



Student Research Integrity procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This Procedure was approved by Academic Board on 11 April 2017, and incorporates amendments to 23 June 2017. This Procedure comes into effect for study periods commencing on or after 10 July 2017.

(2) This Procedure includes the following schedule:

- a. [Schedule A: Outcomes for student research misconduct.](#)

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This Procedure documents the processes that apply to student research integrity and the management of allegations of breaches of research integrity and research misconduct.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This Procedure applies to allegations of research integrity breach/es or research misconduct by students conducting research in Honours, coursework or higher degrees by research (HDR). Allegations relating to academic integrity involving coursework units and additional HDR program content will usually be addressed according to the [Student Academic Integrity procedure](#).

(5) Where an allegation concerns a student who is also a staff member, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research will determine whether the matter be dealt with under this Procedure or the [Staff Research Misconduct procedure](#).

Section 4 - Policy

(6) Refer to the [Research Conduct policy](#).

Section 5 - Procedure

Education and support

(7) Course Directors and Faculty HDR Coordinators will ensure that students enrolled in courses involving research are provided with information about research integrity as part of their orientation to the University.

(8) Information about research integrity will be included in all relevant unit sites, HDR candidature agreements and websites as appropriate. This will include a statement on research integrity incorporating definitions, sources of support and penalties that may apply to research integrity breaches and research misconduct.

(9) Supervisors will provide students with genuine opportunities to learn how to conduct research with integrity in accordance with expected discipline conventions when they commence research units or courses at the University,

with reminders provided throughout their course.

(10) A member of staff in each Academic Unit will be nominated to ensure that:

- a. new supervisors are informed about the [Research Conduct policy](#) and related guidelines as part of their induction
- b. all supervisors are reminded of policy requirements about research integrity at least annually and provided with links to relevant information.

(11) A Faculty, Institute or Academic Unit staff member or group will be nominated to support new and existing staff to improve relevant practices and manage cases of possible research integrity breaches or research misconduct.

Allegations of breaching research integrity

(12) Anyone who believes a research integrity breach or research misconduct by a student has taken place must act in a timely manner and formally report the allegation/s to the Head of Academic Unit. The Head of Academic Unit will keep the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity informed on the management of the allegation and ensure that it is recorded in the Incident/Breach Register according to clause 17.

(13) Where the allegation relates to academic integrity involving coursework units and additional HDR program content, the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research Training and Performance Enhancement will seek the advice of the Dean of Students as to whether the matter should be heard according to this Procedure or the [Student Academic Integrity procedure](#). The Pro Vice-Chancellor Research Training and Performance Enhancement may refer the matter to be heard according to the [Student Academic Integrity procedure](#).

(14) Anyone considering making an allegation/s of research integrity breach or research misconduct may obtain advice on integrity from the [Advisers in Research Integrity](#) appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research. The advice is confidential except as noted in clause 16. Advisers provide advice on research matters, the research misconduct processes and options for reporting a research integrity breach and research misconduct. They will not attempt to assess or investigate an allegation/s or contact the person(s) who is the subject of the allegation/s.

(15) Where the allegation/s is serious enough to constitute a protected disclosure under the [Protected Disclosure Act 2012](#) and the person considering making the allegation/s decides not to proceed, the Adviser in Research Integrity will determine whether the allegation/s warrants further investigation. The Adviser may also choose to make a protected disclosure under the [Protected Disclosure Act 2012](#). In this case, the Adviser will make all reasonable efforts to avoid identifying the source of the information.

(16) On receipt of an allegation/s, the Head of Academic Unit will consider whether there are likely to be significant risks to human or animal safety, the environment or national security. Where it is determined that a significant risk has been identified, appropriate protective or precautionary action will be taken by the Head of Academic Unit.

(17) All reports of suspected research integrity breaches or research misconduct will be entered into an Incident/Breach Register held by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity. This register will include the following:

- a. date and time the report was made
- b. how the report was made and to whom
- c. date and times or timeframe of the alleged incident
- d. description of the alleged incident
- e. name and position of those alleged to be involved
- f. name and role of any other persons relevant to the incident

- g. approximate financial value involved, if appropriate
- h. action taken following discovery of the incident
- i. outcome of investigation (to be included at the conclusion of the investigation).

Preliminary assessment

(18) The Head of Academic Unit will notify the student against whom the allegation/s have been made that they are the subject of allegation/s of a research integrity breach/es or research misconduct, the nature of the allegation/s, and that a preliminary assessment of the allegation/s will be conducted.

(19) The Head of Academic Unit will, with the advice of Deakin Research Integrity, appoint an Assessment Officer who will receive the written allegation/s and conduct a preliminary assessment. The Assessment Officer must:

- a. be independent from the allegation/s
- b. have appropriate experience or expertise
- c. have no conflict of interest or bias.

(20) The Assessment Officer will review the allegation/s, seek a response to the allegation/s from relevant parties, and gather relevant documents, evidence, and any additional information to inform their decision.

(21) The Assessment Officer should prepare a preliminary assessment report within 10 working days and advise the Head of Academic Unit if there are reasonable grounds for the allegation/s of research misconduct and whether there is scope for further investigation.

Outcome of preliminary assessment

(22) The Head of Academic Unit will consider the preliminary assessment report and within 10 working days of receiving the report should decide:

- a. there is no reasonable grounds for an allegation of research integrity breach or research misconduct and recommend the matter be dismissed; or
- b. the allegation/s relates to an apparent research integrity breach and action the matter or refer the matter to the student's supervisor/s or Executive Dean for action; or
- c. there are reasonable grounds for an allegation of research misconduct and the matter should be formally heard according to clauses 28-37
- d. the allegation/s refers to matters not dealt with in this Procedure and recommend that the matter be pursued in accordance with other University policies or procedures.

(23) Both the complainant and student against whom the allegation is made shall be notified of the outcome of the preliminary assessment.

(24) Where the matter is actioned by the Head of Academic Unit, supervisor/s or Executive Dean, a report of the action taken at the conclusion of the matter must be provided to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity.

(25) Where it is determined there are reasonable grounds for the allegation, the matter will be referred to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity for a formal hearing.

(26) Where the allegation also involves general integrity, the Director, Internal Audit will be notified and will make a decision on the appropriate action to be taken.

(27) The Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity will report annually to the Risk and Compliance

Office on the occurrence and nature of allegations and any actions to address the underlying causes. The Research and Research Training Committee will monitor trends through the biannual report from Deakin Research Integrity.

Formal hearing of allegation of research misconduct

(28) Where a formal hearing of an allegation of research misconduct is required under clause 22c, a Student Research Integrity Committee will be appointed to hear the case.

(29) The Student Research Integrity Committee shall consist of:

- a. the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity or nominee who will be the Chair. Where a nominee is appointed, they will be a senior member of the professoriate with significant experience in research
- b. an academic member of the Research and Research Training Committee, not from the faculty or Academic Unit of the student
- c. an expert in the field of research, not involved in the supervision of the student
- d. any person co-opted to the Committee by the Chair.

(30) The Chair will nominate the other members of the Committee.

(31) Committee members will not have any [conflict of interest](#) in hearing the case. Deakin Research will notify the student at least 10 working days before the hearing of:

- a. the date and location of the hearing
- b. details of the allegation and evidence supporting it
- c. the opportunity to respond to the allegation in writing up to two days prior to the hearing and/or attend the hearing in person and to call witness/es to the hearing
- d. the right to bring a support person to the hearing according to clause 34
- e. the opportunity to ask questions of the Committee and to answer questions asked by the Committee during the hearing
- f. the hearing still being held even if the student doesn't respond or attend the hearing. In this case, a decision (and penalty if appropriate) will be made in their absence.

(32) Where further evidence is received it will be provided to the student as soon as possible.

(33) The Committee may request the attendance of staff, students and other relevant people at the hearing to help them to make a decision.

(34) Students may bring a support person to any meetings associated with the investigation or management of the case, provided that the person is not a practising lawyer. Where the support person has expertise likely to assist the Committee on procedural, technical or factual matters or if the student requires reasonable adjustments, the Committee will allow the support person to speak on the student's behalf.

(35) At the hearing, the Committee will review the evidence of the allegation and will give the student the opportunity to respond and interview any staff, students or other relevant people as required. The Committee will:

- a. act fairly and impartially
- b. exercise independent judgement
- c. conduct themselves in an unbiased, professional and courteous manner.

(36) The Committee will make a decision at the end of the hearing or as soon as possible afterwards. The Committee Chair may adjourn the hearing if appropriate.

(37) The Committee will decide whether it is more likely than not that:

- a. the allegation is not supported and dismiss it, or
- b. make a finding of research integrity breach, or
- c. make a finding that research misconduct has occurred.

Outcomes of hearing

(38) Where the Committee decides that research misconduct has occurred, it will decide the outcomes using [Schedule A: Outcomes for student research misconduct](#).

(39) The Committee will notify the student within five working days about the outcome, reasons and right to appeal the decision. Deakin Research will coordinate the implementation of the outcome. The decision will be implemented immediately, except where the decision relates to suspension or exclusion and the student appeals the outcome to the University Appeals Committee, in which case the decision will not be implemented until the appeal process is completed.

(40) Deakin Research will record the decision and outcome in the incident/breach register and the student's record after the conclusion of any appeal process.

(41) The Committee will report outcomes to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity, who will inform all relevant parties of the decision and outcome. Relevant parties may include affected staff, research collaborators including those at other institutions, all funding organisations, journal editors, and professional registration bodies.

(42) Where research misconduct has occurred, the public record, including publications, may need to be corrected where the research findings and/or their dissemination have been affected.

(43) Where an allegation/s of research misconduct poses significant risks to human or animal safety, the environment or national security; or there is a pattern of allegations; or the allegation has been substantiated, the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity will notify:

- a. the Director, Academic Governance and Standards, who will ensure that the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency](#) is notified where required under the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#)
- b. the Risk and Compliance Office
- c. Deakin International if the case involves an international student.

(44) The Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity will report annually on decisions and trends to Academic Board and University Council through relevant committees.

Appeal

(45) A student may appeal to the University Appeals Committee according to the [Student Appeals procedure](#) against the decision only on one or more of the following grounds:

- a. there is new evidence that was not available or not known to the student at the time the allegation was heard
- b. the penalty imposed was too severe
- c. there was a misapplication of procedures resulting in some disadvantage to the student
- d. the decision was unreasonable in the circumstances or cannot be supported by the evidence that was available at the time the decision was made
- e. relevant evidence was not considered or irrelevant evidence was relied on in reaching the decision.

(46) The appeal must be lodged by email within 20 working days of being notified of the outcome of the hearing according to the [Student Appeals procedure](#).

Continuing study and enrolment

(47) Students will remain enrolled throughout the management of an allegation and internal management of a breach of research integrity, including the University appeals process. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity will decide whether the student can continue to conduct research during this time.

(48) Allegations will be heard and decided even if the student withdraws from the unit or course.

Records

(49) Written documentation of the preliminary assessment, the outcome and reasons for it and reports on actions must be provided to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity and included in the Incident/Breach Register.

Correction of the public record

(50) Where a research integrity breach or research misconduct has resulted in incorrect information being placed upon the public record, action will be taken by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and Integrity to correct the public record, including [Deakin Research Online](#).

Section 6 - Definitions

(51) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. academic integrity: acting in accordance with the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in academic settings.
- b. Academic Unit: includes a School, Department or Institute.
- c. contract cheating: A student requesting someone else to produce all or part of an assessment task that is submitted as their own work, including arrangements through a third party.
- d. notify: email the student to their Deakin and last known personal email addresses
- e. research integrity: a commitment to honesty, accuracy, efficiency and objectivity in research which meets the requirements of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).
- f. research integrity breach: a breach of the research integrity which is considered less serious and can appropriately be dealt with at the Academic Unit or Faculty level. Research integrity breaches are technical deviations that are honest or accidental errors
- g. research misconduct:
 - i. a deviation from the standards and provisions of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(the Australian Code\)](#), which includes fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research, and failure to declare or manage a serious conflict of interest. It includes avoidable failure to follow research proposals as approved by a research ethics committee, particularly where this failure may result in unreasonable risk or harm to humans, animals or the environment. It also includes the wilful concealment or facilitation of research misconduct by others. There are many ways in which researchers may deviate from the standards and provisions of the [Australian Code](#), including but not limited to:
 - ii. the fabrication of results
 - the falsification or misrepresentation of result
 - plagiarism

- contract cheating
- misleading ascription of authorship
- failure to declare and manage serious conflicts of interest
- falsification or misrepresentation to obtain funding
- conducting research without ethics approval as required by the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans](#) and the [Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](#)
- risking the safety of human participants, or the wellbeing of animals or the environment
- deviations from this Code that occur through gross or persistent negligence wilful concealment or facilitation of research misconduct by others.

iii. research misconduct may include more serious or deliberate research misconduct and that involves:

- intent and deliberation; or
- recklessness or gross and persistent negligence; or
- serious consequences, such as false information on the public record, or adverse effects on research participants, animals or the environment.
- repeated or continuing instances of research misconduct where these have been the subject of previous counselling or specific direction. Serious research misconduct does not include honest differences in judgment in management of the research project, and may not include honest errors that are minor or unintentional.

h. supervisor: the staff member who provides advice and guidance about research during a unit or course.

Status and Details

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