

UTS Position Description

UTS:HUMAN RESOURCES

Position Title	Research Ethics Officer
Unit/Division or Faculty	Research Ethics Team, Research Office
Position Number (if known)	IRC217249
HEW Level	HEW 6
Date	March 2022
ANZSCO Code (HR Use Only)	

POSITION CONTEXT

In support of our endeavour to undertake excellent research that delivers global impact, UTS is establishing a best practice research culture that will support UTS researchers and professional staff to achieve their full potential. Ethical conduct of research is an essential part of any excellent research culture and has the ability to add significant value to the design and management of research projects.

POSITION PURPOSE

The Research Ethics Officer advises on the research ethics and biosafety application processes for the University, and provides support to the Research Ethics Administrator, Senior Research Ethics Officer, Research Ethics Manager, Chairpersons and members of the University's ethics and biosafety committees, academic staff and students. This position ensures that complex applications and approvals are managed in a timely manner throughout their lifecycle, and that the University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), Health & Medical Research Ethics Committee (MREC) and its Executive Review Committee, Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC) and Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) operate effectively and efficiently.

ENVIRONMENT AND DIMENSIONS

Approved Research Office Staffing Level 2021:	53 FTE
Research Office Budget - 2021:	\$7.9 Million
Number of academic staff (2020 FTE):	2072
Number of professional staff (2020 FTE):	2331
External Research Income (HERDC) for 2020:	\$90M
Target External Research Income for (HERDC) 2021:	\$96M

UTS is Australia's highest performing university under 50 years of age, 94% of our research (broad fields) are rated as world standard or above. Our research excellence and scale are growing rapidly and we have great ambitions to continue this growth.

The Research Office is a central unit within the portfolio of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and provides support for research activities across UTS in partnership with the faculty research offices and other support units, including identifying and accessing research funding, contracts, ethics, post-award, IP management and commercialisation and research data intelligence.

The UTS2027 strategy defines our vision:

We will develop generations of resilient and creative thinkers, equipped with boundary-crossing skills. Our campus will blend the physical and virtual, supporting a lifetime of learning. We will curate personal experiences for our students in our vibrant innovation precinct. We will be recognised as Australia's leading university in entrepreneurship and innovation. Our strength in innovation will help us lead in the responsible

use of technology. Our research will be exemplified by excellence, global engagement and innovative partnerships. It will transcend disciplinary and professional boundaries to deliver real-world solutions. We are committed to setting a new benchmark for excellence in Indigenous higher education, research, employment and community engagement. We are an inclusive university. We celebrate diversity and diversity of thought. We exist to benefit society. Ours is a compelling story, driven by our determination to contribute to the world, inspiring a bright, sustainable future. A future where we will be a leading public university of technology recognised for our global impact. Come with us on our ambitious journey.

RELATIONSHIPS

Supervision

The Research Ethics Officer reports directly to the Research Ethics Manager and draws upon administrative support from the Research Ethics Administrator.

Collaboration and Communication

Internal:

The Research Ethics Officer interacts extensively with members of the University's ethics and safety committees, as well as staff and students of the University.

External:

Sixteen of the various committee members are external to the University. The Research Ethics Officer will also interact with various state and commonwealth government departments, including NHMRC, OGTR, NSW Department of Primary Industry, and NSW Department of Education & Training.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Ensure smooth functioning of a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), Health & Medical Research Ethics Committee (MREC), Executive Review Committee (ERC), Animal Care & Ethics Committee (ACEC) and Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), including preliminary-review and oversight of ethics applications, minute-writing for committee meetings and reviewing of responses to committee queries/comments.
2. Provide high level advice, based on a sound understanding of the relevant ethics policies and guidelines, and a broad range of research methodologies, to students, and staff on the preparation and/or revision of ethics applications and/or participant materials, and at other stages in the ethics review process for assigned departments and schools, including at training and seminars.
3. Plan, coordinate and attend annual cycle of inspections for ACEC and IBC, audit ACEC and IBC files, and monitor animal numbers.
4. Accompany Senior Research Ethics Officer in conduct of physical inspections of facilities and liaise with animal management staff to monitor welfare of animals used in research by UTS staff and students, including facility and protocol-based animal monitoring; up-to-date protocols and associated documentation. Where necessary undertake the rectification of any issues identified from the inspections.
5. Assist Senior Research Ethics Officer with the preparation of high-quality reports (internal and external) on the Committee functions.
6. Establish and maintain effective liaison and quality customer service with researchers and relevant sections of the University, including administrative divisions, Schools and Faculties and external organisations.
7. Under broad direction, develop and implement processes and systems to streamline Committee functions and workflow within the ethics team, and maintain relevant forms, website and documents as required.

8. Accompany Research Ethics Manager in monitoring and review of federal and state legislation and guidelines and advice on the implications of changes to legislation and guidelines for UTS.
9. Develop and deliver training materials and workshops for staff, students and Committee members on online ethics forms and processes.
10. In conjunction with the Research Ethics Manager promote an awareness of ethical issues relating to the conduct of research by providing information and support to researchers, both individually and through the provision of workshops, seminars and written material.
11. Contribute to office-wide projects, as directed.

POSITION CHALLENGES

The Research Ethics Officer must:

- Deal with research staff and students, internal and external committee members and Chairs providing high level assistance while ensuring the smooth operation of the HRECs, ACEC and IBC.
- Be able to provide complex and accurate advice to applicants, and to manage the number of applications, negotiate closing dates, draft correspondence, write committee meeting minutes, and interpret committee advice to applicants.
- Be responsive to the operating constraints of the HRECs, ACEC and IBC, including deadlines and number of applications, whilst recognising the stress that applicants may be under, as ethics and safety approval is necessary for either access to funding, or for the completion of research degrees.

AUTHORITY

The Research Ethics Officer will offer advice to applicants in the first instance, if necessary referring to the Senior Research Ethics Officer or Research Ethics Manager for more complex issues. The Research Ethics Officer will manage the preliminary-review and triage of ethics and biosafety applications, ensuring that the applications are of a high quality and sent to the committee members in sufficient time for the meeting. The Research Ethics Officer is responsible for managing his/her work on a day to day basis, within the framework of the meeting cycles.

Leadership Capabilities For Role

Pipeline					
Category	Leading Strategically	Collaborating and Engaging	Leading Teams	Presence and Awareness	Leading Performance
Capabilities	Maintains Perspective	Deals with Ambiguity	Motivates Others	Leads with Ethics and Integrity	Focuses on Client
	Roles Models Organisational Agility	Encourages Collaboration	Builds Teams	Demonstrates Resilience	Demonstrates Technical Expertise

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Research Ethics Officer must:

- Take reasonable care of, and cooperate with actions taken to protect, the health and safety of both themselves and others.
- Follow specific health and safety procedures as directed.
- Thoroughly understand the UTS Health & Safety Management System, and how to implement the UTS Health and Safety Policy and related risk management programs that apply to the area of responsibility.
- Understand the major hazards, risks profile, compliance requirements and correct safe work procedures in their area of responsibility, including the reporting of hazards and incidents.

- Fulfil any assigned responsibilities under the UTS and local area Health and Safety Plan, including communication and consultation with stakeholders regarding work health and safety risks in their area of responsibility.
- Demonstrate a proactive approach to health and safety by challenging unsafe behaviour/attitude and providing leadership on work health and safety matters.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The Research Ethics Officer must:

- Create and collect records that document their activities.
- Ensure records are captured into the official recordkeeping system.
- Manage records consistent with university procedures.

UTS:HUMAN RESOURCES

POSITION: Research Ethics Officer

FACULTY/UNIT: Research Office

Skills and Attributes

- Strong interpersonal skills, and strong verbal and written communication skills.
- A high level of accuracy, literacy, numeracy and attention to detail.
- A self-motivated, energetic and driven individual that has the ability to work under pressure and to tight deadlines in a dynamic environment.
- The ability to prioritise and carry out a diverse range of competing tasks to a high standard.
- Good problem-solving skills.
- The ability to maintain confidentiality.
- A strong customer service attitude.
- The ability to work effectively and flexibly with a team environment.

Knowledge

- Proficiency in MS Office (Word and Excel) as well as experience and confidence in working with databases.
- A thorough understanding of human ethics review processes, and familiarity with animal ethics and biosafety review processes in the higher education setting.
- Familiarity with current legislation, standards and codes of practice relating to human research ethics, and the capacity to develop familiarity with current legislation, standards and codes of practice relating to animal welfare and biosafety, including their implications for the conduct of research in a university environment.
- A working knowledge of the current Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and its implications for research practice in the university environment.

Qualifications

- Certificate or Diploma in Business Administration or equivalent administrative experience.

Experience

- Minimum of two years' experience in administration or similar support role.
- Provision of good committee support, including minute-writing.
- Prior experience in the Ethics Secretariat of an institutional human research ethics committee (additional prior experience with an animal ethics or biosafety committee would be an advantage).

Desirable

- Previous experience in working with an enterprise database and records management system.