



Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research

1. Purpose

Note: This policy is a preparatory step for the introduction of a research program at King's Own Institute (KOI). The research area is still under development.

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 establish minimum requirements for the conduct of research and recording of research activity.

- Research and its associated activities are conducted in accordance with a research policy framework that is designed to achieve:
 - ethical conduct of research and responsible research practice
 - clarification of ownership and management of intellectual property
 - successful management of research partnerships
 - clarification of requirements for publication and authorship, and
 - resolution of allegations of misconduct in research
- Research is conducted, or overseen, by staff with qualifications, research experience and skills relevant to the type of research undertaken and their role
- A system for accurate and up-to-date recording of the research outputs of staff and research students is maintained.

Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as 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. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising 'creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man [human-kind], culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications'. (TEQSA, Explanation of terms in the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015.)

This policy is based on

- The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)
- The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2018)

developed by the Australian Research Council, National Health and Medical Research Council and Universities Australia.

KOI has a separate policy and procedures dealing with Human Research Ethics.¹

2. Scope

This Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research applies to any person or organisation conducting research under the auspices of KOI, including staff members, students, adjunct staff and contractors.

The meaning of 'research', as used in this policy, is original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight. It is a broad concept and there is no simple, single way to define research for all disciplines. Research may include systematic investigations undertaken to improve teaching, but excludes routine testing and analysis and the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.²

Without limiting its meaning, research includes funded and unfunded research, research that is considered 'low risk' and research conducted by academic and professional staff.

¹ See the Human Research Ethics Policy

² Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)



3. Principles

KOI is committed to maintaining high standards of responsible research. A responsible research culture will demonstrate honesty and integrity, respect for human research participants and the environment, good stewardship of resources used to conduct research, and responsible communication of research results.³

Researchers must foster and maintain a research environment of intellectual honesty and integrity and scholarly and scientific rigour by:

- Respecting the truth and the rights of those affected by their research
- Managing conflicts of interest so that ambition and personal advantage do not compromise ethical or scholarly considerations
- Adopting methods appropriate for achieving the aims of each research proposal
- Following proper practices for safety and security
- Citing awards, degrees conferred and research publications accurately, including the status of any publication, such as under review or in press
- Reporting research responsibly
- Respecting research participants, complying with ethical principles of integrity, respect for persons, justice and beneficence and obtaining written approval from appropriate ethics committees, safety and other regulatory bodies when required.⁴

The Research and Scholarship Committee is responsible for the general oversight of research at KOI, development of research strategy, recommendations on research projects and guidance to staff on the conduct of research. The membership of the Research and Scholarship Committee is

- Research and Scholar Committee Chair
- Vice-President (Academic) or nominee
- One Head of Program
- One member of the academic staff
- One member nominated by the Academic Board.

Management of research data and primary materials

The responsible conduct of research includes the proper management and retention of research data. Retaining research data is important because it may be all that remains of the research work at the end of the project. The central aim is that sufficient materials and data are retained to justify the outcomes of the research and to defend them if they are challenged. The potential value of the material for further research should also be considered, particularly where the research would be difficult or impossible to repeat.⁵

Where research is conducted under the aegis of KOI,

- KOI maintains a secure research repository for research data and primary research materials under the control of the CEO and President (or nominee). The procedures should be designed so that data and records of primary materials can be retrieved by an authorised person other than the researcher. The procedures should capture and record (1) the location of data and primary materials, (2) the location of physical keys, passwords, or other devices necessary to access them, (3) information on indexes, catalogues or other finding tools necessary to access them and (4) conditions of access.
- In general, the minimum recommended period for retention of research data is 5 years from the date of publication. For short-term research projects that are for assessment purposes only, such as research projects completed by students, research data is retained for 12 months after the completion of the project. Research records that may be relevant to allegations of research misconduct must not be destroyed.

³ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Defining Research

⁴ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 1

⁵ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 2



- Access to and disposal of research data is determined by the CEO and President in consultation with the researcher
- Ownership of the research data is held by KOI, or as otherwise agreed in the case of collaborative research
- KOI will maintain records of the location of retained data and primary materials, including locations outside its control such as external databanks as far as practicable.

Throughout a research project, researchers are required to

- Keep clear and accurate records of the research methods and data sources, including any approvals granted
- Keep research data and primary materials in safe and secure storage
- Handle research data and primary materials in accordance with relevant legislation, Institute policy, legal agreements, funding agency policy, research ethics protocols, privacy protection and confidentiality compliance.
- Make research data available for use by other researchers unless this is prevented by issues of ethical, privacy or confidentiality.
- Where there is a conflict, seek advice from the Research and Scholarship Committee.

When researchers leave KOI, KOI will no longer be responsible for the storage of their research data and primary materials, unless an agreement to this effect has been made between the researcher and KOI or a third party, or KOI is the legal owner of the primary materials or the intellectual property in the data.

The Vice-President (Academic) is responsible for ensuring that there are procedures for recording the location of retained research data and primary materials associated with published research outputs.

Training of staff⁶

KOI will provide induction, formal training and continuing education for all staff whose duties include research. Training will cover research methods, ethics, confidentiality, data storage and records retention, as well as regulation and governance. Training will also cover the institution's policies regarding responsible research conduct, all aspects of this policy, and other sources of guidance that are available.

KOI will promote effective mentoring and supervision of researchers and research trainees. Research trainees includes students enrolled in programs that involve a research dissertation or a significant research component. This includes advising on research ethics, research design and methods, and the responsible conduct of research.

The Vice-President (Academic) has the responsibility of ensuring that KOI maintains a safe working research environment in which each research project is conducted. This includes

- promoting awareness of this policy and all the policies, procedures and other guidelines and making relevant documents readily available to researchers
- maintaining a climate in which responsible and ethical behaviour in research is expected and facilitating mutual cooperation with open exchange of ideas between peers
- training research staff and students in responsible and ethical research practice and promote appropriate mentoring and supervision of researchers and research trainees.

Publication and dissemination of research⁷

Dissemination of research findings is an expected part of the research process, passing on the benefits to other researchers, professional practitioners and the wider community. The Vice-President (Academic) is responsible for confirming the submission of published outputs to KOI's annual research publications and outputs survey.

There are many ways of disseminating research findings. Formal publication of the results of research most commonly takes place in refereed academic journals or books, but this is not always the case. This section of the policy applies to all forms of dissemination of research findings, refereed and non-refereed, in any medium of communication, including conferences, public performance and public exhibition.

⁶ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 3

⁷ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 4



In any sponsored research arrangement, KOI will ensure that sponsors understand the importance of publication in research and do not delay publication beyond the time needed to protect intellectual property and other relevant interests and that all parties to the research are aware of the nature and scope of contractual and confidentiality agreements and support communication of research findings to the wider public.

Researchers are expected to:

- comply with any contractual obligations to the research sponsor (if relevant) in the dissemination of findings
- disseminate a full account of their research, including negative findings and results contrary to their hypotheses, to the extent permitted by any restrictions relating to intellectual property, confidentiality, or culturally sensitive data, or arising from contractual obligations
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that their findings are accurate and properly reported. If they become aware of misleading or inaccurate statements about their work, they must correct the record as soon as possible and report this to the Research and Scholarship Committee
- acknowledge the work of other authors and contributors with full and accurate citations
- declare and acknowledge in publications the support of KOI and all other sources of financial and in-kind support for the research and any potential conflicts of interest
- comply with copyright law in publication and dissemination.

It is not acceptable for researchers to include the same research findings in several publications, except in particular and clearly explained circumstances, such as review articles, anthologies, collections, or translations into another language. An author who submits substantially similar work to more than one publisher, or who submits work similar to work already published, must disclose this at the time of submission.

Authorship⁸

Being named as the author of a research output is vitally important to researchers as it gives public recognition of their achievement and may also bring material reward to both the author and the author's institution.

To be named as an author, a researcher must have made a substantial scholarly contribution to the creative or scholarly work that constitutes the research output and be able to take public responsibility for at least that part of the work they contributed. Attribution of authorship depends to some extent on the discipline and publisher policies, but in all cases, authorship must be based on substantial contributions to one or more of

- conception and design of the research project
- analysis and interpretation of research data
- drafting or making significant parts of the creative or scholarly work or critically revising it so as to contribute significantly to the final output.

A person who qualifies as an author must not be included as an author without the permission of that person. Those offered authorship should accept or decline in writing wherever possible.

Researchers are expected to:

- offer authorship to all people, including research trainees (students), who meet the criteria for authorship listed above, but only to those people
- include in the list of authors only those who have accepted authorship
- appoint one author to be the corresponding author to record authorship and manage correspondence about the work with the publisher and other interested parties
- acknowledge all those who have contributed to the research, facilities or materials but who do not qualify as authors, such as research assistants, technical staff, and obtain their consent if they are named as individuals.

Peer review⁹

The term 'peer-review' is used to describe impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field. Peer review has a number of important roles in research and research

⁸ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 5

⁹ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 6



management, in the assessment of grant applications, in selecting material for publication, in the review of performance of researchers and teams, and in the selection of research staff. Peer review provides expert scrutiny of a project, and helps to maintain high standards and encourage accurate, thorough and credible research reporting.

Researchers are encouraged to:

- submit their work to peer review
- contribute to peer review processes
- conduct peer review responsibly by being fair and timely in their review, maintaining confidentiality and declaring all relevant conflicts of interest, and refraining from taking undue or calculated advantage of knowledge obtained during the peer review process.

Researchers whose work is undergoing peer review must not seek to influence improperly the process or outcomes.

Supervising researchers have a responsibility to assist trainee researchers (students) in developing the necessary skills for peer review and understanding their obligation to participate.

Conflicts of interest¹⁰

A conflict of interest exists where there is a divergence between the individual interests of a person and their professional responsibilities such that an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of that person are unduly influenced by their own interests.

Conflicts of interest in research occur frequently and it is important that they are disclosed and dealt with properly. Conflicts of interest have the potential to compromise judgments and decisions that should be made impartially and such compromise could undermine community trust in research.

The Vice-President (Academic) has the responsibility for assisting researchers in disclosing, evaluating and managing conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest may be disclosed on a confidential basis.

Researchers are expected to be alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest and make full disclosure of a conflict of interest or of circumstances that might give rise to a perceived or potential conflict of interest to affected parties and when submitting the research output for publication and dissemination.

Where the circumstances constitute a conflict of interest, or may lead people to perceive a conflict of interest, the person concerned must not take part in decision-making processes. The most satisfactory approach is for complete withdrawal (e.g., leaving the room for the item), but some bodies allow some general discussion of the matter before the person withdraws. It is preferable that the person concerned does not remain in the room, even if silent, while the matter is debated and decided.

A record must be kept of how each conflict is managed in the proceedings, even if confidential information must be omitted. It is important that the possibility of a conflict is acknowledged in each case, along with an outline of how it was managed.

Collaborative research¹¹

Collaborative research means research conducted under the auspices of KOI and also under the auspices of another independent party.

Collaborative research raises specific issues, such as sharing intellectual property, managing research findings, rights to authorship, managing conflicts of interest, commercialising research outcomes, and the possibility of conflicting attitudes and values in the conduct of research. KOI researchers should make every effort to comply with this policy when working with researchers from other organisations. It is highly likely that Australian universities and research institutions will have codes of conduct for research that are consistent with both this policy and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. However, research practices may differ between countries.

Formal agreements with other parties to undertake collaborative research should include a commitment by all parties to follow the principles of the Australian Code of Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), or another code that is consistent with these and cover

¹⁰ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 7

¹¹ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 8



- Conflicts of interest
- Intellectual property
- Confidentiality
- Sharing commercial returns
- Responsibility for ethics clearance
- Responsibility for safety clearances
- Reporting to appropriate agencies
- Protocols for publishing disseminating research outcomes
- Management and retention of research data and primary materials

The Vice-President (Academic) is responsible for providing guidance to researchers involved in collaborations on protecting their interests and those of KOI.

4. Research Misconduct

Allegations of misconduct in research will be made from time to time. KOI aims to provide a prompt and effective response so that affected parties are treated fairly, the situation is remedied and appropriate steps are taken to maintain public confidence in the research endeavour.¹²

KOI will use Part B of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research to identify research misconduct. However once identified further investigations will be carried out under the auspices of the KOI Research and Scholarship Committee who will have oversight of the misconduct procedure.

A complaint or allegation relates to research misconduct if it involves all of the following:

- a breach of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- intent and deliberate, or reckless, or gross and persistent, negligence
- serious consequences, which include false information on the public record, adverse effects on research participants, animals or the environment and adverse effects on other researchers, students, staff or KOI's reputation.¹³

Examples of research misconduct include

- fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research
- failure to declare or manage a serious conflict of interest
- failure to follow research protocols as approved by the KOI Research and Scholarship Committee, or other approving authority, particularly where this failure may result in unreasonable risk or harm to humans or the environment
- repeated or continuing breaches of this policy, especially where these have been the subject of previous counselling or direction
- wilful concealment or facilitation of research misconduct by others
- making a mischievous or vexatious allegation about research misconduct, especially when the vexatious allegation could impact negatively and seriously on the reputation of the target of the allegation or bring KOI into disrepute.

The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research establishes a framework for dealing with allegations of research misconduct and establishing inquiries to determine whether research misconduct has occurred.¹⁴ The penalties for research misconduct will be contained in institutional policies for employment.

The Vice-President (Academic) is responsible for advising the CEO and President whether allegations appear to be justified and whether a prima facie case exists. The Vice-President (Academic) is the first point of contact and receives complaints or allegations relating to research misconduct. The Vice-President (Academic) will be guided by the framework in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

The CEO and President has overall responsibility for the process, although certain aspects may be delegated as agreed by the governing body of the institution.

¹² Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 9

¹³ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 10

¹⁴ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), Chapter 12



References

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (Australian Research Council, 2007 and 2018)
The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (NHMRC, 20018)

Document control

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***** END OF POLICY *****