

# 'Radiation Safety Committee' - Membership and Terms of Reference

## Section 1 - Establishment

### Background

(1) The Radiation Safety Committee (the committee) reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) (DVC (R)), and through the DVC (R) to the Audit and Risk Committee of the University Council.

### Purpose

(2) The committee provides an assurance function for the University in relation to research and teaching involving ionising and non-ionising radiation by oversighting institutional compliance with the [Protection from Harmful Radiation Act 1990](#) and the [Protection from Harmful Radiation Regulation 2013](#). The committee also draws its responsibilities and functions from [Radiation Guideline 5, Recommendations for Radiation Safety Officers and Radiation Safety Committees](#) (the Guide) published by the NSW Environment Protection Authority.

(3) The committee is a representative committee established with a breadth of members to provide this assurance function with the objective of ensuring the consistent practice of radiation management across all locations and facilities. In addition, the committee is to:

- a. act as an administrative and consultative body that reviews the radiation safety of all uses of ionising radiation and radioactive substances within the organisation, and
- b. recommend the implementation of radiation safety policies within the organisation.

(4) While it is not the intention of the committee to extend its scope beyond the Protection from Harmful Radiation legislative framework, the requirements of that framework must be considered in conjunction with the Work Health and Safety regulatory framework. It is further noted that University compliance with the Work Health and Safety regulatory framework is within the scope of the University Safety and Health Management Committee.

## Section 2 - Membership

### Committee membership

(5) The University seeks to ensure representation on the committee from academic and operational staff covering the breadth of radiation use and radiation equipment across the University.

(6) The committee shall be comprised of the following members, nominated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research):

- a. at least one expert in the use of radioactive substances (laboratories)
- b. at least one expert user of radioactive substances (nuclear medicine)
- c. at least one expert user of irradiating apparatus (diagnostic radiography)

- d. at least one expert user of irradiating apparatus (radiation therapy)
- e. at least one expert user of irradiating apparatus (dentistry)
- f. at least one expert user of irradiating apparatus (neutron probes)
- g. at least one expert in the use of irradiating apparatus (veterinary science), and
- h. at least one expert user of non-ionising radiation.

(7) The committee shall also include the following ex-officio members:

- a. A representative nominated by the Executive Director, Safety, Security and Wellbeing, being a person directly involved with incident reporting and management, and
- b. At least one representative nominated by the Executive Dean, Faculty of Science and Health, being a representative of the technical support team.

(8) There should be at least one representative of each school or area that uses radiation across the members listed under clause 6.

(9) As far as possible, the committee should have gender balance.

## **Term of office**

(10) The term of appointment for members of the committee shall be three years.

(11) Members of the committee are to provide three months' notice of their intention to resign.

(12) The appointment of a committee member who has a research portfolio funded workload allocation (usually a presiding officer or deputy presiding officer) can only be terminated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) following advice from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance).

(13) An unfunded member's appointment to the committee may be terminated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) following advice from the presiding officer.

(14) Members may be appointed to consecutive terms.

## **Appointment of members**

(15) Appointments to the committee will be administered by the Research Integrity Unit.

(16) All committee members who are not ex-officio are appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research):

- a. Initial appointment shall be via a merit based recruitment process.
- b. Reappointment shall be on the recommendation of the presiding officer, or in the case of the presiding officer, on the recommendation of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance).

(17) Ex-officio members are confirmed to the committee by the Research Integrity Manager.

(18) For members of staff seeking appointment to the committee the recruitment process shall include confirmation of the support of the member's line management to take up, or continue, the member's participation on the committee.

(19) All members of committee are appointed as individuals for their knowledge, qualities and experience, and not as representatives of any organisation, group or opinion.

## **Induction program**

(20) All members of committee are provided with a formal notice of appointment and may not participate in any committee decision making until they have completed an induction.

(21) The induction program includes:

- a. for University members of staff, completion within the last three years of the University's eLearning modules for research integrity and human research ethics and animal ethics.
- b. an induction session with the presiding officer or their delegate. In the case of a new presiding officer not previously a committee member, an induction session with a suitably experienced committee member.
- c. provision of and an opportunity for familiarisation with these terms of reference.

## **Presiding officer and deputy presiding officer**

(22) The presiding officer shall hold a senior staff member position in the University and be referred to the position by the relevant Executive Dean.

(23) In most cases the presiding officer will also fill a member role on the committee as set out in Section 2, above.

(24) A person holding adjunct status with the University is not eligible for consideration as presiding officer or deputy presiding officer. A person holding adjunct status may be appointed as a staff member with an appropriate position fraction in order to meet the workload of the appointment.

(25) The presiding officer shall be appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) for a term of three years. An appointment from the ranks of the committee shall extend that member's term by the full three year period.

(26) The presiding officer shall have a negotiable workload allocation assigned to their position to ensure that their other responsibilities do not impair the committee's capacity to perform its obligations.

(27) The presiding officer shall have a mature understanding of the compliance issues involved in research and teaching involving radiation.

(28) A deputy presiding officer will be drawn from the ranks of the committee to act in the role of presiding officer in the absence of the presiding officer.

(29) An alternate deputy presiding officer may also be drawn from the ranks of the committee to act in the role of presiding officer or deputy presiding officer.

## **Executive of the Radiation Safety Committee**

(30) A committee executive is to be established from the ranks of the members comprising of:

- a. the presiding officer (or delegate), and
- b. at least four other members of the committee made up of:
  - i. three to four members from those listed at clause 6.
  - ii. zero to one member from those listed at clause 7.

## **Right of audience and debate**

(31) The following position holders have right of audience and debate at meetings of the committee:

- a. Committee support staff, particularly in relation to providing advice on procedural matters and corporate knowledge
- b. Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance)
- c. Research Integrity Manager, and
- d. any other member of staff with the approval of the presiding officer.

(32) Persons with rights of audience and debate have no decision-making authority in relation to the business of the committee.

(33) Persons with rights of audience and debate are not required to be inducted to the committee but are bound by the conflict of interest and confidentiality provisions that apply to all members.

## Section 3 - Functions and responsibilities

(34) The committee shall, either directly or by delegation fulfil the following functions as set out in the guide:

- a. Develop, document and implement a radiation management plan commensurate with the scope of licensed activities
- b. Ensure that procedures and facility engineering are in place so that doses to any person are as low as reasonably achievable
- c. Ensure that each proposed new facility or use of equipment in the organisation that involves the use of ionising radiation or radioactive substances:
  - i. is subjected to an independent safety assessment to ensure its radiation safety,
  - ii. meets all other safety aspects, and
  - iii. fulfils all regulatory requirements and is subjected to any necessary pre-operational tests before its commencement.
- d. Review and approve standard operating procedures and other business processes for each radiation related workplace in the University
- e. Consider the requirements of radiation legislation, relevant standards and codes of practice, and monitor their compliance within the organisation
- f. Review and recommend appropriate radiation safety training for all relevant persons who use ionising radiation or radioactive substances
- g. Review the results of the personal exposure monitoring across the University
- h. Review and endorse radiation emergency guidelines for each radiation related workplace in the University
- i. Review all investigations of radiation incidents and accidents
- j. Receive and consider reports related to:
  - i. personal radiation doses,
  - ii. area radiation surveys,
  - iii. incidents and accidents involving ionising radiation or radioactive substances,
  - iv. inspections of areas where ionising radiation or radioactive substances are used,
  - v. licensing of users of ionising radiation or radioactive substances, and
  - vi. any other relevant matters concerning the uses of ionising radiation or radioactive substances and related facilities.
- k. Make appropriate notification immediately of any unsafe working practice or deficiency in equipment or apparatus brought to its notice that affects radiation safety and recommend immediate remedial action
- l. Review discharges and disposal of radioactive substances from the organisation and ensure compliance with legislative requirements

- m. Provide the University with a radiation safety report, at least annually, which reviews the current radiation safety status of the organisation.

(35) The committee shall also, either directly or by delegation fulfil the following functions:

- a. consider the protection from harmful radiation legislative implications of all proposed teaching and research involving the use of radioactive substances, irradiating apparatus and/or non-ionising radiation conducted at or on behalf of the University and confirm that all meet the required standard
- b. receive and consider annual reports, variations, extensions and end of project reports to ensure that the conduct of research and teaching continues to conform with the approved proposal
- c. submit a quarterly compliance report to the Audit and Risk Committee, via the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)
- d. support the Research Integrity Unit in the management of the Radiation Management Licence
- e. receive and refer to the Research Integrity Unit complaints and issues of non-compliance raised by any person in relation to any matter that has been considered and approved by the committee
- f. review and note decisions made by the presiding officer (or their nominee) and the committee executive between meetings, and
- g. at the discretion of the presiding officer, provide education, information and assistance to University academics, researchers and other stakeholders.

## **Executive responsibilities**

(36) The executive of the committee is, by intention, a quorate representation of the whole committee. The executive may perform any responsibility or function of the committee.

(37) Any decision made by the executive members under the clause above is binding once made but must be presented to a committee meeting for formal noting.

## **Member responsibilities**

(38) Members shall:

- a. thoroughly prepare for meetings by reading applications, reports and documentation provided in meeting agendas,
- b. attend scheduled meetings to deliberate on the acceptability of agenda items for approval,
- c. actively engage in informed and thorough discussion of matters before the committee,
- d. in a timely manner complete actions assigned to them arising from matters before the committee, and
- e. complete training appropriate to the member's position.

(39) Nothing in these terms of reference should exclude a person from referring a matter to the committee for full consideration.

## **Presiding officer responsibilities**

(40) The presiding officer shall impartially guide the operation of the committee, resolve conflicts of interest related to the business of the committee and represent the committee in any negotiations with the management of the University.

(41) Responsibilities of the presiding officer include, but are not limited to:

- a. ensuring that the committee operates in accordance with the relevant policies of the University and any agreed

committee procedures

- b. overseeing all requirements of committee reporting and reviewing
- c. advising the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance) regarding the level of resourcing required by the committee
- d. meeting with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research (Performance and Governance) or other senior management representatives as required to report on the operations of the committee and raise any issues
- e. discharging the functions and responsibilities of the committee on an out of session basis as required and permitted, and
- f. ensuring all activities relating to the procurement, use, storage and disposal of radioactive materials and equipment are conducted in compliance with legislative requirements.

## **Security, safety and wellbeing representative responsibilities**

(42) The role of the security, safety and wellbeing representative is to ensure channel of communication with the University Work Health and Safety (WHS) governance and management structures, recognising that, among other things, WHS committees are not designed to deal specifically and exclusively with radiation safety issues.

## **Non-attendance**

(43) All members must attend 75% of scheduled meetings on an annual basis, subject to mitigating circumstances. Where members cannot attend meetings, apologies must be made in advance to the Research Integrity Unit.

(44) Members who have continued absences from scheduled meetings may be approached by the presiding officer, or nominee, to discuss continuation of membership. If the member opts to remain on the committee but continues to be absent from the meetings, they may be asked to end their term.

(45) Members who are unable to attend meetings are required to submit their comments on applications prior to the meeting, for consideration during the meeting. While not ideal, and if appropriate to the application being considered, comments from absent members may be obtained after the meeting.

## **Committee support**

(46) The Research Integrity Unit will provide administrative and secretariat support so that the committee can discharge its obligations. The Research Integrity Unit can also be called upon for protocol and procedural advice.

(47) It is the responsibility of the Research Integrity Manager to allocate committee tasks to the team members of the Research Integrity Unit. This activity will be undertaken in consultation with the presiding officer.

(48) Research Integrity Unit team members will support the committee in the conduct of its business, including the following responsibilities:

- a. being the first point of contact for applicants wishing to make application or liaise with the committee
- b. providing advice to all stakeholders on governance and administrative matters, including confidentiality and conflicts of interest
- c. ensuring that proposals are provided to the appropriate committee or low risk panel for consideration
- d. ensuring that the decisions are conveyed in a timely manner
- e. ensuring that records are maintained and made available for review by the University and authorised external reviewers
- f. ensuring that the University submits the appropriate license or accreditation applications, renewals and reports as required
- g. assisting with arranging audits and inspections, and

- h. retaining research applications in the form in which they are approved and maintain a record of all proposed projects, so that the following items of information are readily available:
  - i. application identification code or project protocol number
  - ii. project title
  - iii. name and contact details of primary contact, co-investigator(s) and supervisor(s) (if applicable)
  - iv. status of approval or non-approval with date, and
  - v. date(s) designated for reporting.

## Section 4 - Meetings

### Quorum

(49) A quorum consists of:

- a. the presiding officer (or delegate) and
- b. at least four other members of the committee made up of:
  - i. three to four members from those listed at Clause 6.
  - ii. zero to one member from those listed at Clause 7.

(50) Only a quorum can make decisions relevant to the responsibilities and functions of the committee.

### Meetings

(51) The committee meets once per quarter over the period February to December.

(52) Meetings for the first and third quarters will be scheduled to allow enough time for approvals to be returned to applicants prior to the commencement of the academic teaching session.

(53) A schedule of committee meeting dates and agenda closing dates will be posted on the [Radiation Safety Committee website](#) by the beginning of each academic year.

(54) In exceptional circumstances, the schedule of the committee meetings may be altered by the presiding officer, in consultation with the relevant staff in the Research Integrity Unit.

(55) Extraordinary meetings of the committee may be convened during peak workload or to review urgent committee business.

(56) Meetings by flying minute are permissible at the discretion of the presiding officer. Meeting by flying minute would normally be reserved for urgent but uncomplicated decision making where it is not anticipated that extensive discussion and debate will be required. In these cases, proposals and other items of business will be circulated to the committee members who shall consider them asynchronously and, in writing, provide comments on applications or other matters of business.

(57) Only a representative quorum of members is required to hold an extraordinary meeting or meeting by flying minute.

### Agendas and minutes

(58) Agendas are circulated to the members one week before the meeting.

(59) Minutes of meetings are confirmed in draft by the meeting chair within one week of the meeting.

(60) Outcomes of meeting decisions are advised within two weeks of the meeting.

(61) Minutes of the meeting are circulated to members within three weeks following the meeting.

### **Related expenses**

(62) External members may claim a meeting allowance in accordance with the [Research Integrity Committee – Meeting allowances Schedule](#).

### **Conflicts of interest**

(63) Where a member has a perceived or actual conflict of interest as described in the University's [Conflict of Interest Procedure](#), they must declare this to the chair at the meeting before discussion of the item of business.

(64) The meeting chair will determine if members with a conflict of interest may remain present for the discussion of the item but not take part in a decision, or if the member must withdraw from the meeting for the discussion of matters that relate to that conflict of interest. Once such members have withdrawn, the remaining members must still constitute a quorum.

### **Confidentiality**

(65) Confidential matters relating to the committee include, but are not limited to:

- a. the content and nature applications before the committee
- b. the deliberations of members during consideration of meeting business
- c. the private information of persons internal and external to the University contained within meeting papers
- d. arrangements involving third parties, and
- e. information relating to complaints, misconduct or investigations.

(66) Agenda items considered during a meeting and records of specific meeting discussions may be shared by the presiding officer, or by the Research Integrity Manager, with authorised officers of the University who can demonstrate a need to access the relevant information for the performance of their duties.

### **Variations**

(67) Variations to the terms of reference and/or membership of the committee must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research).

## **Section 5 - Glossary**

(68) There are no glossary terms relevant to this document.



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