Document Name
POLICY FOR THE CONDUCT OF INTER-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (INTERNAL)

Document Number
PO-RES-09

Document Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Director of Research</th>
<th>November 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorisation</td>
<td>Academic Board</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>Issue 2E</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date</td>
<td>Review of Issue 2E</td>
<td>December 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Preamble**

A core value of Excelsia College is the integration of Christian faith and excellent scholarship. Although single disciplinary research is supported, Excelsia College also encourages research from interdisciplinary perspectives: in particular, research that includes a theological or religious/spiritual perspective is supported. Excellence in interdisciplinary research and scholarship requires excellence in the quality of research from each contributing discipline. Ensuring excellence of interdisciplinary research requires respectful and authentic use of each constituent discipline, and methodologically sound approaches to the integration of knowledge.

**Purpose and Scope**

This policy specifies requirements for the conduct of research within Excelsia College where the focus or content of that research spans two or more disciplines. The policy applies to staff members and higher degree research students.

**Definitions**

Interdisciplinary research: Interdisciplinary research is any study or group of studies undertaken by scholars from two or more distinct [scientific] disciplines. The research is based upon a conceptual model that links or integrates theoretical frameworks from those disciplines, uses study design and methodology that is not limited to any one field, and requires the use of perspectives and skills of the involved disciplines throughout multiple phases of the research process (Aboelela et al., 2007, p.341).

Note: The original definition includes the term ‘scientific’ but a more general definition with ‘scientific’ deleted is used in the present policy.

**Policy Statement**

1. A supervisory panel comprising members having expertise in the different disciplinary foci must be available before enrolment of Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates who propose to conduct integrative or interdisciplinary research. The HDR candidate must have undertaken relevant coursework in all areas of interdisciplinary study, or enroll in relevant coursework prior to commencing interdisciplinary research.

2. In the case of a HDR candidate proposing integrative or interdisciplinary research,

   2.1. the Director of Research must ensure that proposed members of the supervisory panel can provide expertise in the substantive disciplinary areas (see PO-RES-07);

   2.2. the Principal Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the candidate seeks, and takes into account, advice from each discipline specialist within the supervisory panel (See PO-RES-07 and PO-RES-08);

   2.3. the Principal Supervisor, or a delegated member of the supervisory panel, must ensure that the HDR candidate is trained in appropriate means of theoretical and methodological integration.
3. In the case of staff members undertaking integrative or interdisciplinary research, the Director of Research is responsible to:

3.1. facilitate linkages between disciplinary specialists within WI;

3.2. facilitate training for staff in theoretical models and methodologies appropriate for integrative studies;

3.3. advise on peer review processes that will ensure respectful and authentic use of each constituent discipline.

References Consulted