

Authorship Policy



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OVERVIEW

The University of Adelaide [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#) adopts the principles embodied in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) [the Code], including the requirements for the attribution of authorship in research [publications](#). This Policy is designed to ensure University compliance with the Code.

To be an author, it is essential to have made a substantial scholarly contribution to the published work. While specific practices may differ from discipline to discipline, there are a number of overarching ethical principles and procedures to which all researchers are expected to adhere. These formal procedures are also intended to minimise potential disputes over authorship issues.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all staff, students and titleholders of the University of Adelaide who are involved in the conduct of research associated with the University. In this regard, we accept the Code definition of research as 'original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight'. For specific matters relating to higher degree by research student theses, refer to the [Higher Degree by Research Academic Program Rules](#).

Implementation of this policy will be carried out in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct and the Academic Board Statement on Undue Influence. Any attempts to improperly exert pressure or influence actions or decisions made pursuant to this policy must be reported in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.

PRINCIPLES

1. Determining Authorship

- 1.1 Although attribution of authorship depends to some extent on the discipline involved, in line with the [Code](#), authorship must be based on a substantial contribution to at least two of the following three activities:
 - conception and design of the project;
 - analysis and interpretation of research data;
 - drafting significant parts of the article or critically revising it so as to contribute to the interpretation.
- 1.2 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;
 - 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.

- 1.3 Each individual author must be able to take public responsibility for the part of the work they contributed.

- 1.4 Publication may not proceed, if any of the authors have legitimate reservations concerning the theory, data or its interpretation underpinning critical parts of the work.
- 1.5 All individuals and organisations that contributed to the research outcome (e.g. research assistants, technical writers, funding bodies, the University), must be properly acknowledged within the publication.

PROCEDURES

2. Authorship Protocols

- 2.1 In circumstances where there is more than one author, a [corresponding author](#) must be appointed to record authorship and manage communication about the work with the publisher. Where the corresponding author is not a member of the University of Adelaide, the policy of the corresponding author's institution is to be followed.
- 2.2 Any person who qualifies as an author must be included or excluded only with prior permission in [writing](#).
- 2.3 As the accepted practice for the order of author names on a publication varies between disciplines, that order should be determined, recorded and reviewed in tandem with any other decisions about authorship. Authors should be prepared to explain the listing order, if required.
- 2.4 Where individuals who contributed to the research outcome are to be acknowledged within the publication (e.g. research assistants, technical writers), their [written consent](#) must be obtained, where practicable.
- 2.5 As an acknowledgement of the institutional contribution to the delivery of research outcomes, authors must cite their institutional affiliation or affiliations in any publication.
- 2.6 In compliance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, an '[Authorship Declaration](#)' must be completed by the author of a publication or, where there are multiple authors, by the corresponding author. This must be done before the publication is presented in a public forum.
- 2.7 Where required by a funding organisation (e.g. the NHMRC, the ARC, etc.) as a condition of providing support for a research project, any peer reviewed journal publication arising from that support must be deposited into an [open access institutional repository](#) within a 12 month period from the date of publication.
- 2.8 All authors must declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to their research project if and when they become apparent, in line with the University's [Conflict of Interest Procedure in the Behaviour and Conduct Policy](#).

Responsibility: Researchers

- a) At an early stage of the research project, discuss authorship of a research output with all other researchers involved, and review whenever there are changes in participation.
- b) Where there are joint authors, appoint a corresponding author.
- c) Collectively determine the order of authorship.

Responsibility: Sole or [Corresponding Author](#) (as appropriate)

- d) Offer authorship to all people, including research trainees, who meet the criteria for authorship listed in this Policy. Those offered authorship must accept or decline in [writing](#) within 30 days.
- e) If a potential author fails to respond in 30 days, the corresponding author must keep a record of decisions made on behalf of the authors.

- f) Acknowledge all individuals and organisations that contributed to the research outcome, (e.g. research assistants, the University, etc.). Where individuals are to be named, obtain their [written](#) consent, where practicable.
- g) Complete an '[Authorship Declaration](#)'. Ensure that all authors have approved the version to be published, unless circumstances are such that this is not possible. If an author is deceased or cannot be contacted following reasonable efforts, the publication may proceed provided that there are no grounds to believe that this person would have objected to being included as an author. The Declaration will need to be updated if a publication is re-submitted.
- h) Lodge a copy of the publication with the University of Adelaide's [institutional repository](#), in accordance with its guidelines.

3. Dispute Resolution

It is acknowledged that, on occasions, disputes over authorship may arise. Where researchers are unable to reach mutual agreement on an issue of authorship, the following procedures apply:

- 3.1 Any person involved in the dispute may seek advice from a [Research Integrity Advisor](#), a Head of School, or a [Postgraduate Coordinator](#) (if involving HDR students).
- 3.2 Continuing disputes over authorship are to be referred for attempted resolution to the Executive Dean of the corresponding author. Disputes involving co-authors from other institutions are to be handled by the institution of the corresponding author.
- 3.3 If the dispute remains unresolved within 30 days of referral under clause 3.2, it will be referred to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) for determination. The Provost and DVC&VP(R) may engage an external arbitrator or mediator to assist in this process, although the final decision remains with the University.
- 3.4 Outcomes from the dispute process may include the following options:
 - agreement is reached by all valid authors (as defined in Principle 1.1);
 - individuals who do not meet the authorship criteria will not be included as authors of the publication, but may have their contributions acknowledged in the publication;
 - where valid authors cannot agree on content, the publication might be divided in such a way that some sections can be published separately, or not published at all; or
 - where disputes concerning publications arise over matters not directly related to the inclusion or exclusion of an author, content or interpretation of data, a reasonable decision may be made that permits the paper to be published and the dispute to be suitably acknowledged.
- 3.5 Any determination made as part of a dispute resolution will not be considered grounds for findings of research misconduct, as detailed in the University's [Research Misconduct Procedures](#). However, proceeding to publication without agreement or formal determination of authorship may be considered a [breach](#) of the Code or a case for [research misconduct](#).

Responsibility: Executive Deans

- a) Attempt resolution of authorship disputes.

Responsibility: Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)

- b) Where it has not been possible to resolve authorship disputes at the faculty level, make a determination on what action will be taken.

DEFINITIONS

The Corresponding Author is defined as a specified co-author of a publication who takes formal responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, acts as point of contact for all correspondence regarding the publication, and maintains related records. The position is determined by agreement amongst the authors. The corresponding author is sometimes referred to elsewhere as the 'executive author'.

A Publication is defined as the formal dissemination of research findings in a public forum whether in hardcopy, electronic, web-based or other tangible forms. It includes refereed and non-refereed books and journals, web-pages, conference presentations, creative works, technical papers, etc. It does not include a student thesis.

Written consent includes original hand-written signatures, emails, fax, scanned documents or electronic identification as appropriate.

Breaches of the Code involves actions or omissions that constitute breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, but lack the seriousness of consequence or wilfulness to constitute research misconduct. However, repeated or continuing breaches of the Code may constitute Research Misconduct.

Research Misconduct means fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research, failure to declare or manage a serious conflict of interest, and avoidable failure to follow research proposals as approved by a research ethics committee, particularly where this failure may result in unreasonable risk or harm to humans, animals or the environment. It also includes the wilful concealment or facilitation or research misconduct by others.

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Policy custodian	Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)
Responsible policy officer	Executive Director, Research Services
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Related Policies	Responsible Conduct of Research Policy Intellectual Property Policy Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research Research Misconduct Procedure Conflict of Interest Procedure Higher Degree by Research Academic Program Rules NHMRC Policy on the Dissemination of Research Findings ARC Open Access Policy
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