Research Authorship Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) Authorship of a research publication is an acknowledgement of the substantial contribution made by a Researcher. It carries with it both recognition of work done and responsibility for the material contributed.

(2) This procedure supports the principles established in the following documents, and must be read in conjunction with these documents:

a. Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Code);
b. Authorship: A guide to supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Guide); and
c. Responsible Conduct of Research Policy.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This procedure:

a. details the criteria and protocols for acknowledging research authorship and seeks to recognise the restrictions associated with commercial publication; and
b. provides pathways for resolving any conflict that may arise as a result of the attribution of research authorship.

Section 3 - Audience

(4) University of Newcastle (the University) Researchers.

Section 4 - Scope

(5) This procedure applies to all research outputs of the University.

Section 5 - Document Specific Definitions

(6) In the context of this document:

a. as defined in the Guide, the corresponding author is the author who, as agreed by all co-authors, is responsible for communication with publishers, managing communication between co-authors, and maintaining records of the authorship agreement. This acknowledges that in some disciplines scholarly works may include more than one corresponding author;
b. as defined in the Guide, the research output communicates or makes available the findings of research that may be in hardcopy, electronic or other form; and
c. Researcher means any University staff, Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates and volunteers who conduct research or contribute to research at the University.

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Section 6 - Criteria for Authorship

(7) As detailed in the Guide, authorship must be based on a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution that comprises, as a minimum, at least one and preferably a combination of two or more of the following:

a. conception and design of the project or output;
b. acquisition of research data where the acquisition has required significant intellectual judgement, planning, design, or input;
c. contribution of knowledge, where justified, including Indigenous knowledge;
d. analysis or interpretation of research data;
e. drafting significant parts of the research output or critically revising it so as to contribute to its interpretation.

(8) CREDIT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) is recommended as a useful guide to acknowledging the roles of all contributors to research outputs. The descriptions of the contributions of each author must be detailed to include who was responsible for each individual component including project design, data collection, generation of figures, analysis, interpretation etc.

(9) It is a breach of the Code to claim, demand, or accept authorship or to offer or attribute authorship to someone else without that person having made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution as described in clause 7. It is also a breach of the Code to fail to offer to ascribe authorship to people who meet the criteria described in clause 7.

Section 7 - Contributions other than authorship

(10) Research contributions that do not meet the criteria for authorship should be acknowledged where appropriate, including funding bodies and editors. Researchers must obtain permission from named contributors before acknowledging them in a research output, unless such permission is provided via a collaborative agreement signed on behalf of the University (in the case of research funded by industry or community partners).

(11) As described in the Guide, Researchers who intend to publish Indigenous knowledge obtained through sources including unpublished manuscripts or recordings must seek approval from the Indigenous people involved in the research, or from the Indigenous community from which the knowledge originates, and the contributors to the knowledge must be acknowledged.

(12) Examples of contributions that are not considered to meet the criteria for authorship are detailed in Section 2.1 of the Guide.

Section 8 - Collaborations

(13) Collaborating Researchers must establish early agreement on authorship of research outputs, and this should be reviewed prior to the commencement of writing any publication evolving from the research. As described in the Guide, the agreement should be in writing (including documentation in emails or transcripts) and include:

a. authorship criteria and processes in accordance with the Code;
b. identification of those who will be recognised as authors, including lead and corresponding author roles;
c. acknowledgment of institutional contributions and a description of the contribution each person has made (or will make);
d. an indication of the order in which the authors will appear on the research output, consistent with any applicable disciplinary norms and publication requirements;

e. management of disagreements related to authorship or contributions; and
f. the use of institutional affiliations and branding.

(14) Where a research publication has multiple authors, a corresponding author/s must be determined prior to the preparation of a research output.

(15) The corresponding author/s must be determined by agreement in writing with collaborating Researchers and/or in line with discipline conventions.

Section 9 - Consent and Statement of Authorship

(16) A person who qualifies as an author can only be included or excluded as an author with their written consent, unless clause 20 applies. The author's consent must be accompanied by details of their contributions as it relates to the criteria listed in clause 7.

(17) Consent may be indicated by email in cases where it is not practical to obtain signed notification of consent.

(18) Where research is published, the corresponding author is required to complete and facilitate the completion of a Statement of Authorship and Location of Data Form. The corresponding author is also responsible for ensuring that the completed Statement of Authorship and Location of Data Form is stored with any data underpinning the research publication.

(19) All notifications of consent must be retained in accordance with the Records Governance Policy by the corresponding author to align with data retention timeframes.

(20) If an author is deceased or cannot be contacted despite reasonable and clearly documented efforts, and consent cannot be obtained, the publication can proceed provided there is no basis to believe that this person would have objected. Where publication proceeds on this basis, it must be noted in the publication.

(21) Where another acknowledgment of contribution is given in line with clause 12, consent must also be obtained from the contributor to be acknowledged prior to publication.

Section 10 - Disputes about Authorship and Acknowledgement

Pre-publication

(22) Where agreement on acknowledgement, attribution, or ordering of authorship cannot be achieved prior to publication, collaborating authors and other stakeholders must reconsider the applicable disciplinary principles and authorship criteria, and take all reasonable steps to attempt to resolve the matter themselves.

(23) Where agreement remains unresolved despite making an attempt as detailed in 22, disputing parties must seek assistance from the relevant

a. College Research Integrity Advisor in the first instance;
b. Head of School; or
c. College Pro Vice-Chancellor.

(24) In instances where the issue cannot be resolved locally, it should be referred to the Research Integrity Unit.

Post publication

(25) Where authorship is in dispute and publication has already occurred, the matter must be referred to the Research Breach Investigation Procedure as a potential breach of the Code.

Section 11 - Roles and Responsibilities

Researchers

(26) Researchers are responsible for:

a. offering authorship to all those - including Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates or Honours and undergraduate students - who meet the criteria set out in clause 7, and for not offering authorship to those who do not meet those criteria, regardless of their role or the extent of their technical or other contribution;
b. ensuring that all contributors to the research, including the provision of facilities, materials or funding, are properly acknowledged in line with discipline conventions and contractual agreements;
c. ensuring the accuracy and integrity of their contribution, and for taking reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy and integrity of other contributions, to any publication;
d. assigning authorship in accordance with this Procedure and the principles of authorship identified in the Code, the Guide, and the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy;
e. alerting the corresponding author to any author or contributor who may have been inadvertently omitted;
f. maintaining a knowledge of and applying any relevant discipline conventions; and
g. attempting to resolve and/or co-operate in any process undertaken to resolve a dispute regarding authorship.

Corresponding Authors

(27) For each publication, the corresponding author/s is responsible for:

a. ensuring that all contributors are properly recognised;
b. recording and retaining records regarding the attribution of authorship;
c. managing research data that underpins the publication in accordance with the Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure;
d. managing communication with publishers;
e. ensuring the University is appropriately recognised in all research outputs, by citing “The University of Newcastle, Australia” as the primary institution in the author by-line for all University affiliated authors. The relevant Institute, School or Centre may be listed as a secondary or tertiary byline;
f. ensuring contributions that do not meet the criteria for authorship are acknowledged in line with discipline practice on a discretionary basis, and clearly documenting the basis for the exercise of the discretion;
g. ensuring the metadata is submitted describing the research output, and where applicable, the full version of the output, is submitted into the University's open access institutional repository (NOVA); and
h. ensuring the full text version of the output is made open access immediately upon publication, as per Section 5 of the Open Access Policy.

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Higher Degree by Research (HDR)" - Is a postgraduate university degree involving a unique supervised research project. These degrees are either a Masters of Philosophy, or a Doctoral degree (either Professional Doctorate or a PhD).

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Candidate" - With regard to Higher Degree by Research it has the same meaning as student. For all other instances it is a person considered for appointment to a position.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"School" - An organisational unit forming part of a College or Division, responsible for offering a particular course.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Undergraduate" - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.