



# MERGA Ethics Policy

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## Preamble

The Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia (MERGA) is a research organisation and publisher of the journal *Mathematics Teacher Education and Development* (MTED) and annual conference proceedings<sup>1</sup> (hereafter referred to as MERGA publications). MERGA attaches great importance to the maintenance of high ethical standards in research and publishing.

This policy sets out expectations for the ethical conduct of research by MERGA members and ethical standards for MERGA publications.

## 1. Ethics in research

MERGA expects its members to acknowledge that it is their responsibility to conduct research ethically and to be advocates for such within their spheres of influence.

MERGA is an international organisation with members in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, the Pacific region, and beyond. As an organisation, it recognises that formal and legal rules governing the ethical conduct of research differ from country to country. Ethical research with human subjects by MERGA members, regardless of the context in which the research is conducted, must be safe, respectful, responsible, and of high quality. The ethical conduct of research in Australia and by Australian researchers is guided by four main documents (see below). MERGA expects its members to adhere to these principles and guidelines or similar documents where they exist in other national or local contexts.

MERGA members are expected to adhere to ethics guidelines provided in the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2023\)](#)<sup>2</sup>. In Australia, New Zealand and some other countries, research should only be conducted in alignment with national and institutional standards, which include seeking the award of formal institutional ethics and research gatekeeper approvals as required. For research conducted in contexts where there are no formal or legal rules, MERGA members are expected to adhere to the ethics guidelines contained in the National Statement, including using an appropriate process to

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<sup>1</sup> MERGA published the journal *Mathematics Education Research Journal* (MERJ) from 1989 until 2010. MERJ is now published by Springer. MERGA has also previously published a four yearly review of research in Australasia, *Research in Mathematics Education in Australasia* (RIMEA), which is now also published by Springer.

<sup>2</sup> The *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2023) sets out the requirements for the ethical design, review and conduct of human research in Australia. It will replace the 2007 National Statement on 1 January 2024.

obtain informed consent from participants and the parents/guardians of participants if they are children under the age of 18.

The [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (2018) provides further guidance for the ethical conduct of research. Where research involves the participation of Indigenous peoples, MERGA members are expected to adhere to guidelines provided in the [Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders](#) (2018) and the [AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#) (the AIATSIS Code).

## 2. Ethics in publishing

MERGA requires authors wishing to publish in MERGA publications to adhere to the ethical standards as prescribed by the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#) (COPE).

Research published in MERGA publications should demonstrate excellence in research practice, including respect for all participants in the research. Research involving humans should be approved by the relevant ethics committee(s) or adhere to ethics guidelines provided in the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2023\)](#) and conform to ethical standards for research. All reports of research must contain a statement that includes details of the ethical review process undertaken or describes how the research is consistent with the ethical standards outlined in the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2023\)](#).

Authors, editors, and reviewers of MERGA publications are required to declare any conflicts of interest.

### 2.1 Responsibilities for MERGA

MERGA expects the editors responsible for MERGA publications to follow a high-integrity peer review process that does not discriminate against authors or peer reviewers.

MERGA reserves the right for editors of MERGA publications to check all submission through appropriate plagiarism checking tools. Submissions flagged as suspected of plagiarism will be further investigated and authors will be contacted in the process, if necessary. If the suspicion of plagiarism cannot be refuted, the manuscript will be rejected.

### 2.2 Responsibilities for authors

All manuscripts submitted to MTED should be substantially different from other works published by the author(s) and should not be under consideration, accepted for publication or in press with a different journal or other type of publication.

All *full papers* to be published in the annual conference proceedings should carry meaningful differences from other works published by the author(s) (e.g., the analysis of previously published data using a different theoretical framework). When author(s) later develop an extended publication based on their MERGA conference proceedings contribution, the prior publication (in MERGA proceedings) must be formally acknowledged.

#### 2.2.1 Authorship

Named authors should have made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the article; and/or been responsible for drafting or critically revising the article. They should also give final approval for the version to be published and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the article.

#### 2.2.2 Acknowledgements

Anyone who does not meet the criteria for authorship but has contributed to a manuscript should be listed in an Acknowledgements section at the end of the article or conference paper.

If the research has been funded, author(s) should make a funding declaration in an Acknowledgements section at the end of the article or conference paper.

### 2.2.3 Data and supporting evidence

MERGA expects authors to maintain accurate records of data and supporting evidence. Where appropriate and allowed, authors are encouraged to deposit data in a suitable repository or storage location for sharing and future use by others.

## References

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) (2020). *AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research*.

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-02/aiatsis-code-ethics-jan22.pdf>

Committee on Publication Ethics. <https://publicationethics.org/>

National Health and Medical Research Council (2018). *Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders*. Commonwealth of Australia. <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/resources/ethical-conduct-research-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples-and-communities>

National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia (2023). *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. National Health and Medical Research Council. <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2023#block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1>