1. Context

Torrens University Australia is committed to the highest standards of ethical and responsible research. The University expects all members of the University community to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with its values of excellence, integrity, fairness and intercultural understanding. This policy is based on the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (the Code). The University expects all researchers and research managers to be familiar with its provisions and to conduct their research and related tasks in accordance with the Code, this policy and all other relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements.

2. Definition

Conflict of interest: exists in a situation where an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of a person are or may be unduly influenced by other interests (Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018).

3. Scope

This policy:

- covers research which can be reasonably regarded as the responsibility of the University. It applies regardless of the research funding source or whether the research requires ethics approval.
- applies to all students, staff and other members of the University community engaged in research activity.

4. Principles

This policy is based on the principles of:

- honesty in the development, undertaking and reporting of research
  Researchers must present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.
- rigour in the development, undertaking and reporting of research
  Researchers must underpin research by attention to detail and robust methodology, avoiding or acknowledging biases.
- transparency in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings
  Researchers must share and communicate the research methodology, data and findings openly, responsibly and accurately, and disclose and manage actual and perceived conflicts of interest.
• **fairness in the treatment of others**
  Researchers must treat fellow researchers and others involved in the research fairly and with respect, appropriately reference and cite the work of others, and give credit, including authorship where appropriate, to those who have contributed to the research.

• **respect for research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment**
  Researchers must 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, show respect in the care and use of animals in research and minimise adverse events of the research on the environment.

• **recognition of the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of significance to them**
  Researchers must recognise, value and respect the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to research being undertaken, and report the outcomes of the research back to those involved in the research.

• **accountability for the development, undertaking and reporting of research**
  Researchers must comply with relevant legislation, policies and guidelines, ensure good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research and consider the consequences and research outcomes prior to its communication.

• **promotion of responsible research practices**
  All individuals involved in any University-research activity must promote and foster a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research.

5. **Responsibilities**

5.1 **University Responsibilities**

The University shall:

• maintain a framework for good governance and management practices for responsible research conduct,

• comply with relevant laws, regulations, guidelines and policies related to the conduct of research,

• develop and maintain the currency and ready availability of a suite of policies and procedures which ensure that University practices are consistent with principles and responsibilities of the Code,

• provide ongoing training and education that promotes and supports responsible research conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles,

• ensure research supervisors have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources,

• 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,

• support the responsible dissemination of research findings. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner,

• 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,
facilitate the prevention and detection of potential breaches of the Code,
provide mechanisms to receive concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code,
investigate and resolve potential breaches of the Code,
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,
support the welfare of all parties involved in an investigation of a potential breach of the Code, and
base findings of investigations on the balance of probabilities and ensure any actions are commensurate with the seriousness of the breach.

5.2 Researcher Responsibilities

The researcher shall:

- support a culture of responsible research conduct at their institution and in their field of practice,
- provide guidance and mentorship on responsible research conduct to other researchers or research trainees under their supervision and, where appropriate, monitor their conduct,
- undertake and promote education and training in responsible research conduct,
- 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,
- ensure that the ethics principles of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence and respect are applied to human research,
- engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and respect their legal rights and local laws, customs and protocols,
- 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,
- adopt methods appropriate to the aims of the research and ensure that conclusions are justified by the results,
- 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,
- disseminate research findings responsibly, accurately and broadly. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner,
- disclose and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest,
- 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,
- acknowledge those who have contributed to the research,
- cite and acknowledge other relevant work appropriately and accurately, and
- participate in peer review in a way that is fair, rigorous and timely and maintains the confidentiality of the content.
6. Standards of responsible research conduct

6.1 Management of research data

Researchers must keep clear, accurate, secure and complete records of all research, including research data and primary materials in accordance with: (1) relevant information privacy and records management legislation; (2) University policies; and (3) Research Data Management Policy.

Research data must be of sufficient detail to justify research outcomes and enable verification of the research results.

The Research Data Management Policy provides guidance on storage of research data and primary materials, ownership of research data and primary materials, retention of research data and records, access to research data and records, removal or movement of data and records, destruction of records, and collaborative research projects.

6.2 Authorship and dissemination of research findings

The University expects researchers to disseminate research findings responsibly, in accordance with the provisions of the Code and relevant University policies, including the Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy. This includes:

- ensuring they acknowledge the work of other authors appropriately and accurately in publication and dissemination of their research
- ensuring publication of research findings is complete, taking account of any restrictions relating to intellectual property or culturally sensitive data, and where appropriate, including any negative findings and results which may be contrary to the hypothesis and/or conclusion
- including information on all sources of financial and in-kind support for the research, including recognition of support from Torrens University Australia, as well as any potential conflicts of interest
- accurately describing the status of publications (in preparation, submitted, under review, accepted for publication, in press), research funding (applied for, granted, funding period), and awards conferred
- ensuring that when privately reporting research that has not been subjected to peer review, the unpublished status of the work and the peer-review mechanisms to which it will be subjected are stated fully
- ensuring that published reports, statistics and public statements about research activities and performance are complete, accurate and unambiguous
- correcting the record as soon as possible if they become aware of unintentional misleading or inaccurate statements about their work
- disclosing if they are submitting substantially similar work to more than one publisher at the time of submission
- acknowledging and fully disclosing Torrens University Australia and sponsors involved in any collaborative research, except where restrictions have been agreed with the sponsor
- where feasible and requested, providing research participants with an appropriate summary of the research results, and
- seeking advice from staff responsible for media liaison when discussing research findings with the media or wider community, to minimise the scope for misunderstandings.

6.2.1 Criteria for authorship

For a person to be recorded as an author of a publication, the person must agree in writing, and must have made a substantial contribution to at least two of the following three activities:

- conception and design of the project
• analysis and interpretation of research data, or
• drafting significant parts of the publication or critically revising it so as to contribute to the interpretation.

Authorship must not be offered purely on the following grounds:
• holding a position of authority (e.g. head of a research group or a supervisory role);
• facilitating the acquisition of funding
• providing routine assistance in some aspects of the project, or
• providing a technical contribution, data that has already been published or materials obtained from third parties, but no substantial input to the project or publication.

In this context, 'honorary' authorship is not acceptable.

Each individual author must be able to take public responsibility for the part of the work they contributed and no person who meets the criteria for authorship may be excluded as an author without their permission in writing.

When there is more than one author of a research output, the authors should discuss and reach agreement in writing on:
• who is to be nominated as executive author for the purposes of administration and correspondence, and
• the order in which authors are listed.

Collaborating researchers should agree in writing on authorship of a publication at an early stage in the research project and review their decision periodically.

Written authorship acknowledgements and consents must be retained as part of the research records.

All individuals and organisations who contributed to the research outcome (e.g. research assistants, technical writers, funding bodies, Torrens University Australia), must be properly acknowledged within the publication.

6.3 Peer review

The University recognises the importance of the peer review process. It encourages researchers to seek peer review for all research outputs and to participate responsibly in peer review of research by others.

University staff acting as peer reviewers must:
• be fair and timely in their review
• observe confidentiality in respect of peer review processes in which they are involved
• declare all conflicts of interest, and not permit personal prejudice to influence the process
• not take undue or calculated advantage of knowledge obtained during the peer review process
• be informed of, and comply with, the review criteria, and not introduce considerations that are not relevant
• not participate in peer review outside their area of expertise, and
• properly consider research that challenges, or changes accepted ways of thinking.

Researchers must:
• not seek to influence the peer review process or outcomes
• mentor research students under their supervision in the skills and responsibilities of peer review.
6.4 Conflicts of Interest

The University expects researchers to disclose any perceived or actual conflicts of interest in the course of any research conducted.

6.5 Collaborative research

The University expects researchers participating in collaborative research projects to ensure that they enter into and comply with a written agreement between all participating researchers/institutions on how the research will be managed.

7. Suspected breaches of responsible research conduct

The University expects researchers, and any members of the University community, to act in a timely manner in reporting a case of suspected breach of the Code and/or this policy.

8. Breaches

Failure to comply with this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action under the Staff Misconduct Policy. Persons considering making an allegation of a breach of this policy and/or the Code must refer to the Procedure for Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of Responsible Research Conduct.

9. Research Governance

The Vice-Chancellor is ultimately responsible for the conduct of research within the University. Research governance responsibilities are as follows:

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<th>Responsible committees and University community members</th>
<th>Role</th>
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| Vice-Chancellor and Pro Vice-Chancellor Research       | • Responsibility and accountability in matters relating to research policy, strategy and investment.  
• Approving the establishment, review and termination of research centres.  
• Approving applications from University staff and affiliates for external funding.  
• Approving collaborative projects with researchers from other institutions, including collaborative research agreements with third parties. |
| Governing Board                                        | Overseeing the overall research operational performance and strategic direction of research at the University |
| Academic Board                                         | Advising the Vice-Chancellor on:  
• strategic research investment and priorities  
• research policy  
• research operational matters, and  
• higher degree by research courses. |
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| Research Committee                                       | • Overseeing the implementation of research strategy and management of research activities at the University.  
• Monitoring and ensuring compliance with this policy, the Code and all other relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements.  
• Overseeing higher degree by research programs, including admission, enrolment issues and thesis examination. |
| Ethics Committee                                          | Monitoring and ensuring compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and other relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements.  
Reviewing applications for ethics approval for human research projects. |
| Students, staff members and affiliates of the University conducting research activities | Complying with this policy, the Code and all other relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements. |

10. References and relevant legislation

