

Summary Resource: How are concerns related to research integrity handled at UOW?

As outlined in the article [How are research integrity complaints handled in Australia? – The Research Whisperer](#), most researchers are honest, and their work is a worthwhile addition to the scholarly record. But what happens when that is not the case?

Researchers at UOW are required to follow UOW's [Code of Practice – Responsible Conduct of Research](#) which reflects the principles and responsibilities outlined in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(the “Code”\)](#).

The principles and responsibilities apply to all research – regardless of the project size, discipline or methodology, funding source, whether the research has an ethics application, or whether it is carried out by a student or experienced researcher.

A deviation from the principles or responsibilities is known as a “breach”. Before a breach is assessed or investigated it is known as a “potential breach”, also described as a research integrity concern.

A potential breach at UOW is assessed and/or investigated following the [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Research Code Policy and Procedure](#). A summary of the steps can be found in figure 1 below.

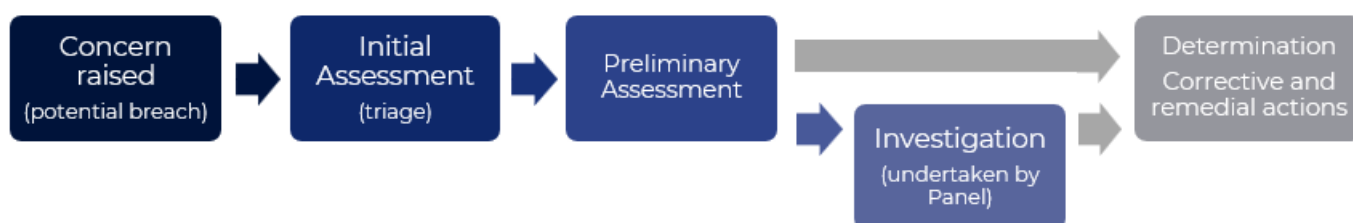


Figure 1. Flowchart showing steps to resolve a research integrity concern at UOW

If it is determined a breach has occurred, the breach will be classified as a “minor” breach, “major” breach or “research misconduct”. Research misconduct is an outcome whereby a breach is determined to be major and serious and also intentional, reckless and deliberate. The spectrum of breaches is demonstrated in figure 2 below.

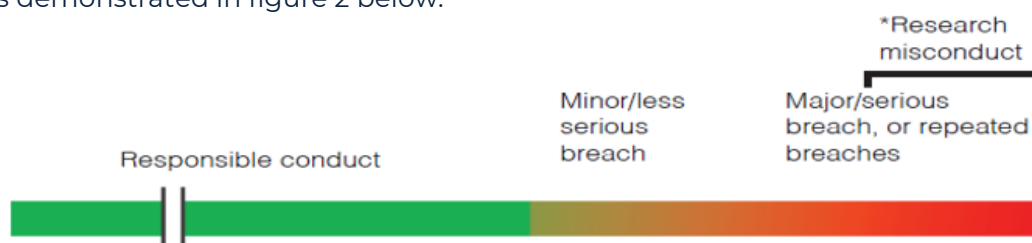


Figure 2. Breaches fall on a spectrum. Source: National Health and Medical Research Council (2018). Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

There are a number of factors which are considered when determining the seriousness of a breach including the extent of departure from accepted practice, the experience of the researcher and impact on others. Further information on classifying breaches can be found in the [Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Research Code Procedure](#).

Researchers are encouraged to ask questions, undertake training in responsible research practices, and report concerns early. Minor issues can often be addressed and corrected, enabling the research to get back on track.

Reporting a potential breach at UOW: Research integrity concerns or complaints are lodged with the [UOW Complaints Management Centre](#)

Queries and advice: Enquiries regarding the responsible conduct of research, including authorship disputes, can be discussed with the [Research Integrity Office](#) or any member of the [Research Integrity Advisor Network](#)

Further information on responsible research practices: [UOW Research Integrity webpage](#)