

## Human Research Ethics Policy

*Printed copies are for reference only. Please refer to the electronic copy in the Policy and Procedure Manager (PPM), the electronic policy management system (EPMS), to ensure you are referring to the latest version.*

### **Purpose:**

This policy outlines how Murdoch University staff and students are to comply with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2018* (the *National Statement*) and, where applicable, any other relevant documents. It forms part of a suite of policies that supports the University's *Research Integrity Policy*.

The *National Statement* sets standards for individuals, institutions and organisations conducting human research, and informs the design, development, review and conduct of human research.

### **Audience:**

Researchers undertaking human-based research under the auspices of Murdoch University.

### **Objectives:**

- To help researchers meet the requirements of the *National Statement*.

### **Definitions:**

*Any defined terms below are specific to this document. The definition of common terms appears in the Murdoch University Dictionary of Terms.*

“Human research” is ‘conducted with or about people, or their data or tissue’.

“Murdoch University” refers to all its entities, including research institutes and centres.

“Researchers” refers to all staff (academic/professional, including Adjunct, Honorary and Emeritus appointments made through the *Honorary Titles and Appointments Policy*) and research students who conduct human research.

“Under the auspices of Murdoch University” means where the researcher is conducting research associated with being a staff member or student at Murdoch University.

### **Policy Statement:**

#### **Responsibilities of the University**

1. Murdoch University must ensure that any research involving human participants it conducts or for which it is responsible is:

- 1.1 designed and conducted in accordance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (the Code)*; and
  - 1.2 ethically reviewed and monitored in accordance with the *National Statement*.
2. Murdoch University must ensure that those conducting research involving human participants:
- 2.1 are either appropriately experienced and qualified, or supervised by qualified and/or experienced persons;
  - 2.2 understand the need to assess risks to their own safety and that of participants; and
  - 2.3 are free to withdraw from research on conscientious grounds, in accordance with the *Conscientious Objection Procedure*.
3. Murdoch University shall establish, maintain and adequately resource, as part of the portfolio of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation (DVCRI), a Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (MU HREC).
- 3.1 MU HREC must operate in accordance with the standards set out in the *National Statement*.
  - 3.2 MU HREC must report at least annually to the DVCRI, and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Australian Research Council (ARC) as required.

#### **Responsibilities of the researchers**

4. Murdoch University researchers in their conduct of research involving human participants must ensure that they comply with the *National Statement* and, where relevant:
- 4.1 the *Ethical Conduct in Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities: Guidelines for Researchers and Stakeholders, Keeping Research on Track II* and *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies*;
  - 4.2 the *Human Biospecimens and Biobanks Policy* in their collection, storage, usage and disposal of human biospecimens;
  - 4.3 the *Research Integrity Policy* and other relevant University policies and procedures;
  - 4.4 facilitate appropriate consumer involvement in research in accordance with the *Statement on Consumer and Community Participation in Health and Medical Research*; and
  - 4.5 declare and manage any conflict of interest, in accordance with the *Conflict of Interest Policy*.
5. Researchers must commence research involving human participants only after obtaining written ethics approval from the MU HREC for new, reciprocal, exempted or amended projects.
- 5.1 Retrospective approvals will not be granted by MU HREC.
  - 5.2 Researchers must also ensure any other relevant approval is obtained.

- 5.3 Researchers must ensure that research is conducted according to the conditions of approval obtained.
6. The Chief Investigator is responsible and accountable for the project.
7. The Chief Investigator for a student project is usually the Principal Supervisor, who is responsible and accountable for the project, and who must ensure that the appropriate ethics approval is obtained.
8. Researchers on any research project involving human participants, when conducted under the auspices of Murdoch University, must ensure that an ethics approval is obtained from the MU HREC. This applies whether the research is conducted at MU or elsewhere, whether MU is the lead institution or not and whether MU researchers are principal, co- or associate investigators on the research.
  - 8.1 Where an external HREC approval recognized by NHMRC is also available, the following may apply:
    - 8.1.1. As lead institution, MU HREC accepts an MU HREC application and notes the external HREC approval.
    - 8.1.2. Where an external institution is leading the research project, MU HREC accepts an MU HREC Reciprocal application with the external HREC approval attached.
  - 8.2 Where an external HREC is not available, researchers must obtain an MU HREC approval.
9. For multi-institutional collaborative research, researchers must have a Murdoch University ethics approval and comply with the requirements for collaborative respective research agreements as set out in the *Research Integrity Policy*.
10. Researchers must manage approved projects in relation to amendments, extensions, adverse events and reporting requirements.
11. Researchers must terminate all research activities immediately if ethics approval is suspended or withdrawn.

### **Complaints**

12. Complaints about a researcher or potential breach of the *Code* should be managed through the *Research Integrity Procedure*.
13. Complaints about MU HREC's conduct in reviewing research proposals should be made to the Pro Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation.

### **Performance Indicators:**

There are no performance indicators.

### **Related Documents:**

[Gene Technology Act 2000 \(Cth\)](#)

[Gene Technology Regulations 2001 \(Cth\)](#)

[National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)

[Prohibition of Human Cloning for Reproduction Act 2002 \(Cth\)](#)

[Research Involving Human Embryos Act 2002 \(Cth\)](#)

[Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 \(Cth\)](#)

[Western Australia Guidelines for Human Biobanks, Genetic Research Databases and Associated Data 2010](#)

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#)

[National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2018](#)

[Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies \(GERAIS\) 2012](#)

[Guidelines under Section 95 of the Privacy Act 1998](#)

[Guidelines approved under Section 95A of the Privacy Act 1988](#)

[Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders 2018](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Conscientious Objection Procedure](#)

[Consultancy Policy](#)

[Human Biospecimens and Biobanks Policy](#)

[Graduate Research Degrees Regulations](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Policy](#)

[Research Integrity Policy](#)

[Research Integrity Procedure](#)

[Safety in Research and Teaching Policy](#)

**References:**

There are no references.

**Approval and Implementation:**

<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation
<b>Responsible Officer(s):</b>	Manager Research Ethics and Integrity
<b>Approval Authority for supporting procedures:</b>	Human Research Ethics Committee
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Manager Research Ethics and Integrity

**Revision History:**

<b>Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Next Review Date</b>	<b>Resolution No. (if applicable)</b>
Administrative amendments	07/10/2020			
Approved	24/9/2019			
Noted by AC	13/11/2019			AC/109/2019
Noted by RC	03/07/2019		23/06/2022	RC/09/2019(i)
Noted by AC	28/08/2019			AC/64/2019 (i)-(ii)
Recommended to AC by RDC	03/07/2019			RC/09/2019(ii)
Rescinded RDC/11/2014(v)	03/07/2019			RC/09/2019(iii)
Amended	12/04/2018		12/04/2021	
Noted by AC	28/01/2015			AC/13/2015
Recommended to AC by RDC	12/11/2014			RDC/11/2014(vi)
Approved by RDC	12/11/2014		12/11/2017	RDC/11/2014(v)
Rescinded 7 February 2012	12/11/2014			RDC/11/2014(xii)
Approved	07/02/2012		07/02/2015	