

# RESEARCH RISK REVIEW PROCEDURE

## APPENDIX 1: COMMUNICATION WITH SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

1. Communicating with Macquarie University subject matter experts (SMEs) during a research risk review is a sensitive process. Considerate communication and careful management of SME expectations is a priority during this time. This Appendix specifies the University's best practice principles for communicating with SMEs during a research risk review.

### Principles of communication

2. The principles of communicating with an SME are:
  - a) Transparency:
    - i. Initial communication with an SME should outline why the SME's advice is being sought and provide context to any request for information.
    - ii. The likely outcomes of a research risk review should be communicated to the SME in the first meeting.
    - iii. An SME should be informed of the likely uses to which any information they provide may be used by the University.
    - iv. The SME should be provided with regular updates on the status of any research risk review they are involved in. This is of particular importance if that review may have a material impact on a project they are involved in, or a collaborative partnership they are a custodian for.
  - b) Responsiveness:
    - i. During the period under which the research risk review is being actively assessed, responsive communication with the SME is a high priority. All correspondence received from the SME should be responded to within 12-24 hours of receipt.
  - c) Confidentiality:
    - i. Information collected from an SME is likely to reflect assessments arising from their professional relationships and academic expertise. This information needs to be treated with the highest level of sensitivity and confidentiality.
  - d) Respect:
    - i. Communication should respect the SME's needs and wishes at all times. This respect should extend to all of the SME's collaborative partners, especially if an SME's collaborative partner is the subject of the research risk review.
  - e) Inclusion:
    - i. The SME is an active member of the research risk review; though they may not have access to all of the information that forms part of a review, they should be actively included and informed of a review's progress until that review has been concluded.
    - ii. At the conclusion of a review the SME should be offered the opportunity to provide feedback on the review process. Any feedback provided by the SME should be used to consider and implement improvements to the review process.

### SME agreement

3. In the first research risk review meeting with an SME, the SME's agreement should be sought for each of the following points:
  - a) Do you agree to this meeting and any future meetings being recorded?
    - i. Any recordings will only be accessible by the National Security and Defence team and the Research Risk Review Committee.
    - ii. If an SME does not agree to the meeting/s being recorded, a minute of the meeting will be provided to them for review.

- b) Do you agree that any information you provide can be used in assessing research risk at the University?
  - i. Information you provide may be used in this and other reviews.
- c) Do you agree that any information you provide can be relied upon by the Research Risk Review Committee and DVCR in making a decision about the risk of research at the University?

#### **Communication of process and outcomes**

- 4. An SME should be provided with information about the research risk review process by sharing the Research Risk Review Procedure. An SME should be offered the opportunity to ask questions about the process and the likely outcomes of the research risk review.