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**Confirmation of Candidature:
Research Integrity, Research Merit and Research Ethics Assessment**

1) The value and benefits of research are vitally dependent on the **integrity** of research ([Singapore Statement in Research Integrity](http://www.singaporestatement.org/) 2010 endorsed by Academic Senate 2013).

2) Researchers must foster and maintain a research environment of intellectual honesty and integrity, and scholarly and **scientific rigour** (2007). UWS

3) The trend among researchers is to embed **research ethics** into all aspects of the research, right from the design stage through to all the activities that form their ethical research practice. This is essential where research involves human participants ([National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/e72_national_statement_march_2014_140331.pdf) 2007) or animals ([Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ea28_code_care_use_animals_131209.pdf) 8th edition (2013).

These quotes signal three key aspects of the Confirmation of Candidature and more detail is provided below.

1) The candidate must be familiar with the expectations of the scholarly community with respect to how the social practice of research is conducted. TESQA requires all candidates to have completed training in the responsible conduct of research. At UWS this is carried out via the vUWS online platform and the module *Responsible Conduct in Research.*

2) The research merit of the candidate’s project must be established by the Confirmation of Candidature Advisory Committee. This includes the suitableness of the method/approach or experimental methodology, including the feasibility of the research process to answer the research questions.

3) In putting together a proposal for a Confirmation of Candidature a student should outline all ethical issues that are of relevance to their proposed project and how they will be dealt with including, but not limited to:

* their responsibilities relating to data management, storage and dissemination – how this will comply with relevant requirements
* their responsibilities relating to authorship
* their responsibilities for research with animals as set out in the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition (2013)](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ea28) (opens in new window)
* their responsibilities for research involving genetically modified organisms as set out in the Gene Technology legislation and AS/NZS22A3.3-5 safety in laboratories part 3: Microbiological Safety and Containment.
* their responsibilities for research with humans including, the voluntary nature of participation (the student must understand how to obtain full and informed consent that is free from coercion of any type)
* Issues related to the safety of participants and the researcher (this includes physical, emotional and other risk factors). How risks are to be minimised, mitigated etc. need to be considered
* Special considerations relevant to particular groups of research participants – e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young children etc.
* Conflicts/duality of interest – what these are and how they will be managed
* Issues of confidentiality and anonymity in relation to the participation in the research and reporting outcomes

Alongside this students need to show they are familiar with UWS policies and codes associated with the ethical conduct of research.

[UWS Research Code of Practice](http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00166)

Where a student is conducting a project that is part of a wider study the Confirmation of Candidature process should reaffirm the boundaries of the student project so that this is clear for all parties to see – and thus the rights and responsibilities of the student as researcher can be clearly defined.