#13 Research Integrity Advisers

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Research Integrity Advisers are a key component of Griffith University's research community and reflect the University's commitment to responsible research.

1) About this sheet

This sheet in the Research Integrity Resource Sheets series describes Griffith University's network of collegiate Research Integrity Advisers (RIA).

This sheet should be considered along with the other sheets in this series (the contents of which are not replicated in this sheet).

2) National Guidelines

The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) is the Australian standard for research integrity/the responsible conduct of research.

Principle 8 of the Australian Code (2018) is of direct relevance to the University's RIA network:

- **P8 Promotion** of responsible research practices
  - o Promote and foster a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research.

As is **Institutional Responsibility 6**:

- R6 Identify and train Research Integrity Advisors who assist in the promotion and fostering of responsible research conduct and provide advice to those with concerns about potential breaches of the Code.

3) Griffith University's collegiate RIA network

When the University implemented the 2007 version of the Australian Code, it was decided the role of the Research Integrity Adviser network should be more collegiate than the role described by the Australian Code.

Consequently, there is very little change required to the role and responsibilities of Griffith University's RIA network.

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Griffith University regards the RIA role to be of strategic importance to the University's research agenda. The RIA network is a key component of the University's collegiate support for our research community and is an important facet of our research culture.

4) Role and responsibilities

The role and responsibilities of RIAs include:

- **Being a source of collegiate advice to researchers in their Group** in relation to the Australian Code (2018) and Griffith University's research integrity arrangements (as described by The Responsible Conduct of Research policy and the Research Integrity Resource Sheets (RIRS)).

- **Advice with regards to whether a matter might be a breach of the Australian Code (2018) or Griffith University's research integrity arrangements** – Informal advice to a party or advice to a Dean Research. For example whether a matter appears to constitute a breach (or more precisely whether the matter could be a breach).

- **Role in awareness raising and training** within their area (e.g. the design and delivery of research integrity workshops in their Group). RIAs are expected to be involved in at least one research integrity workshop in their Group per year.

- **Role in identifying resources and policy material** required to better support researchers in their Group.

- **General role in promoting awareness, the responsible conduct of research and the use of the RIRS series**.

5) RIAs and disputes

Even though RIAs will not undertake a direct role in disputes (e.g. when the parties make a good faith effort to resolve their differences, and the Group's Research Dean tries to mediate a resolution), RIAs can be helpful in a number of ways (see below).

RIAs could provide:

(i)   An explanation of the University's processes, including the steps and likely timeframe;

(ii)   Internal and external sources of information;

(iii)   Some salient literature/cases; and

(iv)   Whether the matter appears to relate to a breach of the Australian Code (2018).

Separate RIAs should advise the different parties to the dispute and Dean Research (if the matter progresses to mediation). If an RIA has a conflict of interest (regardless of whether it is perceived, potential or actual) they should not provide advice on the matter.

Refer to RIRS#11 for more on the handling of disputes.

6) RIAs and alleged breaches

While RIAs are not involved in the handling, investigation, determination or resolution of alleged breaches of the Australian Code (2018) or Griffith University's research integrity arrangements, RIAs can provide similar information for parties to the investigation of alleged breaches as was described at 5) above.

Separate RIAs should advise the complainant and respondent for the alleged dispute. If an RIA has a conflict of interest (regardless of whether it is perceived, potential or actual) they should not provide advice on the matter.

RIAs play no role in determining whether a breached has occurred, determining its severity or appropriate corrective action. If there is an educative response, an RIA (who preferably did not advise one of the parties) may be involved in the educative activity.

Refer to Procedure for the handling of alleged breaches of the Australian Code (2018) resource paper for more on the handling of alleged breaches.

7) Consulting an RIA

All Griffith University researchers can access a RIA. Contact details for Griffith University's network of RIAs are listed online.

RIAs will expect that researchers have first consulted the relevant RIRS.

HDR candidates should always seek the advice of their primary supervisor before consulting an RIA. If the supervisor cannot advise on a matter, both the supervisor and candidate should consult the RIA together.

8) Workshops

Every 12 months a RIA will conduct at least one research integrity workshop in their Group. This might be in the Element where they are based, in another Element of the Group or a Group-wide event.

A Head of Element, Research Centre Director, project/research team leader will generally request their local RIA to facilitate a workshop. Individual researchers (including HDR candidates and supervisors) may ask a RIA to facilitate a workshop. A RIA may stipulate a minimum number of registrants before they agree to facilitate a workshop.

Workshops may be co-facilitated by an RIA and a staff member of the Office for Research.

Workshops conducted by an RIA will not generally be accepted in lieu of HDR candidate orientation or supervisor accreditation.

The person requesting a workshop will generally be responsible for logistics of the activity (such as room and AV/IT booking and promotion).

The Office for Research collects information about the conduct of workshops.

9) Support and professional development for RIAs

The Office for Research provides support and conducts annual professional development activities for Griffith University's network of RIAs.

This support includes:

(i)   Template presentations, vignettes, emails and other material for use in local workshops.

(ii)   On-call advice and suggestions to assist with fielding enquiries from researchers.

(iii)   A suggested reading list and references to cases, resources and ideas.

(iv)   Facilitation of a community of practice between the University's network of RIAs.

10) Nominate to be an RIA

New RIA appointments, and the reappointment of continuing RIAs, are made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, based upon

recommendations by the relevant Research Dean.

Given the importance of the role, and the potential time commitment involved, the relevant Head of Element should be consulted when a Dean is deciding whether to nominate a researcher to serve as an RIA.

Experienced researchers, with excellent professional development skills, who are interested in this important collegiate role, should discuss this with their Head of Element.

Ideally, every Group should have at least two RIAs with the University having at least two RIAs on every campus.

11) Feedback

The primary reason Griffith University has an RIA network is to advise the University's research community and support the responsible design, conduct and reporting of our research. Your feedback and suggestions are essential for the success of the network.

Email your feedback and suggestions to the Research Ethics & Integrity team (see the contact details on the sidebar on p 5).

12) Sources of advice

For any questions about a research integrity matter, consider the prompts in 7 (p 3 above) and then contact individual Advisers. For questions about the operation of the network contact the Research Ethics & Integrity team (see the contact details on the sidebar on p 5).

13) Scope of this sheet

These guidelines apply to all Griffith University researchers and Research Integrity Advisers, regardless of the expertise of the parties.