

Research Ethics and Integrity

December 2020 | Communication (1)

REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS ON RESEARCH ETHICS & INTEGRITY MATTERS

The Research Office is launching this Communication with the aim to share as from 2021 quarterly information with regards to research ethics and integrity services, developments and best practices available.

GATE KEEPER APPROVAL

Permission to conduct research at the Central University of Technology can be obtained from:

Prof. Antoni Szubarga
Deputy Director: Data
Management
szubarga@cut.ac.za
(051) 507 3008

TURNITIN SIMILARITY CHECK ACCOUNT

Supervisors and Researchers can apply for an account through an email to:

Dr Johan Badenhorst
jbaden@cut.ac.za
(051) 507 3223

CONTACT US

Ms. Cecilé Olivier
olivierc@cut.ac.za
(051) 507 4323

RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY AT CUT

Central University of Technology (CUT) is committed to the core values of customer service, integrity, diversity, innovation and excellence. As part of the core values it is important for the university to promote responsible conduct of research in line with internationally acceptable norms and standards.

The Research Ethics and Integrity Policy Framework was approved in 2016. It was recently reviewed, and the updated framework will be available after the approval by Senate in 2021.

FUTURE PLANS: DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACCREDITED HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Research Development and Postgraduate Studies section is currently in the process of developing an Accredited Human Research Ethics Committee for the University. The update of the progress with the establishment of this envisaged Committee will be communicated on the University's webpage.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES and FORMS RELEVANT TO RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

The following documents on research ethics and integrity matters are available at the University:

1. Research Ethics and Integrity Policy Framework (2016)
2. Policy on Plagiarism and Other Forms of Research Misconduct (approved 2019)
3. Policy and procedure on the management of surveys (2015)
4. Ethical Clearance Forms within the Faculties
 - 4.1. Faculty of Humanities: Application for ethical clearance to conduct research in the Faculty of Humanities
 - 4.2. Faculty of Management Sciences
 - 4.2.1. Ethics Application
 - 4.2.2. Ethical Standards: Research Protocol
5. Ethical approval regarding Clinical and Animal Research within the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences.
6. Standard Ethical Approval Letter from Faculties.
7. Similarity Check Software - The University is making use of the Turnitin Similarity Check Software to identify possible similarity with already existing texts. Postgraduate students have access to this Software via their supervisors. Supervisors and researchers can obtain access to Turnitin by applying for an account through an email to Dr Johan Badenhorst at jbaden@cut.ac.za. Researchers can obtain access to this software similar to the postgraduate supervisors.

ETHICS TRAINING

A) Graduate School Webinar Series on Research Ethics and Integrity in Academic and Scientific Writing

The Graduate School hosted a series of three webinars on some key concerns relevant to research ethics and integrity in academic and scientific writing, including plagiarism and the use of Turnitin.

The webinars, focused on research ethics and integrity challenges in academic and scientific writing, as well as understanding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Examples on how to apply writing strategies and skills to avoid inadvertent plagiarism in academic texts, were discussed.

On 19 August 2020 Webinar 1 was presented on the theme: Research ethics and integrity challenges in academic and scientific writing. Prof. Laetus OK Lategan gave an overview of research ethics and integrity challenges. Dr Johan Badenhorst presented a live illustration of the Turnitin software and Ms. Cecilé Olivier presented examples to explain the interpretation of results.

Webinar 2, on 26 August 2020 addressed the application of writing strategies and skills to avoid inadvertent plagiarism in academic texts. The presenter, Dr Alet Olivier, illustrated practical examples on paraphrasing, a comparison between longer source text, word-for-word plagiarism, patch-writing

The application of the Originality Report of Turnitin.com and the formative value of Turnitin.com for students were discussed as well as voiceless writing and writing with voice – positioning your voice in finding your writing identity by means of your personalised and socialised voice.

Webinar 3 focused on the nuances of plagiarism and teaching through metaphors how to avoid plagiarism. Dr Olivier discussed ethical research and why society disapproves of plagiarists. Reality and prevalence of plagiarism were also debated. The audience was engaged with insightful metaphors for avoiding plagiarism such as cheating (intentional plagiarism), cloning (verbatim use of a source text), 2nd hand clothes (how much 'common knowledge' can be reused) and your gang or support team, which relates to the need to incorporate research and the call on authority.

The presenters highlighted the fact that plagiarism prevention lies in specific instruction as to what plagiarism entails in academe; the shifting of the focus towards better academic writing; applying the principle of text transformation; applying your "own voice" versus "voiceless writing"; teaching writing as a process, namely a process of prewriting, drafting, revising and editing.

- **Ms. Eleanor P Nel**
enel@cut.ac.za
(051) 507 4320

B) SARIMA Workshop: Research Ethics Committee Fundamentals

SARIMA hosted a two-day workshop (3 hours per session) that guided delegates through the fundamental aspects of setting-up and running a research ethics committee (REC). The workshop covered a number of pertinent and current topics including the history and principles of research ethics, regulatory requirements and framework to register a REC, governance and the responsibilities of REC, membership and training requirements, social media in research, confidentiality, privacy, informed consent, gatekeeping, authorship and conflict of interest.

A total number of seven (7) colleagues have attended the workshop. Colleagues should have completed two quizzes and the evaluation form at the end of the two-day workshop, upon which attendees did receive a certificate of participation.

- **Ms. Cecilé Olivier**
olivierc@cut.ac.za
(051) 507 4324



RELEVANT DOCUMENTS TO RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

The following protocols and regulations can be noted:

- Singapore Statement on Research Integrity
- Montreal Statement on Research Integrity in Cross-Boundary Research Collaborations
- Amsterdam Agenda
- Statement on Ethical Research and Scholarly Publishing Practices Jointly issued by ASSAf, CHE, DHET, NRF and USAf.
- NRF – Ethical Clearance Requirements