

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH POLICY

PREAMBLE

In June 2018, NHMRC, the Australian Research Council (ARC) and Universities Australia (UA) issued the updated Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 (the **Code**) and the Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Code, 2018 (the **Guide**).

The 2018 Code replaced the 2007 code which contained Part A (Principles and Practices) and Part B (Breaches of the Code). The 2018 Code is a principles-based document that sets out eight principles and 29 responsibilities for institutions (13) and researchers (16). The 2018 Code is the basis of this updated Policy which replaces Institute's *Code of Conduct for the Responsible Practice of Research Policy (Part A)*.

The Code has relevance across all research disciplines and provides a basic reference for the development of appropriate policies and procedures to uphold the standards expected of institutions and researchers. The Code and this Policy are not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with other laws, guidelines and codes of practice that apply to the conduct of research in Australia in addition to the policies and procedures of The Kids Research Institute Australia (Institute).

PURPOSE

The Code and this Policy seek to meet long established community expectations and international standards that require research to be conducted responsibly, ethically and with integrity and aims to articulate the broad principles that characterise an honest, ethical and conscientious research culture.

The Code and this Policy provides a framework for responsible research conduct and a foundation for high-quality research, credibility and community trust in the research endeavour. It outlines the expectations for the conduct of research by the Institute or under the auspices of the Institute and seeks to clearly communicate the principles of sound research practice to researchers including staff, honorary appointees and postgraduate research students. The policy outlines the main responsibilities of both the Institute and Researchers.

The Institute is committed to establishing a research governance framework consistent with the Code including ongoing review of existing policies and procedures for compliance, assessing the need to develop new controlled documents and monitoring compliance with the Code and this Policy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all staff employed by the Institute,
- all staff employed through the Centre for Child Health Research and Honorary Appointees, where their research is undertaken at The Kids Research Institute Australia;
- all former staff of the Institute, the Centre for Child Health Research or former Honorary Appointees where the activities undertaken during their employment or appointment is the subject of an allegation of research misconduct;
- any persons engaged in research under the auspices of, or in the name of the Institute and
- all students of the Institute who engage in research, including past students where the activities undertaken during their candidature is the subject of an allegation of research misconduct.

DEFINITIONS

General definitions can be found on the Policy Library website [here](#). The Definitions in this policy are designed to be consistent with the Code where possible.

Term	Definition
3R's	The 3Rs are three principles that underpin a systematic framework to achieve the goal of humane experimental techniques. The principles are: Replacement of animals with other methods; Reduction in the number of animals used; and Refinement of techniques used to minimise the adverse impact on animals.
Balance of probabilities	The civil standard of proof, which requires that, on the weight of evidence, it is more probable than not that a breach has occurred.
Breach	A failure to meet the principles and responsibilities of the Code. May refer to a single breach or multiple breaches.
Centre for Child Health Research (or CCHR)	The Kids Research Institute Australia's centre at The University of Western Australia
The Code	The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 co-authored by NHMRC, the Australian Research Council (ARC) and Universities Australia (UA)
Institute	The Kids Research Institute Australia
Peer Review	The impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.

Term	Definition
Research	Research is a broad term and includes 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.
Researcher	Person (or persons) who conducts, or assists with the conduct of, research.
Research Governance Committee (or RGC)	The Institute Committee established to oversee the application of this policy and other research governance matters for the Institute
Research Misconduct	A serious breach of the Code which is also intentional or reckless or negligent.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Institute and its researchers, staff, honorary appointees and students are committed to the highest standards of research conduct. The Institute adopts the Code as the basis of its Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and the Research Governance Framework for the Institute. The Principles and Responsibilities of the Code are reproduced here as the basis of the Policy of the Institute.

PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH CONDUCT (DERIVED FROM THE CODE)

- P1. **Honesty** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research
- Present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.
- P2. **Rigour** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research
- Underpin research by attention to detail and robust methodology, avoiding or acknowledging biases.
- P3. **Transparency** in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings
- Share and communicate research methodology, data and findings openly, responsibly and accurately.
 - Disclose and manage conflicts of interest.
- P4. **Fairness** in the treatment of others
- Treat fellow researchers and others involved in the research fairly and with respect.
 - Appropriately reference and cite the work of others.
 - Give credit, including authorship where appropriate, to those who have contributed to the research.

- P5. **Respect** for research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment
- Treat human participants and communities that are affected by the research with care and respect, giving appropriate consideration to the needs of minority groups or vulnerable people.
 - Ensure that respect underpins all decisions and actions related to the care and use of animals in research.
 - Minimise adverse effects of the research on the environment.
- P6. **Recognition** of the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of particular significance to them
- Recognise, value and respect the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
 - Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to research being undertaken, so that they freely make decisions about their involvement.
 - Report to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the outcomes of research in which they have engaged.
- P7. **Accountability** for the development, undertaking and reporting of research
- Comply with relevant legislation, policies and guidelines.
 - Ensure good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research.
 - Consider the consequences and outcomes of research prior to its communication.
- P8. **Promotion** of responsible research practices
- Promote and foster a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSTITUTE

Responsible research conduct is fostered and underpinned by the research culture of the Institute which is accountable to funding organisations and the Australian community.

- R1. Establish and maintain good governance and management practices for responsible research conduct.
- R2. Identify and comply with relevant laws, regulations, guidelines and policies related to the conduct of research.
- R3. Develop and maintain the currency and ready availability of a suite of policies and procedures which ensure that institutional practices are consistent with the principles and responsibilities of the Code.
- R4. Provide ongoing training and education that promotes and supports responsible research conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles.
- R5. Ensure supervisors of research trainees have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources.
- R6. Identify and train *Research Integrity Advisors* who assist in the promotion and fostering of responsible research conduct and provide advice to those with concerns about potential breaches of the Code.
- R7. Support the responsible dissemination of research findings. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.

- R8. Provide access to facilities for the safe and secure storage and management of research data, records and primary materials and, where possible and appropriate, allow access and reference.
- R9. Facilitate the prevention and detection of potential breaches of the Code.
- R10. Provide mechanisms to receive concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code. Investigate and resolve potential breaches of the Code.
- R11. Ensure that the process for managing and investigating concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code is timely, effective and in accord with procedural fairness.
- R12. Support the welfare of all parties involved in an investigation of a potential breach of the Code.
- R13. Base findings of investigations on the balance of probabilities and ensure any actions are commensurate with the seriousness of the breach.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS

Researchers will uphold the principles of responsible research conduct in all aspects of their research.

- R14. Support a culture of responsible research conduct at their institution and in their field of practice.
- R15. Provide guidance and mentorship on responsible research conduct to other researchers or research trainees under their supervision and, where appropriate, monitor their conduct.
- R16. Undertake and promote education and training in responsible research conduct.
- R17. Comply with the relevant laws, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics guidelines and institutional policies related to responsible research conduct. Ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained prior to the commencement of research, and that conditions of any approvals are adhered to during the course of research.
- R18. Ensure that the ethics principles of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence and respect are applied to human research.
- R19. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and respect their legal rights and local laws, customs and protocols.
- R20. Ensure that the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) are considered at all stages of research involving animals and minimise the impacts on animals used in research and in so doing support the welfare and wellbeing of these animals.
- R21. Adopt methods appropriate to the aims of the research and ensure that conclusions are justified by the results.
- R22. Retain clear, accurate, secure and complete records of all research including research data and primary materials. Where possible and appropriate, allow access and reference to these by interested parties.
- R23. Disseminate research findings responsibly, accurately and broadly. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.
- R24. Disclose and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

- R25. Ensure that authors of research outputs are all those, and only those, who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research and its output, and that they agree to be listed as an author.
- R26. Acknowledge those who have contributed to the research.
- R27. Cite and acknowledge other relevant work appropriately and accurately.
- R28. Participate in peer review in a way that is fair, rigorous and timely and maintains the confidentiality of the content.
- R29. Report suspected breaches of the Code to the relevant institution and/or authority.

SCHEDULES

Nil

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Internal Documents

[Managing & Investigating Potential Breaches of the Responsible Conduct of Research Procedure](#)

[Managing Potential Breaches in the Conduct of Research](#) (CAHS and The Kids joint projects)

[Authorship Policy](#)

[Code of Conduct Policy](#)

[Human Research Policy](#)

[Information and Data Retention and Disposal Policy](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Research Data Confidentiality Policy](#)

[Sharing of Research Materials and Data Policy](#)

[Use of Animals in Research Policy](#)

External Documents

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2018\)](#)

[Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Code, 2018 \(the Investigation Guide\)](#)

[National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) (2018)

[Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders \(2018\)](#) and [Keeping research on track II \(2018\)](#)

[Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies](#) (2014)

[Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research](#) (2016)

[Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](#) (8th edition, 2013)

[IAP Statement on Biosecurity, InterAcademy Panel on International Issues](#) (2005)

[Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals \(ICMJE Recommendations\)](#)

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

[Gene Technology Act 2000](#) and [Regulations 2001](#)

[Biosecurity Act 2015](#)

[National Health Security Act 2007](#)

[Privacy Act 1988](#)

[Animal Welfare Act 2002](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about this policy can be obtained by contacting the Head, Research Services or the Manager, Human Research Governance and Integrity.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Review Date	Sections Modified	Owner	Implementation Officer	Author
1.0	Operations Committee	18/11/14	18/11/17	New Policy	Institute Director	Manager Research Governance & Design	The Code working group
1.1	Institute Management Committee	18/05/2015	18/11/17	Positions and committees updated	Institute Director	Manager Research Governance & Design	
2.0	Research Governance Committee	20/11/2019	20/11/2022	Renamed & revised according to Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)	Director Research Services and Innovation	Manager, Research Governance	Manager, Research Governance
2.1	Director, Research	26/09/2024	20/11/2022	Update to align with new brand	Director, Research	Head, Research Services	Head, Research Services
3	Director, Research (Acting)	24/03/25	24/03/28	Policy renewal	Director, Research (Acting)	Head, Research Services	Head, Research Services