

## Research Policy

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**Policy Code:** ACA-007      **Version:** 3.0      **Effective Date:** 11 May 18

### Purpose:

This policy outlines the College's position on research activities within the institution. As a learning and teaching institution the College is committed to a program of research and scholarship that contributes to the evolution of natural medicine professions, informs teaching with new knowledge, and positions the College to contribute more broadly to research in the field of study of natural and complementary therapies.

**Definition of "College"** – *The Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd (ACNM) trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health, College of Natural Beauty, FIAFitnation and Wellnation. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to 'College' or 'the College' should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective trading names.*

- Scope:**
- All campuses and clinics
  - All academic staff
  - All students
  - All clinical staff

### Policy Statement:

Research is the academic process of accumulating and generating knowledge. The College recognises the need for academic staff to be supported in evolving their fields of study and practice. The growth of the disciplines taught at the College depends on accessing quality research and publications that extend the boundaries of knowledge, and describe the socio-economic benefits of these fields. Few institutions are in a better position than the College to become a knowledge leader in natural medicine and to engage in multidisciplinary research in the whole medical systems (see definition) of naturopathy, Chinese medicine and homeopathy as well as in specific modalities (see definition).

Teaching at the College is informed by scholarship and research which underpins all curriculum content. The College supports academic staff to be engaged in scholarship at a variety of levels including:

**The Scholarship of Teaching:** For example creating original instructional material and curricula, incorporating new knowledge into curricula, and evaluating effectiveness of learning modes.

**The Scholarship of Application:** For example non-teaching contributions of intellectual merit, innovative practical outcomes, acceptance by the profession of new resources or techniques developed.

**The Scholarship of Integration:** For example original interdisciplinary contributions, developing new models, and contributing original insight in relation to know facts.

**The Scholarship of Discovery:** For example traditional research, creative work, publication in refereed journals or books and presentations at refereed conferences.

The College encourages scholarship and research by students in the form of inquiry-based learning and the foundations for this are laid in first semester. Graduate attributes include critical thinking, analysis, synthesis and evaluation and these skills are developed throughout the courses. Students are encouraged to look at clinical outcomes, research the evidence base for therapeutic strategies, and to research special topics as they apply to practice.

## Strategic Research Priorities

The focus of research activities at the College will be linked to a range of topic areas identified as strategically important to achieve the intended purpose of research as outlined in this policy. These strategic research priorities provide a guiding framework by which all research activities, including allocation of funding, will be assessed. This will ensure that allocated research resources are committed to research activities most able to facilitate the College achieving its purpose.

## Development of the Strategic Research Priorities

The draft priorities will be developed by the Office of Research, reviewed by the Research Management Committee and recommended to the College Council for endorsement. The endorsed priorities will be reviewed and revised at least every 3 years or earlier if a need is identified by the College.

## Support for Staff Research

Endeavour College supports its staff to pursue research higher degrees through the provision of generous professional development assistance, both in terms of release time and financial support. Details of this support are outlined in the [Professional Development Policy – Academic Employees](#). Competitive internal funding schemes are also available to staff enrolled in a research higher degree as outlined in the Office of Research Funding Policy.

## Support for Student Research

### Endeavour Student Summer Research Program

The Endeavour Student Summer Research Program is coordinated by the Office of Research in conjunction with research teams within the College, and provides an opportunity for students to work with a researcher in a formal research environment.

Each student is supervised by a Research Mentor. The Research Mentor is an academic affiliated with the College, either directly or as an Adjunct or Visiting Fellow, who is undertaking a research project approved by the Office of Research as part of the Program.

Projects are available for between 6-10 weeks over the summer break (from mid-November to mid-February) and do not contribute to credit towards degree requirements.

### Eligibility

The Endeavour Student Summer Research Program is open to undergraduate students who:

- Are currently enrolled at greater than or equal to 50% full time load in an undergraduate degree at the College;
- Have completed at least one year of study;
- A recent alumni graduate (course completion in the same calendar year as commencement of summer program)
- Are studying for a degree relevant to the research project;
- Have a grade point average of 5.5 or above during their undergraduate degree; and
- Have the potential to and interest in undertaking postgraduate study (masters or PhD)

## Application and Review Process

Calls for applications for the Endeavour Student Summer Research Program will be announced by mid-October and applicants will be expected to submit their applications as outlined in the Call for Applications. Applicants should liaise with the Research Mentor before submitting an application to obtain more information about the project availability and suitability. Applicants must also indicate in their application if they would like to be considered for the Endeavour Research Summer Scholarship or Endeavour Student Research Travel Grant (as outlined in the [Office of Research Funding Policy](#)).

Applications will be reviewed and scored through a competitive process by a working group of the Research Management Committee, taking into account:

- The availability of projects and supervisors;
- The academic merit of the applicant as evidenced by their grade point average;
- Reasons provided for wanting to participate in the program;
- The quality of the project; and
- Available funding.

Agreement on the successful applicant/s and their fit with the proposed project will be determined through discussion between the Office of Research and the Research Mentor before the position will be offered to the applicant. Successful applicants will be notified of their appointment to the research project within 7 days of the close of applications.

## Obligations of Student Researchers

Students are expected to participate in an ongoing research project or to undertake a substantial piece of supervised research work. Successful applicants can also elect to be considered for the Endeavour Summer Research Scholarship as outlined in the Office of Research Funding Policy. The research period commences in mid-November and concludes in mid-February and is normally broken into two parts to allow for the Christmas break when the College is closed (annual dates to be confirmed in the Call for Applications).

It is expected that students will work a minimum of 20 hours per week for at least six weeks. Some projects will require scholars to work on a full-time basis (up to 36 hours per week), and the expected workload will be set by the Research Mentor. Where appropriate to the project, additional discipline/project specific obligations may also be

required, such as training in research safety and ethics. This will be outlined by the Research Mentor.

When offers are made, the contact officers will provide scholars with details of the starting dates and expected workload. The scholar and the supervisor are able to negotiate the duration of the project and the workload requirements.

Student Researchers will be required to submit a report to the Office of Research outlining the experience and skills gained through involvement in the Endeavour Student Summer Research Program within two weeks of completion of the program. Any work published as an outcome from the Summer Research Program must include the student's affiliation with the College.

### Obligations of Research Mentors

Research Mentors can apply to have a Student Researcher allocated to their research project through the Office of Research. Applications must be submitted by the end of September for approval by the Research Management Committee prior to inclusion in the list of available projects. Projects will only be considered for inclusion in the Endeavour Student Summer Research Program if they fulfil the following criteria:

- Appropriate resourcing and support already exists for the project
- An articulated role for the student within the project is identified
- Preferred skills and attributes of a research assistant are suitable to an undergraduate student
- Supervisor availability to ensure the student receives appropriate support
- Expected outputs from the student are clearly outlined
- Time commitments for the student researcher in the project are in line with Program Guidelines.

It is expected that Research Mentors will be able to provide mentoring and supervisory support to the student, and will have allocated tasks that are appropriate and relevant to the students skill set to ensure a positive and successful experience for the student and the research team. The Research Mentor must also clearly communicate all expectations to the Student Researcher and ensure agreement to all terms is in place prior to project commencement.

Research Mentors will be required to submit a report to the Office of Research outlining the Student Researcher's contribution to the research project within two weeks of

completion of the program. Any work published as an outcome from the Summer Research Program must include the Research Mentor's affiliation with the College.

## Research Project Assessment and Management

All research projects which are to be conducted utilising College resources or facilities, must have their research project:

- endorsed by the Research Management Committee
- approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee
- listed on the [Office of Research Project Register](#)

## Access to College Resources or Facilities

The College has a range of resources or facilities which may be accessed by a team of investigators for research intended for external dissemination. These include (but are not limited to):

- Wellnation clinics
- Internal databases
- Students
- Staff
- Alumni

Researchers interested in undertaking a research project requiring access to College resources or facilities will be considered by the College on a case-by-case basis. Investigators must submit an [Expression of Interest for Research Project Form](#) to the Research Management Committee via the Office of Research.

## Process for Submitting a Research Project Expression of Interest

An [Expression of Interest for Research Project Form](#) must be submitted to the Research Management Committee via the Office of Research. The application must include:

- Information about the team of investigators
- Brief outline of the intended project
- Resource or facility access required
- Ethical considerations
- Expected outcomes and likely audience
- Timeline for the project

- Budget and Funding details
- Resources or facility access required
- Endeavour staff required to assist, and the tasks agreed upon
- Names and details of all people with access to the raw data.

Each application will be considered by the Research Management Committee on its research merit. Applications requesting access to internal student records will also require approval from the Director responsible for the records of interest. This approval will need to be obtained before the request will be considered by the Research Management Committee.

The Research Management Committee will be responsible for reviewing and endorsing the proposal. Endorsement of project proposals by the Research Management Committee may be subject to recommended revisions to the proposal or requests for additional information. The Research Management Committee may choose to divest the responsibility for revision and endorsement of some proposal types to the Office of Research.

Once endorsed, the investigator/s must then submit an application to the College's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The approval letter issued by the Research Management Committee to the team of investigators will be required to be included in the Human Research Ethics Committee submission. Once the proposal has satisfied the HREC conditions the investigator/s must notify the Office of Research of the Ethics Approval Number, at which time their project will be entered into the *Office of Research Project Register* and allocated a Research Project Identifier (RPI). This RPI will be used on all further correspondence with the College regarding the research project.

## Ethics Review

The College's HREC is composed of external members and follows the national guidelines on research ethics approval utilising the standardised [Human Research Ethics Application](#) (HREA) platform developed by the [National Health and Medical Research Council](#). Refer to [Academic Governance Framework](#) for the terms of reference of the HREC. More information about the process of Ethics Review at the College is outlined in the [Human Research Ethical Clearance Policy](#).

## Responsibilities

The College Council has ultimate responsibility for development of research capacity at the College and will approve any delegation of funding decisions.

The Research Management Committee has responsibility for ensuring research best practice is followed for research conducted through or supported by Endeavour.

The Human Research Ethics Committee will have responsibility for reviewing and granting ethics approval for projects to be conducted by Endeavour researchers or using Endeavour facilities.

The Office of Research has operational responsibility for research at the College.

## Related Procedures:

Not applicable

**Definitions:** **Modality:** in health, a specific class of therapeutic intervention such as massage, nutrition, herbal medicine, acupuncture, counselling, exercise therapy. (See also Whole medical systems)

**Whole medical systems:** complete systems of theory and practice that have evolved over time in different cultures and apart from conventional medicine. Examples of ancient whole medical systems include Ayurvedic medicine and traditional Chinese medicine. More modern systems that have developed in the past few centuries include homeopathy and naturopathy.<sup>2</sup>

**Student** – is an individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the College. The individual person is that who appears on the College's documents such as enrolment, admission and payment documents, and who is assigned an individual student ID.

## Further Information:

**Related Policies:** [Professional Development Policy – Academic Employees](#)

[Office of Research Funding Policy](#)

[Human Research Ethical Clearance Policy](#)

**Benchmarking:** University of the Sunshine Coast



**Supporting Research and Analysis:**

1. Australian Research Council  
<http://www.arc.gov.au/information-applicants>  
(accessed 03/2018)
2. What is Complementary and Alternative Medicine?  
<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/whatiscam>  
(accessed 03/2018)

**Related Documents:**

[Academic Governance Framework](#)

[Office of Research Funding Policy](#)

**Related Legislation:**

Not applicable

**Guidelines:**

Not applicable

<b>Policy Author:</b>	Director of Education
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Associate Director - Research
<b>Contact:</b>	Associate Director – Research Amie.steel@endeavour.edu.au
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<b>Approval Body:</b>	College Council Approved: 7 July 2014
<b>Policy Status:</b>	Revised
<b>Responsibilities for Implementation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Education</li> <li>• Research Management Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Key Stakeholders:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Education</li> <li>• All Research Staff</li> <li>• All Academic Staff</li> <li>• External Researchers</li> <li>• Students</li> </ul>

<b>Version History</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Details</b>
0.1	16 Nov10	G Spaulding	New Policy
1.0	12Dec10		Approved by CEO
1.1	04Oct12	S Crouch	Revision
1.2	8Oct12	N Shoendorfer	Minor revision
1.2	16Oct12		Academic Board Review
2.0	25Oct12		College Council Review
2.1	21 Nov12	S Crouch	Implemented revisions suggested by Chair of College Council
2.2	21Nov12	S Crouch	Further revisions by Chair of College Council
3.0	07Dec12		College Council Approved
1.0	23May14	A Steel	College moved to a new version control system, further version history can be found on The Source.
3.1	27Mar18	A Steel	Updated to reflect refined processes developed since policy was drafted
4.0	13April18		College Council Approved