least annually, refresher training on responsible and ethical research, and research integrity, with a focus on emerging issues in areas where research is conducted at IMC or under the auspices of IMC;
- support appropriate supervision and mentoring of researchers;
- encourage intellectual cooperation through the open exchange of ideas between peers and with respect for freedom of expression and inquiry;
- provide a safe working environment in which research may be conducted and ensure the safety of all associated with the research; and
- establish and communicate effective processes for managing allegations of research misconduct.

#### 4.1.2 Researchers must:

- contribute to creating and maintaining a research environment of intellectual honesty and integrity, and scholarly rigor;
- 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 standards;
- adopt methods appropriate for achieving the aims of research projects;
- adhere to all legislative and policy requirements relating to ethical and responsible research conduct, including proper practices for safety and security;
- when providing information about themselves, cite awards, degrees

- conferred, research outputs, and authorship contributions accurately;
- report and disseminate research findings responsibly; and
- report perceived research misconduct promptly as required by this policy. (See Section 5 below.)
- be familiar with, and conduct research in accordance with the *Australian Code*, this policy, and other relevant policies and guidelines, including those associated with any bodies from which they are receiving research funds;
- if conducting research involving human participants, meet the requirements for ethical research as set out in:
  - the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023)*<sup>2</sup>;
  - IMC's *Human Research Ethics Policy and Human Research Ethics Procedure*; and
- if conducting human research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, consult the *AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research 2020*.

## 4.2 Management of Research Data and Primary Materials

During and after the completion of a research project, researchers must comply with the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW), the *State Records Act 2000* (WA), the *Archives Act 1983* (Tas), or equivalent legislation if the research is conducted in another jurisdiction, as well as relevant IMC policies and procedures regarding the management of research materials and data, including the *Research Materials and Data Management Policy*.

Compliance requirements include:

- 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 Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings

Research findings may be disseminated in a variety of ways, including formal publication in academic journals and books, as well as inclusion in professional and institutional repositories and non-refereed publications, such as web pages, and documentaries.

4.3.1 IMC promotes the responsible dissemination of researcher findings by:

- establishing an environment of honesty, integrity, and responsible and ethical 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 or other relevant interests; and
- supporting comprehensive communication of research findings by

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2023>

accommodating open access to output and guiding researchers on publication options.

#### 4.3.2 Researchers must:

- give a complete account of research findings, including for all collaborative research involving other institutions, ensuring accurate reporting;
- account for any restrictions on dissemination due to knowledge assets, intellectual property, cultural sensitivity, or legal constraints relating to the sponsorship of research activities;
- seek peer review before public release of research findings;
- acknowledge other work accurately and appropriately;
- acknowledge all contributions made by participants and sponsors;
- declare and effectively manage conflicts of interest;
- provide details of research results to research participants and parties impacted by the research before publication;
- obtain permission from the original publisher before republishing research findings;
- correct the record as soon as possible if they become aware of misleading or inaccurate statements in, or about, their work;
- retain clear, accurate, secure and complete records of all research materials including research data and primary materials to facilitate verification of findings if required;
- make relevant data and materials accessible to other researchers as appropriate, in line with FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data principles, as set out in the *Australian Code*, unless prohibited by ethical, privacy or confidentiality requirements, as set out in the *Australian Code*;
- comply with all obligations under funding agreements for the dissemination of research findings;
- consider the potential for misuse of research findings and, where necessary, take steps to mitigate this risk; and
- when submitting substantially similar work to more than one publisher, disclose this at the time of submission

#### 4.4 Authorship

Researchers must comply with the IMC's *Authorship Policy*, ensuring that:

- the criteria for authorship are met, and that a *Statement of Authorship Form* is lodged with the Research Office, with signatures of the author/co-authors of the publication;
- no person who meets the conditions of the definition of 'authorship' is excluded as an author without their written permission;
- ensure that all collaborating researchers agree on the authorship of a publication; and
- written consent is obtained from those individuals named in acknowledgements as contributors to the research.

#### 4.5 Peer Review

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

to participate in peer review as both reviewers and reviewees.

Researchers participating in peer review as reviewers must:

- be suitably qualified and have appropriate discipline expertise;
- be fair, timely and respect confidentiality; and
- declare, and effectively manage, all conflicts of interest

Researchers whose work is undergoing a peer review must not:

- seek to influence the process or outcome.

#### 4.6 Conflicts of Interest

IMC researchers must comply with the *Conflict of Interest Policy* and disclose, record, manage, and resolve all perceived and actual conflicts of interest appropriately.

Researchers must:

- maintain records of activities that may lead to conflicts of interest, including those arising from collaborative research; and
- disclose all perceived and actual conflicts of interest as soon as they become apparent.

#### 4.7 Collaborative Research Across Institutions

IMC supports collaborative research projects across institutions, nationally and internationally.

Before the commencement of collaborative research, there must be a written agreement between the researchers on managing the collaborative project. A copy of the agreement must be sent to the Research Office prior to starting the research project. The written agreement should follow the general principles of the *Australian Code* and should cover the following matters:

- 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 researchers when disseminating the research outcomes, and the management of primary research materials and data.

#### 4.8 Institutional Support

IMC is committed to fostering a robust research culture and promoting ethical and responsible research. In accordance with the *Australian Code*, IMC will appoint, and train, Research Integrity Advisors (RIAs).

RIAs:

- have knowledge of the *Australian Code* and of relevant IMC policies and procedures, including those relating to research integrity;
- provide advice to researchers and other members of the IMC community who have concerns about potential breaches of the *Australian Code* or potential research misconduct;
- assist in the promotion of a culture of research integrity within IMC;

- be familiar with the resources and processes available to support ethical and responsible research
- be available for confidential discussions about research integrity issues;
- guide researchers to relevant policies, resources, and institutional services;
- recuse themselves from any investigations related to matters on which they have provided advice

IMC:

- ensures RIAs are appropriately trained and supported in their role;
- identifies RIAs and provides their contact information to all researchers and other members of the IMC community; and
- regularly reviews and updates the RIA program to ensure its effectiveness in promoting ethical and responsible research, and a robust research culture.

## 5 BREACHES AND RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

**5.1** Research misconduct is a serious 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.

Research misconduct does not include honest errors or honest differences in interpretation of, or judgements regarding, data. These errors are generally remedied within the organizational areas in which the research occurs.

### 5.2 Complaints and Allegations

All researchers have a responsibility to report suspected research misconduct or breaches of the *Australian Code*. Unjustified delays in reporting, or the deliberate concealment of a suspected breach by others, may itself constitute a breach of the Code

Persons considering making allegations of research misconduct or a breach of the *Australian Code* should initially consult the Director of Research and Scholarship, who may be approached in confidence for advice and an explanation of options.

Persons who are the subjects of allegations of research misconduct, or a breach of the *Australian Code*, are treated in accordance with legal requirements, principles of procedural fairness and natural justice, and in a manner respectful of cultural sensitivities.

Confidentiality is maintained, and privacy respected, in investigations of alleged research misconduct or breaches of the *Australian Code*. If there has been public awareness of allegations prior to, or during, the investigation, then after the investigation concludes, the public record will be corrected as required.

### 5.3 Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Code

#### 5.3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- Designated Officer (DO): the Director of Research and Scholarship serves as the DO, responsible for receiving complaints or allegations about potential academic misconduct or breaches of the *Australian Code*, and

- overseeing their management and investigation;
- Assessment Officer (AO): a senior staff member or researcher appointed by the DO to conduct preliminary assessments of complaints or allegations;
- Research Integrity Advisors (RIAs): experienced researchers appointed to provide confidential advice on research integrity issues and the *Australian Code*;
- Investigation Panel: a group of individuals with appropriate expertise appointed to investigate allegations of research misconduct or breaches of the *Australian Code*;
- Responsible Executive Officer (REO): the Deputy President or delegate will serve as the REO, and has final responsibility for receiving reports of the outcomes assessments or investigations and for deciding on the course of action to be taken.

If a complaint or allegation is made regarding the Director of Research and Scholarship, then the Deputy President or delegate will take the role of DO, and appoint a person external to IMC to take the role of REO.

If a complaint or allegation is made regarding the Deputy President or delegate, then the Director of Research and Scholarship will appoint a delegate, external to IMC, to take the role of REO.

### 5.3.2 Receiving and Managing Complaints

- Complaints and allegations should be submitted in writing to the DO.
- The DO will determine whether the complaint or allegation relates to a potential breach of the *Australian Code*.
- Anonymous complaints will be considered based on the information provided.
- IMC will protect complainants from any adverse consequences of making a complaint or allegation.

### 5.3.3 Preliminary Assessment

- i.* The DO assigns a suitable AO to conduct a preliminary assessment.
- ii.* The AO:
  - a. gathers and evaluates facts and information;
  - b. assesses whether the complaint or allegation would, if proven, constitute a breach of the *Australian Code*; and
  - c. provides a written report to the DO with recommendations for further action
- iii.* Based on the preliminary assessment, the DO will determine whether the matter should be:
  - dismissed;
  - resolved locally, with or without corrective actions;
  - referred for investigation; or
  - referred to be dealt with through some other IMC process.

### 5.3.4 Investigation

If an investigation is required, the DO will:

- a. prepare a clear statement of allegations;
- b. develop terms of reference for the investigation; and
- c. nominate the Investigation Panel and its Chair

The Investigation Panel will:

- a. conduct a thorough, fair, and timely investigation;
- b. provide adequate opportunities for the respondent to respond to allegations;
- c. make findings of facts to determine whether there has been a breach of the *Australian Code*;
- d. prepare a draft report of the investigation;
- e. provide the respondent with the draft report or a summary of relevant information;
- f. allow the respondent to comment on the material referred to in e.; and
- g. finalise the report and provide it to the DO, with recommendations for action.

### 5.3.5 Outcomes and Communication

- a. The DO determines if action is required to protect the interests of interested parties external to IMC, such as publishers or funders;
- b. the DO provides the final report and recommendations to the REO;
- c. the REO determines whether a breach has occurred and determines the appropriate course of action;
- d. the REO communicates the findings to respondents and complainants, as appropriate; and
- e. IMC takes the course of action determined by the REO and may notify relevant parties, such as funders, publishers or collaborating institutions, where appropriate.

### 5.3.6 Appeals and Review

- The respondent may request a review of the investigation on procedural grounds.
- External review may be sought through the Australian Research Integrity Committee (ARIC).

### 5.3.7 Additional Considerations

- For collaborative research across multiple institutions, IMC will cooperate with partner institutions to ensure a coordinated approach to investigating potential breaches of the *Australian Code*.
- Matters involving potential corrupt conduct or criminal behaviour will be referred to the police or to other appropriate external agencies.
- If a complaint or allegation relates to an activity that could harm humans, animals, or the environment, immediate action will be taken to minimise risk, independently of the investigation.

## 6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

### 6.1 Internal 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. *Human Research Ethics Procedure*
- vi. *Research Materials and Data Management Policy*

## 6.2 External Documents

- i. *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018*
- ii. *AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research 2020*
- iii. *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards), 2021*
- iv. *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023*
- v. *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority, Guidance Note: Academic and Research Integrity, February 2024*
- vi. *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority, Guidance Note: Research and Research Training, December 2024*

## 7 VERSION CONTROL

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2026.04	Academic Board	16 April 2026
2024.11	Deputy President (Education)	20 November 2024
2023.10	Academic Board	12 October 2023
2019.06	Academic Board	27 June 2019

## 8 STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP/MAINTENANCE

*The Research and Scholarship Committee oversees the implementation of, and compliance with, this Policy. For any enquiries or clarification, please contact [policy@imc.edu.au](mailto:policy@imc.edu.au).*