

## Research Integrity & Responsible Conduct of Research Checklist for graduate researchers and their supervisors

How can graduate research supervisors help to **actively promote the responsible conduct of research**? What are some of the issues that supervisors and their students need to work through?

This checklist is designed to assist supervisors and students to meet their obligations under the **University's Code of Conduct for Research** and engage in a broader dialogue about research integrity and the responsible conduct of research.

The checklist draws upon and refers to a number of key policy documents that set out the University's standards and requirements in relation to the conduct of research.

The starting point is the Code of Conduct for Research (Regulation 17.1.R8) (the University Code), which prescribes standards of work performance and ethical conduct expected of all persons engaged in research in The University of Melbourne. All researchers (staff and students) are required to familiarise themselves with this Code and research and research training related policies, and to take personal responsibility for ensuring that their specific research practices meet these standards. Academic heads of departments and supervisors of research students have an additional responsibilities: i) to actively ensure that their staff and students have access to the Code and other relevant information and advice; ii) to support their compliance with the requirements; and iii) to promote the highest of standards in research integrity.

The University has implemented an online course to research integrity training for graduate research students at the University. [Research Integrity Online Training \(RIOT\)](#) is a community on the LMS open to all University staff and students. RIOT covers the basic principles of research ethics and integrity with content that is tailored to discipline specific practices. The principles of research integrity underpin the trustworthiness and positive impacts of research, and the application of these principles into practice is a key research skill. Successful completion of RIOT is a compulsory requirement for confirmation of candidature. Supervisors are encouraged to also complete RIOT to be able to guide their student researchers in all aspects of responsible research.

**The checklist below** is provided to assist supervisors to fulfill their responsibility to their graduate research students. It is recommended that supervisors and their students **use this checklist at the commencement of candidature**, come back to it during various phases of the project and review it **at least annually**.

In working through each of the items on the list, supervisors and candidates should discuss:

- What research integrity means to them, to the University, to researchers and the community;
- What the University requires of all its staff and students;
- Relevant 'discipline codes'; and
- Project-specific requirements (e.g. laboratory notebook keeping or human ethics approvals).

[Research Integrity Advisors \(RIAs\)](#) are able to provide advice to any member of the University community on research integrity issues and responsible conduct of research. Research integrity specialists at the University's Office for Research Ethics and Integrity can also help with advice or working through this checklist.

### The Concept of Research Integrity

For the *individual researcher*, **integrity** embodies above all a **commitment to intellectual honesty and personal responsibility for ones actions** and to a range of practices that characterise the responsible conduct of research.

For an *institution*, it is a **commitment to creating an environment that promotes responsible conduct** by embracing standards of **excellence, trustworthiness, and lawfulness**.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See *Integrity in Scientific Research: Creating an Environment That Promotes Responsible Conduct* (2002): A Report of the US National Academies  
<http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=0309084792>

### Research Integrity includes:

- Intellectual honesty in proposing, performing, and reporting research;
- Accuracy in representing contributions to research proposals and reports;
- Fairness in peer review;
- Complete, clear and accurate records of all research;
- Transparency in conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest;
- Protection of human participants in the conduct of research; and
- Humane care of animals in the conduct of research.

| Topic  | Recommended action for the supervisor   | Online resources  | Date discussed (or N/A) | Comments<br>(E.g. Actions arising from meeting and completion dates) |
|--|---|---|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (The Australian Code)</b> | Provide your student with a copy of the Australian Code.<br><br>Discuss the Australian Code, and compare its requirements to that in the University.  | The Australian Code<br><a href="http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/r39">http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/r39</a>  |                         |  |
| <b>The University Code, and policies relevant to research and research training</b>  | Provide your student with a copy of the University's Code of Conduct for Research, and policies relevant to research and research training.<br><br>Discuss the University Code; its purpose and main elements. Invite discussion or clarification of any of its provisions.   | See University Statute – Code of Conduct for Research (Regulation 17.1.R8)<br><a href="http://www.unimelb.edu.au/Statutes/r171r8.html">http://www.unimelb.edu.au/Statutes/r171r8.html</a>                                 |                         |  |
| <b>Research Integrity Online Training (RIOT)</b>                                     | Ensure your student is aware that completion of RIOT is a requirement for confirmation. Successful completion is defined as a ≥80% score for the online RIOT Quiz.<br><br>You are also encouraged to complete RIOT for consistency in guiding your student through their research ethics and integrity training. Completion of RIOT can be done at the student's own pace. Discuss any relevant topics in the context of your research as your student encounters them in RIOT. | See Office for Research Ethics and Integrity - Research Integrity Training<br><a href="http://orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/research-integrity-training">http://orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/research-integrity-training</a> |                         |  |
| <b>Local policies and guidelines</b>   | Provide your student with any faculty or departmental policy documents or guidelines pertaining to the conduct of research in their department.   |   |                         |  |

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|-------------------|---|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Authorship</b> | <p>Discuss the University’s requirements for a person to be attributed as an author of a publication.</p> <p>Discuss “up front” the publication strategies and recognition of contributions that should apply to the student’s project. An authorship agreement form is available to facilitate discussions and is a suitable record of agreement about authorship.</p> <p>Revisit this prior to work being prepared or submitted for publication; always agree on authorship, authorship order, and attribution in each specific instance.</p> | <p>See OREI’s authorship and publication website<br/> <a href="http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/authorship-and-publication-practices">http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/authorship-and-publication-practices</a></p> |                         |   |

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| Topic  | Recommended action for the supervisor   | Online resources  | Date discussed (or N/A) | Comments (E.g. Actions arising from meeting and completion) |
|--|---|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Management of Research Data and Records</b> | <p>Discuss with the student how they plan to collect, store and use the research data and records generated by their research.</p> <p>Consider the following issues –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storage – location and identification</li> <li>• Security and protection from damage/destruction</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Removal or destruction</li> <li>• Privacy, confidentiality, restrictions</li> <li>• Discipline-specific practices and codes</li> <li>• And where applicable:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sponsored research – if the research is externally funded, are there any conditions of the grant or contract that affect what data is collected or stored?</li> <li>- Laboratory notebooks</li> <li>- Records required for patenting</li> <li>- Human participants (incl. consent forms and clinical trials)</li> <li>- Indigenous communities and ethnographic data</li> <li>- Potential archival and long-term value</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p>See Management of Research Data and Records webpage <a href="http://orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/data-and-records">http://orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/data-and-records</a></p> <p>The University’s Policy on the Management of Research Data and Records: <a href="https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1242-ResearchDataManagement">https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1242-ResearchDataManagement</a></p> <p>Further information about management of research data see: <a href="http://researchdata.unimelb.edu.au">http://researchdata.unimelb.edu.au</a></p> |                         |   |

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|---|--|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Conflict of Interest</b>                                   | <p>Discuss the concept of ‘conflict of interest’ in research with the student and direct them to the University’s policy.</p> <p>Discuss any potential conflicts of interest that may be associated with their project and agree on how they will be managed in accordance with relevant University policies.</p>  | <p>See Conflict of Interest web for more guidance and resources:<br/> <a href="http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/conflict-interest">http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/conflict-interest</a></p> |                         |   |
| <b>Ethics committee approvals and regulatory requirements</b> | <p>Discuss with your student whether their research will require approval from –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal Ethics Committee</li> <li>• Human Research Ethics Committee (or Department Human Ethics Advisory Group)</li> <li>• Gene Technology and Biosafety Committee</li> </ul> <p>Ensure all ethical and related approvals are in place.</p> | <p>See Office of Research Ethics &amp; Integrity website<br/> <a href="http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/">http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/</a></p>   |                         |   |

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|--|---|---|-------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Advice and complaints about research conduct</b></p> | <p>Research Integrity Advisors (RIAs) can provide discipline-specific advice on responsible research conduct or how to raise a concern or an allegation of research misconduct.</p> <p>Provide your student with the contact of your local RIA. Explain to your student that any concerns about the trustworthiness or responsible conduct of research should be discussed a RIA and this can be done hypothetically.</p> | <p>Research Integrity Advisors<br/> <a href="http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/research-integrity-advisors">http://www.orei.unimelb.edu.au/content/research-integrity-advisors</a></p> <p>UMSU Advocacy Service<br/> <a href="http://umsu.unimelb.edu.au/need-help/advocacy/">http://umsu.unimelb.edu.au/need-help/advocacy/</a></p> |                         |   |

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**A. Initial discussions at the start of candidature**

The initial discussion of these issues should be signed-off as completed within three (3) months of the commencement of candidature:

**Supervisor**      Name:.....      Signature:.....      Date: .....

**Student**      Name:.....      Signature:.....      Date: .....

**B. Review at least annually. Update the sign-off**

**C. As the project unfolds, and new issues arise, circumstances change, e.g. new parties come on board, new partnerships develop, There should be ongoing discussion of integrity-related matters.**

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