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Purpose

This Procedure describes the requirements for peer review of research and how staff conduct peer review at the University consistent with the principles and responsibilities of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (the Code).

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
<i>Research Policy</i>	2 Responsible conduct of research	2.1 – 2.2
<i>Compliance Policy</i>	4 Research data and outputs	4.2
<i>Behaviour Policy</i>	2 Conflict of Interest	2.1 – 2.2
<i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018</i>	1 Behaviour	1.1 - 1.5
<i>Peer Review: A guide supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of the Responsible Conduct of Research</i>		

Procedure

1. Peer review

- 1.1. Peer review in research is the impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field, and includes:
 - a. the assessment of research proposals and grant applications
 - b. the assessment of ethics applications
 - c. the assessment and selection of material for publication and dissemination

- d. the assessment of the research of Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates
 - e. the assessment of research quality, engagement, and impact by government bodies
 - f. other reviews or assessments of research conducted by individual researchers, teams, academic units, and institutions.
- 1.2. The University recognises the importance of peer review and is committed to encouraging and supporting researchers to participate in the process.
- 1.3. University researchers will:
- a. undertake a peer review process prior to submission, where appropriate, to ensure quality applications are submitted for research ethics approval, funding, and publication
 - b. be aware of their obligations under various grant funding agreements to undertake peer review when requested by the funding body (for example, NHMRC, ARC)
 - c. assist research trainees under their supervision to develop the skills and responsibilities involved in peer reviewing and understand their obligation to participate in such activity.
- 1.4. University researchers whose work is undergoing peer review will not seek to influence the process or outcomes.
- 1.5. University researchers will not agree to be a peer reviewer in circumstances where they cannot provide a fair and impartial review. For further guidance see the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) [Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers](#).

2. Conduct of peer review

- 2.1. Peer reviewers will:
- a. be fair, rigorous, and timely in their review
 - b. know the criteria to be applied in the peer review process
 - c. review research objectively, impartially, and in accordance with the review criteria
 - d. apply standards equally to all research under review
 - e. consider research that challenges or changes accepted ways of thinking, which may include innovative, interdisciplinary, or collaborative research
 - f. maintain professionalism in the tone of their comments, ensuring that peer reviews are as constructive and not of a personal nature
 - g. engage in peer review appropriately and respectfully, in accordance with the University Behaviour Policy
 - h. disclose interests and manage conflicts of interest in accordance with [University requirements](#) and the requirements of external bodies such as publishers and funding agencies
 - i. adhere to any peer review policies, guidelines, and expectations of funding agencies and publishers.
- 2.2. Peer reviewers will not:
- a. contact the author/s or other reviewers unless authorised to do so
 - b. seek to unduly influence the review process
 - c. delegate their responsibilities or ask others to assist with a review, unless authorised to do so
 - d. take into account factors irrelevant to the review criteria

- e. permit personal or other forms of prejudice to influence the process (peer reviewers should be aware of how their own conscious or unconscious biases could affect the peer review process, including in relation to gender, ethnicity, nationality, institutional employer, and research discipline)
 - f. take advantage of knowledge obtained during the peer review process, or use information from research projects under review without permission
 - g. conduct a review for which they lack appropriate expertise
 - h. intentionally delay the review process, or
 - i. use the peer review process to disparage other researchers.
- 2.3. Peer reviewers must adhere to the confidentiality requirements of all bodies using peer review including publishers, funding agencies, and other universities. In most circumstances, peer reviewers are required to maintain the confidentiality of the peer review process and must not disclose the content of any material under review or the outcome of any review process. Peer reviewers may be required to sign non-disclosure agreements where the content contains sensitive material.

3. Peer review requirements for publication types

- 3.1. Research outputs must meet the University's [peer review requirements](#) to be considered for an Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) reportable output.

4. Peer review and breaches of the Code

- 4.1. Breaches of the Code that are related to peer review include, but are not limited to:
- a. failing to conduct peer review responsibly and fairly
 - b. taking advantage of knowledge obtained through peer review processes
 - c. disclosing the content or outcome of peer review processes
 - d. failing to disclose relevant interests.
- 4.2. Peer review may also identify departures from the principles in the Code in the research under review, including plagiarism, duplicative publication, errors and misleading statements. Peer reviewers have a duty to promptly report such concerns to the relevant organisation (for example, the journal or publisher).
- 4.3. Peer reviewers should familiarise themselves with the processes involved in reporting potential breaches of the Code identified during the peer review process to external bodies such as publishers and funding agencies.
- 4.4. Where the potential breach relates to University researchers, peer reviewers will follow the *University's Managing Allegations of Research Misconduct Procedure*.

Related procedures

Conflict of Interest Procedure

HDR Examinations Procedure

Managing Allegations of Research Misconduct Procedure

Research Ethics Procedure

Version 1 – Approved 22 June 2021

*Management of Research Funding Procedure***Versions**

Version	Action	Approval Authority	Responsible Officer/s	Approval Date
Version 1	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Executive Director Research	22 June 2021

Definitions

N/A

REPLACED