

# FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS ADVISORS

## *Roles and Responsibilities*

Faculty Research Ethics Advisors (FREAs) perform an important role within the University. This document provides information in relation to their appointment, role and responsibilities. University policy in relation to FREAs can be found in MOPP D/2.6, MOPP D/6 and on the *Research Ethics* webpage.

### APPOINTMENT

*FREAs are appointed by the dean of the faculty and are drawn from senior members of the faculty with a significant record of research experience. FREAs are nominated as academic staff members with knowledge of, and current experience in, research involving one or more of the disciplines covered by the nominating faculty.*

#### **University Human Research Ethics Committee**

*Each faculty must appoint at least one FREA who will be appointed to University Human Research Ethics Committee (UHREC) and a second FREA from each faculty as the alternate member of UHREC.*

#### **University Animal Ethics Committee**

*Faculties with research interests which include scientific work with animals should appoint one FREA to University Animal Ethics Committee (UAEC).*

#### **QUT Institute Biosafety Committee**

*Faculties with research interests which include projects and teaching activities dealing with GMOs or biosafety materials should appoint one FREA to QUT Institute Biosafety Committee.*

### ROLE

The role of a FREA includes:

- taking a leadership role within the Faculty on research integrity and research ethics issues;
- assisting the Faculty with the formulation of local policies and procedures relating to research integrity and research ethics issues;
- advising staff and students on research integrity issues;
- advising staff and students on the University's research ethics policies;
- advising staff and students (via their supervisor) on the process of obtaining appropriate ethical clearance;
- advising staff and students (via their supervisor) on responding to requests from UHREC, UAEC and QUT IBC.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL FREAS

Each FREA will:

- be familiar with University and external policies, guidelines and requirements relating to the conduct of research as follows:
  - University's Code of Conduct;
  - NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice;
  - National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans; and/or
  - Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes; and/or
  - Handbook on the Regulation of Gene Technology in Australia;
  - QUT Code of Conduct for Research;
  - the Code of Good Practice for Postgraduate Research Studies and Supervision at QUT; and
  - the Supervision Guide for Postgraduate Students and Supervisors.

- respond in a timely fashion to requests for information, advice and assistance on research ethics issues;
- deliver training each year to Honours, Masters and Professional Doctorate level students within the relevant Faculty in relation to research integrity / research ethics;
- provide advice on potential or actual conflicts of interest either on personal or professional grounds;
- advise on misconduct in research and issues of integrity in research, and explain the rights and responsibilities of individuals in relation to any complaints;
- contribute to the formulation of University and Faculty research integrity / research ethics policies and procedures;
- assist in consulting with researchers on policy and procedural issues; and
- in the case of alternate FREAs on UHREC, attend at least one meeting per year as an observer.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY NOMINEES ON UHREC, UAEC and QUT IBC**

In addition to the above, each faculty nominee on UHREC, UAEC and QUT IBC will:

- take a leadership role amongst the other advisors within the Faculty to ensure a consistent standard of advice is available, to identify training and support needs, and to ensure a sound communication flow to all FREAs;
- be able to advise on any disciplinary or other matters relating to ethics applications from the Faculty;
- be available for consultation with proponents to assist both during the process of preparing applications and to respond to requests arising from consideration of applications;
- represent the Faculty during discussion of policy and procedural issues;
- take an active role (eg participating in working parties, formulating issues papers and consulting with key stakeholders) in response to emergent issues;
- attend nearly every meeting of UHREC, UAEC or QUT IBC as appropriate;
- provide a short annual report on the activities of the FREAs within the Faculty; and
- ensure alternate FREAs on UHREC attend meetings when the nominated FREA is absent from the University.