Disseminating Research Outputs Policy process

Objective: To promote an environment of honesty, integrity, accuracy and responsibility in the dissemination, publication, and reporting of the outcomes of research.

Exclusions: Nil.

Definitions

ARC: Australian Research Council

Clinical Trial: Any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health related intervention to evaluate the effects on health outcomes. Medical interventions include any intervention used to modify a health outcome and include drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioural treatments, etc. (WHO/ ICMJE 2008 definition)

Dissemination: The process of widely circulating information.

NHMRC: National Health and Medical Research Council

Open access (OA): The idea that research articles should be freely, immediately and permanently available online to anyone, rather than locked away in subscription journals.

Peer review: The impartial and independent assessment of research, conducted by researchers working in the same or related fields. Peer review has a number of important roles in research and research management, in the assessment of grant applications, in selecting material for publication, in the review of performance of researchers and teams, and in the selection of staff.

Publication: The formal dissemination of research findings in a public forum whether in hardcopy, electronic, web-based or other tangible forms. Publication is more than the production of a book. It includes quality control such as peer review or equivalent in-house quality control through processes such as expert assessment or review, as well as editing, copy-editing, design, and conversion of the work to an appropriate format. Source: 1.3.4 2014 Higher Education Research Data Collection specification

Research Repository: RMIT's Research Repository is a free, publicly accessible repository of all RMIT research publications.

Research Output: This includes published research outputs such as journal articles, books and book chapters, but also includes creative works, performances, and other scholarly works. It includes technical papers, reports and conference abstracts. It includes web-based publications including personal or professional blogs and any form of research output made available over the Internet. It does not apply to theses but it may apply to papers that form part of a thesis by publication.

Process steps:

Introduction

When disseminating, publishing and promoting their research outcomes, researchers will do so honestly and responsibly. This includes:

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- Ensuring the quality of the research findings and observations (See Section 1)
- Accurate acknowledgements, affiliation and referencing (See Section 2)
- Disseminating outputs using appropriate methods (See Section 3)
- Reporting outputs accurately to your institution and on your research record (See Section 4)
- Respecting restrictions on dissemination (See Section 5)

1. **Quality of the research outputs**

   1.1. To ensure the quality of research outputs researchers will:
   - Base the work on accurate and valid research outcomes;
   - Disseminate a full and accurate account of the research, including where possible, negative outcomes and results contrary to their hypotheses;
   - Have the work peer reviewed, quality assured or equivalent prior to dissemination, in line with expected good practice in the discipline. See RMIT website for additional guidance. This includes dissemination via the media and non-research groups.

   1.2. Researchers will declare and manage any actual or potential conflicts of interest in line with RMIT's **Ethics and Integrity Policy (unresolved)** and other relevant guidelines, such as those of the publication.

   1.3. Researchers will clearly distinguish between professional comments based on research and opinions based on personal views.

   1.4. Researchers will take all reasonable steps to ensure their research findings or observations are accurate and properly communicated and reported. If they become aware of misleading or inaccurate statements in their work, they will correct the record as soon as possible. This could involve corrections or retractions, and will be done in line with the publication's guidelines.

2. **Acknowledgements, affiliation and referencing**

   2.1. When disseminating research outputs, researchers will not present another person's work, idea or creation as though it is their own. The work of others will be cited, acknowledged, and referenced appropriately and in a manner consistent with discipline norms.

   2.2. When disseminating research outputs researchers will acknowledge all authors, contributions (including financial and in-kind support), funding bodies, and affiliations (including attributing RMIT as the host institution) in line with the Authorship of research outputs process.

   2.3. When promoting research outputs for publicity purposes RMIT University will acknowledge all relevant partner institutions and sponsors involved in collaborative research.

   2.4. Research is an original contribution to knowledge, therefore researchers will not disseminate multiple research outputs that overlap significantly unless:
   - When submitting the work, the author/creator discloses to the publisher that substantially similar work has been published or has been submitted to another publisher; or,
   - When disseminating the work, the author/creator discloses that the work has been disseminated elsewhere; or,
   - There is full cross-referencing within the outputs, such as a series of closely related works or a review article; or,
   - It is a complete work developed from a previous publication such as an abstract or conference presentation; or,
   - It has been translated into another language and the original source is acknowledged.

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2.5. Research outputs based on research that required ethics approval, a regulatory permit or other discipline specific approval will reference the permits or approvals in line with discipline norms.

3. **Dissemination and publication of research findings**

   3.1. RMIT encourages researchers to disseminate research findings broadly to increase the reach and impact of research, make a greater contribution to public knowledge and share the benefits of research with other researchers, practitioners and the wider community. Researchers may disseminate research using a wide variety of means, (including academic journals, books, conference papers, exhibitions, presentations, performances, media interviews, participation in debates and providing public statement) and to a wide range of audiences (such as professional organisations, peer researchers, policy makers and the community). Researchers will respect restrictions on dissemination as detailed in Section 5.

   3.2. Researchers will disseminate in reputable outlets that provide quality assurance and peer review or equivalent in line with good research practice and discipline norms. Researchers will take active steps to ensure that any publisher or other outlet is of good standing and avoid predatory outlets or those with low standing in the discipline.

   3.3. Where it is a funding requirement, researchers will ensure that their research results are available via open access. If researchers are unable to do so, they must fulfil funding body requirements in this area, for example the ARC and NHMRC require the researcher to include an explanation in the final report for the relevant grant if the researcher is unable to disseminate an open access copy of a research output within 12 months from the date of publication. For more information see NHMRC's policy and the ARC's Open Access Policy.

4. **Reporting research outputs**

   4.1. Researchers will report research outputs to the Research Office that meet the reporting criteria following the instructions on the website, so that the achievements of RMIT's research community can be appropriately acknowledged and reported, and so that resources can be allocated accordingly.

   4.2. Where possible, researchers will send a digital version of their peer reviewed research outputs to the RMIT Research Repository as soon as possible or within twelve (12) months of dissemination, following the instructions on the website.

   4.3. Researchers will ensure that the information about their research activity and track record as it appears on their CV, job applications, grant applications, reports and public statements is accurate. This includes accuracy regarding:

   - The type of output (journal article, book etc.);
   - The status of the output (in preparation, submitted, under review, accepted for publication, in press, peer reviewed or not);
   - The role of the researchers (author, editor, etc.);
   - The status of research funding (applied for, granted, funding period, role of funder in the research or its dissemination); and,
   - Any awards conferred.

5. **Respecting restrictions on dissemination**

   5.1. When communicating research outcomes, researchers will respect any restrictions due to the following requirements:

- Intellectual property rights;
- Contractual arrangements;
- Confidentiality;
- Personal information/privacy issues;
- Cultural sensitivities;
- Ethics requirements and institutional ethics processes/policy documents; and,
- RMIT policy, in particular the Intellectual Property Policy and Privacy and Information Management Policy.

5.2. Researchers will provide research participants with a summary of the outcomes prior to communicating research outcomes, where possible. This may not be possible, for example, in research projects where consent is waived or qualified.

5.3. Before informing the media about their research outcomes, researchers should inform those directly impacted by the research both about the research outcomes and that they are informing the media.

5.4. Researchers will be aware of and abide by terms and conditions of publication agreements with journals or other publishers. Publication agreements are legal documents and often involve the assignment of copyright and restrictions on republication of work.

5.5. Where possible, researchers will retain the right to republish their research outcomes, for example by only granting a non-exclusive licence to publishers or using a creative commons licence. Where this is not possible (for example due to contractual obligations or an embargo) researchers will gain any required permissions (for example, permission from the original publisher) before republishing research outcomes.

Related policy: Research Policy

Supporting documents: [Links to templates, forms, guidelines etc]

- Disseminating research outputs at RMIT

Cross-referenced to: [State and federal laws and regulations and other relevant RMIT policies]

- Animal ethics process
- Authorship of research outputs process
- Human research ethics process
- Research involving genetically modified organisms (GMOs) process

Feedback link: Policy@rmit.edu.au

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