

# Research Ethics Policy



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Research and Graduate studies

Owner: Dean of Research and  
Graduate Studies

## POLICY & PROCEDURES:

- Research Ethics Policy

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## Version Control & Sign-Off Sheet

Version Control			
Version	Change reference	Approval	Dates
1	Initial version	UC	20.05.2019
		BOT	23.05.2019

# Research Ethics Policy

## 1. Terms and Definitions

- University: - Refers to Applied Science University.
- Committee: – Refers to the Research, Innovation and Research Ethics Committee
- PI – Refers to the Principal Investigator who is the main researcher in
  - A research project
  - An article authoring and/or publishing
  - A Book authoring and/or publishing
  - MSc thesis
  - Final year graduation project
- Human subject research: is any research that is conducted with or about people, or their data and involves using archived data in which individuals are identifiable or gathering information about human beings (and organizations) through interviewing, surveying, questionnaires or observation of human behavior
- Participant: any human subject participating in the research
- Ethical review: is the process of ethical evaluation of a proposed research before it is begun to ensure that the research will treat its participants, their data and rights fairly and safely, without exposing them to risks.
- Ethical Approval: Is the process of approving the research proposal by the Committee after conducting the Ethical Review

## 2. Policy Statement and Purpose

- This policy aims to establish and disseminate key principles and procedures of good ethical practice in research at the University. The objective of this policy is to prevent any possible occurrence of research misconduct by academic staff or students. In particular, Human Subject Research usually raises ethical issues and hence, the University must ensure that ethical practices are followed and ethical principles are explicitly applied.
- Therefore, it is necessary that both staff and students proposing to engage in any research activity gain approval for such activity before it begins according to the terms of this policy.

## 3. Guiding Principles

This policy is guided by the following principles regarding conducting research by students and staff:

1. Honesty: Honesty needs to be assured in all scientific communications without any fabrication, falsifications or misprinted data. This should be assured in reports, data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status.

2. Integrity: Consistency of thought and action throughout the research must be assured.
3. Objectivity: bias must be avoided in all aspects of research: research, experimental design, data analysis and interpretation, review, etc.,
4. Accuracy: Care must be taken to avoid errors and negligence. Good records of research activities, such as data collection, research design, and correspondence with agencies or journals need to be assured and maintained.
5. Openness: Be open to criticism and new ideas by sharing your data, results, ideas, tools, resources with peers to allow outcomes and contribution revision.
6. Research freedom: The researcher has the right to freely select research topics along with the right to use relevant methodology,
7. Respect for Intellectual Property: Do not use unpublished data, methods, or results without permission and proper acknowledgement and do not plagiarize.
8. Confidentiality: Confidential communications, such as personnel records, trade or military secrets, and patient records should not be shown to the public.
9. Mentoring: Help to educate and advise students. Promote their welfare and allow them to make their own decisions.
10. Respect for Colleagues and Social Responsibility: Respect your colleagues and treat them fairly.
11. Competence: Promote competence in science to improve your own professional expertise through lifelong education and learning.
12. Legality: Know and follow relevant laws related to institutional and governmental policies regarding scientific research.

#### **4. Scope**

This policy applies to research proposals prepared by either staff or students which include any of the following research works:

- Projects funded by the university or externally
- Articles published in conference proceedings or journals
- Master theses and projects
- Undergraduate student projects
- Books or chapter(es) in books

#### **5. Responsibilities**

- It is the responsibility of academic staff to read, understand and be familiar with this Policy.

- It is the responsibility of every academic staff to ensure compliance with the Policy.
- In the case of students, it is a joint responsibility of the student and his/her supervisors to follow and be aware of this Policy
- It is the responsibility of the Committee to ensure that all research works conducted by students and staff are free of plagiarism or any unethical misconduct.
- It is the responsibility of the University to ensure intellectual property (IP) rights of individuals and institutions as stated in the University Intellectual Property Bylaw.

## 6. Procedure for Obtaining Ethical Approval

- Before submitting the research work for funding or publication, the PI fills the **Application Form for Research Proposal Ethical Approval** which is issued by the Deanship of Research and Graduate Studies. The PI must provide the following information accompanied with the application:
  - Clear and sufficient information about the participants involved in the research
  - Participant consent forms
  - Clear and sufficient information about the type of the data to be collected and its sensitivity degree.
  - Risk assessment of the proposed research work (risks to researchers themselves and to participants)
  - The questionnaires, interview questions, and any information about the experiments to be conducted
  - A data management plan: how data is accessed, collected and analyzed, how data will be protected, and archived
  - The anticipated benefits for the participants in research and communities to which the research will be relevant
  - Permissions from other organization(s) (if applicable)
- If the PI believes that his/her research does not need an ethical approval, he/she still needs to fill the form.
- The PI submits the application along with the supporting documents to his/her College Scientific Committee through his/her Dean and Head of the Department
- Upon approval by the College Scientific Committee, the College Dean transfers the application to the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies
- The Dean of Research and Graduate Studies transfers the application to the Committee for approval.

- If the information for ethical approval provided by the PI is not sufficient, or if further explanation is needed, the applicant will be informed by the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies to submit the necessary information.
- If the Committee is not convinced that the submitted research work meets the ethical requirements, it may decide to reject the proposal.

## **7. Criteria for Ethical Review**

The following criteria are considered by the Committee when evaluating the applications for ethical approval:

- Capacity of the researcher(s): The PI and co-researcher(s) have the qualifications and experiences to conduct the proposed research.
- Recognition of efforts of individual researchers: The PI recognizes the efforts of the collaborators in the research and that their rights are not violated
- Confidentiality: The PI Ensures that there is no unauthorized use of confidential research results, and that there is no breach of academic values and scientific norms
- Culturally sensitive issues: The PI ensures that the research does not include any culturally sensitive issues that may harm the reputation of the University or the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- Permissions: The PI ensures that he has obtained (or will obtain) the required permissions or consents to conduct or to publish his research where applicable.
- Risk Management: The PI has identified the risks to researchers themselves and/or to participants and a plan to mitigate these risks
- Intellectual Property: The research work must respect the IP rights of individuals and/or organizations where necessary.

# Application Form for Research Proposal Ethical Approval

## NOTES TO THE APPLICANT:

- The purpose of this application is to make sure that you as a researcher, research participants, Department and the College are safeguarded.
- Please provide as much information as possible about your research with human participants, sensitive topics or sensitive materials.
- If you are a student then your completed application form, together with all related documents should be approved by your supervisor in the first instance.
- If you are a member of academic staff, your completed application form together with all related documents should be submitted for approval by the college scientific committee and finally by the Research, Innovation and Research Ethics Committee.
- No research, data collection/analyzing, or any further step may begin before ethical approval has been granted.

1. Applicant Details (Principal Investigator)			
<b>First name</b>		<b>Surname</b>	
<b>Department</b>			
<b>Tel</b>		<b>Email</b>	
<u>For student PI only:</u>			
<b>Degree Programme</b>		<b>Student No.</b>	
<b>Name of Supervisor</b>		<b>Supervisor Email</b>	

2. Co-Investigators, if any				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>University (if not ASU member)</b>	<b>Programme (For student only)</b>	<b>Email</b>



3. Research Project	
Project Title	
Research Funder(s)	
Other Organisations Involved	
Proposed Start / End Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Researcher Category	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate

4. Research Project Ethics Checklist	
Type of ethical approval needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Data <input type="checkbox"/> Humans <input type="checkbox"/> Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Others (specify):-----
Will the research involve collection of sensitive data	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please specify: -----
Will the research involve discussion of culturally sensitive issues?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please specify: -----
Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please specify: -----
Research type	<input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaire/ Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Experiments <input type="checkbox"/> Observational <input type="checkbox"/> Database <input type="checkbox"/> Interview <input type="checkbox"/> Other- specify:-----
Intended publication	<input type="checkbox"/> Journal Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Conference Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Book <input type="checkbox"/> Book Chapter <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis <input type="checkbox"/> Others: -----

<b>Target participants (select all that apply)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ASU Staff or Students <input type="checkbox"/> Adults <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Specify): -----
<b>Will the research require permission or consent to conduct or to publish</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please state where: -----
<b>Are the intended participants of the study not members of the ASU community?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please state where: -----
<b>Is the research to be conducted in organisations other than the ASU</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please state where: ----- Have the appropriate ethical considerations been granted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please attach a copy.
<b>Are there any risks to researchers themselves and/or to participants</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes, please provide a document of project risk assessment details
<b>Any other issues regarding your research?</b>	

<b>5. Supporting Documentation</b>	
<b>Document</b>	<b>Attached</b>
<b>Copy of the research project proposal</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Participant consent form</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Participant information</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Questionnaire(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Project risk assessment (risks to researchers themselves and to participants)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Data management plan (how data is accessed, collected, analyzed, confidentially protected, and archived)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Other Organization(s) permissions (non ASU, if applicable)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Others (please state):-----</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

6. Declaration	
I certify that all the information provided in this application is accurate. In addition, I acknowledge the rights of all participant's risks that may arise while conducting this research. I confirm that the research will be conducted in line with all University, Higher Education Council and Kingdome of Bahrain laws and ethical standards and will not make any amendments to the project without further approval.	
<b>Name of Principal Investigator</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

7. Decision of the College Committee		
The College Committee has considered the ethical aspects of this proposal. The committee recommends that the research project be:		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Approved</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Deferred (for reasons attached)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not approved</b>		
<b>Name of Committee Member</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

8. Final Decision		
The Research, Innovation and Research Ethics Committee has considered the ethical aspects of this proposal. The committee recommends that the research project be:		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Approved</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Deferred (for reasons attached)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not approved</b>		
<b>Name of Committee Member</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

# Consent to Participate in Research Study Form

1. Applicant Details (Principal Investigator)			
<b>First name</b>		<b>Surname</b>	
<b>Department</b>			
<b>Tel</b>		<b>Email</b>	
<b><u>For student PI only:</u></b>			
<b>Degree Programme</b>		<b>Student No.</b>	
<b>Name of Supervisor</b>		<b>Supervisor Email</b>	

*[Replace text in brackets]*

**KEY INFORMATION:**

*[Please insert one paragraph which includes all 5 of the following components.*

- 1. A statement that the project is research and participation is voluntary*
- 2. A summary of the research including purpose, duration and list of procedures*
- 3. Reasonable, foreseeable risks or discomforts*
- 4. Reasonable, expected benefits*

**Description of the Study Procedures**

- If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things: *[explain in sufficient detail the procedures and tasks; identify any procedures that are experimental; describe length of time for participation, frequency and duration of procedures; etc.]*

**Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study**

- The study has the following risks. First, *[explain first risk, including the likelihood of the risk]*. Second, *[if needed, explain second risk, including the likelihood of the risk]*. Third, ... etc.
- *[If there are no foreseeable risks, state as such.]* There are no reasonable foreseeable (or expected) risks. There may be unknown risks.

### Benefits of Being in the Study

- The benefits of participation are *[explain benefits of participation that will be gained by the participants and/or other. If a benefit is not likely to occur do not include.]*

### Confidentiality *[explain how data, information or results are confident]*

### Payments or Compensation

- You will/will not receive payment/reimbursement: *[explain amount of payment or other reimbursement information (e.g., class points, tokens, donations, etc.), as well as when payment and/or reimbursement will occur and in what cases payment will not occur if any. If there will be no payment, state this.]*

### Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study *at any time*. Your decision will not result in any loss or benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely from the interview or survey at any point during the process; additionally, you have the right to request that the interviewer not use any of your interview material.

### Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, or have any other concerns about your rights as a research participant any time feel free to contact me, *[name]* at *[email]* or by telephone at *[phone number]*. *[If the researcher is a student, add: You may also contact the supervisor of this research (name, e-mail, telephone number)].* If you like, a summary of the results of the study will be sent to you.

### Informed Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study investigators.

Participant Name:

Participant Signature:

Date:

Principal Investigator's Signature:

Date: