

Version

#1

Author

Dr Gordon McGurk
OmniAdvisory Consulting

Owner

Deputy Director

Policy Type

Policy

Approval Authority

Executive



Approved
September 2025



Effective
September 2025



Review
March 2026

Contents

1	BACKGROUND	2
2	PURPOSE	2
3	SCOPE	2
4	DEFINITIONS	3
5	RESEARCH INTEGRITY AS A MARKER OF RESEARCH QUALITY.....	3
6	MEETING COMMUNITY AND SECTOR EXPECTATIONS.....	4
7	RELEVANT LEGISLATION, STANDARDS, CODES AND GUIDELINES.....	4
8	PRINCIPLES OF GOOD RESEARCH CONDUCT	4
9	THE PERKINS RESEARCH INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK	5
10	INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESEARCH INTEGRITY	6
11	RESEARCHER RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESEARCH INTEGRITY	6
12	MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY	8
13	ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESEARCH INTEGRITY	8
14	CONTACT OFFICERS.....	8
	APPROVAL AND AMENDED HISTORY	8

1 BACKGROUND

The Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research ('the Perkins') was established in 1998 to unify Western Australian scientists in a collaborative research powerhouse. It now brings together more than 250 research and staff to conduct medical research on major diseases that impact the community, including diseases like cancer, heart disease, diabetes and rare genetic diseases.

As an Independent Medical Research Institute (MRI), the Perkins has a responsibility in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) ('the Code')¹ to 'Establish and maintain good governance and management practices for responsible research conduct'². To achieve this, the Perkins has developed this Research Integrity Framework ('the Framework').

2 PURPOSE

The purposes of the Framework are to:

- Set out the Perkins' Framework for research integrity management;
- Specify responsibilities and accountabilities in relation to maintaining research integrity and the conduct of research;
- Outline the Institute's mechanisms for handling breaches of the Code; and
- Outline how the Perkins will meet the expectations of the sector and community in relation to research integrity.

3 SCOPE

The Framework applies to all Researchers and includes persons conducting research and relevant professional services at or under any affiliation agreement with the Perkins. This includes research activity conducted by Perkins' staff, employed or visiting researchers, students and third parties using the Perkins to conduct research³.

¹ *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018*. National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra. See <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018#block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1>

² Ibid, Responsibility 1.

³ Currently most researchers are employed by UWA. However, this framework will apply to all researchers who are conducting work at or funded by the Perkins.

4 DEFINITIONS

The terms listed below should be read within the context of the Framework.

Term	Definition
Animal Ethics Committee (AEC)	A Committee constituted in accordance with the terms of reference and membership laid down in the Animal Code ⁴ and used by the Perkins to ensure that all research involving animals is conducted in accordance with the Animal Code and with relevant State and Commonwealth legislation ⁵ .
Animal Code	<i>Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes</i> , as amended from time to time.
Assessment Officer (AO)	The person delegated by the Designated Officer to conduct a preliminary assessment of an issue raised that may be a breach of the Code.
Code	<i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018</i> , as amended from time to time.
Designated Officer (DO)	An individual appointed by the Director to receive any research integrity issues raised and decide how the issue should be treated.
NHMRC	The National Health and Medical Research Council.
Questionable Research Practices	A spectrum of research-related behaviours that range from honest errors and mistakes at one end, through to more serious behaviours at the other and which can lead to untrustworthy results and undermine the entire purpose of research ⁶ .
Research Integrity Advisor (RIA)	An experienced scientist appointed by the Perkins and who can provide advice on matters of research and research conduct, including how and to whom to make a complaint or raise an issue in relation to research.
Responsible Executive Officer (REO)	A senior officer in an institution who has final responsibility for receiving reports of the outcomes of processes of assessment or investigation of potential or found breaches of the Code and deciding on the course of action to be taken. In the Perkins, the REO is the Chief Executive Officer (Institute Director).
Researcher	Any researcher approved to conduct research at the Perkins. It includes but is not limited to employees, visiting scientists, students, affiliates, honorary appointees and professional services staff directly involved in research activities.

5 RESEARCH INTEGRITY AS A MARKER OF RESEARCH QUALITY

The Perkins is proud of its standing in the community in Western Australia. To ensure that the community can continue to have trust in research, the Perkins will use the Framework, in addition to other research management mechanisms, to be transparent about the way that research is managed and partly to demonstrate the quality with which the research is conducted at the Institute. This includes the way in which the Perkins manages funding,

⁴ *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, 8th edition*. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council. Currently under review. As in force from time to time.

⁵ The AEC has a role in research integrity matters as stated in section 5.5 (iii) of the Animal Code.

⁶ Taken from the UK Research Integrity Office publication on questionable research practices <https://ukrio.org/wp-content/uploads/Simon-Kolstoe-Guidance-QRPs-2023.pdf>

protects humans and animals, manages personal information and biospecimens, and engages with the community in relation to research.

6 MEETING COMMUNITY AND SECTOR EXPECTATIONS

While the Framework outlines how the Perkins will meet its responsibilities in accordance with the Code, it is important to understand that there are other stakeholders that have an expectation that all research, not just publicly funded research, meets the highest standards. These stakeholders include but are not limited to:

- Donors to and Supporters of the Perkins
- The Western Australian and broader Australian community
- State and Commonwealth Government including funding bodies;
- The Research community

The Perkins will meet these expectations by the development and implementation of a Framework that will help to ensure that all staff and students are aware of their responsibilities in relation to good research conduct.

7 RELEVANT LEGISLATION, STANDARDS, CODES AND GUIDELINES

Research is governed by legislation, standards, Codes and Guidelines which the Perkins has a requirement and a responsibility to follow. The relevant legislation and other publications for the purpose of this Framework can be summarised as follows⁷:

Relevant Legislation

- *Animal Welfare Act 2002 (WA)*
- *Animal Welfare (General) Regulations (2003) (WA) (where applicable)*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (WA)*
- *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (Cth)*
- *Therapeutic Goods Regulations 1990 (Cth)*

Relevant Standards, Codes and Guidelines

- *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 and associated guides*⁸
- *Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018*
- *Australian Code For The Care And Use Of Animals For Scientific Purposes, 8th edition (2013)*
- *National Statement for Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2025)*

8 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD RESEARCH CONDUCT

The Code lists 8 principles that are the hallmarks of responsible research conduct;

- **P1 Honesty** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research;
- **P2 Rigour** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research
- **P3 Transparency** in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings
- **P4 Fairness** in the treatment of others;

⁷ This list is not exhaustive.

⁸ The NHMRC has published several guides which should be read in conjunction with the Code. These are available at: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018#block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1>

- **P5 Respect** for research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment;
- **P6 Recognition** of the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of particular significance to them⁹;
- **P7 Accountability** for developing, undertaking and reporting of research; and
- **P8 Promotion** of responsible research practices.

The Perkins supports these principles and will endeavour, through the implementation of this Framework, to provide a research environment that is conducive to these principles being met by all Researchers at the Perkins.

9 THE PERKINS RESEARCH INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

To ensure a holistic approach to research integrity, the Perkins will adopt a comprehensive model for research integrity that incorporates institutional culture, organisational structures and systems and processes. The components of this model¹⁰ are listed below:

- **Institutional Research Integrity Culture-** Robust research integrity framework which incorporates a clear understanding of questionable research practices is implemented and supported by senior executive and researchers and where the institution is committed to following the Code and correcting the public record or repaying funding where necessary; institution ensures barriers that may prevent researchers from raising concerns are removed.
- **Clear Roles and Responsibilities-** related to research integrity which includes a Research Integrity Officer, a Designated Officer, Assessment Officer(s)¹¹ and Research Integrity Advisor(s) to provide guidance to individuals wanting to raise concerns in relation to research integrity.
- **Robust Systems-** to receive, triage (may include legal input), allocate and respond to complaints.
- **Policies and Procedures-** that support effective research governance including handling anonymous complaints, managing assessment and investigation of breaches of the Code such as managing authorship disputes, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest and managing research records, data and primary materials. Prescribed periodic review of processes and mechanism in place for internal or external review of decisions.
- **Capability and capacity-** to receive and provide advice on matters of research integrity, manage and investigate complaints, and to undergo professional development in research integrity.
- **Training and Education-** Delivered to researchers, students, research integrity advisors and where appropriate, other staff through more than one modality. Training and education may be developed through evidence-based and co-design approaches and can be delivered either by internal or external means. Relevant topics will include researcher and institutional responsibilities in relation to research in general, human and animal ethics requirements, research integrity, data management, conflict of interest, and authorship.
- **Evaluation, Review and Improvement-** of the Perkins' research integrity capability. This may be achieved by seeking feedback from researchers, using metrics associated with previously reported cases are used to tailor training material, and routine evaluation of training effectiveness through surveys and other feedback mechanisms.

⁹ This concept is explored further in the National Statement.

¹⁰ Developed by Adjunct Prof Gordon McGurk and Dr Juanelle Furness, QIMR Berghofer, 2023.

¹¹ Not yet appointed and subject to Institutional discretion.

- **Governance, Transparency, Reporting and Oversight**- This will be managed by ensuring that the Perkins approach to quality in research, including integrity, is communicated effectively through its website and that reporting to the board occurs. Implementation of the Framework will be the responsibility of the Deputy Director but will be externally audited from time to time.
- **Inclusion and collaboration in research**

10 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESEARCH INTEGRITY

The Code sets out 13 responsibilities of Institutions which the Perkins, through its Framework will meet. These responsibilities include:

- **R1** Establish and maintain good governance and management practices for responsible research conduct.
- **R2** Identify and comply with relevant laws, regulations, guidelines and policies related to the conduct of research.
- **R3** Develop and maintain the currency and ready availability of a suite of policies and procedures which ensure that institutional practices are consistent with the principles and responsibilities of the Code
- **R4** Provide ongoing training and education that promotes and supports responsible research conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles.
- **R5** Ensure supervisors of research trainees have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources.
- **R6** Identify and train Research Integrity Advisors who assist in the promotion and fostering of responsible research conduct and provide advice to those with concerns about potential breaches of the Code.
- **R7** Support the responsible dissemination of research findings. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.
- **R8** Provide access to facilities for the safe and secure storage and management of research data, records and primary materials and, where possible and appropriate, allow access and reference.
- **R9** Facilitate the prevention and detection of potential breaches of the Code.
- **R10** Provide mechanisms to receive concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code. Investigate and resolve potential breaches of the Code.
- **R11** Ensure that the process for managing and investigating concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the Code is timely, effective and in accord with procedural fairness.
- **R12** Support the welfare of all parties involved in an investigation of a potential breach of the Code.
- **R13** Base findings of investigations on the balance of probabilities and ensure any actions are commensurate with the seriousness of the breach.

The Perkins is committed to upholding these responsibilities.

11 RESEARCHER RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESEARCH INTEGRITY

For a holistic research integrity system, both institution and researchers have a role. As outlined in the Framework, the Perkins will build its capability and capacity to manage and respond to anyone who wishes to raise issues in relation to research integrity. It will also ensure that relevant training is made available to all researchers and students. Researchers have a significant role to play in this holistic framework. The Code lists 16 responsibilities¹² which researchers are expected to uphold. These responsibilities can be grouped as follows:

- **Promote responsible research conduct (R14-R17)**

¹² Above n1 at p3.

- **R14** Support a culture of responsible research conduct at their institution and in their field of practice.
- **R15** Provide guidance and mentorship on responsible research conduct to other researchers or research trainees.
- **R16** promote education and training in responsible research conduct
- **R17** Comply with the relevant laws, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics guidelines and institutional policies related to responsible research conduct.
- **Meet human and animal ethics requirements (R18-R20)**
 - **R18** Apply the ethical principles of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence, and respect to human research.
 - **R19** Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and respect their legal rights and local laws, customs, and protocols.
 - **R20** Ensure that Replacement, Reduction and Refinement are considered at all stages of research involving animals and minimise the impacts on animals used in research and in so doing support the welfare and wellbeing of these animals.
- **Conduct research, record and disseminate research results to the expected standard (R21-R23)**
 - **R21** Adopt methods appropriate to the aims of the research and ensure that conclusions are justified by the results.
 - **R22** Retain clear, accurate, secure, and complete records of all research including research data and primary materials.
 - **R23** Disseminate research findings responsibly, accurately, and broadly. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.
- **Manage conflicts of interest (R24)**
 - Disclose and manage Conflicts of Interest.
- **Meet authorship requirements (R25-R27)**
 - **R25** Ensure that authors of research outputs are all and only those, who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research and its output, and that they agree to be listed as an author.
 - **R26** Acknowledge those who have contributed to the research.
 - **R27** Cite and acknowledge other relevant work appropriately and accurately.
- **Participate in peer-review (R28)**
 - in a way that is fair and rigorous way that is fair, rigorous, and timely and maintains the confidentiality of the content.

- **R29 Report suspected breaches of the Code (R29)**
 - to the institution and/or relevant authority¹³.

12 MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY

To manage and evaluate research integrity, the Perkins has a responsibility to provide the necessary systems, processes and infrastructure to support research responsibilities. These will include:

- A robust and anonymous research integrity issues management capability
- A mechanism for the declaration, disclosure and evaluation of conflicts of interest
- A data governance model and data repositories to house all personal information and biological samples collected as biobanks by Perkins researchers
- A standing agenda item on Perkins Board Agenda
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of the research integrity system by researchers and students.

13 ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Although all researchers, students and staff have a responsibility to in relation to research integrity, the Institute Director, who is also the REO, has delegated responsibility for research integrity to the Deputy Director. The Deputy Director will do all things necessary to implement the Framework, once approved by the Director and Board. This will include the development of a work plan where necessary.

14 CONTACT OFFICERS

The following are suggested as contact points for the Framework. This may be amended at the discretion of the Director:

- Deputy Director
- Research Integrity Officer.

APPROVAL AND AMENDED HISTORY

Approvals	Details
Review cycle	6 months
Created by	Moira Clay, Deputy Director
Creation date	August 2025
Reviewed by	Executive
Review date	September 2025
Approved by	Executive
Approval date	September 2025
Next review date	March 2026

– End of Document –

¹³For the Perkins, the relevant authority is either the RIO, DO or REO. All researchers, students and other staff have a responsibility to report suspected breaches if they become aware of them.