LINCOLN INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy and Procedure

Document code: LIHE-RIM-001
Version: 1.0 (Draft for Academic Board approval)

1. Purpose

This policy sets out Lincoln Institute of Higher Education's institutional framework for responsible conduct of research and for managing, assessing and investigating potential breaches of research integrity. It adopts, implements and operationalises the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) and its national Investigation Guide, and aligns with HESF 2021 Standard 5.2. NHMRC+1TEQSA

2. Scope

This policy applies to all LIHE researchers, HDR candidates, supervisors, professional staff engaged in research support, visiting and adjunct researchers, honorary and emeritus appointees, volunteers, contractors and third-party collaborators conducting or supporting research under LIHE auspices, on LIHE infrastructure, or under LIHE ethics approvals. Where research is conducted with partners, this policy applies unless a written agreement provides an equivalent or higher standard.

3. Normative references

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018); Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Code (2018); TEQSA HESF 2021 Domain 5.2 (and TEQSA Guidance Note); OAIC guidance on Notifiable Data Breaches. NHMRC+1TEQSA+1OAIC

4. Related LIHE documents

Privacy Policy (LEA-GEN-COR-70050); Data & Records Integrity Policy and Procedures (LEA-GEN-COR-70025); IT Resources and Online Conduct (LEA-GEN-COR-70040); Student Grievances, Complaints & Appeals (LEA-GEN-COR-70055); Academic Integrity and Misconduct (coursework); Student Support, Wellbeing & Safety. My CMS+5My CMS+5My CMS+5

5. Principles

LIHE adopts the Code's principles of research integrity, including honesty, rigour, transparency, fairness, respect and accountability, and implements institutional responsibilities to provide policy, training, advice, secure data management and fair processes for addressing concerns. NHMRC

6. Definitions (summary)

Breach of the Code: a failure to meet the Code's principles and responsibilities. Research misconduct: a serious breach that is intentional, reckless, or negligent, and that is confirmed by investigation; normally also involves a pattern of behaviour or significant consequences. Supporting definitions (e.g., authorship, supervision, data, conflict of interest) are as per the Code and Investigation Guide. NHMRC+1

7. Roles and responsibilities

Responsible Executive Officer (REO): Chief Executive Officer. Final decision maker on investigation findings and institutional actions.
Designated Officer (DO): Academic Dean (or delegate). Receives concerns, determines next steps and appoints Assessment Officers.
Assessment Officer (AO): senior academic/manager appointed per matter to conduct preliminary assessment.
Research Integrity Advisor(s) (RIA): trained advisors providing confidential, impartial advice to staff and students; not decision makers.
Decision-Maker for Investigation: normally the REO; may be the Academic Board Chair if conflict exists.
All roles operate in line with the Code and Investigation Guide's role architecture. NHMRC

8. Prevention and research culture

LIHE provides mandatory research integrity training for HDR candidates, supervisors and research-active staff; discipline-appropriate supervision; authorship and data management guidance; conflicts of interest declaration processes; and secure data and records infrastructure consistent with LIHE data and privacy policies. My CMS+1

9. Receiving and triaging concerns

Any person may raise a concern or allegation about potential breaches. Anonymous reports are accepted and assessed on their merits. Reports should be directed to the DO or via the researchintegrity@lihe.edu alias. Reports involving imminent risk to safety, animal welfare or serious data/privacy breaches must also be escalated to relevant LIHE officers and external authorities as required by law and the OAIC NDB scheme. OAIC

10. Preliminary assessment

The DO appoints an AO to undertake a timely, proportionate preliminary assessment to decide whether the concern: relates to research integrity; is trivial, vexatious or mistaken; can be resolved locally (e.g., correction, authorship clarification); or warrants a formal investigation. The assessment considers evidence sufficiency, scope, and risks, and follows procedural fairness. Target timeframes: acknowledge receipt within five working days; preliminary assessment normally within twenty working days. Process design follows the national Investigation Guide. NHMRC

11. Outcomes of preliminary assessment

Possible outcomes include: no breach; minor breach managed locally with corrective actions; referral under other LIHE policies (e.g., coursework Academic Integrity; HR or student conduct); or recommendation to proceed to a formal investigation with draft Terms of Reference. The REO (or delegate) decides on investigation, conflicts management and panel composition consistent with the Guide. My CMSNHMRC

12. Investigations

Investigations are evidence-based, proportionate and procedurally fair. The REO approves Terms of Reference, appoints a panel with appropriate expertise and independence, manages conflicts of interest, and ensures secure records. Respondents are provided with allegations, relevant evidence and an opportunity to respond. On completion, the panel provides findings on the balance of probabilities, with reasons and recommended actions. The REO issues determinations and actions and communicates outcomes to parties, funding bodies, journals and regulators as required. NHMRC

13. Findings and actions

Where a breach or research misconduct is found, actions may include education and training, supervision changes, data or records correction, corrigendum or retraction requests to journals

consistent with COPE guidance, restriction of research privileges, candidature conditions, or disciplinary action under employment or student statutes. Systemic improvements are recorded and monitored. Publication Ethics

14. Interface with HDR candidature and coursework

HDR candidates are researchers for the purposes of the Code. Research-related concerns are handled under this policy. Coursework-only academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism in a taught unit) follows the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy; where matters overlap, the DO coordinates a single, coherent process in consultation with the Course Coordinator and Graduate Research leadership. My CMS

15. Confidentiality, privacy and records

All matters are handled confidentially and in accordance with LIHE Privacy Policy and Data & Records Integrity Policy. Records are created and securely retained, including allegations, assessments, investigation materials, decisions and actions, consistent with retention and security controls. Data breaches involving personal information are assessed against OAIC's NDB scheme and reported where required. My CMS+1OAIC

16. Protection from detriment and vexatious matters

LIHE prohibits victimisation of any person who raises or participates in a matter in good faith and takes steps to protect parties' wellbeing. Frivolous or vexatious complaints may be dismissed after assessment, with reasons recorded and communicated. My CMS

17. External reporting and liaison

Where applicable, LIHE will notify and cooperate with funders, partner institutions, ethics committees, regulatory bodies, and journals. In the ARC/NHMRC context, parties may request a review by the Australian Research Integrity Committee of LIHE's processes once institutional processes conclude. ARIC reviews process adequacy; it does not re-investigate merits. Australian Research Council+1

18. System learning and reporting

De-identified trend data on breaches, outcomes and corrective actions are reported annually to the Academic Board and Corporate Governance Board for quality assurance and continuous improvement, in line with HESF 5.2 and 7.3. TEQSA

19. Training and awareness

Mandatory induction and refresher training covers the Code, authorship, data and information management, supervision, peer review, publication ethics, conflicts of interest and reporting channels. Completion is recorded in the LMS. Guidance on data management aligns with national guidance on Management of Data and Information in Research. NHMRC

20. Authorship and publication ethics

LIHE expects transparent authorship practices, contributor recognition, disclosure of conflicts, data availability consistent with approvals, and correction of the record. Editors and corresponding authors associated with LIHE should follow COPE retraction and correction guidance when necessary and cooperate with journals. Publication Ethics

21. Complaints and appeals

Process decisions prior to a final determination can be raised with the DO or REO. After institutional processes conclude, parties in ARC/NHMRC-relevant matters may seek an ARIC review of process. Student appeal rights otherwise sit under the Student Grievances, Complaints & Appeals Policy. Australian Research CouncilMy CMS

22. Procedure (operational steps)

1. Intake: DO receives concern, acknowledges receipt, ensures safety/containment steps if needed (e.g., suspend risky procedures, secure data, notify OAIC pathway if indicated). OAIC
2. Preliminary assessment: AO gathers and reviews information, consults RIA as needed, applies the Guide's decision points, and recommends outcome to the REO. NHMRC
3. Decision to investigate: REO approves Terms of Reference, panel, scope and timelines. NHMRC
4. Investigation: panel conducts interviews, examines evidence, documents reasoning, and drafts findings. NHMRC

5. Determination and actions: REO issues determination and actions; notifies relevant internal and external parties; initiates record corrections or retractions where required. Publication Ethics
6. Close-out and learning: recordkeeping, monitoring of actions, reporting to governance, policy/process improvements. TEQSA

23. Document control

Document code: LIHE-RIM-001
Title: Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy and Procedure
Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer (REO)
Contact Officer: Academic Dean (DO)
Approval Authority: Academic Board
Review cycle: Every 3 years

24. Version Control

Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Academic Board	24/09/2025	New policy
1.1	Academic Board	11/06/2026	Minor amendments to expression

Appendix A: Mapping to national standards

This policy implements the Code's institutional responsibilities and the Investigation Guide's role architecture and model process; it also satisfies HESF 2021 Standard 5.2 requirements for institutional frameworks that prevent, detect and address research misconduct and for maintaining records of incidents and outcomes. NHMRC+1TEQSA

Appendix B: Roles, conflicts and independence

Role descriptions, eligibility, appointment, conflict checks, and training expectations for REO, DO, AO, RIA, panel members and secretariat are maintained by the Registrar and Academic Dean in a standing register and reviewed annually in line with the Investigation Guide. NHMRC

Appendix C: Model documents (operational templates)

Template pack includes: allegation intake form, preliminary assessment report, investigation Terms of Reference, notice of allegation, respondent/complainant information sheets, investigation report template, determination letter, action plan and external notification checklists (funders, journals, OAIC where relevant). The external notifications checklist incorporates COPE guidance for corrections/retractions and OAIC NDB criteria. Publication EthicsOAIC

Appendix D: Data, privacy and security controls

Data and records from integrity matters are classified as internal restricted data, stored and retained per LEA-GEN-COR-70025, and handled in accordance with the Privacy Policy and IT Resources and Online Conduct Policy. Breach assessment follows OAIC's four-step approach (contain, assess, notify, review). My CMS+2My CMS+2OAIC

Appendix E: Interface with student and staff processes

Where matters concern HDR candidates, the Graduate Research leadership is consulted to coordinate actions affecting candidature. For coursework-only academic misconduct, the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy applies; where issues span both domains, the DO coordinates a single coherent pathway to avoid duplication and ensure fairness. My CMS

Authoritative sources

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) — PDF. NHMRC
Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Code (2018) — PDF. NHMRC
TEQSA HESF 2021 overview and Domain 5.2; TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic and Research Integrity — PDF. TEQSA+2TEQSA+2
OAIC Notifiable Data Breach scheme guidance (updated 2025). OAIC
COPE Retraction Guidelines. Publication Ethics