Responsible Conduct in Research Module

Introduction

‘The value and benefits of research are vitally dependent on the integrity of research. While there can be and are national and disciplinary differences in the way research is organized and conducted, there are also principles and professional responsibilities that are fundamental to the integrity of research wherever it is undertaken’ (Singapore Statement on Research Integrity).

‘Universities have been protectors and bearers, across centuries, of humane and civilised values. As a researcher, therefore, to belong to a university is to carry further shared responsibility for the ethical character of one’s research’ Associate Professor Christopher Cordner, University of Melbourne, one of the contributors to the UWS Responsible Conduct of Research module.

Research integrity covers matters such as: the expertise of those whom conduct research; the training of new researchers (including research students); adherence to ethical standards; the dissemination of the results of research; authorship; peer review; collaborations between institutions; and the response to concerns or complaints relating to research misconduct. In other words, the day to day social practices of scholarship and research.

Arguably, the greatest threat to a university or academic’s standing would be an event that calls into question the integrity of their research activities.

The responsible conduct of research is not a new concern of the research community but has come into sharper focus recently. There are ‘emerging challenges in research integrity associated with new technologies and scientific frontiers’ (Singapore Statement). One of those challenges is the way that trust in experts has become contestable, and all these challenges are complicated by ‘cross national, cross disciplinary and cross sector research partnerships’ (Singapore Statement).

Topics

The Responsible Conduct in Research module introduces you a range of topical and complex questions that as a researcher you may encounter. You will find discussions that are not always directly related to your research but as a well rounded researcher, it is expected that you will be cognisant of a wide breadth of research integrity questions. Many participants find questions outside their discipline to be of great interest and we hope that do you do too.

Ethics Applications

This module does not address ethics applications from a details or process point of view. For more information on how to apply for ethical review of your research project, see the Office of Research Services Ethics web pages.

Aims

The module aims to introduce you to the range and complexity of ethics, the requirements of international and national standards and University requirements on research practice. The module asks you to participate thoughtfully and you may wish to make notes as you proceed. You will see that the questions posed are complex and multi-faceted.
Time

Most participants find that the module takes about seven hours to complete, which includes the additional reading. You may wish to spread this over a period of time.

Completion

You will be planning your Confirmation of Candidature and in order to proceed you should complete Postgraduate Essentials and this module. Your School or Research Institute will follow up with an invitation for you to discuss what you have been engaging with in the module with your supervisor(s) or attend a workshop.

Related Links

- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)
- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (2007)
- Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research (2003)
- Office of the Gene Technology Regulator
- Australian Standard AS 2243.3 Safety in the Laboratory, Part 3: Microbiology
- International Compilation of Human Research Standards
- UWS Research Code of Practice
- Singapore Statement on Research Integrity

Accessing the module;

All Higher Degree Research students have access to the module in vUWS

1. Go to the UWS homepage
2. Click on “Blended Learning (vUWS)” at the top left of the page
3. Login with your MyUWS account
4. You will see “Responsible Conduct in Research Training” on the left of the page
5. Scroll down to get started here (right hand area of the home page) to commence.