Authorship and Dissemination of Research Procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') is committed to research excellence and integrity, and to providing a research environment that will promote both a high standard of professional conduct by its researchers, and a culture of research practice that is ethical, competent, safe and accountable

(2) Dissemination of research findings is an important part of the research process, and passes on the benefits of the research to others within academia and beyond.

(3) Authorship of outputs must be consistent with expectations outlined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018 (the Code), Authorship – A Guide Supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, and the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy.

Section 2 - Purpose

(4) This procedure outlines:

a. the principles and criteria for determining authorship of outputs that are the result of research undertaken at CDU;
b. the responsibilities of researchers with regard to authorship and dissemination of research findings; and
c. mechanisms for resolving disputes.

Section 3 - Scope

(5) This procedure applies to:

a. all staff, students, and visitors undertaking research under the auspices of the University;
b. 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
c. research outputs that are produced from or form part of a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) thesis.

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

Section 4 - Procedure

Publication and dissemination of research

(7) Researchers have a responsibility to disseminate a full and accurate account of their research as broadly as possible, including negative findings and results contrary to hypotheses.

(8) Researchers must appropriately acknowledge and cite:

a. the use of the work of others; and
b. the use of their own, previously published work.

(9) Researchers who use generative artificial intelligence (gen AI) tools, including but not limited to in the writing of manuscripts, the collection or analysis of data, or the production of images, must be transparent in documenting its use including by describing which AI tools have been used and when, how they were used, and the effect of their use on the research process.

(10) Publication activities must take account of any restrictions relating to intellectual property, culturally sensitive data, or confidential information and manage these appropriately.

(11) Publication and dissemination activities must also take account of any funder policies and requirements.

(12) Publication of multiple papers based on the same analysis of the same set(s) or subset(s) of data is not acceptable except where new interpretations are presented and there is full cross-referencing within the papers (for example, in a series of closely related work, or where a complete work grew out of a preliminary publication and this is fully acknowledged). In borderline cases, an author who submits substantially similar work to more than one publisher must disclose this to the publishers at the time of submission.

(13) Research findings should not be pro-actively reported in the public media before they have been reported to a research audience of experts in the field of research, preferably by publication in a peer-reviewed journal, except where there is a contractual arrangement.

(14) Where there is private reporting of research that has not yet been exposed to open peer-review scrutiny, especially when it is reported to prospective financial supporters, researchers have an obligation to explain fully the status of the work and the peer-review mechanisms to which it will be subjected.

(15) Deliberate inclusion of inaccurate or misleading information in documents related to research, such as grant applications, is a breach of the Code. Accuracy is essential in describing the state of publication (in preparation, submitted, accepted), research funding (applied for, granted, funding period), awards conferred, and where any of these relate to more than one researcher.

Criteria for and rights to authorship

(16) To be named as an author of a research output, a researcher must have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution that comprises 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 First Nations 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.

(17) The contribution of First Nations knowledges may warrant recognising non-traditional methods of contribution with authorship. In such cases, contributions may include discussion and oral editing of the draft output or giving permission for the use of material, its analysis and dissemination as a recognised cultural authority in this context.

(18) 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.

(19) Authorship cannot be ascribed to gen AI tools as they cannot assume responsibility for content.

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

a. the provision of funding, data whose acquisition did not require significant intellectual judgement or input, materials, infrastructure or access to equipment;
b. the provision of routine technical support, technical advice or technical assistance which did not require significant intellectual judgement or input;
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'); or
d. 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').

(21) It is a breach of the Code to fail to acknowledge individuals who meet the criteria for authorship above. It is also a breach of the Code to include individuals who do not meet the criteria for authorship.

Appropriate and fair attribution of authorship

(22) 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. In the case of a deceased First Nations co-author, permission to proceed with a publication featuring their name, image or direct quotes must be sought from family members.

Author responsibilities

(23) All authors will disclose any conflicts of interest.

(24) All authors will approve the research output before its submission for publication and will also approve the final version before final publication. In doing so, all authors agree to be accountable for it.

(25) 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.

Authorship arrangements

(26) All researchers should discuss authorship at an early stage in the research, as well as throughout the course of the research project.

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

(28) 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;
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; and
d. any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.

(29) Researchers publishing multi-author outputs must also appoint at least one corresponding author. 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.

(30) 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.

(31) 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.

(32) 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

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

(34) 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.

(35) 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.

(36) 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

(37) 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.

(38) 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.

Acknowledging First Nations contributors

(39) 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 the output, including as an author where appropriate, 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.

(40) The Citation Style Guide in the Indigenous Knowledges Attribution Toolkit (IKAT) provides guidance for referencing published and unpublished First Nations knowledges.

Authorship dispute resolution

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

(42) 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.

(43) 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.

(44) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection 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.

(45) Where the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection 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.

(46) Where authorship is in dispute and publication has already occurred, the matter must be referred to the Research Integrity Office.

Higher degree by research candidates

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

(48) An HDR candidate should be listed as first 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 secondary author status, unless the candidate and supervisor have agreed otherwise.

(49) There may be circumstances where a supervisor is the first 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.

(50) Principal supervisors of HDR candidates are responsible for mentoring and ensuring responsible publication practice for associated HDR outputs. This includes confirming author eligibility, order, and acknowledgements for HDR outputs, and for approving the publication submission, process, and related correspondence. They must ensure ethical publishing practices, including disclosure of limitations and conflicts of interest, and responsible journal selection, in line with applicable governance documents. The principal supervisor is also responsible for oversight of and ensuring accurate research data reporting, and appropriate data management and deidentification, particularly where data are provided to a journal.

(51) To facilitate responsible publication practice, HDR candidates must include their principal supervisor in the planning and preparation of HDR-related research outputs, and for adhering to ethical and responsible publication practices.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(52) Non-compliance with governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees 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.

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

(54) 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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Responsible Executive	Steve Rogers Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection +61 8 89466890
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

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

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called ‘governance documents’ and are often referred to as ‘policy’ or ‘University policy’.

"Non-traditional research output" - A research output that does not take the form of a published book, book chapter, journal article, or conference paper. Non-traditional research outputs or NTROs include: Creative works; Performances; Records or renderings of creative works or performances; Curated or produced exhibitions and events; and Research reports for an external body.