Policy Redesign Project

All policies and procedures are being reviewed as part of this project. This document is pending review, but remains in effect until the review is carried out.

Authorship Policy

Establishment: Academic Senate, 29 June 2016

Last Amended: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), 27 July 2021

Nature of Amendment: Rescission of provisions relating to publication and peer review, consequential to Academic Senate approval of amendments to Research Integrity Policy.

Date Last Reviewed:

Responsible Officer: Director, Research Development and Support

1. Scope and Objectives

1.1 This policy defines the rights and responsibilities of researchers and the University relating to authorship. It should be read in conjunction with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (the Code).

1.2 This policy applies to all researchers conducting research under the auspices of Flinders University, including staff, students and affiliates.

2. Policy Principles

2.1 This policy is based on guidance in the Code. Where there may be a conflict between this policy and the Code, the requirements of the Code will prevail.

2.2 To be acknowledged as an author, researchers must have made a substantial intellectual contribution to the work, and be able to take responsibility for the part that they contributed.

2.3 Breaches of this policy or the Code will be managed in accordance with the Breach of Research Integrity Procedures.
3. Responsibilities

3.1 Each author is responsible for the integrity, accuracy, originality and validity of the research contribution they make to published work.

3.2 Authors will ensure that all those who have contributed to the research, facilities or materials are properly acknowledged, and that where individuals are to be named, consent is obtained in accordance with procedures pursuant to this policy.

3.3 In cases in which a work has more than one author, a lead author will be appointed to take responsibility for recording authorship, and managing communications and liaison with the publisher/editor and co-authors.

3.4 Authors will ensure that publications are made freely available as soon as possible, subject to relevant legal and contractual requirements, including those of funding bodies and publishers, via the University’s open access repository.

4. Procedures

4.1 Attribution of Authorship

4.1.1 In all cases, authorship must be based on a substantial scholarly contribution to the work through a combination of the following (preferably at least two):
- conception and design of the research;
- analysis and interpretation of research data; and
- drafting or revision of significant parts of the work so as to contribute to the interpretation.

4.1.2 Authorship must be offered to those who meet the above criteria.

4.1.3 A person who qualifies as an author must not be included or excluded as an author without their permission. Formal, written records of acceptance or denial of authorship, including original hand-written signatures, email, fax, or equivalent written acknowledgement, must be retained by the lead author’s School or Business Unit. Acceptances should include a brief statement of contribution to the project. Where it is not possible to contact all contributors to a publication (applicable in cases where a person to whom the title of author applies is not contactable or has died), then the publication should attribute authorship providing there are no reasonable grounds upon which to base an argument that this author would have objected to their identification as an author of the work.

The University’s Authorship and Data Location Form may be used as a written acknowledgement of authorship.

4.1.4 Authors of web-based publications must take responsibility for the content of the publication, and must be clearly identified in the publication in accordance with the guidelines above.

4.2 Acknowledgement and Affiliation

4.2.1 The right of authorship is not tied to a position or profession, and is not dependent on whether the contribution was paid or voluntary. It is not sufficient to have only provided materials or routine technical support, or to have only generated the data on which the publication is based. Authorship is only granted to those providing substantial intellectual involvement with the research and thus may not be applicable to contributors such as research assistants in all cases. Where assistants have generated the data upon which the publication relies, but have performed no analysis and have made no intellectual contribution to the work, then authorship is not appropriate.

4.2.2 Where contribution to the research and publication has not been sufficient to warrant the status of
author, such contribution must be acknowledged in a manner consistent with current practice in the relevant academic discipline.

4.2.3 Flinders University must be identified as the affiliated organisation in the author by-line of research outputs for Flinders employees. For publications for which a substantial amount of the research has been conducted, funded or otherwise supported by Flinders University, i.e. research outputs of academic status holders, the University must also in this instance be identified as the affiliated organisation in the author by-line.

4.2.4 Publications or outputs should disclose financial and other sponsor support as appropriate and agreed by the sponsoring body.

4.3 Order of Multiple Authors

In fields in which position in a list of authors is significant, all parties must:
- understand the relevant discipline's principles upon which placement in the sequence of authors will be made;
- determine author listings as early as possible within the research project, which may include recognition of equal contributions by two or more authors; and
- contribute to the manuscript in a manner befitting their placement in the authorship hierarchy.

4.4 Resolution of Author Disputes

4.4.1 Staff disputes concerning authorship should be resolved through the grievance processes outlined in the Enterprise Agreement.

4.4.2 Higher Degree by Research student complaints concerning authorship should be resolved through the processes outlined in the Student Complaints Policy.

Related Links

- Academic Status Policy
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Higher Degrees by Research Policy
- Research Integrity Policy
- Breach of Research Integrity Procedures