



**RAJARATA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA**

**RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION POLICY**

**Prepared by:**

**Research and Publication Committee**

**2023**

**Policy Number: RUSL/PO/ACA/006/2023**

## Research and Publication Policy: RUSL/PO/ACA/006/2023

On the recommendation of the Senate, the Council of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, as the governing authority of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka by resolution adopts the following Policy. Policy is cited as Policy No: RUSL/PO/ACA/006/2023.

Accepted Date: 01<sup>st</sup> October 2023

Council Approved Date: 275<sup>th</sup> Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Senate Approved Date: 252<sup>nd</sup> Senate meeting held on 08<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Amended Date:

---

### Contents

1. Purpose of the policy
2. Policy statements
3. Scope
4. Definitions and key words
5. Responsibilities
6. Review
7. Approval and amendment

---

### 1. Purpose

The main purpose of this policy is to establish the mechanism for the development and implementation of research and publication policy at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (RUSL) among staff members to carry out required research obligations, and in which both undergraduate and postgraduate students are engaged and to be supported in their research.

The policy framework for any research has been developed and identified by the Senate of RUSL as a requirement. The Research and Publication Policy of the university is aimed to address the following specific areas of research and publication within the University.

- a) Requirement of undertaking research
- b) Research policy and practice
- c) Research management
- d) Resource availability to research
- e) Eligibility required for the university research funds
- f) Responsibilities of a researcher
- g) Responsibilities of the committees
- h) Requirements for maintaining a safe and ethical research environment
- i) Maintenance of research records, and data storage and retention
- j) Confidentiality provisions relating to research
- k) Publication and authorship

- l) Research conducted by students
- m) Conflict of interest
- n) Handling research misconduct and fraud

## **2. Policy statements**

### **2.1 Requirement of undertaking research**

- a. All academic staff members of the RUSL are required to conduct research and engaged with any sort of research grants awarded from any funding agency both locally and internationally and publish their research findings to the scientific community for wider publicity.
- b. All academic staff members of the RUSL should, where appropriate, seek research funding opportunities (locally or internationally) in support of their research.
- c. Undertaking research is a career expectation and excess workload will be balanced as appropriate with the other obligations of academic staff including significant administrative responsibilities.

### **2.2 Research policy and practice**

- a. The RUSL establishes a conducive research environment within the university to promote a high standard of professional conduct of its researchers, and an ethical, competent, safe, and accountable research culture.
- b. Research within the University should be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the guidelines for Research and Publication Grants, with relevant legislation and guidelines, with this Research and Publication Policy, and with other University and UGC policies, guidelines, and procedures on research matters.
- c. The Chairperson of the Research and Publication Committee (RPC) of the University is responsible for monitoring the adherence to the Research and Publication Policy across the University and reporting to the RPC on any significant issues that may arise with regard to the conduct of research.
- d. Patent/Copyrights/etc.: If RUSL pays for the patent and patent maintenance, the patent rights should go to RUSL. If the researcher pays himself/herself for the patent and patent maintenance, patent rights should go to the researcher.
- e. The Deans of Faculties/Heads of the divisions are responsible for ensuring the Research and publication Policy that is implemented within the relevant faculty/division and monitoring its adherence.

The Dean of a Faculty/Head of a division shall be responsible for:

- f. Implementing the Research and publication Policy within the faculty/division, and ensuring that researchers are aware of their responsibilities with regard to complying with the research and publication policy.
- g. Chairing the Faculty/Division Research Committees and ensuring its active function.
- h. Ensuring that the Faculty/Division develops, and operates within guidelines, procedures, and strategies that promote good research practice, as required, to address research issues within the Faculty/Division that are not covered elsewhere by University policies and guidelines;
- i. Ensuring that researchers are informed about, and have the opportunity to

undertake, induction and training that will equip them to conduct their research in accordance with appropriate professional standards that apply in their research area/s.

### 2.3 Research management

- a. All research matters in the University are coordinated through the RPC of the University and Faculty/Division Research Committees.
- b. The RPC is the governing body of the University for research management which is chaired by a Dean/Senior Professor/Professor nominated by the Senate and appointed by the Vice Chancellor for a period of three (03) years. It advises the University Senate on research strategies to be pursued, develops policy, and reviews progress in these areas.
- c. The RPC of the University comprises the following members
  - i. Dean/Senior Professor/Professor (Chairperson of the Committee)
  - ii. All the Deans of the faculties
  - iii. Two Senior Professors/Professors nominated by the Senate
  - iv. Librarian
  - v. All coordinators of the faculty research committees
  - vi. Registrar
  - vii. Bursar
  - viii. A Deputy Registrar/ Senior Assistant Registrar/Assistant registrar as the Secretary to the committee
- d. The RPC of the university is responsible to manage and monitor both non-funded research allowances and the distribution of University Research Funds and their progress.
- e. Faculties are required to establish faculty-level research committees known as the Research and Publication Committee of the Faculty (RPCF) to support the research activities of the academic staff.
- f. Faculty-level research committee is formed by the Dean of each faculty to advise the RPC of the University and their own faculties.
- g. The RPCF comprises the following members,
  - i. Dean of the Faculty/Senior Academic appointed by the Faculty Board (Chairperson of the Committee)
  - ii. All Heads of the departments
  - iii. Coordinator of the faculty research committee
  - iv. One Senior Professor/Professor/Senior Lecturer representing each Department nominated by the faculty board.
  - v. Faculty Senior Assistant Registrar/Assistant Registrar (Secretary to the committee)
- h. The RPCF has the right to formulate its own by-law or TOR aligned with the research and publication policy of the university for the smooth functioning of the committee.

### 2.4 Resource availability

- a. The University Research Funds (URF) supports research that is aligned closely with the national and strategic priorities of the university.
- b. The governing of the allocation of all research funding in the University should

be done efficiently to maximize the range of outcomes that the University expects to result from academic staff research.

- c. A portion of the URF supports early career researchers.
- d. The amount of the research grant per faculty and the library will be decided by the RPC of the university based on the number of academic staff of each faculty. The criteria for fund disbursement and allocation are decided by the RPC of the University.
- e. The URF provides support to the University Academic Staff to publish research papers in indexed journals. The criteria for fund disbursement are decided by the RPC of the university subject to the approval of the Finance Committee of the University.
- f. In the case of external contracts/external research provisions and obligations,
  - i. All applications for external research funding of the academic staff are to be submitted through the Dean of the faculty to the Vice Chancellor to obtain the approval of the Finance Committee.
  - ii. The RPC of the university provides the contract and financial management services for the grant management process.

### **2.5 Eligibility requirement for the university research funds**

Only the permanent academic staff members of the RUSL are eligible for applying and obtaining the research grants subject to the conditions applied in the procedures/guidelines for research grants from URF.

### **2.6 Responsibilities of a Researcher**

- a. Researchers must submit applications for a research grant from the University Research Funds in accordance with the procedures/guidelines for research grants established by the RPC of the University which is approved by the Senate and the Council of the University.
- b. Researchers should inform the RPC of the university through RPCF if any external funding has been awarded to support their research, and comply with any conditions specified by funding bodies with respect to their research.
- c. Researchers should inform the research progress periodically (half-yearly) to the RPC of the university through the RPCF as mentioned in the procedures/guidelines for research grants in the university.
- d. Researchers should manage the research funds as mentioned in the procedures/guidelines for research grants and financial regulations of the university.
- e. Researchers should publish the research papers in any refereed journals and present papers in research symposiums and conferences as much as possible.
- f. Researchers should maintain the research ethics and confidentiality of the research data as required.
- g. viii. Researchers should submit the final research report/published articles at the end of the research project to the RPC of the university through the RPCF in order to complete and settle the research grants.

### **2.7 Responsibilities of the RPC**

- a. Granting approval for the applications for research and publication grants submitted through the RPCF.
- b. Recommending the applications submitted for the non-funded research

allowances.

- c. Monitoring the progress of research projects funded by the University Research Grants.
- d. Taking necessary steps to enhance the research culture in the university and motivating academic staff to conduct research activities.
- e. Organizing workshops and training programmes on research planning, conducting, research management, publishing of research results, etc in collaboration with the Staff Development Center of the University.

## **2.8 Safe and ethical research environment**

- a. Deans of Faculties in collaboration with researchers are responsible for developing and maintaining an ethical and safe research environment in each research field undertaken within the faculty.
- b. Research activities should be undertaken by a faculty only where a suitable professional environment can be achieved.
- c. Researchers must comply with relevant legislation, guidelines, policies, and directives with regard to ethical and safe practices in research.
- d. All research involving human subjects, animals, or biosafety matters must be approved and monitored by the Faculty Research Committee or Research and Publication Committee of the university or any authorized body, as mentioned below:
  - i. Proposals involving animals should be submitted to the Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee for its approval.
  - ii. Proposals involving the participation of human subjects, or the use of human tissue or blood, or those that involve the participation of human beings, are to be submitted either to the University or Faculty Research Ethics Committee or any authorized body.
  - iii. Proposals involving the use of clinical drugs in research trials must be submitted to the relevant Faculty Research Committee, as appropriate.
  - iv. Proposals involving biosafety matters including experimentation involving genetic modification or work with a genetically modified organism; carcinogens; toxic substances; and infectious substances; must be submitted to the relevant Faculty Research Committee, as appropriate.
- e. In case, the research is planned to be conducted outside the University or through an external affiliation, the University may approve an arrangement to monitor the research project with another authorized committee as per the conditions and agreement signed between the two institutes.
- f. Researchers are responsible for submitting research proposals, as required, to the committees in accordance with policies or guidelines specified by the relevant committee.

## **2.9 Maintenance of research records, data storage and retention**

- a. Research records and data must be retained and stored appropriately to enable the accuracy, reliability and basis of research findings and research methods to be tested, established and scrutinized.

- b. The RPC of the university will issue guidelines specifying the requirements of the University for reporting on research activities, maintaining research records and retaining and storing research data.
- c. Each researcher is responsible for:
  - i. Reporting research activities, projects and publications, as required, through the RPCF to the University RPC.
  - ii. maintaining records in respect of the conduct of experimentation involving animals, human subjects or biosafety matters, in accordance with the provisions and processes identified above.
  - iii. maintaining research records, and ensuring that arrangements are made for the research data and records to be stored and referenced in accordance with this Policy.
- d. A researcher who uses data or research materials obtained under an agreement between the University and an external agency or institution is bound by the terms and conditions imposed between the two institutes.

#### **2.10 Confidentiality provisions relating to research**

- a. Access to research data may be limited by confidentiality provisions, normally for the purposes of protection.
- b. Any confidentiality provisions that apply to research intended for publication should provide for data and records to be kept in a way that will enable a third party to have access to them without breaching confidentiality, and where practicable for data and records to be available for discussion with other researchers.
- c. The researcher is responsible for ensuring arrangements are made for protecting the security of any confidential research data, including data held in computer systems.

---

#### **2.11 Publication and authorship**

- a. Publication and Authorship of Research and Publication Policy is expected to:
  - i. Identify the contribution of authorship for research outputs, patents and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) involving academic staff and students of the University.
  - ii. ensure that authorship is confirmed and agreed upon prior to submission for publication, patents and IPR.
  - iii. ensure that researchers appropriately contribute research outputs, patents and IPR to the University.
- b. Authorship must be determined based on substantial scholarly contributions to the research output, patents and IPR measured in terms of conception, design, analysis and/or interpretation of research data.
- c. Authors of research publications should acknowledge their affiliation to a particular Department, Faculty and Unit of the university and also other institutes accordingly.
- d. Authors should disclose any conflict of interest when conducting research and/or publishing the research output.
- e. Authors should acknowledge any financial or other support obtained from another party.

- f. Authors should deposit all published research outputs such as peer-reviewed research articles and conference proceedings in the faculty or University Repository. The University main Library/Faculty Library is responsible for the registration and archiving of the publication.
- g. Authors should comply with the Intellectual Property Policy of the University.
- h. Authors should comply with the Plagiarism Policy of the University.
- i. If there is more than one author of a research output, the following conditions must be agreed upon prior to the preparation of the research output:
  - i. the authorship of the research output
  - ii. the order of authors' names in the authorship list and the justification for this order if applicable.
  - iii. appointment of a corresponding author to take responsibility for maintaining authorship agreements and managing all correspondence about the research output, patents and IPR.
- j. All authors of all research outputs, patents and IPR must provide written acknowledgment of authorship prior to submission of the research output and applications for patents
- k. All individuals who have contributed to the research, but whose contribution does not meet the authorship attribution should be properly acknowledged in the research output/s.
- l. The Rajarata University of Sri Lanka must be attributed as an institution of affiliation for all research outputs and patents that have resulted from work conducted by University staff and students

#### **2.12 Research Conducted by Students**

- a. Students who are conducting research must comply with the provisions contained in:
  - i. Policy on Research and Publication
  - ii. Research Policies and Procedures of the University
  - iii. Other relevant policies and guidelines on research
- b. Students must report, as required, in the following ways:
  - i. Maintain regular contact with appointed supervisors and report research progress, as specified in the Research Policies and Procedures in the case of research higher degree students; or as specified in University or Faculty policies for students conducting research as part of another degree;
  - ii. Participate in the University's Research Data Collection, as required, in accordance with instructions issued by the RPC
  - iii. Complete an Authorship Form, as required, in respect of any research to be published;
  - iv. Notify the supervisor and Dean of Faculty, in advance, of any proposal to enter into a contractual arrangement or agreement for commercial or other purposes of the student's research;
  - v. Submit other reports as specified by the Dean of Faculty, or in relevant University policies.



- c. A supervisor of a student conducting research is responsible for providing guidance to students on all matters of research practice and ensuring that students are informed of relevant University policies and procedures that affect the conduct of the student's research.
- d. In accordance with the Statement and Guidelines, a supervisor will be entitled to have access to research data and other relevant information about the research of a student for the purposes of undertaking normal supervisory responsibilities and ensuring compliance with this Policy and other University policies and procedures. The supervisor must:
  - i. consult with the student about the need to maintain confidentiality in respect of the student's research data, methodology, or findings; and
  - ii. ensure the integrity of the student's research data is preserved; and
  - iii. Where a student is conducting research as part of a research team, inform the student at the commencement of the research project of any protocols or operating conditions that may apply in respect of the conduct of the research project, the use and storage of research data, publication of research findings, confidentiality, or commercialization or other agreements or arrangements that may apply to the research.
- e. A supervisor will:
  - i. take such steps as they are practicable to ensure the validity of a student's data and research methodology, and provide verbal and written feedback to the student on a regular basis;
  - ii. ensure appropriate induction and ongoing advice is provided to the student about professional approaches that should be adopted with regard to ensuring the validity of data, and about requirements for maintenance of records and storage and retention of research data; and
  - iii. ensure that discussions with the student on research practice are documented in the student's annual review form.
- f. Where a supervisor has concerns about the validity of a student's data or about whether the student is undertaking appropriate record-keeping or data storage or research practices, the following steps must be taken:
  - i. The supervisor should provide written advice to the student, and document any steps taken by the student to address the matter;
  - ii. If the matter is not addressed expeditiously, and to the satisfaction of the parties, the supervisor should advise the University research committee/ Faculty research committee and notify the student accordingly;
  - iii. If the Faculty research committee is unable to resolve the matter expeditiously and to the satisfaction of all parties, the matter will be referred to the Chairperson of the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee, who will consider any further action to be taken in accordance with the relevant procedures.

### **2.13 Conflict of interest**

- a. Researchers must disclose to the University Research and Publication Committee or Faculty research committee any affiliation with or financial involvement in any organization or entity with a direct interest in the subject matter or materials of the researcher. The researcher must identify:

- i. direct benefits such as sponsorship of the research; or
  - ii. indirect benefits which may include the provision of materials or facilities; or
  - iii. support of individual researchers through the provision of travel or accommodation expenses to attend conferences, or similar benefits.
- b. Researchers should disclose to any relevant outside parties including editors of journals, readers of published work, and external bodies from which funds are sought any potential conflict of interest that could be seen to influence the research and investigations, publication, and media reports, grant applications, and applications for appointment and promotion.

#### **2.14 Handling research misconduct and fraud**

- a. Some of the research misconduct or fraud may include, but is not limited to the following:
- i. Fabrication of data: claiming results where none has been obtained;
  - ii. Falsification of data, including changing records;
  - iii. Plagiarism, including the direct copying of textual material, the use from other people without adequate attribution;
  - iv. Misleading ascription of authorship, including the listing of authors without their permission, attributing work to others who have not in fact contributed to the research, and the lack of appropriate acknowledgment of the work of a student or associate;
  - v. Other practices that seriously deviate from those commonly accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting or reporting research;
  - vi. An infringement of the University's Policy on Research Conduct or other research-related policies that is either intentional or caused by negligence;
  - vii. Negligence, or failure to uphold commonly accepted standards in the conduct of research within the relevant field of research.
- b. Once a complaint has been received, the following steps must be taken:
- i. The person that receives the complaint must immediately inform the University Research and Publication Committee that a complaint has been received and provide any information that the complainant has presented about the matter to the University research committee;
  - ii. The University Research and Publication Committee will consider the matter that has been provided, and if necessary, seek such additional information and relevant specialist expertise advice, that may be required to establish whether the matter needs to be further investigated, and will either:
    - Decide that the allegations have no substance and dismiss the complaint; or
    - Decide that there is no evidence of misconduct or fraud, but that alternative action is required, and refer the matter for consideration and action through an appropriate University process; or
    - Decide that the allegations require further investigation as a potential

- matter involving misconduct or fraud, and initiate an investigation of the matter in accordance with 4.14.iii below.
- c. An investigation is to be conducted with relevant to the issue, the Vice-Chancellor is requested to take the following actions:
    - i. In the case of a member of the academic staff, it is referred the matter for investigation and consideration in accordance with the disciplinary provision for academic staff in the university;
    - ii. In the case of a research student, it is referred the matter for investigation and consideration in accordance with disciplinary provisions for students in the university;
    - iii. In the case of a person who is affiliated with the university but who is not a staff member or a student, it is recommended to take such action on the matter as the Vice-Chancellor deems appropriate.
  - d. Where an allegation of misconduct is under investigation, the Vice-Chancellor will, as appropriate:
    - i. Inform the Research and Publication Committee of the University or other parties with a direct and legitimate interest in the matter, that the matter is under investigation, and the status of any proceedings, and of any other matters that may be of direct concern to them; and
    - ii. Take such other action as may be necessary to protect the interests of the University, and exercise a duty of care towards staff members, students, the public or any other parties involved in the matter.
  - e. In a case of misconduct, the University may, in addition to taking action in accordance with the provisions outlined above, exercise its right to take legal or other action against the researcher or a third party.

### 3. Scope

This policy is applicable to the whole university and a university-wide research and publication policy.

### 4. Definitions and key words

The following definitions shall be applied for the purposes of this policy unless otherwise stated.

**Research:** this is mainly dealt with searching for knowledge that finds facts and new ideas, solving problems, and developing new theories/proving existing theories, without limiting to boundaries of thought, using a systematic investigation. Therefore, the research includes the systematic collection of data or information, analyzing and interpreting them systematically, and finally reaches into conclusions that are proven scientifically.

**Principle Investigator:** Any permanent academic staff member of the RUSL.

**Co-Investigator:** Any permanent academic staff member of the RUSL or student of RUSL or a person involved in research from other universities, or research institutes or as an employee of any other relevant institution approved by the Research and Publication Committee of the university.

**Research Collaborator:** any employee from other institutes who cooperates in the implementation of a research project by utilizing physical and human resources that are normally unavailable, or not easily accessible.

**5. Responsibilities**

The research and Publication Committee is responsible for implementing and monitoring the research and publication policy of the university.

**6. Review**

This policy is reviewed in a five year cycle and revised accordingly.

**7. Approval and Amendments**

Date adapted	: 01 <sup>st</sup> October 2023
Date Commenced	: 01 <sup>st</sup> October 2023
Administrating Authority	: Senate and the Council of RUSL
Date of Review	:
Date Rescinded	: