



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Research Ethics Processes for PDRFs

When Postdoctoral Research Fellows (PDRFs) conduct research outside their home country, they must adhere to a set of ethical processes that ensure their research is responsible, culturally sensitive, and legally compliant. These ethical processes include:

1. **Host Institutional Ethical Approval:** PDRFs must obtain approval from the Research Ethics Committee of both their home and host institutions. All research conducted and published under the University of Johannesburg's auspices must receive ethics approval from the Faculty of Education. This approval must be accompanied by a certificate from the TRREE training. Ethics applications will not be considered without this certificate. It is mandatory for all staff, PDRFs and students to complete the TRREE training on research ethics.
2. **Research with University of Johannesburg students and staff:** Once the UJ ethics clearance is received, the PDRF must request institutional permission by completing the online form using the following link: [UJ Gatekeeper Requests 2025](#)

The function of the UJ Gatekeeper is to manage the access to research requests undertaken at the University of Johannesburg by staff or students. An online form has been developed to streamline the process related to these requests. The research request may be related to data collection that involves staff or students. The request may also involve access to information that is in the possession of UJ. Please note that the following documentation is required when submitting a Gatekeeper application:

- Ethical Clearance
 - Research Proposal
 - Questionnaire/Interview Schedule
3. **Home Institutional Ethical Approval:** If research is conducted in the PDRFs home country outside of South Africa, all relevant approvals as per the requirements of the relevant departments, schools and universities must be observed. The supervisor must be sent these approvals for record-keeping purposes.
 4. **Informed Consent:** If the research involves human participants, PDRFs must ensure that informed consent is obtained. This involves explaining the study's purpose, risks, benefits, and the voluntary nature of participation in a language understandable to participants.
 5. **Cultural Sensitivity and Respect:** Conducting research in a foreign country requires an understanding of and respect for local customs, traditions, and social norms. Ethical guidelines require PDRFs to engage in community consultation or develop research strategies that are culturally appropriate and respectful to local populations.
 6. **Data Protection and Confidentiality:** PDRFs must adhere to both their home country's data protection laws and the host country's data protection regulations. This includes ensuring that all data collected is securely stored, and personal information is kept confidential, especially



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in cross-border research scenarios. In addition, local privacy laws and any specific country-specific regulations (e.g., around data sharing) must be respected.

7. **Compliance with Local Laws:** Research activities must comply with the host country's legal framework, including research-related laws, and any restrictions on international collaboration or data sharing.
8. **Safety and Risk Management:** Ethics processes include considering the safety and well-being of PDRFs themselves and their research participants. This involves risk assessments, ensuring the security of both the researchers and participants, and addressing potential issues such as political instability, health risks, or environmental hazards in the host country.
9. **Monitoring and Reporting:** Ongoing monitoring of the research's ethical standards is crucial. PDRFs should regularly report on their research to both their home institution and any regulatory bodies, ensuring that the research remains within the ethical boundaries set out at the start.

These processes are designed to ensure that research is conducted responsibly, respecting local laws and cultural contexts while adhering to international ethical standards.

Yours in Education

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