Artificial Intelligence Governance Policy

Section 1 - Background

(1) The University of Newcastle (University) is a globally recognised leader in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in industry and the community, and this Policy is intended to ensure that the University continues to lead innovation in this area.

(2) Our expertise and innovation span:

a. equipping our life ready students with the skills to be responsible and proficient users of AI;
b. developing cutting-edge AI models, tools, and technologies through ongoing research and collaborations;
c. applying AI to real world challenges through innovations and partnerships with industry, government, and our region;
d. ensuring that the ethical, legal, and societal implications of AI are thoughtfully addressed in its development and application.

(3) As an innovative organisation, the University also evaluates and integrates AI models and tools into our operations, where appropriate.

Section 2 - Purpose

(4) This Policy:

a. provides a governance framework for the use, procurement, development and management of artificial intelligence (AI) at the University of Newcastle for the purposes of teaching, learning, research and operations;
b. outlines the ethical principles of AI usage, the governance requirements, and provides references to policies, procedures and standards; and
c. formalises the formation and functions of the AI Governance Committee.

Section 3 - Scope

(5) This Policy applies to all staff, students, and those engaged in University activities including controlled entities of the University. The Policy relates to all teaching and learning, research and business operations that involve the development, deployment, or use of AI.

Section 4 - Definitions

(6) Artificial Intelligence (AI):

a. the University defines artificial intelligence (AI) as the ability of any artificial system to think, analyse, learn and decide in a rational way that is similar to human beings. The field of AI develops and studies methods and software that enable machines to perceive their environment and then uses this data to take actions to help

achieve a desired goal.

b. Examples of AI include generative AI (discussed below) and in a university includes systems and processes that may report on student data, interrogate research data, provide business insights and enable automated decision making.

(7) Generative AI (Gen AI):

a. Any tool, system or software that can be used to generate new content in one or more formats (code, text, images, audio, video, etc). Examples are of Gen AI include Chat GPT, Microsoft Copilot, Claude and Grammarly Co.

(8) University AI project:

a. A University AI project involves the development, implementation, or use of AI technologies in any University related activity. This includes research initiatives, administrative processes, educational applications, and activities of controlled entities.

(9) AI Use:

a. AI use refers to the deployment, application, and integration of AI technologies within University's operations, academic activities, and administrative functions, including those of controlled entities. This includes, but is not limited to:
    i. Educational Tools and Systems: Utilisation of AI-driven platforms and software for teaching, learning, and assessment purposes.
    ii. Research Applications and Systems: Employment of AI methodologies and tools in research projects and scholarly activities;
    iii. Administrative Functions: implementation of AI systems and tools to enhance operational efficiency, decision-making processes, and service delivery;
    iv. Student and Staff Support: Use of AI technologies to provide support and resources to students and staff;
    v. Data analysis and management: Application of AI for data collection, analysis, and management to inform operational matters, policy-making and strategic planning.

Section 5 - Supporting Documents

(10) This Policy is supported by the following documents:

a. Policy on the Use of Generative AI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment;
b. Generative AI in Research Guideline;
c. Guidance for Course Coordinators – Responding to suspected inappropriate use of GenAI in written assessments;
d. Voluntary AI Safety Standard.

(11) Further information on Generative AI use at the University can be found on the University AI information web page.

Section 6 - AI Governance and Oversight

AI Governance Committee

(12) The University will establish an AI Governance Committee which is a subcommittee of the Executive Leadership Team and will oversee projects where AI is being applied to change existing systems or processes.

(13) The Committee will oversee teaching and learning activities, research arrangements and business operations where AI is either planned, or is being used in a way that may raise ethical implications.

(14) The Committee will support University arrangements that meet this Policy's requirements, ethical principles and any external regulatory arrangements.

(15) The Committee may refer questions relating to the use of AI to another committee or sub-committee of the University.

(16) The Committee will make recommendations to the Executive Leadership Team and Council on AI governance matters at the University.

(17) Each University AI project must undergo a review to evaluate its ethical implications, potential societal impact, and compliance with this Policy. The Committee is responsible for determining the processes and responsibilities that will comprise such reviews which will include, but may not be limited to, risk analysis and regular reporting.

(18) The Committee will review the risk assessment and make recommendations to reduce the risk of the AI to the University.

(19) The risk assessment of AI projects will be completed by the originator before the project or implementation commences. Further risk assessment may be completed at any stage in the project life cycle to reassess changing risks or at the request of the committee.

(20) The functions of the Committee include:

a. monitoring the use of AI systems and investigate any concerns or issues;
b. consider periodic evaluations of generative AI projects or technologies to ensure ongoing compliance with ethical standards and policy requirements;
c. providing direction on the use of AI within the University;
d. promoting AI literacy and awareness among the University community;
e. ensuring that relevant information from College Boards, Academic Senate Committees, divisions and Digital Technology Solutions (DTS) are reported to the AI Governance Committee to enable appropriate oversight, monitoring and review of AI arrangements;
f. supporting compliance with external regulatory requirements;
g. developing and regularly reviewing the AI Governance Policy and relevant related policy documents;
h. reporting to the Executive Leadership Team and the University Council following each meeting;
i. establishing the AI Governance Committee Terms of Reference; and
j. meeting at least 4 times a year.

Membership of the AI Governance Committee

(21) The membership of the AI Governance Committee will comprise:

a. Vice-Chancellor (Chair);
b. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
c. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation);

d. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Equity;
e. Director, Strategy Planning and Performance;
f. Chief Digital & Information Officer;
g. one academic staff member from each College appointed by the Chair. One of which needs to be an Indigenous academic staff member, and one academic staff member with ethics expertise.
h. one student member nominated by any Deputy Vice-Chancellor;
i. other members as required, invited by the Chair for specific meetings or projects.

Section 7 - Core Principles

Opportunity and Risk

(22) The University is committed to exploring and educating staff and students on the benefits of using AI technologies and ensuring risks and ethical considerations are understood before use, including but not limited to:

a. external regulatory or funding requirements;
b. obligations under the Higher Education Standards Framework; and
c. adherence to University policies related to privacy and information security as well as the requirements set out in the University Codes of Conduct.

(23) The use of AI must align with the risk appetite of the University Council as expressed through the Risk Management Framework, University values and the strategic vision that focus on core values such as equity, excellence, sustainability and engagement.

Ethical Principles

(24) In addition to the alignment with the University values as outlined in the University strategic plan, and the University supports the following core ethical principles as adopted by the Australian Government's Department of Industry, Science and Resources, in relation to AI use:

a. Human, societal and environmental wellbeing: AI systems should benefit individuals, society and the environment.
b. Human-centred values: AI systems should respect human rights, diversity, and the autonomy of individuals.
c. Fairness: AI systems should be inclusive and accessible, and should not involve or result in unfair discrimination against individuals, communities or groups.
d. Privacy protection and security: AI systems should respect and uphold privacy rights and data protection, and ensure the security of data.
e. Reliability and safety: AI systems should reliably operate in accordance with their intended purpose.
f. Transparency and explainability: There should be transparency and responsible disclosure so people can understand when they are being significantly impacted by AI, and can find out when an AI system is engaging with them.
g. Contestability: When an AI system significantly impacts a person, community, group or environment, there should be a timely process to allow people to challenge the use or outcomes of the AI system.
h. Accountability: People responsible for the different phases of the AI system lifecycle should be identifiable and accountable for the outcomes of the AI systems, and human oversight of AI systems should be enabled.

Responsible AI Use

(25) The University will ensure that the deployment, and use of AI systems adhere to the following requirements:

a. be designed with clear and well-defined purposes, and their capabilities and limitations must be clearly communicated;
b. be developed and tested with attention to potential biases and discriminatory outcomes, and appropriate measures must be taken to mitigate these risks;
c. address the privacy and security of data used to train or operate digital solutions using AI;
d. complement and enhance human capabilities, rather than replace or displace human decision-making;
e. incorporate training and support for staff and students on the ethical use of AI, including guidelines for the responsiblity use of generative AI tools.

Section 8 - Risk Assessment of AI Use

(26) The AI Governance Committee will determine the parameters for the AI Risk Assessment Tool. The University will assess risks and opportunities relating to the development, deployment, procurement or use of AI systems in a manner which is:

a. informed by the principles of the NIST Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework: Generative Artificial Intelligence Profile and the NSW Government Artificial Intelligence Assurance Framework;
b. is consistent with the University's overarching Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework; and
c. complies with any relevant legislation, including but not limited to, legislation pertaining to copyright, intellectual property and cybersecurity.

(27) Risk assessments will be recorded by the AI Governance Committee and reported to the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Associated records will be managed in accordance with the University's Records Governance Policy.

Section 9 - Alignment with External Frameworks

(28) The University's AI Governance Policy is aligned with the CSIRO’s Responsible AI Framework, which provides guidance on the ethical development and use of AI systems.

Section 10 - Review and Continuous Improvement

(29) The AI Governance Policy and supporting documents, including the AI Governance Committee Terms of Reference, will be reviewed and updated at least every 12 months to respond to new challenges, technological advancements, and changes in legal and ethical norms.

Section 11 - Related University Policy

(30) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the guidelines, procedures, and other relevant University policies that provide guardrails for AI use.

Privacy and Data Security

(31) Privacy Policy

(32) Privacy Management Plan

(33) Data Classification and Handling Policy and Standard

(34) Information Security Policy

(35) Data Breach Policy (Personal and Health Information)

(36) Cyber Security Incident Management Procedure

(37) Information Security Access Control Standard

Transparency and Disclosure

(38) Academic Integrity and Ethical Academic Conduct Policy

(39) Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

(40) Transparency and Disclosure Policy

Respect for Intellectual Property

(41) Intellectual Property Policy

(42) Intellectual Property Procedure

(43) Copyright Compliance Policy

(44) Research Authorship Procedure

Fairness and Bias Mitigation

(45) Code of Practice for Higher Degree by Research Candidature

(46) Education Quality Assurance Policy

(47) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

(48) Ethical Framework

(49) Open Access Policy

(50) Research Peer Review Procedure for Ethics Applications

Procurement, Development and Implementation of AI Systems and Tools

(51) Procurement Policy

University Codes of Conduct

(52) Staff Code of Conduct

(53) Student Code of Conduct

University Compliance

(54) Information Technology Conditions of Use Policy

(55) Records Governance Policy

(56) Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure

(57) Research Publication Responsibility Guideline

(58) Responsible Conduct of Research Policy

(59) Risk Management Policy

(60) Risk Management Framework

Status and Details

Status	Not Yet Approved
Effective Date	To Be Advised
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Responsible Executive	Alex Zelinsky Vice-Chancellor alex.zelinsky@newcastle.edu.au
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Risk appetite" - An organisation's approach to assess and eventually pursue, retain, take or turn away from risk.

"Risk assessment" - The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis, and risk evaluation.

"Academic staff" - A person employed as an academic staff member or appointed as an academic honorary appointee (including adjunct, clinical, visiting, honorary and conjoint appointments), but does not include persons who are employed solely as teachers or professional staff.

"Controlled entity" - Has the same meaning as in section 16A of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Intellectual property" - Intellectual property (IP), as defined by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, refers to creations of the mind: inventions; literary and artistic works; and symbols, names and images used in commerce. Intellectual property is divided into two categories: Industrial property includes patents for inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications; and Copyright covers literary works (such as novels, poems and plays), films, music, artistic works (e.g. drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures) and architectural design. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and broadcasters in their radio and television programs.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.