FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
FOR HUMANITIES ACADEMIC ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Related Documents

- Code of Academic and Research Ethics
- Academic Regulations
- UJ Student Regulations
- University of Johannesburg Guidelines on Authorship: Research Output
- Supervisor and Postgraduate Student Agreement

1. Preamble

The Faculty Academic Ethics Committee functions in accordance with the policy framework of the UJ Senate Committee for Academic Ethics and is responsible for the implementation of the UJ Code of Academic Ethics in the Faculty of Humanities.

2. Master's and Doctoral Research

(a)   Proposals may be referred to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee for scrutiny prior to or after HDC review. Proposals should be referred to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee by the supervisor or the student, as well as the DHDC or HHDCs.   Based on this scrutiny, the departmental committee responsible for higher

degrees will determine which proposals need to be accompanied by a completed 'Research Ethics Protocol' form before or after submitting these proposals to the Faculty HDC.

Masters and Doctoral proposals may be referred to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee by the student, supervisor, Departmental Higher Degrees Committee (or equivalent) or Humanities Higher Degrees Committees (HHDCs), before or after the proposal is reviewed by the HHDC.

All Masters and Doctoral proposals undergo scrutiny and clearance in regard to considerations of research ethics. The HHDCs routinely assess whether proposals have complex ethical implications. The HHDCs provide ethical approval to studies that do not have complex ethical implications. Proposals that are judged by the HHDC to have complex ethical implications are referred to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee for a full ethical review. In such cases, HHDC acceptance of a proposal is dependent on ethics approval.

Proposals that involve the following are routinely referred to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee:

1.   Children (people under the age of 18 years).

2.   Other vulnerable groups (e.g. prisoners, sex workers).

3.   An intervention (e.g. a therapeutic procedure).

4.   UJ students or staff.

The supervisor or student is responsible for the electronic submission of the application to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee, including the following documentation:

- A cover letter
- The research proposal on the current Faculty template that has or will be submitted to the Humanities Higher Degrees Committee
- A completed 'Research Ethics Protocol' form

Once the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee has reviewed the relevant documentation, the Chairperson of the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee will inform the following persons of the outcome: The relevant HHDC chairperson, and the supervisor/promoter of the relevant master's or doctoral candidate.

(b)   In cases where specific documentation / letters of ethical clearance are required (e.g. in order for a student to gain access to respondents), such cases can be

electronically referred to the chair of the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee, via the office of the supervisor. The following documentation must be submitted:

- A cover letter
- The research proposal approved by the relevant Faculty Higher Degrees Committee
- A completed 'Research Ethics Protocol' form

3. Honours Research Projects

(a)   In the case of honours individual and/or group research projects, the function of monitoring the ethical standing of research proposals and granting ethical clearance is delegated to the relevant department. The department will determine which honours research proposals need to be referred to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee for further scrutiny. Such referral is done by the relevant departmental chairperson as indicated in the Charter for Humanities Academic Ethics Committee, point 4.2 (b).   In such cases the following documentation must be submitted to the office of the chair of the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee:
- A cover letter
- The research proposal indicating name, department, title or research, literature review / context, goals, methodology, ethical consideration, and references (about 5 pages)
- A completed 'Research Ethics Protocol' form

 (b)   In cases where specific documentation/letters of ethical clearance are required (e.g. in order to gain access to respondents), such cases can be referred to the chair of the Faculty Ethics Committee, via the office of the supervisor / honours course coordinator. The following documentation must be electronically submitted:

- A cover letter
- The research proposal indicating name, department, title of research, literature review / context, goals, methodology, ethical consideration, and references (about 5 pages)
- A completed 'Research Ethics Protocol' form

4. Research Projects: Members of Staff

All staff members embarking on a specific research project are expected, in the spirit of academic integrity and social justice, to ensure that the standard practice of ethical

professionalism will be upheld. Staff members must adhere to guidelines and procedures regarding ethical professionalism stipulated by their relevant departments.

The design and methodology of research undertaken by a member of staff, as with students' research, that makes use of research subjects like people, human remains, other living beings and the environment, must be electronically submitted to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee for evaluation and approval. Staff research proposals that involve the following are routinely referred to the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee:

1. Children (people under the age of 18 years).

2. Other vulnerable groups (e.g. prisoners, sex workers).

3. An intervention (e.g. a therapeutic procedure).

4. UJ students or staff.

In such cases the following documentation must be electronically submitted to the office of the chair of the Humanities Academic Ethics Committee:

*   A cover letter
*   The research proposal indicating name, department, title of research, literature review / context, goals, methodology, ethical consideration, and references (about 5 pages)
*   A completed 'Research Ethics Protocol' form