

Policy Title: Authorship, Publication of Research, and Peer Review

Policy Owner: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

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1. INTENT

Researchers have a responsibility to their colleagues and the wider community to disseminate a full account of their research and to acknowledge those who have contributed to it. The University promotes an environment of collegiality, honesty, integrity, accuracy and responsibility in the authoring, reviewing and publication of research findings.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, affiliated researchers and students involved in research and research-related activities at ECU.

3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
“Authorship” means	the specification of the names of the individual or team members responsible for the outputs or products of research or creative activity, especially in the context of publication of that work.
“Peer Review” means	impartial and independent scholarly assessment of research activities.
“Publication” means	traditional and non-traditional forms of research dissemination, including but not limited to, published academic books and book chapters, journal articles, conference papers and publicly released, performed or broadcast showings of creative art works.

"Research" means	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 and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes.
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4. POLICY CONTENT

- 4.1 All principles outlined in this policy are intended to be consistent with the *Australian code for the responsible conduct of research* (Australian Government, 2007). Associated guidelines should be applied in the context of acceptable practice within the relevant discipline(s).
- 4.2 Researchers are expected to publish and disseminate their research findings. This is an essential part of the research process and is required to inform other researchers, professional practitioners and the wider community.
- 4.3 Only persons who have participated in a substantial way in at least part of the relevant research should be included as an author of a publication derived from that research. The requirements for authorship depend to some extent on the discipline, but must be based on substantial contributions in a combination of:
- i. conception and design of the project;
 - ii. analysis and interpretation of research data;
 - iii. drafting or revising significant parts of the work.
- 4.4 General supervision of the research group or participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not in itself justify authorship. Similarly, being a supervisor of a research higher degree student is not in itself sufficient for co-authorship of any of the student's publications; contributions summarised in the previous clause must be made.
- 4.5 An author's role in a research output must be sufficient for that person to take public responsibility for at least that part of the output in that person's area of expertise.
- 4.6 Order of authorship should be a joint decision of the co-authors.
- 4.7 A person who qualifies as an author must not be excluded as an author without their permission in writing.
- 4.8 "Honorary authorship", i.e. inclusion based on status, seniority or credentials, is an unacceptable practice.
- 4.9 Peer review is an essential element of the responsible conduct of research, supporting honesty and integrity of research and the maintenance of high standards by encouraging accurate, thorough and credible research reporting.

5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to this policy, the following positions are responsible for the following:

Policy Owner

The Policy Owner, being the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation in ECU.

Staff/students

Staff/students are required to comply with the content of this policy and to seek guidance in the event of uncertainty as to its application.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

6.1 The policy is supported by the following Guidelines:

- Authorship, Publication of Research and Peer Review Guidelines

6.2 Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, Australian Research Council (ARC), Universities Australia and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Australian Government 2007
- Responsible Research Conduct (ac074)
- Research Misconduct Policy (ac091)
- Copyright Act (1968)

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

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APPROVAL HISTORY

Policy approved by:	Vice-Chancellor
Date first approved:	12 June 2008 (AB21/08)
Date last modified:	20 November 2015
Revision history:	25 August 2011 (Vice-Chancellor and AB61/11) – content reviewed and updated, placed into current policy template, guidelines added and policy title changed. 13 August 2012 (Vice-Chancellor and AB63/12) 20 November 2015 – minor amendments made to the policy and guidelines as a result of the academic organisational restructure, approved by the Policy Owner.
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Authorship, Publication of Research, and Peer Review

All principles outlined in these guidelines should be applied in the context of acceptable practice within the relevant discipline(s).

1. Authorship

- 1.1 Only persons who have participated in a substantial way in at least part of the relevant research should be included as an author of a publication derived from that research. The requirements for authorship depend to some extent on the discipline, but must be based on substantial contributions in a combination of:
 - i. conception and design of the project;
 - ii. analysis and interpretation of research data;
 - iii. drafting or revising significant parts of the work.
- 1.2 Authorship of a publication should be discussed between researchers at an early stage in a project, and reviewed whenever there are changes in participation and/or the content of the publication.
- 1.3 When a student has produced the majority of the research outputs presented in a manuscript, and has made substantial contributions to authorship of that manuscript, he or she will normally be the first-named author or, if appropriate to the discipline and agreed by other authors, be placed elsewhere in the authorship list consistent with a major contribution to authorship.
- 1.4 The order of authorship should be a joint decision of the co-authors. Different disciplines and journals have different conventions regarding the placement of the principal author; authors may wish to explain the order of authorship in a footnote.
- 1.5 When there is more than one author of a publication, one co-author (by agreement amongst the authors) should be nominated as executive author for the whole research output.
- 1.6 Executive authors must offer authorship to all people, including research trainees, who meet the criteria for authorship. Those declining authorship must do so in writing.
- 1.7 Executive authors must retain records of rejections of offers of authorship.
- 1.8 Other persons who contributed to the work who are not authors should be named in 'Acknowledgements' (where the publisher provides for this). An author must ensure that the work of contributors, such as research assistants and technical officers, is recognised in a publication derived from research to which they have made a contribution. Individuals and organisations providing facilities should also be acknowledged.

- 1.9 Groups of researchers may be identified under a corporate authorship statement. In such cases, members who meet the criteria for authorship must be identified in a footnote.
- 1.10 Any advice and/or disputes about authorship should be referred to the relevant School Dean, who will decide on a course of action. If a potential conflict of interest exists, the dispute will be referred to an alternate on the recommendation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).
- 1.11 Publications should include the institutional affiliation(s) of each author.
- 1.12 Publications should include information on the sources of financial support for the research.
- 1.13 "Honorary authorship", i.e. inclusion based on status, seniority or credentials, is an unacceptable practice.

2. Publication

- 2.1 The same research findings should not normally be included in different publications, except in particular and clearly explained circumstances such as review articles, anthologies, collections, or translations into another language, or where the relevance of those findings has been changed as a result of subsequent research. This becomes acceptable where there is full cross-referencing within the papers (for example, in a series of closely related work, or where a complete work grew out of a preliminary publication and this is fully acknowledged). For creative art works, the situation is generally reversed with the same output gaining prestige by progressing through development phases, e.g. touring to a number of venues or on-selling to further distribution outlets.
- 2.2 Author(s) who submit the same or substantially similar work to more than one publisher should disclose that fact to the publishers at the time of submission.
- 2.3 Subject to conditions agreed with the research sponsor, researchers should seek to communicate their research findings to a range of audiences which may include the sponsor, professional organisations, peer researchers, policy makers and the community.
- 2.4 If research findings are reported in the public arena before they have undergone peer review, the status of the findings must be disclosed at the time.
- 2.5 Where there is private reporting of research that has not been peer reviewed, especially when it is reported to prospective financial sponsors, researchers have an obligation to explain fully the status of the work.
- 2.6 Deliberate inclusion of inaccurate or misleading information relating to research activity in curriculum vitae, grant applications, job applications or public statements or the failure to provide relevant information, is a form of research misconduct. Accuracy is essential in describing the state of publication (in preparation, submitted, accepted), research funding (applied for, granted, funding period), and awards conferred, and where any of these relate to more than one researcher.
- 2.7 All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that published reports, statistics and public statements about research activities and performance are complete, accurate and unambiguous.

- 2.8 The dissemination of research findings is an important part of the research process and as a general principle ECU supports the public dissemination of new knowledge arising from research activity. Nevertheless the University recognises that in some sponsored research the sponsors may seek to delay or restrict the release of research results.
- 2.9 Where a sponsor wishes to delay the public dissemination of results, prior agreement should be reached between the University and the sponsor of the time restriction which is to be applied, and the reasons why it is justifiable.
- 2.10 Where a candidate for a higher degree is involved in a commercially-sponsored project, the student's right to submit and have their thesis examined must not be compromised by any agreement to delay or restrict the release of the research results. At the request of the sponsor and the concurrence of the student and the University, the thesis may be submitted to the examiners in confidence.

3. Peer Review

- 3.1 Researchers are responsible for ensuring that research findings that have the potential to influence community behaviour or professional conduct are peer reviewed before reporting.
- 3.2 Researchers whose work is undergoing peer review must not seek to influence the decision-making process.
- 3.3 Peer reviewers must ensure that they are fully informed about, and comply with, the policies and criteria to be applied and
 - i. are fair and timely in their review;
 - ii. act in confidence and do not disclose the content or outcome of any process in which they are involved;
 - iii. declare all conflicts of interest to the Editor;
 - iv. do not introduce considerations that are irrelevant to the publication criteria;
 - v. do not permit personal prejudice to influence the process;
 - vi. give proper consideration to research that challenges or changes accepted ways of thinking;
 - vii. do not take advantage of knowledge obtained during the peer review process; and
 - viii. do not agree to participate in peer review beyond their area of expertise.