

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH POLICY

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1. RATIONALE AND SCOPE

The University of New England encourages its researchers to enter into collaboration with other researchers within the University, at other Universities, research institutions and business or industry organisations, where the partnerships serve to complement and expand existing research strengths.

This Policy covers formal research collaborations between staff at UNE and staff at other institutions, as defined under section 2 of this policy. The university requires that a formal written agreement between the partner institutions on the management of such a joint research project is put in place prior to the project's commencement.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Formal research collaborations are those which are likely to involve the need for institutional approvals for the lodgement of funding applications or other formal agreements with third parties, or which may involve the expenditure of funds or the use of resources beyond the normal discretion of individual academics to make as part of their research activities.

Institution refers to a legal organisation which may or not be another higher education provider, a business, a community or government organisation or an industry, whose staff may collaborate with UNE staff.

Research is defined in the Australian Research Council ERA 2010 Submission Guidelines¹ as:

the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way such as to develop new concepts, methodologies and understandings, and could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

¹ OECD (2002), Frascati Manual : Proposed Standard Practice for Surveys on Research and Experimental Development (Paris)

Staff includes employees, Emeritus, adjunct, honorary and visiting staff, and postdoctoral fellows working under the auspices of the University of New England.

3. PRINCIPLES

The agreement follows the general principles of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, such that research is conducted consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements, with the UNE Code of Conduct for Research and other UNE policies, and with the policies and requirements of collaborating institutions.

4. POLICY

- 4.1. A written agreement is required to establish a formal research collaboration with another institution.
- 4.2. UNE staff who are involved in formal collaborative research projects must be aware of, and comply with, all policies and written agreements affecting the project.
- 4.3. Management of research materials and data will be consistent with the *UNE Research Materials and Data Management guidelines*.
 - 4.3.1. Each collaborating institution will identify a person from their institution who is to be involved in the management of research data, primary materials and other items to be retained at the end of the project.
 - 4.3.2. Where the primary researcher for a joint research project is a UNE staff member, as defined under section 2 of this policy, UNE will normally be the holder of the research materials and data.
 - 4.3.3. The arrangement for shared access to research materials and data must be negotiated prior to commencement of the research project and must be included in the formal written agreement and documented as required under UNE policy.
 - 4.3.4. If UNE is not the holder of the research materials and data, the holder and subsequent repository of the research materials and data must be recorded in the **Research Data Management Database** as required under UNE policy.
- 4.4. Management of Knowledge Assets and Intellectual Property, including Copyright, will be consistent with the *UNE Knowledge Assets and Intellectual Property Policy*. It is essential that the formal agreement between UNE and a collaborating organisation include identification of creators, distribution and ownership of Knowledge Assets before, during and after the conclusion of a collaborative research project.
- 4.5. Ethics and Safety clearances must be obtained prior to commencement of the research, consistent with the requirements of the *National Statement for Ethical Conduct in Research* and the *Australian Code and Practice for the Care and Use of Animals*.
 - 4.5.1. Where a UNE staff member is the primary researcher on a collaborative research project with researchers from another institution and the research project involves human participants, approval for the research project must be obtained from the UNE Human Research Ethics Committee and, as required from equivalent committees of the collaborating institutions, prior to the commencement of the research.
 - 4.5.2. Where a UNE staff member is an associate researcher or co-investigator on a research project involving human participants which is initiated at another institution, an application to the UNE Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) for ethics approval is required prior to commencement of the research. A copy of the human research ethics clearance from the lead collaborating institution must be submitted with the application to the UNE HREC.

- 4.5.3. Where a UNE staff member is the primary researcher on a collaborative research project with researchers from another institution and the research involving vertebrate animals, approval must be obtained from the UNE Animal Ethics Committee prior to commencement of the research.
- 4.5.4. Where a UNE staff member is an associate researcher or co-investigator on a research project involving vertebrate animals which is initiated at another institution, an application to the UNE Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) for ethics approval is required prior to commencement of the research. A copy of the animal research ethics clearance from the lead collaborating institution must be submitted with the application to the UNE AEC.
- 4.5.5. All research undertaken at UNE must meet the requirements of legislation and University policies pertaining to Occupational Health and Safety.
- 4.6. Confidentiality
 - 4.6.1. Confidentiality requirements under relevant legislation, agreements, research ethics requirements and other relevant professional standards with respect to research materials and data must be met.
 - 4.6.2. The nature and scope of confidentiality requirements must be agreed upon by the collaborating researchers and documented in the formal agreement between institutions.
 - 4.6.3. Confidential materials must be stored securely and researchers who are given access to confidential materials must maintain that confidentiality and use the information only in ways that are consistent with ethical and legal requirements and agreed to by those who gave the information.
 - 4.6.4. When a UNE researcher uses data which is held outside UNE, details of the source of the data, arrangements for its storage and the agreement, including any confidentiality issues, with the holding institution must be lodged on the UNE research data management system.
- 4.7. Sharing Commercial Returns
 - 4.7.1. Where it is anticipated that there will be commercial returns resulting from a collaborative research project, the formal agreement between partner institutions to the project must include details about distribution of those returns, and must be consistent with the UNE *Guidelines for Commercial Activities*.
- 4.8. Reporting to Appropriate Agencies
 - 4.8.1. The formal agreement between UNE and the collaborating institution(s) should include details about which institutions will meet the reporting requirements to relevant agencies.
 - 4.8.2. Where a UNE staff member is the primary researcher, UNE will normally have primary reporting responsibilities.
 - 4.8.3. Where the research project has required ethics or safety clearances from the relevant UNE committees, then the normal reporting requirements on progress against those approvals must be met.
- 4.9. Dissemination of Research Outcomes
 - 4.9.1. The means by which research outcomes will be disseminated must be agreed upon and documented in the formal written agreement between the collaborating institutions.
 - 4.9.2. The UNE staff members who are involved in the collaborative research project must comply with the *UNE Authorship Policy*.
 - 4.9.3. In disseminating research outcomes, all collaborating researchers must adhere to confidentiality, knowledge assets and intellectual property conditions agreed to under the formal agreement between the collaborating institutions, and any other relevant legislative, industry or professional requirements.

4.10. Conflict of Interest

- 4.10.1. Researchers involved in collaborative research projects need to be aware when a potential conflict of interest may arise and are required to disclose and manage conflicts of interest arising in collaborative research, as required under the UNE *Conflict of Interest Policy*².

5. PROCEDURES

- 5.1. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) has delegated authority to sign, on behalf of the University of New England, formal research collaborative agreements between the University and other institutions, within the limits established by the University Council.
- 5.2. When a formal research collaboration with another/other institution/institutions is to be established, the UNE staff member involved with the collaborative research project must complete and submit a [Project Approval Form](#), to Research Services.
- 5.3. Research Services will assist and advise on the completion of the form, and the subsequent development of a formal agreement between the University of New England and the other institution(s) taking part in the formal research collaboration.
- 5.4. The University Legal Office will construct the formal agreement in liaison with the UNE staff involved in the research project, Research Services and the equivalent staff and office from the other institution(s) taking part in the formal research collaboration.
- 5.5. The formal agreement will cover, at a minimum, those items identified under this policy and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, and must include a clause relating to the termination of the collaborative research project.
- 5.6. The formal agreement takes effect when it has been signed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on behalf of the University of New England, and by appropriate persons from the other institution(s) taking part in the formal research collaboration,
- 5.7. The documents will be lodged in the University's Records Management System , and the agreement will be managed through Research Services.
- 5.8. Research Services will provide a copy of the formal agreement to the primary UNE researcher involved in the collaboration.
- 5.9. All UNE staff members who are involved in the collaborative research project must ensure that they understand and comply fully with the formal agreement, and must seek advice from Research Services, who may refer to the Legal Office, on any matters that may arise that are of concern with respect to the formal agreement.

² See footnote 15.