

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE CHAIR ROLE DESCRIPTION

Approved by Council: 8 May 2019



1. Overview

The University is required by the [National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) (the *National Statement*) and the Determinations to Regulation 1 to appoint a Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC):

A chairperson, with suitable experience, whose other responsibilities will not impair the HREC's capacity to carry out its obligations under this National Statement (*National Statement 5.1.30a*)

The Chair of the Committee is appointed by the Council from the membership of the Committee. In the absence of the Chair, a member of the Committee is elected by the Committee as acting Chair for that meeting. (Determinations to Regulation 1.6.2).

This document provides a guide to the role and responsibilities of the Chair of the HREC of the University.

2. Role and Relationships

- 2.1 The Chair provides human research ethics leadership at the University and is appointed from the membership of the Committee.
- 2.2 The Chair exercises significant authority in matters relating to human research ethics, playing a leading role in quality assurance.
- 2.3 The Chair works collegially with academic staff and students to promote awareness of University policies and strategies concerning human research ethics.
- 2.4 The Chair works closely with the members of HREC, the Director of Research, and the Committee's Executive Officer. The Chair reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor and the University Council.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 To uphold the responsibilities of the HREC Chair and apply the ethical principles and values set out in the [National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) (the *National Statement*), the HREC terms of reference set out in clause 6.4 of the Determinations to Regulation 1, UD policy and procedures, and operating guidelines.
- 3.2 To provide leadership and impartial guidance in relation to the responsible conduct of research on human participants as per the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (the *Code*) and the *National Statement*.
- 3.3 To chair HREC meetings in a manner that ensures that the views of all members are received and considered and that consensus-based decisions are made where possible.

- 3.4 To provide guidance to the Director of Research and research office staff with respect to the most appropriate ethics review pathway for ethics applications, amendments, and reports.
- 3.5 To promote good communication between the HREC, researchers, and the University.
- 3.6 To promote staff, student and HREC member research ethics professional development and awareness of relevant legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines.

4. Specific Duties

- 4.1 Liaise with Research Office staff regarding preparation for HREC meetings, including reviewing draft agenda and supporting documentation;
- 4.2 Monitor responses to HREC meeting invitations and liaise with Research Office staff to ensure quorum and minimum attendance requirements are met and the views of absent HREC members are received and considered in accordance with the requirements of the *National Statement*;
- 4.3 Prepare for and chair HREC meetings, call for disclosure of conflicts of interest, manage the business of meetings in accordance with the meeting agendas, and foster the free exchange of opinions from HREC members;
- 4.4 Liaise with Research Office staff regarding post-meeting procedures, including reviewing draft minutes, supporting documentation, and response letters to applicants and supervisors;
- 4.5 Provide *ad hoc* guidance and advice to researchers and supervisors in consultation with the Director of Research and Research Office staff;
- 4.6 Liaise with the Director of Research regarding the operations of the HREC generally;
- 4.7 Monitor and liaise with Research Office staff regarding the HREC's regulatory compliance, in particular the preparation and lodgement of the HREC's annual report to the NHMRC;
- 4.8 Maintain familiarity with the *National Statement* and the *Code* and consult other relevant documents as necessary.
- 4.9 Report to the Vice-Chancellor and UD Council as appropriate.
- 4.10 Review and comment on HREC and UD documentation as required.