

Code of Conduct for Research Rule

Section 1 - Overview

(1) The University of New England (UNE) expects research to be conducted responsibly, ethically and with integrity. The University of New England Code of Conduct for Research Rule (CCR) articulates the broad principles that characterise an ambitious, honest, ethical and conscientious research culture.

(2) The CCR adopts the principles and responsibilities embodied in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) (ACRCR 2018), developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the Australian Research Council (ARC), and Universities Australia. The ACRCR establishes a framework for responsible research conduct that provides a foundation for high-quality research, credibility and community trust in the research endeavor. The ACRCR outlines the expectations for the conduct of research in Australia or research conducted under the auspices of Australian institutions. The ACRCR addresses the regulatory requirements established under the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#) through the Higher Education Standards Framework. UNE adopts the following [ACRCR 2018 guides](#) as amended from time to time:

- a. Authorship
- b. Collaborative Research
- c. Disclosure of interests and management of conflicts of interest
- d. Management of data and information in research
- e. Managing and investigating potential breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- f. Peer review
- g. Publication and dissemination of research
- h. Supervision, and
- i. Research integrity advisors

(3) Compliance with the ACRCR 2018 is a requirement for the receipt of funding by the ARC, NHMRC and many other national funding bodies. The CCR must be read in conjunction with other relevant policy instruments and guides referred to within the CCR.

(4) The CCR is subject to legislative requirements and UNE staff collective agreements or equivalent employment contract. Where there are any inconsistencies between the CCR, legislation or the collective agreements, or equivalent employment contract, the legislation and collective agreements take precedence.

Section 2 - Scope

(5) The CCR applies to all researchers associated with the UNE who are University Representatives and and/or Students, who carry out Research under the auspices of UNE.

(6) UNE researchers must adhere to the principles and responsibilities as set out in the CCR at every stage of their research activities.

(7) A researcher is defined under the ACRCR 2018 as a "Person (or persons) who conducts, or assists with the conduct

Section 3 - Rule

Principles of Responsible Research Conduct

(8) The following principles are the hallmarks of responsible research conduct at UNE and are expected to be followed by UNE researchers.

- a. Honesty in the development, undertaking and reporting of research:
 - i. Present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.
- b. Rigour in the development, undertaking and reporting of research:
 - i. Underpin research by attention to detail and robust methodology, avoiding or acknowledging biases.
- c. Transparency in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings:
 - i. Share and communicate research methodology, data and findings openly, responsibly and accurately;
 - ii. Disclose and manage conflicts of interest.
- d. Fairness in the treatment of others:
 - i. Treat fellow researchers and others involved in the research fairly and with respect;
 - ii. Appropriately reference and cite the work of others;
 - iii. Making appropriate acknowledgements, including authorship where appropriate, to those who have contributed to the research.
- e. Respect for research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment:
 - i. 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;
 - ii. Ensure that respect underpins all decisions and actions related to the care and use of animals in research;
 - iii. Minimise adverse effects of the research on the environment.
- f. Recognition of the right of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of particular significance to them:
 - i. Recognise, value and respect the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to land of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples ;
 - ii. Engage with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to research being undertaken, so that they freely make decisions about their involvement;
 - iii. Report to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples the outcomes of research in which they have engaged.
- g. Accountability for the development, undertaking and reporting of research:
 - i. Comply with relevant legislation and policies;
 - ii. Ensure good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research;
 - iii. Consider the consequences and outcomes of research prior to its communication.
- h. Promotion of responsible research practices:
 - i. Promote and foster a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research.

Responsibilities of UNE

(9) UNE has an obligation to encourage and support responsible research conduct.

(10) UNE has the responsibility to report potential breaches to the relevant external stakeholders, where applicable.

(11) UNE is accountable to funding organisations, as well as Australian and international communities for how research is conducted.

(12) To foster responsible research conduct UNE will:

- a. Establish and maintain good governance and management practices for responsible research conduct.
- b. Identify and comply with relevant laws, regulations and policies related to the conduct of research.
- c. Commit to open inquiry and academic debate as stated in the UNE [Freedom of Speech Rule and Academic Freedom Statement](#).
- d. 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 CCR.
- e. Provide ongoing training and education that promotes and supports responsible research conduct for all researchers, research supervisors, all staff involved in research administration and management, and those in other relevant roles.
- f. Ensure research supervisors have the appropriate skills, qualifications, training and resources.
- g. 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 CCR.
- h. Support the responsible dissemination of research findings. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.
- i. 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 in accordance with:
 - i. [Research Data Management Policy](#)
 - ii. [Open Access to UNE Research Publications and Data Policy](#) and the [Open Access to UNE Research Publications and Data Procedures](#);
 - iii. [Research UNE Deposit, Collection and Access Rule](#) and [Research UNE Deposit, Collection and Access Procedures](#);
 - iv. [Knowledge Assets and Intellectual Property Policy](#); and
 - v. The University's [Records Management Rule](#) and [Records Management Procedures](#).
- j. Facilitate the prevention and detection of potential breaches of the CCR.
- k. Provide mechanisms to receive concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the CCR.
- l. Ensure that the process for managing and investigating concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the CCR is timely, effective and in accord with procedural fairness.
- m. Support the welfare of all parties involved in an investigation of a potential breach of the CCR.
- n. Base findings of investigations on the balance of probabilities and ensure any actions are commensurate with the seriousness of the breach.

Responsibilities of Researchers

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

(14) UNE Researchers will:

- a. Support a culture of responsible research conduct at their institution and in their field of practice.
- b. Exercise freedom of speech and academic freedom in a manner consistent with the principles in the UNE [Freedom of Speech Rule and Academic Freedom Statement](#).
- c. Provide guidance and mentorship on responsible research conduct to other researchers under their supervision and, where appropriate, monitor their conduct.

- d. Undertake and promote education and training in responsible research conduct.
- e. Comply with the relevant laws, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics guidelines and institutional policies related to responsible research conduct.
- f. 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.
- g. Ensure that the ethics principles of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence and respect are applied to human research. Researchers working with human participants must ensure that they obtain approval from the UNE Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and adhere to the requirements of the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2023\)](#).
- h. Ensure research involving children is conducted in accordance with the UNE [Child Protection Policy](#).
- i. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and respect their legal rights and local laws, customs and protocols. Research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must also be in accordance with [Ethical Conduct in Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders 2018](#), [Keeping Research on Track II 2018](#), and the [AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#).
- j. 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. Researchers involving vertebrate and higher invertebrate animals must ensure that they obtain approval from the UNE Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) and adhere to the requirements of the [Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013](#).
- k. Ensure collaborative research is conducted in accordance with the [Collaborative Research Rule](#).
- l. Conduct research considering the compliance requirements associated with [foreign interference risks](#), [autonomous sanctions and modern slavery risks](#).
- m. Be aware of their obligations under the [Defence Trade Controls Act 2012](#).
- n. Conduct their research so as to show consideration for the wider community, with reference to the [Statement on Consumer and Community Participation in Health and Medical Research 2016](#).
- o. Adopt methods appropriate to the aims of the research and ensure that conclusions are justified by the results.
- p. 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. During and after completion of the relevant research, researchers must comply with the [State Records Act 1998](#) as reflected in UNE policy instruments pertaining to the management of research materials and data, including:
 - i. [Research Data Management Policy](#);
 - ii. [Open Access to UNE Research Publications and Data Policy](#) and [Open Access to UNE Research Publications and Data Procedures](#);
 - iii. [Research UNE Deposit, Collection and Access Rule](#) and [Research UNE Deposit, Collection and Access Procedures](#);
 - iv. [Knowledge Assets and Intellectual Property Policy](#); and
 - v. the University's [Records Management Rule](#) and [Records Management Procedures](#).
- q. Disseminate research findings responsibly, accurately, and where relevant, broadly. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.
- r. Disclose and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in accordance with the [Conflicts of Interest Policy](#).
 - i. Manage and declare any gifts or other benefits, received or given, in accordance with the UNE [Gifts and Benefits Policy](#).
 - ii. Receive payment or honorariums that are paid to UNE for work performed as an employee of UNE, or work performed in the service of UNE.
- s. 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 in accordance with the [Research Authorship Policy](#).

- t. Acknowledge those who have contributed to the research, including international contributors, in accordance with the [Research Authorship Policy](#).
- u. Cite and acknowledge other relevant work appropriately and accurately in accordance with the [Research Authorship Policy](#).
- v. Participate in peer review and editorial activities in a way that is fair, rigorous and timely, and maintains the confidentiality of the content.
- w. Report suspected or potential research integrity breaches of the CCR in accordance with the [Research Conduct - Managing Potential Breaches Procedures](#).
- x. Ensure use, and acknowledge the use, of artificial intelligence appropriately, including adherence to the [ARC Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence](#) in the ARC's grants programs and the [NHMRC policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Grant Applications and Peer Review](#), as appropriate.

Work Health and Safety

(15) All research must comply with requirements of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#).

(16) All research must be conducted in line with the UNE [Work Health and Safety \(WHS\) Rule](#) and UNE's WHS protocols, procedures and guidelines applicable to the research.

Supervisors and HDR Candidates

(17) UNE requires that supervisors and Higher Degree Research (HDR) Candidates comply with the University's requirements as provided in the relevant [HDR Supervision Policy](#).

Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings

(18) UNE promotes the responsible publication and dissemination of research findings with the expectation that:

- a. all parties to the research (e.g. funding bodies, supervisors, researchers, students and participants) are informed of the nature and scope of confidentiality agreements;
- b. researchers and, where necessary, research funding bodies, are informed about the UNE [Knowledge Assets and Intellectual Property Policy](#);
- c. researchers are aware of contractual arrangements that may restrict, delay or limit publication;
- d. research funding bodies are informed about the importance of publication in research so that publication is not delayed beyond the time needed to protect intellectual property and other relevant interests;
- e. researchers are assisted in communicating research findings consistent with the UNE [Media Policy](#);
- f. researchers are supported in making their research publications openly accessible, consistent with the [Open Access to UNE Research Publications and Data Policy](#), through Research UNE (UNE's repository for research outputs);
- g. researchers follow relevant publication and editorial policies of external publishers (journals, professional associations, etc.) in reporting and disseminating research; and
- h. the reporting of research results for publicity purposes gives proper acknowledgment of partner institutions and funding bodies involved in collaborative research, in alignment with the [Collaborative Research Rule](#).

Peer Review

(19) Researchers contribute to peer review processes such as:

- a. the assessment of research proposals and grant applications;
- b. the assessment and selection of materials for publication and dissemination; and
- c. the assessment of the research of Higher Degree Research (HDR) Candidates.

(20) UNE expects that participants in peer review:

- a. understand and comply with the criteria of the review;
- b. are suitably qualified with appropriate expertise to participate in the review;
- c. are fair and timely in their review;
- d. maintain confidentiality of content and outcome of the process;
- e. declare all conflicts of interest, and avoid the influence of any personal prejudice and/or any irrelevant considerations in the process;
- f. do not take undue or calculated advantage of knowledge obtained during the peer review process;
- g. give proper consideration to research that challenges or changes accepted ways of thinking.

(21) UNE stipulates that researchers whose work is undergoing peer review must not seek to influence the process or outcome.

Collaborative Research Across Institutions

(22) For the purposes of the CCR, collaboration across institutions is not restricted to other higher education institutions.

(23) UNE supports and encourages collaborative research within and outside Australia, where and when it is appropriate, and where there is a formal agreement that follows the principles of the UNE [Collaborative Research Rule](#).

Research Breaches, Complaints and Allegations

(24) A failure to meet the principles and responsibilities set out in the CCR, is a breach of the CCR.

(25) Departures from the standards of conduct outlined in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (ACRCR 2018) and adopted guidelines may constitute a breach of that Code and this CCR.

(26) A breach of the CCR occurs on a spectrum from minor breaches to those that are more serious.

(27) A serious breach of the CCR that is carried out with intent, recklessness or negligence is particularly egregious and referred to as research misconduct.

(28) The [Research Conduct – Managing Potential Breaches Procedures](#) outlines the procedures UNE uses to:

- a. investigate and manage potential breaches of the CCR,
- b. determine any corrective actions to ensure the integrity of the record, and
- c. when a finding of research misconduct may be made.

(29) To make a complaint contact the Research Integrity Office at UNE. Preference is for complaints to be made in writing and emailed to researchintegrity@une.edu.au. Other concerns that do not relate with the CCR or complaints relating to Ethics Committees should follow their respective procedures, where appropriate.

Rule Administration

(30) Substantive amendment or revision of the CCR must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive

Officer.

(31) Records Management

- a. Actions relating to the implementation of the CCR must be recorded and managed in accordance with the University's [Records Management Rule](#).
- b. Actions relating to breaches, complaints and allegations of the CCR must be identified and treated as confidential information and managed in accordance with the University's [Records Management Rule](#).

Quality Assurance

(32) The Academic Board will monitor the effectiveness of the CCR through:

- a. benchmarking the University's standards with those adopted elsewhere;
- b. information available from the review of records relating to the CCR's implementation.

Authority and Compliance

(33) The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, pursuant to Section 29 of the [University of New England Act 1993](#), makes this University Rule.

(34) University Representatives and Students (inclusive of all Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Candidates and HDR Supervisors) must observe this Rule in relation to university matters. A failure to comply with this rule may amount to a breach of the CCR, research misconduct and/or unsatisfactory performance.

(35) The Rule Administrator, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, is authorised to make policies and associated information for the operation of this University Rule. The policies and associated information must be compatible with the provisions of this Rule.

(36) The CCR operates as and from the Effective Date.

(37) Previous policy on the Code of Conduct for Research Rule and related documents are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Rule, with the exception of:

- a. Complaints relating to potential research related breaches are managed according to:
 - i. the relevant code of conduct that was in effect at the time of the alleged conduct;
 - ii. the relevant procedure for managing potential breaches or complaints that was in effect at the time the report was made.

(38) Notwithstanding the other provisions of the CCR, the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may approve an exception to the CCR where the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer determines the application of the CCR would otherwise lead to an unfair, unreasonable or absurd outcome. Approvals by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer under this clause must be documented in writing and must state the reason for the exception.

Section 4 - Definitions Specific to this Document

(39) For the purposes of the CCR document, the following definitions apply:

- a. 3Rs – 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.

- b. ACRCR 2018 – [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#).
- c. Allegation – An allegation is a claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong, typically one made without proof.
- d. 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.
- e. Breach – A failure to meet the principles and responsibilities set out in the CCR. May refer to a single breach or multiple breaches.
- f. CCR – Code of Conduct for Research Rule.
- g. Complaint – A complaint is defined as a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.
- h. Conflict of interest – A 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. This refers to financial or non-financial interest which may be a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest.
- i. Peer review – The impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.
- j. Principles of procedural fairness – The principles of procedural fairness (also referred to as natural justice) apply to managing and investigating potential breaches of the Rule. These principles encapsulate the hearing rule (an opportunity to be heard), the rule against bias (decision-makers do not have a personal interest in the outcome) and the evidence rule (decisions are based on evidence).

Actions taken under these procedures should be:

- i. Proportional – Investigations and subsequent actions need to be proportional to the extent of the potential breach of the Code.
- ii. Fair – Investigations need to afford procedural fairness to respondents and, where appropriate, complainants and others who may be adversely affected by any investigation.
- iii. Impartial – Investigators and decision-makers are to be impartial and declare any interests that do, may, or may be perceived to jeopardise their impartiality. These interests are to be appropriately managed.
- iv. Timely – Investigations into potential breaches should be conducted in a timely manner to avoid undue delays and to mitigate the impact on those involved.
- v. Transparent – Information about University processes should be readily available and/or provided to respondents, complainants, all employees and students engaged in research. Accurate records must be maintained for all parts of the process, with records held centrally in TRIM and in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- vi. Confidential – Information will be treated as confidential and not disclosed unless required.
- k. Researcher – person (or persons) who conduct(s), or assists with the conduct of research.
- l. Research excellence – refers to the highest-quality research which will contribute new knowledge, complexity of thinking, new thinking, breakthroughs in understanding difficult concepts and transcendence of boundaries.
- m. Research impact – is focused on the benefits of research outside academia, such as economic, social and other benefits.
- n. Research integrity – is behaviour-based and requires adherence to the ethical principles and professional standards essential for the responsible conduct of research.
- o. Research misconduct – A serious breach of the CCR which is also intentional or reckless or negligent.
- p. Research quality – is process-orientated and requires the best research design, the right methods, measurements, data analysis, reporting and supervision standards. This relates to the rigour of the research undertaken. Quality research is rigorous, transparent and in principle reproducible.

Status and Details

Status	Current
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Unit Head	Chris Armstrong Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Student" - Is an admitted student or an enrolled student, at the relevant time: 1. an admitted student is a student who has been admitted to a UNE course of study and who is entitled to enrol in a unit of study or who has completed all of the units in the UNE course of study; 2. an enrolled student is a student who is enrolled in a unit of study at UNE.

"Authorship" - Authorship is defined as substantial contributions in a combination of the following: conception and design of the project; analysis and interpretation of research data; and drafting significant parts of the work or critically revising it so as to contribute to the interpretation.

"Research" - Is 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 (defined by the Australian Research Council).

"Effective Date" - means the Rule/Policy takes effect on the day on which it is published, or such later day as may be specified in the policy document.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" - Is a person who is of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and is accepted and known as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they have lived.

"University Representative" - means a University staff member, contractor, agent, affiliate, residential staff member, UNE Council member, Council committee member, employee of a controlled entity, director of a controlled entity and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations, affiliated organisations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"Allegation" - An allegation is a claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong, typically one made without proof.

"Complaint" - A complaint is defined as a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.

"Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people" - Is a person who is of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and is accepted and known as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they have lived.