Authorship of Research Outputs Procedure

Section 1 - Context

(1) This procedure outlines criteria for, and responsibilities of, authorship of research outputs. This procedure is aligned to the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018](), its supporting guide on authorship, and the RMIT [Research Policy]().

Section 2 - Authority

(2) Authority for this procedure is established by the [Research Policy]().

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This procedure applies to all staff, students, visiting researchers and honorary and adjunct appointees undertaking or supporting research at all RMIT Group and external research locations, and any research RMIT is obliged to consider.

Section 4 - Procedure

Responsible Authorship

(4) Authorship recognises significant intellectual and scholarly contributions to research in a responsible, respectful, and fair manner.

(5) Authorship will:

a. honestly reflect contributions to research
b. fairly and consistently recognise those contributions, in accordance with disciplinary practice
c. be communicated clearly and transparently between those who contribute to the research.

(6) Responsible authorship embodies the principles of Fairness and Recognition in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018]() and the [RMIT Values]() of Inclusion, Courage, and Passion.

(7) Researchers are required to discuss, agree and document authorship in accordance with this Procedure.

(8) A person is listed as an author of a research output only when they have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research described in the research output, are willing to be accountable for their contribution, and agree to be listed as an author.

(9) Researchers acknowledge all contributors and contributions to the research described in the research output.

(10) Researchers name RMIT University as their affiliation where warranted (where a part of the research was conducted at RMIT or with RMIT support) and may list multiple affiliations, as appropriate and in accordance with this Procedure.

Authorship Criteria

(11) In order to qualify for authorship, a person must make a significant scholarly contribution to the intellectual shaping of a research output by:

    a. participating in the conception and design of the project; and/or

    b. acquiring research data where that acquisition requires significant intellectual judgement, planning, or design; and/or

    c. contributing relevant knowledge, including Indigenous knowledge; and/or

    d. analysing and interpreting research data; and/or

    e. drafting significant parts of the work or critically revising it so as to contribute to the interpretation.

(12) Contributors who make a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to one or more of the criteria in clause (11) will qualify as authors.

(13) To be named as an author, contributors will also take responsibility for the integrity and accuracy of, and be accountable for, at least their contribution to the output.

(14) Contributors will agree on authorship in writing (for example, in an authorship plan/agreement, or an email). A contributor who qualifies as an author will not be included or excluded as an author without their written permission. For more information, see Agreeing Authorship, below. If a contributor disputes the recognition of their contribution, they will follow the disputes resolution procedures described in this Procedure.

(15) Research teams, and particularly supervisors and students, will discuss authorship in the initial stages of planning a publication, and regularly during the course of research to ensure that contributions from members of the research team are appropriately acknowledged. These discussions will be formalised (for example, in an authorship plan/agreement) which may be revisited as the publication progresses.

(16) Authors will agree to the final authorship list by submission of the manuscript or the step prior to publication of the research output.

(17) Supervisors will ensure that research students or candidates receive appropriate credit for their work and are offered authorship if they meet the authorship criteria. Research students will offer authorship to their supervisor(s) if they meet the authorship criteria. This applies to research outputs other than student theses.

(18) Where authorship practices vary across research disciplines, such as order of authors, researchers will follow good practice in the relevant discipline area. Schools, discipline areas or the Research Integrity Advisors may provide researchers with discipline-specific advice in this regard.

(19) As detailed in this procedure, authorship requires a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution. The following contributions on their own do not represent a significant contribution and will not be recognised with authorship:

    a. providing materials or data from third parties or that have already been made publicly available

    b. providing routine technical support

    c. collecting data where the collection of the data has not required significant scholarly or intellectual contribution or expertise

    d. supervising or being part of the wider team conducting the research, or

e. holding a position of authority such as Dean/Head of School.

(20) In these cases, the authors can invite these persons to make a contribution that would warrant their inclusion as an author (as described in procedures on Authorship criteria), and/or acknowledge them in line with the procedures on Acknowledgement.

(21) Contributors will ensure their authorship is listed accurately, for example in curricula vitae, funding applications, and websites.

Agreeing Authorship

(22) Each author will provide the corresponding author with information of their contribution to the research output. Each author will also keep their own record of this information.

(23) Authors will discuss the order in which the authors will be listed at an early stage in the research project. Authors will review authorship agreements periodically as the order of authors and qualification as an author may change as the research output changes.

(24) When agreeing authorship, each author will declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest (for example, funding sources, supervisory or personal relationships, memberships, consultancies) in line with RMIT's Conflict of Interest Policy. If a conflict of interest arises following the agreement of authorship, the author will declare their conflict to the other authors and any other relevant parties such as funding bodies and publishers.

(25) The corresponding author will document authorship agreements (for example, in an authorship agreement, email, or other written form), and any updates, and retain this documentation for the minimum retention period of the research output.

(26) All authors must consent to be named as an author. If a contributor does not consent to be an author, consider an acknowledgment in line with the provisions for Acknowledgement, below.

(27) Authors will respond to communications about the research output in a timely manner. If an author does not respond, is on leave, or has left their role, every reasonable effort will be made to contact them. If they cannot be contacted, the Dean/Head of School or another appropriate person determined by the Dean/Head of School may respond on their behalf.

(28) If an author is deceased or cannot be contacted, the research output may proceed with this person named as an author provided there are no reasonable grounds to believe this person would have objected to being included as an author. In this instance, the Dean/Head of School or another appropriate person determined by the Dean/Head of School may sign the relevant documentation. If an author is deceased, this will be noted in the publication.

(29) All authors will be notified of, and consent to, changes of authorship before the submission of publication of a research output.

(30) Dissemination will not proceed until all authors agree on authorship. Dissemination will not proceed if any of the valid authors dispute the theory, or the data or its interpretation, underpinning the work. Where researchers cannot agree on authorship, they will use the procedures outlined herein for Disputes.

(31) Staff leaving RMIT University will submit copies of their authorship agreements to their School (for example, line manager or Associate Dean, Research & Innovation). Schools will maintain a record of these authorship agreements.

Corresponding Authors

(32) Collaborating researchers will appoint a corresponding author. The corresponding author does not have to hold a particular place in the order of authorship.

(33) Authors will follow the relevant authorship policy of the corresponding author's institution. If the corresponding author is not an RMIT University author and their institution does not have a policy, then follow RMIT [Research Policy](#) and this Authorship of Research Outputs Procedure.

(34) Corresponding authors may delegate their duties to co-authors. Where a corresponding author will be out of contact for an extended period of time, they will provide another point of contact.

(35) Corresponding authors are responsible for communication to the journal and manuscript preparation, submission, peer review and publication processes, documenting authorship agreement, and reporting research outputs as outlined in the RMIT Dissemination of Research Outputs Procedure.

(36) Research outputs with multiple authors can have a group name. If so, the corresponding author will specify the group name, and clearly document the group members who can take credit and responsibility for the work as authors.

Affiliation

(37) RMIT staff and students will name RMIT University as their affiliation, where a part of the research was conducted at RMIT or with RMIT support. This applies to RMIT staff, students, visiting researchers, research collaborators, and honorary and adjunct appointees undertaking research activities at all RMIT University campuses and external research locations. This applies in cases where an author has since left RMIT but some or all of the work was conducted while they were at RMIT.

(38) Author's will attribute RMIT affiliation in the author's by-line, in the author's profile, or in a footnote or statement that the research leading to the output was undertaken in the author's capacity as a staff member or student of RMIT University. Correct attribution of affiliation is required so that RMIT University's achievements and investment in research can be appropriately acknowledged and reported.

(39) Multiple affiliations are acceptable in some cases, including but not limited to research collaborations with other institutions, professional practice-based research, and dual badged programs with offshore universities. List RMIT University first when possible.

(40) Authors of research outputs that result from practice-based research will consider whether the professional practice should be declared as an acknowledgement rather than an affiliation, in line with this Procedure.

Acknowledgment

(41) Authors will fully acknowledge all people contributing to the research who are not authors. This includes but is not limited to research assistance, technical writing and technical support, editing, translation, transcription, advisory or lived experience groups. These contributors will not have played a significant role in the intellectual shaping of the research output (in these circumstances authorship may be more appropriate).

(42) Where authors plan to acknowledge a contributor, they will record the individual's written consent.

(43) Research outputs will appropriately acknowledge all sources of financial and in-kind support for the research, such as access provided to research facilities, and acknowledge funding bodies in line with their requirements.

(44) Authors will fully acknowledge people and organisations contributing facilities, data or materials to the research. Authors will gain, record and store permission for the use of these facilities, data or materials, and comply with any conditions of use. See RMIT's Intellectual Property Policy (unresolved) for information about appropriate use of other people's intellectual property, for example third party copyright materials.

Disputes

(45) If disagreements arise over authorship, researchers will try to resolve them at the local level using mediation and

by seeking advice from a Research Integrity Advisor, Dean/Head of School, Higher Degrees by Research Coordinator, or other senior researchers, as appropriate.

(46) Disputes that cannot be resolved at a local level will be referred to the Research Integrity Office (RIO). The RIO will initiate a formal mediation process in which authors meet with a Research Integrity Advisor and discuss relative contributions to the research output, per the authorship criteria in this Procedure and accounting for authorship practices in the relevant academic discipline.

(47) Where a dispute cannot be resolved by mediation, or where the dispute evidences a breach of research integrity, the matter will be handled in line with the RMIT Management of Breaches of Research Integrity Procedure.

(48) Where a disagreement of authorship involves authors from different institutions, authors will first seek to resolve the disagreement locally using the Authorship supporting guide to the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research (see Resources) and the authorship policy of the corresponding author's institution. If the corresponding author's institution does not have an authorship policy, or if this attempt to resolve the disagreement is unsuccessful, researchers will inform the RMIT RIO and follow dispute resolution process outlined in this Procedure. The RIO will liaise with all authors and the corresponding RIO of other institutions to mediate the dispute.

(49) Work that is the subject of an authorship dispute will not be disseminated until the dispute has been resolved. Where a dispute arises following dissemination, this will be managed in accordance with the Managing allegations of a breach of research integrity Procedure.

Section 5 - Definitions

(Note: Commonly defined terms are in the RMIT Policy Glossary. Any defined terms below are specific to this policy).

Author	Author includes equivalent terms such as but not limited to creator, writer, designer, artist, as long as the person fulfils the authorship criteria in this Procedure.
Contributor	A contributor is anyone contributing to shaping of the research output and can include those who make significant intellectual or scholarly contributions to the criteria in this Procedure (see procedures on authors) or those who have assisted the output in other ways such as those in this Procedure (see procedures on acknowledgements).
Corresponding author	The corresponding author is a specified co-author of a publication who acts as point of contact for all correspondence regarding the publication, and maintains authorship agreements and related records. The corresponding author is sometimes referred to as the 'executive author'.
Publication/Research output	Publications and research outputs are formal disseminations of research findings in a public forum whether in hardcopy, electronic, web-based, or other tangible forms. It includes refereed and non-refereed books, book chapters and journal articles, conference proceedings, creative works, technical papers, performances, other scholarly works, and web-based publications including personal or professional blogs. It does not include a student or research candidate thesis.
Practice-based research	Practice-based research examines what designers and artists actually do when they develop new approaches to creative practice by simultaneously developing practice and reflection-in-action. Practice-based research is embedded within professional practices and communities beyond the institution.
Research data	Research data are the material, data, records, files, and other evidence upon which a research project's observations, findings, or outcomes are based. This includes all content and forms (e.g. print, digital, physical or other forms), and both primary material and analysed data. For example, laboratory notebooks, survey forms, specimens, computer code and any other records needed to reconstruct or evaluate reported results of research, and the events and methods leading to those results.
Researcher	A researcher is anyone who carries out research at RMIT University. This includes staff, students, visiting researchers, research collaborators, and honorary and adjunct appointees.

RIO	Research Integrity Office. At RMIT, the RIO is part of the Ethics, Integrity and Governance team in Research Services.
Supervisor	A supervisor is a staff member who advises and assists research candidates in meeting the requirements for successfully completing their candidature milestone reviews and submitting their research for examination.
Written consent	Written consent is documented and informed agreement and includes original hand-written signatures, forms, emails, faxes, scanned documents or electronic identification as appropriate.

Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Calum Drummond Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation
Policy Author	Jane Holt Executive Director, Research Strategy and Services
Enquiries Contact	Research Services

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"RMIT Group" - The University, its controlled entities and strategic investment vehicles (known as the RMIT Group).

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Page 7 of 7