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1. Introduction

This guide supports the implementation of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (the Code), which articulates the broad principles and responsibilities that underpin the responsible conduct of Australian research.

In particular, this guide is intended to assist institutions and researchers to adhere to relevant principles of the Code, including:

- Principle 3, 'Transparency in declaring interests …', which includes the responsibility to disclose interests and manage conflicts of interest.
- Principle 4, 'Fairness in the treatment of others', which requires researchers and others involved in research to be treated fairly and with respect.

This guide aims to assist those involved in research to understand and apply best practice in conducting and participating in peer review.

This guide applies to the peer review of research by researchers employed by, or a□liated with, Australian institutions. These institutions vary in size, maturity, experience and organisational structure. They range from large and complex universities to small privately funded institutes. Accordingly, it is acknowledged that di□erent institutional policies and processes are capable of fulfilling the aim of this guide and attempts have been made to ensure that there are appropriate options for flexibility in its application.

2. Peer review

For the purposes of this guide, and as defined in the Code:

Peer review is the impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.

Peer review has a number of important roles in research and research management, including:

- the assessment of research proposals and grant applications
- the assessment and selection of material for publication and dissemination
- the assessment of the research of Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates
- the assessment of research quality, engagement and impact by government bodies, and
- other reviews or assessments of research conducted by individual researchers, teams, academic units and institutions.

Peer review provides expert scrutiny of proposed research or research outputacad2(r)6.8 2(e)-10 (a)-Stn-USd

4.4 Mentor trainees in peer review

Researchers have a responsibility to assist research trainees under their supervision, including early career and HDR students, to develop the skills necessary for conducting peer review responsibly.

4.5 Engage in relevant training

Researchers should engage in relevant training about peer review processes, and should seek out other relevant training opportunities when they perceive a knowledge gap.

Under the Code, researchers have the responsibility to:

R16 Undertake and promote education and training in responsible research conduct.

5. Breaches of the Code

Institutions should manage and investigate concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code in accordance with the *Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (the Investigation Guide).

Examples of breaches of the Code that are related to peer review (see also Section 2.1 of the Investigation Guide) include, but are not limited to:

- failing to conduct peer review responsibly and fairly
- taking advantage of knowledge obtained through peer review processes
- disclosing the content or outcome of peer review processes
- failing to disclose relevant interests.

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