

Research Ethics and Integrity

May 2021 | Communication (I)

REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS ON RESEARCH ETHICS & INTEGRITY MATTERS

The Research Office presents this Communication with the aim to share quarterly information with regard 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:

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TURNITIN SIMILARITY CHECK ACCOUNT

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Highlights from Research Ethics and Integrity activities

a) PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT (POPIA) ACTIVITIES AND COMPLIANCE INTO THE RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – UPDATE

The Research Office's development of research ethics and integrity systems, gained momentum with the appointment of an external expert to assist with the process of developing and implementing a fully integrated research ethics system, accredited Human Ethics Committee and also alignment of ethics functions to the POPIA. The implementation will be done in two phases and involves a number of activities. The following task teams were approved during the Research Ethics and Integrity Committee's meeting on 11 May 2021:

- *University Research Ethics consultation group* – The purpose of the task team is involvement in the assessment and alignment of the current systems of ethical approval and committees in terms of constitution, functions/roles and responsibilities and compliance.
- *Development of Policies and Procedure in support of Research Ethics* – The purpose of the task team is involvement in the development of two policies and procedures: 1) Research Data Management Policy and Procedure and 2) Policy and Procedure on the Research Data Collection during COVID-19 and other pandemics.

The university community will be updated on the progress with the development of the research ethics and integrity systems.

b) POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS RELEVANT TO RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Research Ethics and Integrity Policy Framework – The Research Ethics and Integrity Policy Framework was up for review in 2020. The REIC and FRICs were requested for inputs on the updates. The updated Framework served at the URIC for discussion. The Framework was approved by Senate. The updated Framework will be posted to the University's website.

c) WEBINAR: RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY TO POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Prof. Laetus OK Lategan presented on invitation a webinar on Research Ethics and Integrity to postgraduate students in the higher education programme in the Faculty of Education, University of the Free State. The focus was on dealing with principles directing respectful research.

d) AFRICAN RESEARCH INTEGRITY NETWORK (ARIN) WEBINAR

On Tuesday, 30 March 2021, ARIN hosted a webinar in partnership with the global Research Integrity Network (GRIN). The title of the webinar was Institutional support for research integrity: Is multi-purposing an option? The following matters were discussed:

- i. The most important resources and skills required to promote research integrity at institutional level.
- ii. Key differences between research integrity (RI) and research ethics (RE) – and the institutional resources typically available to promote both.
- iii. How can limited resources can be co-shared to foster both RI and RE.
- iv. Identify recommendations for promoting research integrity for institutions in Africa.

Guidelines for permission to do research at CUT

Permission from CUT is needed to conduct research involving students or staff at CUT campuses, as well as their records. The submission should contain the following:

- a) Survey purpose / research proposal
- b) Ethical considerations including privacy legislation
- c) Questionnaire / checklist / tool
- d) Sampling procedure
- e) Ethical clearance from an appropriate Ethics Committee

For more enquiries, please contact Prof. Antoni Szubarga, Deputy Director: MIS, Institutional Planning and Quality Enhancement. E-mail: Szubarga@cut.ac.za

CUT Researchers and students can make use of the Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSREC) of the University of the Free State (UFS) to obtain ethics approval for projects

Many CUT research projects must be submitted for ethical approval to the Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSREC) of the UFS. The good news was shared by Dr Belinda van der Merwe, Senior Lecturer: Radiography and CUT representative on the UFS HSREC, that training will be offered to staff and students to prepare their submissions for ethical clearance. Prior to HSREC submission, the projects are submitted for approval and review by the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee (FRIC) of the relevant faculties. The following information on the HSREC can be useful.

1. The purpose of the HSREC

The essential purpose of the HSREC is to protect the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of all human participants in health-related research. Attention is placed on the protection of the identity and confidentiality of subjects and on measures for the protection of researchers and the institution. The HSREC will do this through independent, prospective and ongoing ethics review of all health research projects undertaken by members of staff, registered students and affiliates of the University of the Free State. The HSREC carefully guards against aspects that could result in serious side-effects, could offend, be dangerous or discriminatory or involve risks, as well as against poorly or vaguely formulated protocols and information documents for subjects. The HSREC may, at the discretion of the Chair or HSREC Administration, except for review research protocols involving human participants submitted to it by researchers from other institutions who are not UFS staff members, students or affiliates.

2. When must a researcher obtain ethical approval?

Ethical approval must be obtained before any health-related research study commences. The HSREC will not consider projects for approval if it is apparent that the research has already been conducted or has been started.

3. Where and how must researchers submit an application?

The Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSREC) uses an online ethics review management system, Research Information Management System (RIMS), to manage the application and review process. The application preparation guide is available on the Postgraduate Students Community on eThuto to provide researchers with the information needed to comply with the administrative requirements of an ethics application to the HSREC.

4. Training videos

Training videos are available on eThuto and Teams to assist researchers and supervisors with the application process. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/zaq6mun1yvsg7xy/AAARBKJHZgip3PILZOmYuDYUa?dl=0>

For more information you are welcome to contact Dr Belinda van der Merwe (bevdmerwe@cut.ac.za).

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL HSREC SUBMISSION - AVOIDING FREQUENT MISTAKES WORKSHOP

The purpose of the workshop is to highlight the administrative and ethical considerations from an HSREC evaluator perspective. This information may be useful to both supervisors and researchers preparing their students or their own protocols for HSREC evaluation.

Date: 14 May 2021

Time: 8:30 – 10:00

Venue: Black Board collaborate in the Post Graduate Student Community. Members can join the session directly from eThuto from the Post Graduate Students community. Outside CUT guest (15 minute before the time by using this link via Chrome):
<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/282a8e6697824443bf60138d1b504f7c>

Presenter: Dr Claire Barrett (Vice Chair HSREC)

Dates for the next workshops:

13 August 2021, 08:30 – 10:00

10 September 2021, 08:30 – 10:00

Contact person for more details:

Dr Belinda van der Merwe
(bevmerwe@cut.ac.za)

The World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI) 2021 Virtual

Growing the global research integrity community through focused, diverse and engaging webinar discussions

From 30 May to 2 June 2021, the WCRI will host a series of FREE webinars on six engaging and relevant topics.

Each topic will be broadcast live via webinar in two different time slots. This is to ensure that as many delegates as possible from around the world and in different time zones are able to participate.

The sessions will take place via Zoom.

Session Topics:

Session 1 & 3 - What is Research Integrity?

Session 2 & 4 - Carrot or stick? How might funders and publishers respond to new challenges for research integrity?

Session 5 & 7 - Towards a Cape Town Statement on Fostering Research Integrity through equity, fairness and diversity.

Session 6 & 8 - Implementation of the Hong Kong Principles in Low and Medium Income Countries.

Session 9 & 11 - What can RPOs do to foster RI?

Session 10 & 12 - Research interpretation and data use with integrity in the COVID pandemic.

Register now:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScgmZjFzFQKL-7bqnyMUQ1ScOSjeX7ChzWC5dA0tYRug1Fbmg/viewform>