# Research Authorship, Publication and Dissemination Policy

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<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research &amp; Enterprise</td>
<td>15 December 2021</td>
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## Policy Statement

### Purpose

To outline requirements for:

1. determining authorship and providing acknowledgement to other contributors of research outputs at UNSW
2. publication and dissemination of research; and
3. conformity with the UNSW Research Code of Conduct (Research Code).

### Scope

This policy applies to the intended publication, publication and dissemination of research outputs, findings and other documents related to research, where one or more of the authors are UNSW researchers.

Researchers should note that the dissemination of research findings may be subject to third-party agreements or requirements. Unless subject to third-party agreements, the provisions of this Policy will apply.

UNSW recognises that some publishers have specific requirements that may prevail over the specific provisions of this Policy. Where this is the case, researchers will be responsible for retaining evidence of these requirements to support decisions made about authorship of the research output.

## Policy Provisions

### 1. Introduction

Authorship of a research output recognises an individual’s significant intellectual contribution to the work and responsibility for the content and dissemination of a publication.

Decisions about authorship inclusions have ethical and legal implications, with reputational consequences for researchers and the University.

This Research Authorship, Publication and Dissemination Policy (Policy) supports the principles and responsibilities of the UNSW Research Code of Conduct (Research Code); and obligation under the UNSW Code of Conduct to apply academic freedom in a manner consistent with a responsible and honest search for and dissemination of knowledge and truth.

The Policy also applies the Authorship: A guide supporting the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research and the Publication and dissemination of research: A guide supporting the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research. Where research involves consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples these codes need to be read alongside the NHMRC Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders 2018 and AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research.

In addition to exposure of researchers to proceedings for breaches of the above Ethical codes, wrongful attribution of authorship will invalidate publishing contracts and could expose named authors to legal proceedings for copyright infringement and breach of moral rights under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).

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1. This includes, but is not limited to, research proposals, grant applications, reports for funding agencies, tenders, patents and patent applications, where such documents are required to list contributors.
2. Guiding principles

2.1. Authorship of research outputs must be:
   a) an honest reflection of a contribution to research
   b) attributed fairly, and consistently with established disciplinary practice; and
   c) communicated clearly and transparently between the contributors to the research.

2.2. Research methodology, data and findings should be shared and communicated openly, responsibly and accurately at the earliest opportunity.

2.3. Journal editors may also have additional responsibilities in considering authorship inclusions. Authors may also find these sources helpful in interpreting best practice principles in their discipline.4

3. Authorship criteria

3.1. An author is an individual who:
   a) has made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research and its output; and
   b) agrees to be listed as an author.

3.2. A significant intellectual or scholarly contribution must include sole or shared responsibility for one, and should include a combination of two or more, of the following:
   a) conception and design of the research project or output
   b) acquisition of research data where the acquisition has required significant intellectual judgement, planning, design, or input
   c) contribution of significant knowledge, where justified, including any Indigenous knowledge
   d) analysis or interpretation of research data
   e) drafting significant parts of the research output or critically revising it to contribute to its interpretation.

3.3. Anyone who has contributed to the research and who meets the authorship criteria cannot be intentionally excluded as an author. For example, a researcher who has collected research data on the understanding or agreement that they would analyse and interpret that data and be recognised as an author cannot be later excluded from being an author having provided that significant intellectual contribution.

3.4. Authorship must not be attributed:
   a) when an individual has not made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research or its output; or
   b) solely upon:
      (i) the provision of funding or other benefits, data, materials, infrastructure, or access to equipment
      (ii) the provision of routine technical support, technical advice, or technical assistance
      (iii) the position or profession of an individual, such as their role as the author’s supervisor or head of department (‘gift authorship’)
      (iv) whether the contribution was paid for or voluntary; or
      (v) the status of an individual who has not made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution being perceived to elevate the esteem of the research (‘guest authorship’).

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4 The COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) Guidelines: See https://publicationethics.org/guidance/Guidelines
3.5. A corresponding author is, as agreed by all co-authors, responsible for communication with the publisher, managing communication between the co-authors and maintaining records of the authorship agreement referred to at section 4.3.3 of this Policy.

4. Author responsibilities

4.1. Ensure appropriate and fair attribution of authorship

4.1.1. Researchers must include only, and all, authors of research outputs who meet the authorship criteria detailed in this Policy, or if appropriate, the requirements of the publisher.

4.1.2. ‘Ghost authorship’ is not acceptable and is inconsistent with the principles and responsibilities of the Research Code.

4.1.3. An author must not be included or excluded from a research output without their written agreement. This written agreement should be provided by each author in a timely fashion. A record of each written agreement must be retained by the corresponding author. See section 4.3 below.

4.1.4. The corresponding author has primary responsibility for ensuring that all authors and contributors to the research and its output are appropriately recognised, regardless of their position or any changes in their position or role. This includes contributions from students and/or research trainees.

4.1.5. All authors should alert the corresponding author to any author or contributor who may have been omitted or incorrectly included.

4.1.6. Where an author is deceased prior to submission of the research output to the publisher, reasonable efforts should be made to obtain consent from the author’s estate. The status of the author should be noted in the publication.

4.1.7. Particular care should be taken in considering where contributions by Aboriginal collaborators amount to co-authorship. The NHMRC and AIATSIS codes and implementation guides require Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples be consulted about their right to assert and retain ownership of cultural and intellectual property.

4.2. Order of authorship

4.2.1. UNSW recognises that the order of listed authors differs between disciplines. Disciplinary norms or practices will prevail. For example, alphabetical listing, listing by seniority of researcher, or the most senior author listed last.

4.2.2. Researchers must be aware of the applicable disciplinary norm.

4.2.3. Where research is multi-disciplinary or similar, the authors must discuss and agree upon, the disciplinary norm that will apply.

4.3. Document authorship arrangements

4.3.1. All researchers should discuss authorship principles at an early stage and continue to do so throughout the research project.

4.3.2. Where there is more than one author of a research output, the authorship agreement, should be documented in accordance with the principles set out in section 4.3.3 below. The authorship agreement does not need to be a formal legal document. It may be in the form of an exchange of emails, a transcript of online discussions or other similar evidence of agreement.

Authorship agreement

4.3.3. The authorship agreement should include:

a) individuals to be attributed as authors and a description of the contribution made, or to be made, by each author

b) an indication of the order in which authors will appear (consistent with disciplinary norms and publication requirements)

c) at least one nominated corresponding author under this Policy (See section 3.5 above)

d) any acknowledgments to be made to individuals who contributed to the research or its output, but do not qualify as authors

e) any version of the research output to be submitted for publication or dissemination
f) the storage, location and access to all data underpinning the research output.

4.3.4. The corresponding author has primary responsibility for maintaining and retaining records of the authorship agreement and any agreed changes to the authorship of the research output.

4.3.5. Where the corresponding author is not from UNSW, all UNSW-based co-authors are encouraged to keep their own records.

4.4. Acknowledgement of other contributions

4.4.1. Contributions to research that do not meet the criteria for authorship (set out in section 3 of this Policy) should be acknowledged. For example, contributions from individuals or organisations providing support and/or research funding, resources and/or infrastructure.

4.4.2. Researchers should obtain written permission from contributors before acknowledging them in research outputs, as acknowledgment may imply a contributor’s endorsement of the research output. Such permission should also cover agreement from the contributor as to what they will be acknowledged for.

4.4.3. Researchers intending to publish Indigenous knowledge obtained through sources including manuscripts, audio, or video recordings, should seek approval from the Indigenous people involved in the project and the community from which the knowledge originates. Individual and collective contributors of the knowledge should also be acknowledged, as appropriate.

4.5. Be accountable for the research output

4.5.1. Each author is directly responsible for the accuracy and integrity of their respective contribution to the output.

4.5.2. All listed authors are collectively accountable for the accuracy and integrity of the whole research output.

4.5.3. Any individual who is unwilling to be accountable for their individual contribution and the collective contribution of all the authors of the research output or publication should not agree to, or be listed as, an author.

4.5.4. If an author is deceased (or cannot be contacted after reasonable attempts have been made), all remaining co-authors must continue to retain confidence in the accuracy and integrity of the deceased author’s contribution. This includes consideration of any underlying data and/or methodology.

4.5.5. All authors should alert the corresponding author to any author or contributor who may have been omitted.

4.5.6. Following publication, all authors must ensure that they appropriately respond to any concerns about the accuracy or integrity of any part of the research output. This includes providing all necessary evidence to demonstrate the accuracy and integrity of their data, materials or analysis, and if necessary, seek such evidence from the other co-authors. Where necessary, this also includes correcting the public record by way of an erratum or retraction, and co-operating in any processes to resolve authorship disagreements, including the UNSW Research Authorship and Publication Dispute Management Procedure.

4.5.7. UNSW Researchers should refer to Responsibilities 10 and 12 of the Research Code and its supporting documents for obligations relating to the integrity of the content of a research output.

4.6. Accurately reflect institutional affiliation

4.6.1. Authors must accurately reflect the institutional affiliation:

a) where they were engaged or employed when they undertook their major contribution to the research or its output

b) which owns and/or manages the intellectual property rights; and

c) which provided resources to the researcher or research.

4.6.2. Authors may list multiple affiliations where this is an accurate reflection of the above criteria.

4.7. Approve research output and prior to publication

4.7.1. All authors must approve the research output before its submission to a publisher or publication platform.

4.7.2. All authors must approve the copyright terms prior to publication.

4.7.3. The corresponding author must keep written records related to sections 4.7.1 and 4.7.2 that confirm the approval given by all the authors.

5. Researcher responsibilities in publication and dissemination of research

5.1. Disseminate research findings

5.1.1. Researchers are responsible for disseminating a full and accurate account of their research, ensuring that decisions about research publication or dissemination are not inappropriately influenced by the nature and direction of results (reporting bias)⁶.

5.1.2. Filing a patent may be a legitimate way in which to publish research results. However, researchers should consider the need to restrict publishing research findings where they intend to submit a patent application.

Dissemination of research findings in the public domain may void a patent application.

5.1.3. Preprints are now a part of the open research landscape, and their use can accelerate the dissemination of research. Researchers can post a research manuscript on a public server as a preprint to allow research outputs to be available and useable prior to peer review.

5.2. Ensure accuracy of research

5.2.1. Researchers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

a) the methodology, data and findings are reported completely, accurately, unambiguously, and are consistent with international guidelines and conventions appropriate to their discipline/s. Researchers must ensure that conclusions are justified by the results and any limitations are appropriately acknowledged.

b) relevant negative results as well as findings that may be contrary to any stated hypothesis are included; and

c) where they become aware of unintentional, misleading or inaccurate statements about their work; or any errors or misleading information in the dissemination of their research findings, they must correct the records in a timely manner. This includes where research findings have been misrepresented by third parties such as the media.

5.3. Accurately disclose support and relevant interests

5.3.1. Researchers must ensure that:

a) they disclose conflicts of interest to journal editors, readers of the published work, and to external bodies from which funds are sought.

Researchers have an obligation to disclose at the time of reporting, proposing or submission of research, any conflict of interest which has the potential to influence research and investigations, publication and media reports, grant applications, applications for appointment and promotion, or research commercialisation.

b) communications about research and its findings identify the host institution/s and all sources of support for the research, including sponsorship or funding arrangements.

Publications must include information on financial sources or support for the research. This must include recognition of the support of the University in cases where a by-line is not included. Financial sponsorship that carries an embargo on the naming of the sponsor should be avoided.

⁶ Further guidance on avoiding reporting bias can be found in Chapter 10 of the Cochrane Handbook, https://methods.cochrane.org/bias/reporting-biases. See also reporting guidelines at http://equator-network.org.
c) they acknowledge and fully disclose the involvement of UNSW and any sponsors, unless there are restrictions on communications which may have been agreed with the sponsor; and

d) they disclose relevant interests and manage conflicts of interest consistent with the UNSW Research Code, UNSW Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Management Policy and UNSW Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Management Procedure.

This includes fully disclosing relevant interests upon submission of publications and to consider if other actions are required to manage potential conflicts of interest.

5.4. Cite and acknowledge relevant work

Researchers must ensure that they:

a) cite and acknowledge their own work and the work of others (whether published or unpublished sources) accurately and according to the Research Code, section 4.4 (Acknowledgement of other contributors) above and UNSW Plagiarism Policy, and the accepted conventions within the relevant discipline/s

b) cite primary sources and data to ensure that credit for research is attributed fairly and to facilitate the easy location of the origin of a work, a finding, and idea or research data; and

c) where they seek to publish the same research in more than one publication, such as in an original journal article, followed by publication in book form and/or in anthologies, collections and translations that they disclose this detail at the time of submission for publication. Disclosure must also be included in the work itself to prevent any such re-use having the effect of portraying previously presented ideas or data as new.

5.5. Obtain necessary permission to reproduce copyright material

Researchers must obtain the necessary written permission to substantially reproduce any copyright material owned by a third party. This includes, but is not limited to, any text, illustration, table, or other material, including data, audio, video, film stills, screenshots, musical notation, and any sound recording. Any use of third-party owned materials must be fully attributed and not impinge upon the moral rights of the author.

Reproduction of short extracts of text and some types of material may be permitted as fair dealing not requiring written permission, on the basis that the materials are reproduced:

a) for scholarly criticism or review (not merely illustration); and

b) accurately, either with quotation marks or as displayed text; and

c) with full attribution.

For further information refer to the UNSW Library’s online guidance on copyright or contact the relevant UNSW Outreach Librarian.

5.6. Foster transparency in research and publication

Researchers are responsible for ensuring that:

a) Where appropriate, research plans and protocols are approved and registered with the relevant body or institution prior to the commencement of research. This may include ensuring appropriate ethics approvals are in place, a prior agreement about anticipated co-authorship and assignment of intellectual property ownership of future research outputs and data.

b) before recruiting the first participant in a research project that prospectively assigns participants to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects on health outcomes, the research project is registered as a clinical trial on a publicly accessible register (that complies with international standards).

Other human and animal research may also be registered on international databases.

c) conclusions are justified by the results and any limitations are appropriately acknowledged.

d) publication of multiple full papers drawing the same conclusions from the same set of research findings is not acceptable, except where there is full cross-referencing within the papers (for example, in a series of closely related works, a review article, or where a
complete work grew out of a preliminary publication, such as an abstract or conference presentation, and this is fully acknowledged).

e) they accurately describe the state of publication (in preparation, submitted, under review, accepted for publication, in press), research funding (applied for, granted, funding period), and any awards conferred.

f) publication of the same material translated into different languages is acceptable provided that the original source is fully acknowledged.

g) re-publication of control data (rather than performing new control experiments) is not acceptable unless a full justification is provided and is approved by the journal editor.

h) where they submit substantially similar work to more than one publisher, they must disclose this fact to the publishers at the time of submission.

i) they fully disclose at the time of submission relevant interests to publishers and readers of published works

j) where research that has not yet been subjected to peer review and is privately reported, researchers must fully disclose the unpublished status of the work and the peer-review mechanisms to which the research output will be subjected.

k) research data, survey instruments, software, coding manuals and tools, and resources that supported the analysis of research data (in a form that makes them findable and accessible in future), is published or shared with interested parties, where appropriate to do so. These materials should also be stored in accordance with the Research Data Governance and Materials Handling Policy and supporting documents; and

l) research outputs are available on an appropriate institutional or discipline repository, such as the UNSW institutional repository, UNSWorks, according to the UNSW Open Access Policy

5.7. Protect confidential and sensitive information

5.7.1. Researchers are to protect confidential and sensitive information and to consider the consequences and outcomes of research or its outputs prior to publication and dissemination activities, including any:

a) ethical or legal restrictions relating to intellectual property and the appropriate handling of confidential or other sensitive information, such as Indigenous knowledge.

This includes any instances when publication may be restricted, delayed or limited by ethical or legal obligations, such as intellectual property arrangements, confidentiality obligations made to participants or restrictions on the publication of sensitive information.

b) actual or potential harm to human, animal or plant health, the environment or national security which may arise.

5.7.2. Researchers must comply with data storage, retention, disposal and classification requirements outlined in the UNSW Research Data Governance and Materials Handling Policy and supporting documents.

5.7.3. Researchers must ensure that all relevant ethics and compliance requirements have been met in the course of the conduct of research.

5.7.4. Researchers should seek advice from UNSW Legal Services before disseminating research or technical data which may be considered confidential or sensitive. This includes dissemination via pre-publication activities, such as submitting an article to a journal for peer review.

5.8. Communicate research broadly

5.8.1. Researchers are to communicate their findings to the widest possible audience, having regard to using forms of publication and dissemination which:

a) are accessible to that audience

b) engage with relevant communities, using appropriate communication channels to inform genuine public debate; and

c) publish and share research ethically.
5.8.2. Where research affects or is of particular interest to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, the outcomes of the research must be presented in a format which is culturally appropriate and acceptable.

Researchers must comply with Principle 6 (Recognise the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in Research that affects or is of significance to them) and Responsibility 6 (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples) of the Research Code.

5.9. Consider potential application and consequences of publication and dissemination of research

The publication and dissemination of research can sometimes have unintended consequences for individuals and communities. Research, especially where it is reported in a preliminary, incomplete, informal or summary form, may be liable to misinterpretation.

Research may also be misused to cause harm to human, animal or plant health, the environment or national security.

For further information UNSW researchers should contact a Research Integrity Advisor (typically the Associate Dean, Research in each Faculty) or corporate communications within the Division of External Engagement.

5.10. Publication and Intellectual Property

Researchers should have regard to the intellectual property rights of third parties prior to publication. Reference should be made to the UNSW Intellectual Property Policy and if necessary, seek advice prior to publication of any research that has potential commercial value.

6. Authorship or publication disputes and breaches of the Research Code

6.1. Authorship and publication disputes between UNSW researchers should be resolved according to the UNSW Research Authorship and Publication Dispute Management Procedure.

6.2. Potential breaches of the Research Code will be managed according to the UNSW Research Misconduct Procedure.
### Accountabilities

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<th>Responsible Officer</th>
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<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Director, UNSW Conduct and Integrity</td>
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### Supporting Information

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<td>Supporting Documents</td>
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### Related Documents

- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018
- Authorship: A guide supporting the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research
- Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Management Policy
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Management Procedure
- Guidelines for Copyright Ownership
- Ethical Conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders
- Handling Research Material & Data Procedure
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Open Access Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Publication and dissemination of research: A guide supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Research Code of Conduct
- Research Data Governance & Materials Handling Policy
- Research Misconduct Procedure

### Superseded Documents

- Research Authorship and Publication Dispute Management Procedure

### File Number

- 2021/045204

### Definitions and Acronyms

#### Author

An individual who has made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to research and its output and who has agreed to be listed as an author.7

#### Authorship

At UNSW this is the practice of the inclusion of researchers who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research and its output according to the authorship criteria set out in this Policy.

#### Breach of the Research Code

A failure by a UNSW Researcher to meet the principles or responsibilities of the UNSW Research Code of Conduct (Research Code). A breach of the Research Code may refer to a single breach or multiple breaches.

#### Coursework Student

- Undergraduate students undertaking research, research subjects or a research assessment in fulfilling their course requirements (e.g. Honours program students); or
- Postgraduate coursework students (e.g. Masters by Coursework) undertaking research, research subjects or a research assessment in fulfilling their course requirements.

The Research Code only applies to those aspects where Research is/has been conducted.

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7 Authorship: A guide supporting the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research, National Health and Medical Research Council, Commonwealth of Australia 2019 p6
| **Ghost authorship** | An individual, such as a research assistant or industry researcher, who meets the criteria for authorship but is not listed as an author |
| **Gift authorship** | Awarding of co-authorship based on the position or profession of an individual e.g their role as the author's supervisor, senior researcher or head of department/school rather than any specific contribution to the research output in question.8 |
| **Guest authorship** | Awarding of co-authorship because of the status of an individual, rather than a specific authorial contribution, in order to elevate the esteem of the research output9. |
| **Higher Degree Research (HDR) Candidate** | A person enrolled in a UNSW Higher Degree Research program (Doctor of Philosophy, Professional Doctorate, Masters by Research or Master of Philosophy). |
| **Indigenous** | Indigenous people of any culture, including but not limited to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. |
| **Peer Review** | The ‘impartial and independent assessment of the scholarly work, research, or ideas of others who have knowledge and/or expertise in the same or related field10. Peer review includes, but is not limited to, group meetings and assessment of theses, grant applications, conference abstracts, and research works submitted for publication or display including books and creative works. UNSW Researchers in receipt of public funding have a responsibility to participate in the peer review process. See also the UNSW Responsible Peer Review Procedure. |
| **Preprints** | A version of a scientific manuscript posted on a public server prior to formal peer review. Once posted, the preprint becomes a permanent part of the scientific record, citable with its own digital handle. |
| **Research** | 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, inventions and understandings. This could include:  
  - Synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative  
  - The conception, design, conduct and reporting of research, including all associated research activities, methods, procedures and research outputs; or  
  - Other activities in support/maintenance of a Researcher’s functions at UNSW, including undertaking responsible conduct of Research training, Research supervision (limited to mentoring on responsible Research conduct and monitoring Research Trainee conduct) and participating in peer review or other activities as required. |
| **Research Code** | UNSW Research Code of Conduct |
| **Research Data and Materials** | This includes all raw data, and any data produced or generated in the conduct of research and associated research activities (including any data collection; and/or analysis). This also includes the storage, retention and disposal of research data. See also the UNSW Research Data Governance & Materials Handling Policy and UNSW Research Data Governance & Materials Handling Procedure. |
| **Research output** | A research output communicates or makes available the findings of research that may be published in hardcopy, electronic or other form. Examples of research outputs include, but are not limited to journal articles, book chapters, books, conference papers, reports, datasets, patents and patent applications, performances, videos, exhibitions and research theses. These can be in draft or published form. |
| **Research Trainee/s** | Any HDR Candidate or any Researcher who is within 5 years of having obtained their postgraduate Research qualification, excluding any career interruptions, and who is being supervised by another Researcher. |

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8 Ibid p2  
9 Ibid p2  
10 Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, Chapter 6
### Researcher/s

Person or persons engaged or affiliated with UNSW who conducts research.

At UNSW this includes UNSW academic staff, non-academics/professionals undertaking research, conjoint appointments (those who have been conferred an academic title by UNSW in accordance with the UNSW Conferring Academic Titles Policy), and visiting appointments undertaking research at UNSW, including staff classified as “professional and technical” and casual staff undertaking research at UNSW.

Researchers also include Research Trainees, Higher Degree Research (HDR) Candidates and Coursework Students.

### Revision History

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<td>1.0</td>
<td>President and Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>15 December 2021</td>
<td>1 January 2021</td>
<td>New Document</td>
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