QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) QUT is committed to the highest standard of integrity in research. The University expects all staff, researchers and research students to comply with all relevant policies, procedures, standards and regulatory obligations. The QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research (the QUT Research Code) forms an integral part of the University's Research Governance Framework and promotes ethical research behaviour within the University community consistent with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 (the Code).

(2) The QUT Research Code imposes requirements on researchers in addition to the general ethical obligations for members of the University community set out in the Code of Conduct - Staff and Code of Conduct - Student.

Section 2 - Application

(3) The QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research applies to all staff (regardless of employment type), students and visitors, who undertake, assist or support research activities within or in association with QUT.

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Head of Research Portfolio	Ensures governance of research activities is consistent with QUT's research governance framework. Fosters a culture of responsible research conduct across the University. Promotes compliance with QUT's Research Code. Oversees management and where necessary, investigates complaints or concerns about the conduct of research, and allegations of breaches of the Code.
Director, Graduate Research Education and Development/Heads of School	Ensures supervisors of research students have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources, including having completed the Foundations of HDR Supervision module (QUT staff access only).
Executive Director, Office of Research Services	Manages and provides advice on research grants, large programmatic initiatives and other government or industry funded centres. Manages and provides advice on commercial research, and consulting activities. Negotiates and manages all contracts related to research funding activities with due consideration for the principles of the Code.
Executive Director, Industry Engagement	Supports researchers with industry engagement including maintaining industry partner relationships and developing commercialisation contracts and agreements Protects and commercialises the University's intellectual property according to the Intellectual Property Policy.

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Position	Responsibility
Director, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity (OREI)	Develops and maintains policies and procedures which ensure that the University's research is consistent with the principles and responsibilities of the QUT Research Code and ensures these are readily available. Manages allegations of breaches of the QUT Research Code and allegations of research misconduct in accordance with Managing and investigating potential breaches of the QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research, including providing mechanisms to receive concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code, investigating and resolving potential breaches of the Code. Trains and supports 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 QUT Research Code. Provides ongoing training and education in responsible conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles. Maintains a register of research related disclosed interests and reports annually to the Vice-Chancellor and President on disclosed interests consistent with QUT's Conflict of Interest Policy.
Director, Graduate Research Centre	Manages processes for ensuring Higher Degree Research (HDR) students undertake research integrity online training as part of candidature. University Delegate for any assignment of student intellectual property.
Director, Research Infrastructure Operations	Maintains research data management strategy policies, procedures, guidelines, training, researcher-driven policy engagement and advocacy that align with the FAIR Guiding Principles.
University Librarian	Develops and maintains currency of policies and procedures on Open Access for QUT Research Outputs (Including Theses) Policy and the Copyright Policy. Supports the responsible dissemination of research findings by promoting open access and supporting researchers in disseminating their research widely. Provides ongoing training and education that promotes and supports scholarly communication elements of responsible research conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles.
Executive Director, Carumba Institute	Provides strategic leadership, guidance and advice across the University, in relation to increasing and strengthening indigenous research capabilities, engagement and outputs, in cooperation with the executive deans and associate deans (research).
Executive Deans, Centre Directors and Associate Deans (Research)	Foster a culture of responsible research conduct in their faculties/centres. Ensure appropriate supervision and training of research staff and students. Nominate and support Research Integrity Advisors.
Heads of School	Ensure the proper collection, storage, security and disposal of research data, including primary materials, within their operational area. Ensure that research staff and students receive adequate training in relevant University codes and policies, including research ethics. Promotes responsible authorship practices and resolution of conflicts arising from disputes about authorship.
Research Integrity Advisors	Provide advice on responsible research conduct. Promote research integrity within their area.
Staff and students involved in research activities	Comply with the requirements of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018, the QUT Code of Conduct - Staff, the QUT Code of Conduct - Student, QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research and any other relevant University policy and procedures affecting the conduct of research activity at QUT.

Section 4 - Principles

(4) The QUT Research Code is based on the following principles:

a. QUT will position academic rigour, research ethics and integrity and professional best practice at the core of all its research endeavours.

b. QUT will ensure its research outputs remain trusted and respected by upholding the highest standards of ethics

and integrity.

   c. All individuals are accountable for their actions relating to the development, undertaking and reporting of research and must comply with the QUT Research Code.

   d. All researchers will undertake training in relevant research policies and procedures and the University's expectations for ethical and responsible behaviour.

   e. All researchers must ensure appropriate treatment and respect of research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment.

   f. All researchers should be transparent in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings.

   g. Information must be presented truthfully and accurately throughout the research lifecycle, including the proposal, conduct and reporting of research.

   h. QUT recognises the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of particular significance to them. The University expects that any such research will value and respect the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to the land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and complies with all relevant national codes and guidelines.

Section 5 - Research Misconduct

(5) The University has no tolerance for any misconduct or unethical behaviour in its research activities. Researchers have a responsibility to ensure accurate representation of all information relating to their research outputs. Failure to abide by the responsibilities outlined in the QUT Research Code may constitute a breach of the Code and will be investigated in accordance with the [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#), consistent with the [NHMRC Guide to Managing and Investigating potential breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

Section 6 - Specific Requirements for the Conduct of Research

Management of Research Data

(6) The University recognises that research data is a valuable asset and must be stored and managed appropriately in accordance with University policy, ethical guidelines, relevant legislation and discipline-specific standards of best practice.

(7) Researchers have a responsibility to retain clear, accurate and complete records of all research related data and materials to support the principles of honesty and transparency. Research data should generally be made available, in accordance with [Management of Research Data and Primary Materials Policy](#), for use by other researchers, both within and external to QUT, subject to funding body, contractual, commercialisation, ethical, privacy or confidentiality considerations.

(8) All research data, including primary materials, are considered to be University records and must be stored, disposed of or transferred in accordance with the [Records Governance Policy](#). The University is committed to the protection of personal information which may be contained in research data and primary materials. When collecting, storing, using or disclosing personal information, researchers must abide by the mandatory requirements of the [Information Privacy Act 2009](#) and the University's [Information Privacy Policy](#). Research involving Indigenous Australians should ensure that decisions regarding access to, reuse and ownership of data or information include consultation with its Indigenous owners.

Supervision and Training of Research Students and Staff

(9) QUT supports the development of respectful, culturally aware and professional relationships between researchers and their supervisors. The University requires all research students and staff involved in research complete the [Research Integrity Training](#) (QUT staff access only) and be appropriately trained in relevant research policies, procedures and the University's expectations for ethical and responsible behaviour.

(10) Research Integrity Online is required training for:

a. QUT students enrolled in an honours, research masters or doctoral programs, or any substantial postgraduate research project or dissertation; and
b. all staff involved in research, research management, or research support including, for example, academic researchers, lab assistants, research assistants, supervisors of Higher Degree Research students and research Managers.

(11) Faculty Executive Deans, together with Heads of School are responsible for ensuring:

a. all research students and staff new to the University undergo an induction on their commencement that outlines their responsibilities under relevant legislation and University policies and procedures, including Research Integrity Online; and
b. each new research student and staff member is paired with a responsible and appropriately qualified supervisor or mentor.

(12) Supervisors of research students and staff must:

a. adhere to the standard for behaviour outlined in the [Code of Conduct - Staff](#) and where applicable the [Higher Degree Research Supervisor Guidelines](#) (QUT staff and student access only);
b. provide advice in all matters of good research practice consistent with the QUT Research Code and the [Higher Degree Research Supervisor Guidelines](#) at QUT (where applicable) (QUT staff and student access only);
c. have processes in place to ensure the validity of research methods and outcomes of staff and students under their supervision and critique and verify data as appropriate;
d. ensure they have access to students' research data generated, procured and analysed under their supervision and critique and verify data as appropriate; and
e. actively seek out opportunities for ongoing and refresher training to maintain a working knowledge of the principles that underpin responsible research conduct.

(13) The University expects staff and students under supervision to:

a. conduct their research in a cooperative manner;
b. uphold a professional attitude towards their research; and
c. actively seek out opportunities for their own professional development.

Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings

(14) Publication and dissemination of research is a vital component of the research process that encourages innovation, fosters collaboration, enhances community engagement and allows the benefits of research to be recognised.

(15) Before disseminating research findings, researchers must be aware of and consider:

a. any confidentiality requirements of a contractual or funding agreement;

b. the protection of any personal information in the research data;

c. intellectual property rights (Intellectual Property Policy);

d. funders' expectations about open access and licensing open access requirements and responsibilities under QUT's Open Access for QUT Research Outputs (Including Theses) Policy

e. any contractual restrictions or delays on publication, including any contractual requirements to obtain prior consent from funding bodies;

f. the potential for misinterpretation of published research or misuse causing harm to animals, humans, the environment or national security;

g. obtaining permission from the original publisher prior to republishing research data or figures; and

h. selecting reputable publishers appropriate for the research field that utilise peer-review.

(16) When publicising or disseminating research findings, researchers must ensure that:

a. research methodology, data and findings are reported accurately and consistently with conventions appropriate to the relevant discipline or disciplines, including applications for funding;

b. research outcomes are reported to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples and communities where the research affects or is of particular significance to them;

c. the host institution(s) and all sources of support and funding are acknowledged;

d. if significantly similar work is presented to more than one publisher, this must be disclosed to the publisher at the time of submission;

e. where research findings are disseminated or discussed before being exposed to peer-review scrutiny, (e.g. conferences, preprints or to sponsors or prospective financial supporters), there is an obligation to explain fully the status of the work;

f. the work of others is acknowledged and cited appropriately, including the citing of primary sources and data wherever possible to ensure credit is attributed fairly;

g. actions to correct any errors or misleading inaccuracies post-publication must occur in a timely manner; and

h. all clinical trials and if appropriate, other study types, must be registered with a recognised register.

(17) The University encourages the broad dissemination of accurate research findings in a responsible manner. All researchers must be aware of their responsibilities for disseminating research, specifically QUT's Open Access for QUT Research Outputs (Including Theses) Policy.

(18) All researchers working on sensitive information, technology or biological agents must advise the University as soon as they suspect their research or a publication arising from their research may be subject to Australian export controls and sanctions regimes and comply with QUTs Trade Controls for Goods, Software, Technology and Services Policy.

Authorship

(19) Appropriate attribution of authorship ensures individuals' contributions to published research are acknowledged and credit for the research is assigned honestly and fairly. QUT expects that the authorship of all research outputs (as defined in NHRMC's Authorship: A guide supporting the Australia Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research) will be properly determined in accordance with authorship criteria. Researchers are to ensure that attributed authors 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.

(20) A significant intellectual or scholarly contribution must include one and should include a combination of two or more of the following:

a. contribution to the design of the project or output;

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b. procurement of research data, where the acquisition involves significant intellectual judgement, planning, design or input;

c. contribution of knowledge, including Indigenous knowledge;

d. evaluation or interpretation of research data; and

e. generation of significant sections of the research output or critical revisions contributing to its interpretation.

(21) Authors must ensure that the work of research students/trainees, research assistants, technical officers and Indigenous peoples is properly acknowledged. Individuals and organisations providing facilities and funding should also be acknowledged.

(22) Collectively, authors are accountable for the entire research output and are each responsible for ensuring the accuracy and integrity of their contribution. Authors are also responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the contributions of all other co-authors.

(23) Corresponding authors have primary responsibility for ensuring appropriate recognition of all contributors, maintaining records of any authorship agreements (both formal and informal), obtaining approval from all authors to publish research outputs prior to submission and ensuring authors' affiliations are accurate.

(24) Schools, centres and research groups are responsible for encouraging and promoting responsible authorship practices that are considered appropriate within the discipline area. The Head of School, institute Executive Director or Centre Director is responsible for the resolution of conflicts arising through disputes about authorship. Where resolution cannot be achieved, the matter should be escalated to the Executive Dean of the faculty. If resolution of the matter is not possible, the matter should be referred to the Head of Research Portfolio for consideration.

Peer Review

(25) Peer review provides impartial and expert assessment of proposed research and research outputs, helping to maintain high standards of research. Peer review is an essential component of maintaining research integrity. The University strongly encourages researchers to participate in opportunities for peer review across the whole research cycle.

(26) Schools, centres and research groups are responsible for encouraging and promoting responsible peer review practices that are considered appropriate within the discipline area, consistent with the following principles:

a. Fairness:

i. all processes are conducted in a fair and equitable manner.

b. Transparency:

i. all conflicts of interests should be disclosed and managed accordingly.

c. Appropriateness:

i. the method of peer review should be appropriate for the research area or type of research output under review.

d. Participation:

i. authors who have benefited from the peer review process or receive public funding should participate in peer review processes as part of their professional obligations, including mentoring of junior colleagues.

e. Confidentiality:

i. all information supplied during the review process is held in confidence by reviewers and any other entities involved.

f. Impartiality:

i. peer review is conducted objectively and impartially, with outputs assessed on their merit and within the

scope of the assessment.

g. Quality and expert assessment:

    i. assessments are provided by individuals with suitable expertise, to provide high quality, constructive reviews aimed at promoting and improving research excellence.

h. Integrity:

    i. peer review activities and associated research are conducted responsibly, honestly and respectfully.

(27) When acting as a peer reviewer, QUT expects researchers to conduct reviews responsibly in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 and the principles described above. Any member of the QUT community engaged to assist in peer review for external funding bodies or publishers must also abide by the external establishment's policies in addition to QUT's Research code.

(28) Peer review of researcher outputs is promoted by QUT to provide assurance to the public and research community that work conducted by QUT researchers is of the highest quality and integrity. Any researcher whose work is undergoing peer review must declare all relevant conflicts of interest, not seek to influence the peer review process or outcomes and respond to reviewers' comments in a professional manner.

Collaborative Research

(29) QUT supports collaborative research with other researchers and other institutions (including industry partners, government and not-for-profit sectors), both within Australia and internationally.

(30) QUT researchers should exercise caution in selecting collaborators, bearing in mind that they will be accountable for research outputs. Researchers should implement mechanisms to establish trust — for example to access and verify data. Formal collaborative research agreements with other institutions should be in writing and must be formally approved in accordance with the Register of Authorities and Delegations and the Contracts and Legal Instruments Management Policy.

(31) Formal collaborative research agreements should address:

a. ownership of intellectual property;

b. the management of research findings, including dissemination, confidentiality, management of research data and authorship;

c. access to other assets or items that are retained at the end of the project;

d. the disclosure and management of conflicts of interest;

e. the roles and responsibilities of institutions or individuals with respect to reporting to funders, regulatory bodies, management of potential breaches and ethics, governance and safety approvals;

f. the commercialisation of research outcomes;

g. disclosure of funding arrangements;

h. dispute resolution procedures; and

i. any involvement of undergraduate and postgraduate students.

(32) Where a collaborative research project involves an undergraduate or postgraduate student, it is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure a Student Intellectual Property and Confidentiality Deed is in place.

(33) All researchers involved in collaborative research must be aware of, understand, and comply with all policies and agreements relating to the project. QUT expects all researchers involved in collaborative research to observe responsible research practices and report any potential breaches in accordance with QUT's policy on Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and the procedures described within the collaborative agreement.

Research Related Conflicts of Interest

(34) QUT recognises that conflicts of interest may arise on occasion between an individual's personal and research interests. Staff and students have a responsibility to disclose and appropriately manage all research related conflicts of interest in accordance with QUT's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and the Procedures for managing conflicts of interest in research ([Research conflicts of interest](#)).

(35) Depending on the type of conflict staff and students may have obligations to disclose the conflict to other bodies, including:

- a. ethics committees;
- b. research participants;
- c. co-investigators, including students under a researchers supervision;
- d. funding agencies;
- e. research partners;
- f. editors of journals;and
- g. the public.

Generative Artificial Intelligence

(36) Irrespective of the tools used, researchers will be responsible for the integrity, rigour, and originality of their research outputs and applications for research funding. Any use of generative AI tools in research must be consistent with the University's Position Statement on the responsible use of generative AI tools in research ([Artificial intelligence](#)).

Section 7 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Breach	Is defined in the [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#).
Collaborative Research	Means research undertaken between researchers from different academic departments and/or institutions that are working together to achieve a common goal.
Conflict of Interest	Is defined in the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).
Peer Review	Means the impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.
Research	Is defined in [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#).
Research Data	Is defined in the [Management of Research Data and Primary Materials Policy](#).
Research Governance	Is defined in the [Research Governance Framework](#).
Research Misconduct	Is defined in [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the QUT Code for Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#).
Research Output	Means modes that communicate or make available the findings of research that may be in hardcopy, electronic or other form. Examples of research outputs include journal articles, book chapters, books, conference papers, reports, datasets, patents and patent applications, performances, videos and exhibitions.
Supervision	Means overseeing a staff member or student, their activities and actions for whom you are responsible. Under this Policy it is principally directed to supervision of early career researchers, Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates, undergraduate students and other research trainees.

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Section 8 - Delegations

(37) Refer to [Register of Authorities and Delegations](#) (C015) (QUT staff access only).

Status and Details

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Effective Date	21st March 2024
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Policy Owner	Anne Walsh Director, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity
Author	Anne Walsh Director, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity
Enquiries Contact	Anne Walsh Director, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity