

# Human Research Ethics Policy

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of the *Human Research Ethics Policy* (“policy”) is to ensure that the Institution complies with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2025 (‘the National Statement’) and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 (‘the Code’) so that ethical practices and processes are in place for scholarly research to support the Institution’s aims for excellence in scholarship. As a higher education institution, all academic staff have access to advanced knowledge and support in scholarly research. This policy is informed by the Institution’s Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Framework.

## 2. Scope

2.1 All current and prospective academic staff at the Institution, including sessional staff, casuals and contractors.

2.2 All scholarly research that involves human participants, their data or information.

## 3. Definitions

See *Glossary of Terms*.

## 4. Policy statements

4.1 The Institution is committed to complying with the National Statement and the Code.

4.2 Research is underpinned by the principles and values including merit, integrity, justice, beneficence and respect.

4.3 Research should deliver accurate, replicable and unbiased results reported responsibly, with the appropriate acknowledgement of all stakeholders.

4.4 Academic staff can ethically engage in research with human participants.

4.5 Academic staff and external colleagues engaged in research embrace the

highest ethical, professional and scholarly standards to protect the rights, safety and privacy of individual research participants as well as others who can be impacted by the conduct or outcomes of the research.

4.6 Students learning about research methods as part of their coursework are not required to collect primary data or information from human participants. Students required to learn about human research using secondary data or information in a field of study must be given access to advanced knowledge about ethical principles and practices.

4.7 Work integrated learning projects with third party organisations that may require using primary or secondary human data or information must obtain appropriate ethics approval or exemption prior to the commencement of the study period.

4.8 The Institution puts in place a strong scholarly culture which strives to ensure the benefits of scholarly research are disseminated and shared with other academic staff, researchers, professional practitioners and the wider community.

4.9 The Institution has a Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel (HREAP), constituted by the suitably qualified and trained members of the Scholarly Practice Committee and overseen by its Chair. The HREAP has the capacity to review and approve minimal to low risk research only in accordance with the [Ethics Review Process Flowchart](#). Greater than low risk projects must be reviewed by a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) registered in Australia, in alignment with the requirements of the National Statement.

4.10 The Chair of the Scholarly Practice Committee with an AQF Level 10 qualification undertakes the role of the Chair of the HREAP who has oversight of all research at the Institution to ensure they meet the requirements of the National Statement and the Code. In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair elected from the Scholarly Practice Committee oversees the HREAP.

4.11 The ethics review process is coordinated by the Ethics Director, who is an elected member of the Scholarly Practice Committee with an AQF Level 10 qualification.

## **5. Ethics application process**

5.1 Ethics applications are submitted to the Ethics Director. Ethics application forms and information regarding the review and approval process are available on the Scholarly Practice Hub, accessible through the Institution's Learning Management System (LMS).

5.2 A chief-investigator on an ethics application can only be a full-time, part-time or sessional academic staff member due to annual reporting requirements.

5.3 Low risk research goes through a peer-review process coordinated by the Ethics Director before it is reviewed by the HREAP. Minimal risk research can be eligible for an expedited review by the Chair of HREAP.

5.4 Certain lower risk research may be eligible for an exemption from ethics review under paragraphs 5.1.15 - 17 in the National Statement. Researchers involved in this type of research can apply for an exemption by submitting a Human Research Ethics Review Exemption Form for review and approval by the HREAP.

5.5 If ethics approval by a HREC registered in Australia has been established for a research project, additional ethics approval from the Institution is not required. However, researchers are required to submit a Human Research Ethics Declaration Form to the Ethics Director for recordkeeping.

5.6 Researchers who are not employed by the Institution conducting research on a campus of the Institution or where recruitment involves staff or students, researchers must register the external approval with the Ethics Director along with a letter of support from the President and Managing Director (President) confirming their agreement for the research to proceed. Recruitment of participants from the Institution or on-site data collection must not start until the President agrees in writing.

5.7 If ethics approval with an overseas international review board/ethics committee has been established, additional ethics approval from the Institution is not required if:

(a) Participants within Australia will not be recruited;

(b) the Institution will not be responsible for the conduct of the research at an Australian site; and

(c) a researcher from the Institution will not be responsible for fieldwork, recruitment or data collection overseas.

However, investigators from the Institution are required to register the external approval with the Ethics Director for recordkeeping.

5.8 The Ethics Director has the right to desk-reject an ethics application if:

(a) it is incomplete and/or supporting documents are missing;

(b) it does not sufficiently address reviewer feedback and/or lacks research merit and integrity; and

(c) the project involves greater than low risk.

5.9 Only ethics applications with research merit and integrity that involve minimal to low risk will be submitted to the HREAP for approval.

5.10 All research involving greater than low risk must be reviewed and approved by an HREC registered in Australia in accordance with the National Statement.

5.11 A modification request is to be submitted to the Ethics Director if revisions are made to an approved research project.

## **6. Monitoring and review**

6.1 All approved projects are required to submit an annual progress report and a final report upon project completion for monitoring by the Scholarly Practice Committee. This is to ensure compliance with the approved research protocol and that any complaints or issues occurred have been appropriately addressed and rectified.

6.2 Complaints about ethical issues by participants, external organisations, students or staff are addressed in the first instance by the Ethics Director. If these complaints are still unresolved, they may be addressed via the *Complaints and Appeals Policy* and *Complaints and Appeals Procedures* (students) or the grievance procedure outlined in the *Employee Handbook* (staff).

6.3 Any concerns about a breach in ethical conduct by an academic staff member must be reported by the Ethics Director to the Scholarly Practice Committee.

## **7. Recordkeeping and legal protection**

7.1 All ethics proposals and scholarly records are electronically recorded and maintained in a secure folder in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

7.2 The Institution provides an assurance of legal protection to all those involved in the ethical review of research for liabilities that may arise in the course of the bona fide conduct of their duties as advised in the National Statement (Chapter 5.1). Protection is afforded to the Chair, members of the Scholarly Practice Committee and ethics reviewers.

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

8.1 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) monitors the effectiveness of the policy and is responsible for ensuring appropriate support and resources for students and academic staff undertaking research at the Institution.

8.2 The Chair of the Scholarly Practice Committee is responsible for ensuring the Institution:

- is compliant with the National Statement and the Code;
- has the resources and capacity to carry out lower risk research competently and professionally; and
- has effective systems and processes in place for reviewing, evaluating and monitoring research of academic staff.

8.3 The Chair of the HREAP is responsible for:

- providing advice to academic staff on ethical matters to ensure that research at the Institution conforms with the National Statement and the Code;
- overseeing the review, evaluation and approval of lower risk research proposals by staff in compliance with the National Statement and the Code; and
- reporting and advising on matters of ethics to the Scholarly Practice Committee.

8.4 The Ethics Director is responsible for:

- evaluating the suitability of ethics applications submitted for approval by the HREAP;
- coordinating the lower risk ethics peer-review process;
- record keeping of ethics applications, outcomes and annual reports;
- record keeping of declarations of research undertaken at the Institution with ethics approval obtained from a registered HREC;
- ensuring appropriate storage arrangements for research data and information in accordance with the National Statement; and
- reporting and advising on ethical issues in research projects to the Chair of HREAP.

8.5 Staff who undertake human research are responsible for complying with the National Statement and the Code, keeping auditable records of their research activities, and disseminating research outputs responsibly and appropriately.

## **9. Related documents**

*Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Policy*

*Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Procedures*

*Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Framework*

*Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) Framework*

*Records Management Policy*

[Ethics Review Process Flowchart \\_approved AB\\_20250718](#)

**Approved by Academic Board on 18 July 2025**