Alphacrucis University College

Research Policy

Effective Date: 2026.10.26
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Version: v1 2026.10.26

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the principles, responsibilities and institutional arrangements governing research conducted under the auspices of AC. It supports a research culture marked by integrity, rigour, accountability, ethical conduct, public benefit and responsible stewardship of resources.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all research conducted under AC auspices, including research undertaken by faculty, HDR candidates, adjunct and honorary faculty, visiting researchers, research centres, research clusters and approved external collaborators.

3. Definitions

3.1. **Research** means the creation of new knowledge, or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way, to generate new concepts, methods, interpretations, insights, or creative works.

3.2. **Researcher** means any person who conducts, assists with, supervises, manages, reports or disseminates research under AC auspices.

3.3. **High-quality publications** refer to research outputs that demonstrate rigour and a substantive contribution to knowledge, published in reputable outlets with appropriate peer review or equivalent scholarly quality assurance. Research quality is determined in the context of each discipline and publication type, including with reference to journal rankings and publisher rankings.

3.4. **Early Career Researcher** means a researcher within 5 years of completing their PhD or equivalent doctoral qualification, adjusted to account for career interruptions and periods of part-time employment.

3.5. This policy distinguishes **research** from **scholarship** in accordance with TEQSA's usage: research is directed to the creation of new knowledge or the new and creative use of existing knowledge, while scholarship refers more broadly to activities that develop, maintain, apply or transmit advanced understanding in a field, including through teaching, learning, research training and professional practice.

4. Policy Statement

4.1. Governance and Responsibility

4.1.1. Academic Board has ultimate academic governance oversight of research and research training. Research Committee advises Academic Board on research strategy, research policy, research performance, internal research funding, and other matters relating to research governance.

4.1.2. The DVP Research is responsible for implementation of this policy and for leadership of AC's research strategy, research reporting, and research performance monitoring. Heads of School support research activity within their schools and approve research workload allocations.

4.1.3. The Director of Graduate Research is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy in relation to HDR candidates and HDR supervision.

4.1.4. The Human Research Ethics Committee reviews and monitors human research in accordance with AC's Research Ethics Policy and the National Statement. HDR supervisors are responsible for supporting HDR candidates in responsible research conduct, publication planning, and timely progress.

4.1.5. Researchers are responsible for complying with ethics and funding conditions, maintaining accurate records, managing conflicts of interest, protecting confidential information, and disseminating findings responsibly.

4.2. Responsible conduct and integrity

4.2.1. All research under AC auspices must comply with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

4.2.2. Human research must not commence until any required ethics approval has been obtained. Researchers must comply with all ethics approval conditions.

4.2.3. Concerns about possible breaches of responsible research conduct must be reported and managed through the relevant research integrity or misconduct procedure.

4.3. Use of artificial intelligence in research

4.3.1. Researchers may use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to support their work, but remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality and integrity of their research. Any AI-generated references or content must be carefully verified. Researchers must retain intellectual control over their research, including its central arguments, interpretations and conclusions. Any substantive changes proposed by AI must be critically evaluated and supported by the underlying research evidence.

4.3.2. Authorship of research outputs can be attributed only to people, not to AI tools.

4.3.3. Confidential information and restricted research data must not be entered into AI tools unless specifically authorised for the intended use and consistent with participant consent, ethics approvals and AC's privacy and data protection requirements.

4.4. Data, records, and privacy

4.4.1. Researchers must create and retain complete, accurate and secure records of research, including research data and primary materials. Records must be sufficient to verify findings, support ethics and reporting obligations, and enable audit.

4.4.2. Research data must be stored in approved AC systems or other secure systems approved for the project. Researchers must manage privacy, confidentiality, consent, access, and data transfer in accordance with ethics approvals and privacy obligations.

4.5. Conflicts of interest and external partnerships

4.5.1. Researchers must disclose and manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest that may affect the project or its public communication.

4.5.2. External research partnerships must be consistent with AC's mission, research strategy, and governance requirements. Written agreements are required where projects involve external funding, data sharing, intellectual property, commissioned deliverables, or international partners.

4.6. Research outputs and reporting

4.6.1. AC supports the responsible dissemination of research through peer-reviewed publications, creative works, policy submissions, public scholarship, conferences and other appropriate

channels. Authorship and intellectual property are governed by AC's separate Authorship and Intellectual Property policies.

4.6.2. Researchers must use AC affiliation where AC employment, funding, ethics approval, HDR candidature, or other institutional support has contributed to the research.

4.6.3. Researchers must report research outputs through AC's approved research data collection systems. AC will maintain current, accurate and auditable records of research outputs and research activity.

4.7. Research workload, funding, and research-active status

4.7.1. AC may support research through workload allocation, internal funding, research incentives, mentoring, research centres, and research clusters. Allocation of research workload and internal research support is determined strategically, taking account of research quality, institutional priorities, career stage, and available resources.

4.7.2. Faculty with a research workload allocation are required to be research active and must produce high-quality research outputs consistent with their allocation, appointment level, and career stage, with provision for Early Career Researchers and faculty undertaking a PhD.

4.8. HDR research environment

4.8.1. AC will ensure that HDR candidates undertake research training in an environment of active research, appropriate supervision, suitable resources, ethics governance, progress monitoring, and academic quality assurance. HDR research training is governed by the HDR Candidature, HDR Examination, Research Supervision and Research Ethics policies and related procedures.

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5. Procedures

5.1. Determination of Research-Active Status

5.1.1. A member of faculty will be classified as research active where, within the past 5 years, they meet one of the following criteria:

a. they have produced at least 5 research publication outputs (where an academic monograph is equivalent to 5 outputs); or
b. they have produced at least 3 research publication outputs and had at least one HDR supervision completion; or
c. they have produced at least 3 research publication outputs and have served as lead researcher on an externally funded research grant or research contract.

5.1.2. Before a research workload allocation is approved, the Head of School (or delegate) and faculty member will agree on research objectives, expected outputs and indicative timelines. Each allocation will be reviewed annually as part of the performance review process. The faculty member will provide a brief account of their research progress against the agreed expectations. Following the review, the Head of School, in consultation with the DVP Research, will decide whether to renew the research workload allocation at its current level, or to change or discontinue it.

5.1.3. Research Committee will review an annual summary of faculty workload allocation and performance to evaluate the effectiveness of workload allocations and recommend improvements as needed.

5.2. Journal and Publisher Rankings

5.2.1. AC will maintain an academic journal and book ranking tool to assist researchers in assessing the standing of publication venues. The tool supports publication planning, research reporting, and institutional monitoring of research quality.

5.2.2. Researchers are expected to avoid predatory publishers and low-quality publication outlets. Where there is any uncertainty, they are expected to seek advice from senior researchers in their field.

5.3. Recording Research Outputs

5.3.1. Researchers are responsible for maintaining accurate and current records of their research outputs. All research outputs will be recorded in AC's faculty profiles database. The Research Office will monitor and quality-control research output records for performance monitoring and reporting.

5.4. Research Data and Records Management

5.4.1. Research records will be managed in accordance with the approved ethics application, including their secure destruction or continued retention following the applicable minimum retention period.

6. Responsible for Implementation

6.1. DVP Research.

7. Related AC Policies or Documents, Standards and Legislations

7.1. AC Policies or Documents

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following AC policies available at https://ww1.ac.edu.au/ppm/

7.1.1. Academic Freedom Policy;
7.1.2. Authorship Policy;
7.1.3. HDR Admissions Policy;
7.1.4. HDR Candidature Policy;
7.1.5. HDR Examination Policy;
7.1.6. Intellectual Property Policy;
7.1.7. Research Ethics Policy;
7.1.8. Research Supervision Policy;
7.1.9. Special Studies Program Policy.

7.2. Relevant Standards and Legislation

7.2.1. Higher Education Standards Framework;
7.2.2. Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018;
7.2.3. Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018;
7.2.4. National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023;
7.2.5. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth);
7.2.6. Copyright Act 1968 (Cth).

8. Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed by the DVP Research on a regular basis in accordance with the Policy Development and Review Policy. Any proposed changes will be tabled at the Research Committee for endorsement and Academic Board for approval. Revisions will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders upon approval.

9. History of Approval and Amendments

Policy owner	DVP Research

Alphacrucis University College

Policy category	Research
Policy status	Approved
Approval Body	Academic Board
Endorsement Body	Research Committee
Approval Date	2026.10.26
Last Review Date	2026.10.26
History of Policy Amendments	
V1 2026.10.26	New policy — differentiated from the Research and Scholarship Policy, per Academic Board's request

Add a new row for each version of the policy. Do not remove previous changes.

Appendices
N/A