

# WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY IN AFRICA



**Quality  
Assurance  
Department**

549 Arcturus Road, Manresa  
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Zimbabwe

Addressing gender disparity and fostering equity in higher education

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## POLICY FORMAT TEMPLATE

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### TITLE OF THE POLICY: WUA RESEARCH INTEGRITY POLICY

#### 1. INTERPRETATION (DEFINITION OF TERMS)

##### Introduction

Research Integrity entails carrying out a research in such a way that permits others to have assurance and trust in the methods and the findings of the research. It ascribes both to the scientific integrity of carried out research and to the professional integrity of the researchers

Key element of research integrity includes: Rigour, honest, open communication and transparency and the care and respect of all participants. Accountability should be apparent at all phases of the research. Research findings advise public policies, treatment of human and animal diseases and future research. As a responsible member of the research community, WUA seeks to produce research of the highest standard.

Breach of the Code - any indecorous action by a staff member in his official capacity or any conduct by a university staff member, which is unconnected with his official duties, inclined to bring the University into public disgrace; any inappropriate use or effort to take advantage of his/her position; any behaviour contrary to the terms of his pledge or declaration.

Wrongdoing in research - deliberate, fraudulent or grossly negligent conduct such as falsification, fabrication, plagiarism, deliberate distortion of or other behaviours by a staff member or collaborator that completely deviate from the research code of conduct

Collaboration: A partnership happens when an institution or individual either within or external to the University work collectively and there is a obligation of resources by both parties.

Confidential data: Commercially treasured information or a trade secret, a sacred or secret information (usually communicated by participants/ people) or any other information which is deemed as confidential by a person involved in research, research participant, or the

University. It does not include information which:

- a. is in or turn into part of the public domain (other than through a breach of confidence); or
- b. the recipient already knew at the time of disclosure (unless if such knowledge emerged through a breach of confidence); or
- c. the receiver can verify that it was independently acquired or developed without breaching any obligations of confidence.

Conflicts of Interest: A position in which an individual is in a capacity to derive personal benefits from arrangements or decisions made in their authority.

A student at Masters or Doctor of Philosophy level (AQF 9 or 10 respectively), of which two thirds (2/3) of the work is research or research training.

Intellectual Property: Imperceptible stuff that is developed as the result of one's creativity or grant, such as patents and copyrights.

Moral Rights: Individual legal rights belonging to originators of copyright works which cannot be transferred, allotted or sold.

Individuals Involved in Research: Research participants

Plagiarism: Includes the use of someone's intellectual output and giving it, in any formula, as one's own with no appropriate credit or acknowledgment.

Principal Investigator: It is **the person who is responsible for the planning, carrying out and administering of a research grant**, cooperatively agree, train or spearhead a, contract, public service project an or other sponsored projects.

Records: The substantial form of information, linked to or derived from research. Records may comprise of correspondence, grant or ethical clearance applications, technical reports, consent forms signed by participants, participants' information sheets for research or other similar documents. For the purposes of this Policy, records do not comprise of research data and materials.

Research: All ways ending up to, in planning for, during and after the end and reporting of:

- a. an study carried out to produce original knowledge, authenticate preceding research, or use standing knowledge in a novel and creative way to produce new ideas, methodologies and understandings;
- b. an innovative work carried out on a logical manner in order to increase the available base of knowledge;
- c. Experimental advance into applications software, new programming dialects and new operating systems.

**Researcher:** A researcher is someone who does research or a expert who dedicates himself or herself to doing research

**Research Supervisor:** A research Supervisor is an academic Staff appointed to guide an undergraduate, graduate, or post-doctoral student through research related to a thesis, dissertation, or other research project. To be a Research Supervisor one characteristically needs three years' experience in the correlated area as an individual contributor. In-depth knowledge of the functional area under supervision is critical. Principal investigators and supervisors play a significant part in supporting the professional growth of researchers. The Field Supervisors are in control of and ensuring the quality of the data collected is of the highest value in the assigned study area. The field supervisor will intensively supervise the field researchers and the overall process in detail.

**Research Trainee:** A Research Trainee is a person who does not possess a doctoral degree and will be training in a set-up with specific research goals. A Research Trainee will have a one-year term limit if not currently joined in a doctoral program. Classically working under the orders of a research manager, He or she conducts research and analysis, gather and organize files, prepare and arrange samples, and run errands as needed. Moreover, they must learn and adhere to the facility's safety policies and regulations for a safe and efficient workflow.

**Research Mentor:** Mentors offer direction into the research process, give feedback on progress, suggest ways to mitigate challenges, and use their proficiency to assist one to develop as a researcher. Research mentors also give helpful advice and insight into next steps one may want to take in their academic or career path

**Research Misconduct:** Research misconduct is defined as to include plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, in recommending, execution, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. **IMPORTANT:** Research misconduct does NOT embrace honest error or differences of opinion

**Under the auspices of women's University:** Research is where any of the following statements are true:

- a. the research will be carried out on the University site or amenities or using University apparatus or services;
- b. the study will be claimed for activity-based aid;
- c. the study will be defined (e.g. in consent material, recruitment or in study outputs) as the University study;
- d. the study is a element of the University academic programme; or
- e. the investigator(s) want the University's indemnity, or insurance arrangements to cover the study.

## **2. PURPOSE**

This Policy upholds the values and principles that fortify quality research and sets out the minimum criteria anticipated of the University and all individuals associated with research and research training. It is made up of a governance and management framework planned to build an environment that encourages responsibility, safety and ethical behaviour of research and to enrich the reputation of the University and its researchers.

This Policy holds the principles of the [Respectful Ethics Clearance Boards for different professionals) to institute and sustain virtuous governance and management practices concerning the conduct of research activities within the University. It is the obligation of WUA Research leadership to embolden good practice.

## **3. SCOPE**

This Policy relates to all University staff and students

## **4. PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE POLICY**

- A principle is a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behaviour or for a chain of reasoning.
- The set of principles guiding the implementation of the policy should be stated and explained. For instance, the principles guiding the National Gender Policy of 2013 are: Gender Justice; Affirmative Action; Integration of Gender Perspectives; Broad-Based Inclusivity etc.

## **5. POLICY PROVISIONS**

VU Research is committed to the principles of the Zimbabwe and WUA Codes. Namely, honesty, rigour, transparency, fairness, respect, recognition, accountability and promotion.

The University has established a research integrity governance and management framework, comprised of this Policy and associated Procedures, that:

- a. promotes quality research underpinned by a culture of responsible and ethical conduct to enhance the reputation of the University, researchers and research as a profession;
- b. comprises of the adoption and application of a suite of established policies, guidelines and procedures outlining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, and appropriately minimise and manage risk associated with the conduct of research; and
- c. provides formal training and continuing professional development on all aspects of **the Zimbabwe and WUA Codes** and this Policy for all researchers and those in other relevant roles.

The University has appointed experienced researchers to create a network of Research Integrity Advisors (RIAs). The primary roles of RIAs are to promote and foster the responsible conduct of research and to be a source of collegiate advice to researchers.

### **Women's University in Africa Research Commitments**

All persons involved in research will maintain high standards of research integrity (the components of this responsibility are outlined in the University's Research Integrity Procedures).

All University researchers, that is, research mentors, graduate researchers, research trainees, and technical and other support staff when directly involved in research, will comply with relevant laws, regulations, guidelines and policies related to the design, conduct and reporting of research, and participate in relevant professional development activities offered by the University.

All University researchers will adhere to the provisions of the Zimbabwe and WUA Codes and this Research Integrity Policy, and will not engage in research misconduct. Where it is alleged there has been non-adherence or that research misconduct has occurred, the matter will be dealt with under the Research Integrity - Guide to the Management of Potential Breaches of the Zimbabwe and WUA Code Procedures.

The University is committed to the Research responsibilities below, which are outlined in the following procedures:

- a. Research Data and materials [pending];
- b. Research Integrity - Authorship Procedure;
- c. Research Integrity - Guide to the Management of Potential Breaches of the WUA and Zimbabwe Code Procedure;
- d. Peer Review [pending].

### **Research data and materials**

Researchers will maintain comprehensive notes, books, and records related to research activities, including details of observations, processes and other significant actions or findings, together with any research data and materials necessary to verify the integrity of a research project.

Research data and materials will be retained for a prescribed period beyond the completion of a project as set out in the Management of Data and Information in Research: A guide supporting the Zimbabwe Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research to enable research outcomes to be validated and justified.

### **Supervision of trainee researchers**

Research supervisors will have the appropriate skills and qualifications to guide students. They will also mentor and guide their trainees with regard to the responsible conduct of research (see Higher Degrees by Research Procedure and Supervision).

The University supports supervisors through procedures relating to the supervision of work, mentoring and the professional development needs of research trainees and responsibilities of supervisor/trainee.

### **Publication and dissemination of research findings**

University research will be disseminated responsibly and should be disseminated widely.

The Zimbabwe and WUA Codes and this Policy applies to all forms of refereed and non-refereed publications that enable research to be shared by other researchers, professionals and the wider community.

University researchers will disseminate research findings responsibly through publication in academic journals, conference papers, books, exhibitions, films, performances, websites, other media or professional and institutional repositories.

University researchers will promptly take appropriate action to correct the record where there are potential problems with a reported output.

University researchers will take all reasonable steps to avoid publishing with an illegitimate/vanity/pay-to-pay/predatory publisher.

### **Authorship**

The University and its researchers will attribute authorship and acknowledge contributions to scholarly works recognising the moral rights of others and avoiding plagiarism.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Conflicts of interest can arise in a range of contexts relating to research and will be managed to ensure judgements and decisions are not influenced by, or perceived to be influenced by, personal interests or associations.

All persons involved in research will recognise and manage actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest.

### **Collaborative research with organizations and individuals outside the University**

While this commitment may vary, collaborations raise specific research integrity issues.

All research collaborations will be dealt with through a written agreement.

### **Breaches of the Australian Code and Research Misconduct**

(44)The University's arrangements for investigating alleged breaches of the WUA charter (including research misconduct) are described in the Research Integrity - Guide to the Management of Potential Breaches of the Zimbabwe and WUA Code Procedures (pending).

(45)All persons involved in University research will contribute to the University's efforts to prevent and detect potential breaches of the Zimbabwe and WUA Code.

### **Research Integrity, Ethics and Compliance with Regulatory Bodies**

The University has established processes to promote research integrity, including formal mechanisms designed to ensure research involving or impacting on humans, animals or the environment is designed, conducted and reported in accordance with relevant regulatory systems. These standards are consistent with, and additional to, the obligations, values and principles articulated by the Zimbabwe and WUA Code and this Policy.

(47)There is additional guidance for research with

## Occupational Health and Safety

Nothing in this Policy alters any legal obligation related to or involving Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). All persons involved in research will be aware that they may be personally liable at law for breaches of OHS that occur in the conduct of their research.

### SECTION 5 - PROCEDURES

Research Integrity: Research Data and Materials Procedure [pending]

Research Integrity - Authorship Procedure (Pending)

Research Integrity - Guide to the Management of Potential Breaches of the WUA Code Procedure (pending)

Research Integrity: Peer review Procedure [pending]


## 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### RESPONSIBILITY

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Quality Assurance Department	Develop and disseminate University-wide Policy Format Template
RIPGC	Processing all ethical clearance for all PhD students
ALL FACULTIES	Working with research Board and facilitate, ethics clearance of collaborative studies
RESEARCH BOARD	Sending all research to be carried out at the university is sent for ethical clearance and recorded
ETHICS REVIEW BOARD	Ensuring that all research carried out at the university is ethical sound recorded and given
ICT	Create storage space, archiving and security and giving assurance that the data can accessed when needed. Advising on the time period of keeping storing data

## 7. DOCUMENT VERSION MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Document Name	WUA Research Integrity Policy	
Version Reference	Version 1.1 20/08/2022	
Document Owner		
Approved by		
Date of Approval		
Review Date		
		<b>WUA</b>