

Research Security Principles Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy establishes the principles governing research security and research collaborations at the Australian Catholic University (ACU). It seeks to support and enable research and collaboration, and to uphold principles of academic freedom, research integrity, and transparency, while promoting compliance with applicable Australian laws, regulations and government requirements (including [autonomous sanctions](#)).

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to all ACU staff, adjuncts, visiting academics (including research students), and higher degree by research candidates, and to all research activities undertaken under ACU auspices. It applies to all forms of research collaboration, including formal and informal collaborations, regardless of whether a contract, grant or other formal agreement exists.

(3) This Policy applies to all forms of collaboration, including researcher-to-researcher engagement, co-authorship, data sharing, supervision, or access to facilities or resources, regardless of the existence of formal agreements.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) ACU supports international research collaboration as a cornerstone of research excellence and impact. Where research involves [sanctioned](#) entities, collaboration must be managed in accordance with Australian law, government guidance and ACU policy. Research security is a shared responsibility between individual academics (including research students), Faculties and the University.

Section 4 - Principles for Secure Research Collaboration

(5) Awareness of collaborator affiliations: Academics (including research students) must take reasonable steps to understand the institutional affiliations, funding sources (and their origins) and relevant associations of all collaborators on a project.

(6) Proactive identification of sanctions risks: Academics (including research students) must proactively identify potential sanctions or research security concerns at the earliest stage of collaboration and throughout the life of a project.

(7) Proportionate, risk-based decision-making: Collaboration decisions must be proportionate to the level of risk and informed by national interest and research security considerations.

(8) Transparency: All research collaborations should be conducted in a manner that is open and

transparent, facilitates institutional oversight, and is consistent with ACU’s research integrity, declarations of interest, and national security obligations.

(9) Non-discrimination: These principles apply to entities and activities (including sanctioned entities). A person’s nationality, ethnicity or identity is not reasonable grounds for exclusion from research collaboration.

Section 5 - Responsibility

(10) Academics (including research students) must comply with this Policy and applicable law. Associate Deans (Research) provide Faculty-level advice and oversight. ODVCRE provides institutional guidance, training and monitoring to support compliance.

(11) Where uncertainty or potential risk exists, academics (including research students) must seek advice from their Associate Dean (Research) or the Research Stewardship Unit within ODVCRE before proceeding.

(12) Where risk is present, appropriate risk mitigation strategies should be implemented. Formal agreements, as part of this risk mitigation, can be an effective mechanism for protecting ACU, its academics (including research students), and its research, by clearly addressing roles, responsibilities, intellectual property, and including appropriate termination clauses.

Section 6 - Compliance

(13) Failure to comply with this Policy may expose individuals and the University to legal and reputational risk and may result in action under applicable ACU policies and procedures.

Section 7 - Associated Information

(14) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Section 8 - Review

(15) In accordance with the University's [Policy Development and Review Policy](#), this Policy is scheduled for review every three years or more frequently if appropriate.

Section 9 - Roles and Responsibilities

Approval Authority	Acedemic Board
Governing Authority	University Research Committee
Responsible Officer	Abid Khan

Status and Details

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Effective Date	30th June 2026
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Approval Authority	University Research Committee
Approval Date	24th June 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Abid Khan Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
Responsible Manager	Phil Parker Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)
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