Authorship of Research Output Procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University (CDU) promotes and fosters excellence and innovation in research at or above world standard. CDU recognises the importance of authorship of research output as an acknowledgement of the substantial contribution made by a researcher individually or in collaboration with other researchers.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This procedure supports the University's Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and related research and research training policies and procedures.

(3) The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 requires universities to ensure that research and its associated activities are conducted in accordance with a research policy framework that includes clarification of requirements for publication and authorship.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This procedure applies to:

a. all staff, adjunct and honorary staff, title holders and students of the University;
b. all staff and students of partner organisations who are or have been involved in the conduct, supervision or support of research at the University;
c. all research outputs, including non-traditional research outputs, arising from research by staff, adjunct and honorary staff and titleholders and students of the University; and
d. research outputs that are produced from or form part of a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) thesis.

(5) This procedure does not apply to theses that are submitted for an HDR course.

Section 4 - Procedure

(6) This Procedure supports the principles of the following documents:

a. Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 (the Code);
b. Authorship - A Guide Supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Guide); and
c. Charles Darwin University's Responsible Conduct of Research Policy.

(7) This Procedure establishes appropriate mechanisms for confirming authorship, minimising disputes and resolving any conflict or disputes that may arise as a result from acknowledgement of research authorship. It ensures that credit for authorship, affiliation and contributions to research for all research outputs is fairly and accurately stated, managed and recorded in alignment with the Code and the Guide.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or parts thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of staff printing this document to always refer to the Governance Document Library for the latest version.

(8) Researchers must adhere to the authorship criteria of the Code, the Guide and this Procedure.

(9) Authorship and copyright are not the same. For assignment of copyright contact the University's Copyright Officer and refer to the Intellectual Property Policy, which states requirements relating to intellectual property in research outputs.

Criteria for and Rights to Authorship

(10) To be named as an author of a research output, a researcher must have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research and its output. Researchers must ensure that authorship is not offered to those who do not meet the criteria for authorship.

(11) Authorship will be offered to all people who meet the criteria for authorship. All named authors must be willing to accept public responsibility for their part in the publication.

(12) Authorship must be based on a significant scholarly or intellectual contribution and should include at least two of the following:

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

(13) Some journals, disciplines, and institutions may have different criteria for authorship. In such circumstances, researchers must apply the more stringent set of criteria.

(14) Authorship will not be offered or attributed on the basis of:

a. the provision of funding, data, materials, infrastructure or access to equipment;
b. the provision of routine technical support, technical advice or technical assistance;
c. the position or profession of an individual, such as their role as the author's supervisor or as the head of a research group or a department ('gift authorship');
d. whether the contribution was paid for or voluntary; or
e. the status of an individual who has not made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution being such that it would elevate the esteem of the research ('guest authorship').

(15) It is a breach of the Code for a person to claim, demand, or accept authorship without having made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution.

(16) It is also a breach of the Code for a person to offer or attribute authorship to someone who has not made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution.

(17) All those who contributed to the research but do not meet the criteria for authorship of this procedure must be properly acknowledged. Authors will make a reasonable attempt to obtain the written consent of any individuals intended to be acknowledged and named.

(18) Following publication, all authors must ensure that any concerns about the accuracy or integrity of any part of the output are appropriately responded to. This may mean providing all necessary evidence to demonstrate the accuracy and integrity of their contribution, or seeking such evidence from the other co-authors. It may result in correcting the public record by way of erratum or retraction in a timely manner.

Appropriate and Fair Attribution of Authorship

(19) A person who qualifies as an author will not be included or excluded as an author without their written permission.

(20) If an author is deceased or cannot be contacted following reasonable efforts to do so, the publication may proceed provided that there are no grounds to believe that this person would have objected to being included as an author. If an author is deceased, this should be noted in the publication.

(21) All authors will approve the research output before its submission for publication and will also approve the final version before final publication.

Authorship Arrangements

(22) The University requires that researchers complete and agree to an Authorship Record Form, available through Research and Innovation.

(23) The Authorship Record includes:

a. identification of those who will be recognised as the authors of the research output;
b. a description of the contribution that each author has made or will make to the research output; and
c. a list of the order in which the authors appear, which should be consistent with any applicable disciplinary norms and publication requirements approved by the University.

(24) The researchers must also appoint at least one corresponding author, who will be responsible for communication with the publisher and managing communication between the co-authors. It is the responsibility of the corresponding author to:

a. ensure that all contributors to the research output are properly recognised;
b. maintain records of the authorship agreement and any amendments to the agreement;
c. obtain written approval from all authors for the final publication of the research output;
d. communicate with the publisher and co-authors; and
e. periodically consult with all authors to review the authorship agreement to ensure consistency with the criteria of authorship, especially if new people become involved in the research and make a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution.

(25) If the corresponding author is not from CDU, all CDU authors must keep their own records of the authorship agreement and any amendments to the agreement.

(26) Collaborating authors must agree on authorship of a publication at an early stage in the research project and review their decision periodically.

(27) The order of authorship should reflect the different amounts of intellectual and scholarly input, with the person who made the greatest contribution listed as the principal author using the discipline standard and others listed in order of relative contributions.

(28) The process of author order determination must be discussed and documented, particularly if there are discipline-specific requirements on the order of authorship.

(29) Authorship certification may also be required for work to be submitted to journals or other publishers.

(30) The Authorship Agreement Form and all written or electronic communications in relation to authorship will be

stored in line with data retention and management requirements for the research and wherever else required by the University.

Institutional Affiliation

(31) Researchers are responsible for recording all research publications and creative works in the University's research repository.

(32) For staff and students of the University, authorship of a research output must record their affiliation to the University if they undertook the research as part of their employment or course of HDR study with the University.

(33) The University also expects adjunct and honorary staff to record their affiliation to the University in outputs of their research as an adjunct staff member in accordance with the Adjunct and Honorary Appointments Procedure.

(34) Even if a researcher has left the University, the researcher should record their affiliation to CDU in outputs from research conducted while they were at the University.

Acknowledging Contributors

(35) All those whose research or other contributions do not meet the criteria for authorship, but who have otherwise made a meaningful contribution to the research, including funding agencies, have the right to be acknowledged in the research output.

(36) Researchers should 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.

(37) Researchers who intend to publish First Nations knowledge obtained through sources such as unpublished manuscripts, audio or video recordings, observation, or verbal knowledge (e.g., yarning) must seek approval from the First Nations people involved in the research, or from the Indigenous community from which the knowledge originates. The individual and collective contributors of the knowledge must be acknowledged in accordance with the Guide, the Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and/or the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research.

Authorship Dispute Resolution

(38) Researchers will initially attempt to resolve authorship disputes internally with reference to the existing Authorship Agreement Form and all other relevant documentation.

(39) If a power imbalance exists between authors in a dispute, junior authors, including HDR candidates, may wish to seek the support of a third party such as the head of another faculty or institute, provided that person is not a practicing lawyer.

(40) Where the dispute cannot be resolved internally, the authors should consider mediated discussion supported by an impartial senior colleague, someone at least the same level as the most senior author. Alternatively, advice may be sought from a Research Integrity Adviser, who will advise on the appropriateness of the inclusion of each author listed in the Authorship Agreement, based on their documented contributions and other relevant documentation.

(41) The Provost or their delegate will decide all disputes and conflicts on authorship that cannot be resolved by collegial discussion or mediation. They will investigate by talking with all parties involved and, if necessary, taking advice from colleagues in other institutions before making a decision.

(42) Where an author is unhappy with the decision of the Provost on a dispute, they may request a review by the Research Committee.

(43) Where the Provost considers that a person claiming authorship has breached the Code in doing so, they may refer the matter for investigation under the Responsible Conduct of Research Procedure.

Higher Degree by Research Candidates

(44) Acknowledgement of a supervisor as a co-author is appropriate if the supervisor meets the criteria for authorship as stated in the Guide.

(45) An HDR candidate should be listed as principal author on any multiple-authored article that is substantially based on the candidate's work for the HDR award. If a supervisor meets the criteria for authorship, they should take second author status, unless the candidate and supervisor have agreed otherwise.

(46) There may be circumstances where the supervisor is the principal author, but this must be with the candidate's written approval. If a research supervisor and candidate form a contract for research collaboration, it must include a statement on the principles to be used to determine authorship.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(47) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct – Staff or the Code of Conduct – Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(48) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(49) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"**Faculty**" - An organisational and academic unit in the University that delivers courses and conducts research.