

## INTRODUCTION

This is a guide to the completion of an application for ethical clearance by the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee. All applications for ethical clearance are subjected to a blind review.

Applications for ethical clearance that involve children or sensitive/intrusive topics, will be subjected to a **complete review** by two peer reviewers who have 4 weeks to consider the applications. Applications for ethical clearance that involve less sensitive/intrusive topics will be subjected to an **accelerated review**, which implies that the application will not be reviewed by two peer reviewers, but will be discussed during a meeting of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee for an immediate decision. If however, the meeting decides that said application will be better served by a complete review, the Research Ethics Committee retains its right to send the application out for review.

All researchers at the University of Pretoria have to submit an application for ethical clearance when their research involves the participation of human respondents. There are five groups of researchers who generally apply for ethical clearance and their applications will be handled as follows:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>M.Ed students:</b>    | Applications for ethical clearance have to be submitted after a departmental defence, but before any fieldwork has commenced. Applications for ethical clearance are valid for 2 years from the date of consideration. Students who have not completed their degrees in this time, or when the research design has changed significantly and substantially, should submit a new application.  |
| <b>PhD students:</b>     | Applications for ethical clearance have to be submitted after the Faculty defence, but before any fieldwork has commenced. Applications for ethical clearance are valid for 3 years from the date of consideration. Students who have not completed their degrees in this time, or when the research design has changed significantly and substantially, should submit a new application.   |
| <b>Staff:</b>            | Applications for ethical clearance have to be submitted before fieldwork is conducted. Because staff projects usually involve longterm projects, an application for ethical clearance may be made once to cover the entire project, or multiple times to cover specific research activities as they unfold in the life of the project. However, no staff member may actively do fieldwork without ethical clearance. Applications for ethical clearance are valid for the life of the project unless the research design has changed significantly and substantially, in which case a new application should be submitted.            |
| <b>Class approval:</b>   | This group involves applications from lecturers at the undergraduate level who require their students to do research as part of fulfilling the requirements of a module. Teaching practice only requires ethical clearance if there is a clear research component involved. Research activities should be structured and prescribed and no undergraduate students should be permitted to design their own data collection instruments. Class approval applications are valid as long as the module content and the research project remains the same and applications need not be renewed annually.                                   |
| <b>Honours students:</b> | Applications for ethical clearance have to be submitted by the lecturer and students/group of students involved. This application can be submitted as a class approval if all students in a module are required to do the same research. However, if variations exist in the research projects among students, this application is best submitted per research project. Applications for ethical clearance are valid for 1 year from the date of consideration. Students who have not completed their degrees in this time, or when the research design has changed significantly and substantially, should submit a new application. |

## RESPONSIBILITIES

In any application for ethical clearance, there are a number of parties involved, each with their own responsibilities. In this section, the responsibilities of each party are described in greater detail.

### Supervisor (Honours/M.Ed/PhD):

The supervisor's responsibility is to

- guide the student in the academic and ethical aspects of the research process
- ensure that the student is aware of the most important research-related processes
- instruct the student in writing about the necessity to apply for ethical clearance after the research proposal has been defended
- ensure that the student do not commence with fieldwork before ethical clearance has been provided
- provide the application forms for ethical clearance to the student
- discuss the ethical aspects related to the student's research project, such as the need to obtain permission, aspects of informed consent with adults and other special populations, confidentiality and issues regarding plagiarism.
- Communicate any important changes in guidelines to students under their supervision

**Student-applicant:**

The student's responsibility is to

- complete an application for ethical clearance and to submit and follow-up the application to the Research Ethics Committee timeously
- ensure that all relevant parties have signed the relevant documents
- ensure that all supporting documents are attached to the application
- ensure that ethical clearance has been granted before commencing with fieldwork
- adhere to ethical guidelines when conducting fieldwork
- bring ethical issues to the attention of the supervisor for discussion

**Class approval applicant:**

The applicant's responsibility is to

- complete an application for ethical clearance and to submit and follow-up the application to the Research Ethics Committee timeously
- ensure that all relevant parties have signed the relevant documents
- ensure that all supporting documents are attached to the application
- ensure that ethical clearance has been granted before commencing with a module
- guide students in the academic and ethical aspects of the research process
- ensure that students are aware of the most important research-related processes
- ensure that students do not commence with fieldwork before ethical clearance has been provided
- discuss the ethical aspects related to the research project, such as the need to obtain permission, aspects of informed consent with adults and other special populations, confidentiality and issues regarding plagiarism.
- Communicate any important changes in guidelines to students under their supervision

**Staff members:**

The applicant's responsibility is to

- complete an application for ethical clearance and to submit and follow-up the application to the Research Ethics Committee timeously
- ensure that all relevant parties have signed the relevant documents
- ensure that all supporting documents are attached to the application
- ensure that ethical clearance has been granted before commencing with fieldwork
- adhere to ethical guidelines when conducting fieldwork
- guide students who are involved as co-workers in their projects in the same way as is described for supervisors
- ensure that students who work on their projects are in a reasonable position to obtain ethical clearance from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

## **REGULATIONS**

All researchers in the Faculty of Education are expected to abide by the regulations of the University of Pretoria regarding the code of conduct for proper research practices. Please refer to Annexure B for the content of these regulations.

## **SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS**

The Faculty research ethics committee meets once a month to distribute new applications for peer review and to discuss reviewed applications for a final decision. The dates of meetings is published on Opforum and supervisors are responsible for communicating these dates to the students under their supervision. Applications may not be lodged shorter than a week before a meeting and applications who are received in the week before a meeting will stand over for the next month's meeting. Researchers are therefore reminded to make provision in their planning for the submission of Ethics meetings.

Any incomplete/old/unsigned application forms will not be accepted. In these cases, students and/or their supervisors will be notified that a new application should be submitted.

All applications must be submitted in triplicate. Electronic submissions can only be accepted in PDF format with all the necessary signatures in place.

## APPLICATION FORM

Below is an example of the application form that should be completed by all researchers in the Faculty of Education. **Do not** use this form to complete your application, it is only an example. There is a separate form available for this purpose.

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN RESPONDENTS					
APPLICANT DETAILS					
<b>Surname:</b>		<b>Name:</b>		<b>Stud/pers nr:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>				<b>Contact number:</b>	
<b>Qualification:</b>	M.Ed	PhD	Staff	Class approval	Honours
<b>Supervisor:</b>			<b>Co-supervisor:</b>		
				<b>Date registered:</b>	
				<b>Department:</b>	

The details above assist the Research Ethics Committee in keeping track of the status of applications in the Faculty of Education and is also required for feedback to the UP Research Ethics and Integrity Committee meetings twice a year. **“Date registered”** means the date that the *Honours/M.Ed/PhD student* first registered for the degree that requires the research project. *Staff members* should indicate the date that the project is expected to commence. Staff members should indicate “not applicable” for **“Supervisor”** and **“Co-supervisor”**. *Class approval* applications should indicate the date that the module/course will commence. **“Department”** indicates the department in which the research project falls or the degree will be awarded. Please see Annexure A for a list of valid entries.

DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT				
<b>Title of project</b>				
<b>Research design (tick with x)</b>	Qualitative	Quantitative	Mixed methods	Other

The **“Title of the project”** should be provided clearly and in good language. For M.Ed/PhD students, it is essential that the title of the project is consistent with the title of their dissertation/thesis. Substantial differences will require the re-issue of the ethical clearance certificate. **“Research design”** refers to the primary nature of the most important data collection measures.

<b>Data collection (tick appropriate boxes with an x)</b>	Questionnaires Survey	Structured interviews	Semi-structured interviews	Open ended interviews
	Non-participatory Observation	Participatory Observation	Intervention/ Therapy	Experimental

In terms of data collection, most research projects will probably use a combination of the methods above. Please indicate in as many boxes as required those measures that are relevant to the application. **“Questionnaires/survey”** refer to all data collection that involves existing or newly developed lists/self-report instruments/scales/questionnaires and these should be attached to the application. **“Structured, semi-structured and open-ended interviews”** should be accompanied by a schedule that contains the areas/questions that the researcher will cover in the interview. **“Observational measures”** should be accompanied by an observation schedule of what the researcher will focus on. **“Intervention/therapy”** refers to all research activities that will involve therapeutic and non-therapeutic interventions. Researchers should be able to demonstrate that a particular therapy/intervention is scientifically sound and should be especially attuned to limitations of confidentiality related to the role of the therapist versus the researcher. **“Experimental”** research involves any research activities that include the manipulation of variables in relation to the research participants.

<b>Sensitivity/Intrusiveness (tick with an x)</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>LOW</b>
	(Participation requires intrusive and sensitive information about participants' mental/psychological health and/or their relationship with a person/institution with power over them)	(Participation requires information about policies/ modules/ courses/ institutional processes with a view to analyse, assess and evaluate them as human artefacts)

Not all research is equally sensitive and/or intrusive. Research activities with **high** sensitivity and intrusion are those activities that requires sensitive and intrusive information about participants' mental/psychological health; research on vulnerable populations; any research involving children; research involving participants in terms of their relationship with a person/institution with power over them (this includes research conducted on learners/students).

Research activities with **low** sensitivity and intrusion are those that focus primarily on an analysis/assessment/evaluation of participants' views of policies/modules/courses/institutional processes/other issues in the public domain or where the participants are not the main unit of analysis, but their participation is required to evaluate a process.

RESEARCH CONTEXT			
<b>Do participants come from vulnerable populations?</b> <b>(tick one or more of the applicable descriptions)</b>	1. Under 18 years	2. Over 18 years	3. Orphaned, separated or unaccompanied minors
	4. Extreme poverty or illiterate	5. HIV/AIDS	6. Mentally compromised or physical limitations

Completion of this section requires the researcher to indicate a choice between 1 and 2, as well as further indication of any vulnerability in the participants. Active agreement should be sought from all minors above the age of 7 years. Research involving children younger than 7 years should make provision for witnessed consent from the child in the presence of a parent/caregiver/legal guardian/competent adult.

**“Orphaned, separated or unaccompanied”** minors include any minor with no direct access to a parent or legal guardian to act in the best interests of the child and includes street children, orphaned children in child-headed households; and children living in a place of safety. Research on this population may only be undertaken in the context of a recognised institution who can act in the best interests of the child. In the absence of a recognised institution, researchers should approach relevant organisations/community groups as research partners to protect and advance the best interests of the child. Non-therapeutic research (i.e. of no direct benefit to the participants) on this population will not be permitted.

**“Extreme poverty” or “illiterate”** includes participants who are not able to meet their basic needs and who are not in a position to read documents pertaining to the research. Non-therapeutic research on these populations will not be permitted. The researchers should also make provision for witnessed consent in the case of illiterate participants.

**“HIV/AIDS”** includes research involving participants who have been affected directly and indirectly by the pandemic. **“Mentally compromised” or “physical limitations”** refer to those participants who are found to be incompetent to make an autonomous decision about their own participation in a project and those who, by virtue of their physical limitations requires special accommodations for meaningful participation. Developmental age alone is not regarded as sufficient to argue that a participant is mentally compromised.

<b>Primary research setting</b>	1. Pre - school	2. Public school	3. Higher education	4. Private institution
	5. Individual	6. Family	7. Community	8. Clinic/Mental Health/Hospital

In addition to informed consent from participants, research in a **pre-school, higher education, private school/institution** and **clinic/mental health institution/hospital** setting should be accompanied by an official letter of permission to conduct research from an organisational/institutional official who are duly authorised. In addition to informed consent from participants, research in a **public school** should also make provision for the permission from a relevant Department of Education, as well as the school principal to conduct the research. Research on **individuals** and **families** with no affiliation to a particular organisation or institution need only informed consent from the participant/s involved. Research within a broad **community** should ideally be accompanied by permission from a community representative who are duly authorised to act in the best interests of a community. If this is not possible, the burden is on the researcher to demonstrate that they are acting in the best interests of a particular community.

STATUS OF RESEARCH PROJECT									
<b>Do you require a blind (anonymous) review of your application? (STAFF MEMBERS ONLY)</b>								Yes	No
<b>Proposal defended?</b>	Yes	No	N/A	<b>Fieldwork started ?</b>	Yes	No	<b>Fieldwork concluded?</b>	Yes	No

Since staff members' projects are reviewed by colleagues, staff members should indicate whether they would like their application to be anonymously reviewed.

Applications for ethical clearance from M.Ed and PhD students can only be submitted after the proposal defence has taken place. Fieldwork **may not** commence before ethical clearance has been granted. Researchers who lodge applications for ethical clearance after fieldwork has commenced/concluded will be required to report on the matter in detail and may be reported to the UP Research Ethics and Integrity committee for an investigation of research misconduct. Researchers who are of the opinion that their application has been handled inappropriately/unfairly, may give notice of their intention to appeal and the matter will be referred to the UP Research Ethics and Integrity committee for further action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Head of Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## PERSONAL DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Reference:	
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The personal declaration should accompany all applications and should be signed by all research assistants when applicable. Depending on the nature of the project, minor changes may be made to reflect special issues not addressed already. The title should be stated and should be the same as the title for the project. Please add the names of assistants as necessary.

Research project: .....

1. I declare that I am cognisant of the goals of the Research Ethics Committee in the Faculty of Education to:

- ☐ develop among students and researchers a high standard of ethics and ethical practice in the conceptualisation and conduct of educational research;
- ☐ cultivate an ethical consciousness among scholars especially in research involving human respondents; and
- ☐ promote among researchers a respect for the human rights and dignity of human respondents in the research process.

2. I subscribe to the principles of

- ☐ *voluntary participation* in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- ☐ *informed consent*, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- ☐ *safety in participation*; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.
- ☐ *privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- ☐ *trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

3. I understand what plagiarism entails and I am aware of the University's policy in this regard. I undertake not to make use of another student's previous work and to submit it as my own. I also undertake not to allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of using it as their own work.

.....  
Student

.....  
Signature

.....  
Date

.....  
Supervisor / Promoter

.....  
Signature

.....  
Date

## FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

STUDENT APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF  
RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN RESPONDENTSAPPLICATION FORM**1. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH**

Please provide a brief summary of *the nature and purpose of the research* in **non-technical** language (1 page.)

In this section, the application should briefly describe the project in language that is accessible to non-specialists. Cut-and-paste from project proposals is not acceptable as it is usually presented out of context and therefore difficult to understand the important points. Avoid the use of **jargon**, **technical terms** and **abbreviations** that reviewers outside the subject area would not understand. A good summary of the project is like the abstract of an article. It will provide information on the **purpose**, the **participants** and the **procedures** that will be used in the study.

**2. PARTICIPATION OF HUMAN RESPONDENTS**

Describe *Who will be participating in the study* in terms of race, sex, age range, institutional affiliation, and other special criteria

Be clear about who the participants are and whether any special considerations apply. If participants come from vulnerable groups, this should be indicated clearly. It is a good idea to use a table format and to list all participant groups. Demographic information should be provided especially when it is relevant to the main research question.

2.2 describe *how will you select the participants in the study*; indicate whether participation is voluntary or not; and state what inducements (if any) will be offered to human subjects to participate in this study

Be detailed about invitations to participate, under which circumstances they will be issued (i.e. personally, telephonically or in a public place). Note whether participants will be given time to respond to the invitation without pressure. In the case of researchers doing research on their own students, it is highly advisable to make specific provision for providing students with the opportunity to opt out or to state explicitly that non-participation will not influence their grades in any way. In the case of therapy case studies, it is highly advisable that the researcher, in addition to the normal ethical rules for psychologists, ask participants for informed consent to use data generated during therapy only once the therapy has concluded. This avoids any role confusion on the part of the psychologist as well as the client. The same situation applies to teachers/lecturers who would like to use data from their courses towards a research project. Students/learners should have the opportunity to give informed consent in terms of which data may be used, for what purposes and should also be in a position to say what must be excluded from analysis.

2.3 describe *what the respondents will be expected to do*, or what will be done to them, or what information will be required; indicate how many times observations, tests, questionnaires etc., will be administered; and state how long their participation will take for each specified task

This section is crucial. If respondents do not know exactly what will be expected of them, their consent cannot be regarded as informed. This is especially important in cases where research is conducted on vulnerable populations.

**3. SUBJECT APPROVAL AND INFORMED CONSENT**

3.1 indicate whether you have received permission to conduct this research from the relevant authority:

the provincial department of education  
the school  
other authority (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Permission forms should be attached to the application as no application will be approved without the necessary permission granted. No research can commence without permission from the relevant authority. Research taking place in community settings where vulnerable populations participate should attempt to liaise with a community representative or present solid reasons for not being able to do so.

3.2 describe *how you will explain the research to respondents*, and how you will obtain their informed consent to participate. And how is it made clear to subjects that they can end their participation in the study at any time? Please attached a written letter of consent which participants are expected to sign.



To give informed consent is different from giving consent. For informed consent, participants have to be in a position to judge, based on full disclosure from the researcher, whether they want to participate in the project voluntarily. To do so, they need to be fully informed about their role, what will be expected of them, as well as what the possible risks or advantages may be. They also need to be informed about who will have access to the data that they generate, how the data will be handled and published. On occasion, participants may choose to forego the condition of confidentiality but then the burden is on the researcher to demonstrate that participants made such a decision based on full disclosure from the researcher and that they were in a position to consider possible risks and/or disadvantages.

If the researcher is going to make audio/video recordings or take photos, participants need to be aware of that and they need to give permission for the publication of any material that will allow their identity to be established.

3.3 describe *how you will obtain consent* in cases where subjects who are minors (under 18), mentally infirm, or otherwise not legally competent to consent to their participation. How is their assent obtained and from whom is proxy consent obtained?

In the case of minor children, consent to participate must be sought from the minor participant as well as the minor child's parents. In the case of orphaned, abandoned or unaccompanied children, a competent adult/community leader who knows the child and who is in a position to advocate the child's rights will be required to give proxy consent. Non-therapeutic research on such populations will not be permitted, i.e. researchers must demonstrate that children will experience significant benefits as a result from participation in the project. If no significant benefit can be demonstrated, the application will not be approved.

Children should have the right to choose for an adult to be present during any procedure that a researcher may administer, especially when children have been traumatised and/or

3.4 describe how you will ensure full consent and participation in cases where the research is not conducted in the mother-tongue of the subjects or in a language in which the subjects feel competent?

Full consent and participation in the case where participants do not understand the researcher's working language must be obtained by involving an assistant who can translate procedures and who can ensure that participants wishes are made known. Translators are required to sign a personal declaration of responsibility as they are also bound by the ethical principles of the study. Participants must be given ample opportunity to for clarification and questions.

#### **4. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE OF THE RESEARCHER**

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4.1 describe your *experience* with this kind of research.

To conduct ethical research, no researcher may morally engage in activities for which they have not been trained. List all formal and informal training you have received that will prepare you for your task. Undergraduate and postgraduate modules are appropriate examples of research experience.

4.2 do you as researcher require *registration* for any specific techniques or treatment that you will administer in this study?

Certain procedures require the use or administration of procedures which have been restricted to trained persons in a particular field. In our Faculty, it is most often psychological tests which are of relevance. Please ensure that you provide full details about the kind of procedures you will use and ensure that you are up to date about the requirements of each. If you are going to use a test restricted to registered psychologists, you are required to furnish your Health Professions Council PS registration number.

4.3 list any *assistants* who might be working with you, describe what they will do, and their competence and preparation to do such tasks. Take note that assistants are also required to sign a personal declaration of responsibility.

All assistants are required to sign the personal declaration of responsibility. Depending on their role [which should be clearly specified], you may have to describe their qualifications, experience and preparation to do the tasks that you will require of them. If part/all of your data will be collected by a professional person such as a psychologist in the course of their professional activities, they need to provide you with a letter giving permission that you may use the data and you may have to follow extra steps to ensure that the participants whose data you will be using are aware of it. This is especially important if the data has been gathered for a purpose other than research, such as a research workshop, a support workshop in an organisation or for psychological/educational assessment or intervention.

## **5. RISKS AND DISADVANTAGES TO HUMAN RESPONDENTS OR PARTICIPANTS**

5.1 Do respondents risk any harm—physical, psychological, legal, social—by participating in the research? What safeguards do you take to minimize the risks?

Most research carries various levels of risk for the participants. The applicant must consider these issues carefully and avoid skipping this section by simply stating “no”. At the most basic level, participants’ identities may become known and this may carry serious/less serious risks. In the case of qualitative research, the risk increases as qualitative research necessitates the collection of in-depth data about participants and their lives. Researchers must be able to demonstrate that they have considered these risks and have placed certain back-up plans in place.

In case of observation in schools, it can happen frequently that researchers may observe children being maltreated and the researcher must make the school and teachers aware that they have an obligation to report child abuse should they obtain such information in the course of their research.

How participants are selected may make them feel suspicious about the researcher’s motives, or others may question or wonder about their own exclusion from the project. If the researcher does not consider these issues, participation and/or non-participation carries definite risks that must be handled.

Research with vulnerable populations always carry the risk of participants who may develop unrealistic expectations of what the researcher will do for them. Orphaned children may develop the hope that they will be adopted if they cooperate, some communities may expect financial help if they cooperate. It is extremely important that the researcher is clear about what they will be able to provide otherwise participants may feel abused if their [often implicit] expectations are not met.

## **6. BENEFITS AND ADVANTAGES TO HUMAN RESPONDENTS OR PARTICIPANTS**

6.1 In what ways—if at all—will this research benefit the participants?

It is preferable that participants are not “used” solely for data collection, but that they are able to experience some kind of benefit as a result of their participation. Workshops to disseminate findings, helping to establish support networks, providing training, implementing research findings are all ways in which participants can benefit from participation. Research with children and vulnerable populations must provide some kind of benefit to the participants as non-therapeutic research on these groups will not be permitted.

## **7. CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMITY AND TRUST**

7.1 Were the respondents offered confidentiality and anonymity for their involvement in the research? How did you go about ensuring confidentiality and anonymity to respondents?

There is a difference between anonymity [when the researcher gathers data without gathering any identifying details] and confidentiality [when the researcher gathers personal details but undertakes not to make it public]. In the case of confidential data, the burden is on the researcher to describe to the participants how their identities will be protected. In some cases, the research project may be of such a nature that participants’ details cannot be protected or the client may forego their rights to confidentiality. In such cases the researcher must provide evidence in the informed consent that the participants were in a position to evaluate the risks and disadvantages and that the decision was based on full disclosure.

7.2 Will participants receive feedback on the research process and its conclusions? Will participants be asked to comment on drafts e.g., transcripts of interviews? If so, how will you use such comments from respondents in your research report?

Participants should be provided with feedback as much as possible. In the case of qualitative research, participants should routinely be offered the opportunity to check interview transcripts for accuracy as well as being given the opportunity to delete data which they do not want to be used in the research.

7.3 Describe the ways in which the data will be stored for a period of at least 15 years.

The researcher should keep all records pertaining to the research project in case of any queries or disputes. It remains the researcher’s ultimate responsibility to ensure that the information that is provided in the application for ethical clearance is correct and is abided by.

### **VERY IMPORTANT**

To avoid unnecessary delays in the review process, please ensure the following:

1. The application forms should be signed in the appropriate places by the appropriate role-players.



2. If any research assistants will involved, they are also required to sign a personal declaration of responsibility
3. You should submit your application in triplicate.
4. Electronic submissions can only be accepted in PDF format.

Please ensure that the following documents are attached:

1. Permission granted for conducting the research. Take note that all research conducted in public schools must be accompanied by permission from the relevant Department of Education.
2. Letters of informed consent from participants. In the case of minor children, proxy consent from a parent/guardian is necessary but not sufficient. The researcher must demonstrate that the minor child has actively agreed to participate based on sufficient information about the research.
3. Copies of questionnaires and interview schedules if and when applicable.

## **Annexure A**

### **Departments in the Faculty of Education**

1. Arts, languages and Human Movement Studies Education
2. Early Childhood Education
3. Science, Mathematics and Technology Education
4. Social Studies Education
5. Curriculum Studies
6. Educational Management and Policy Studies
7. Educational Psychology

## 1. GENERAL

- 1.1 The University of Pretoria has a research task, which it fulfils in the interest of science and the community in which it is situated.
- 1.2 The University of Pretoria and researchers who work at the University acknowledge that research is undertaken in the context of a particular academic value system. It is inherent to this academic value system that the University and researchers at the University
  - 1.2.1 Should adhere to the ethical principles of justice and credibility at all times;
  - 1.2.2 Have an increased research responsibility and obligation when human beings, animals or the environment are the object of research.
- 1.3 To ensure that all research in the university is undertaken within the context of the abovementioned value system, the University has laid down certain policy guidelines and procedures.
- 1.4 It follows from the above that research that is not undertaken within the boundaries of the above academic value system is considered to constitute research misconduct. The University discourages and disapproves of such research.
- 1.5 To determine whether research is undertaken within or beyond the boundaries of the above academic value system, the University provides for the following matters in respect of research: a system of disclosure, prior approval, record keeping, accountability and evaluation.

## 2. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH PRACTICES

### 2.1 General

The code of conduct applies to all researchers at the University

- 2.1.1 Academic and research staff, students and research co-workers of the University
  - 2.1.1.1 Shall act with intellectual honesty and professionalism at all times;
  - 2.1.1.2 Shall at all times fulfil the legal requirements that apply to a specific research project or that have an impact on it;
  - 2.1.1.3 Shall fulfil the ethical rules that apply to research within the University, faculty and/or discipline;
  - 2.1.1.4 Shall fulfil the ethical rules laid down for research by a specific professional body in a field over which it has jurisdiction;
  - 2.1.1.5 Shall at all times fully disclose and account for the income and expenditure related to a research project;
  - 2.1.1.6 Shall at all times keep comprehensive records of all actions in respect of and data of research projects;
  - 2.1.1.7 Shall at all times refrain from any action that constitutes research misconduct.
- 2.1.2 The above code implies that researchers shall not violate the trust placed in them by colleagues, research colleagues, the University and the wider community. The research misconduct of a single researcher has a negative impact on the reputation of the University and therefore also a direct impact on the community of researchers in the University.

### 2.2 Discipline-oriented requirements

- 2.2.1 The University acknowledges and subscribes to certain discipline-oriented ethical codes that enjoy international recognition and accepts such codes and standards as guidelines and rules for researchers at the University. The specific codes are available for perusal at the faculty/school concerned.
- 2.2.2 In addition to the above-mentioned international codes, the ethics committees in faculties may lay down guidelines and requirements with which research and research projects in the faculties must comply.

### 2.3 Prior approval

- 2.3.1 If the approval of an ethics committee or another constituted control committee is required to undertake certain research, the research may not commence before written approval has been obtained from the body concerned.
- 2.3.2 Each faculty has its own procedures that should be followed to obtain the approval referred to above.
- 2.3.3 Each faculty has a framework document that researchers can use in their preparation of an application for approval.
- 2.3.4 When it is necessary to obtain approval for undertaking research from a person involved in the research, such approval should be obtained from the person prior to the commencement of the research. The person whose approval is requested, should receive sufficient information to enable him/her to make an informed decision.

- 2.3.5 A person in the capacity of patient/client may not be put under improper pressure to convince him/her to participate in a research programme.

## **2.4 Record keeping**

Each faculty should keep a proper record of all protocols that were approved and rejected as well as the status of the projects that were approved. The minutes of each meeting should be submitted to the Department of Research Support for central record keeping. The Department will maintain an electronic database of all protocols.

## **2.5 Conclusion of projects**

Upon the conclusion of a project, the researcher should advise the ethics committee concerned that the specific project has been completed and certify that the research was undertaken in accordance with the research protocol that had been approved. This information should also form part of the minutes of the faculty committees that are submitted to the Department of Research Support for central record keeping.

## **2.6 Confidentiality**

- 2.6.1 Generally speaking, it should be possible for all colleagues in the University, other researchers, interest parties and the public to evaluate research results and methods. Researchers should therefore keep proper record of the course of their projects.
- 2.6.2 When confidentiality is required, researchers are obliged to honour it. However, the approval of an ethics committee should be obtained before confidential research is commenced.
- 2.6.3 Research information may not be used for a purpose other than the one for which it was obtained or for which approval has been granted.
- 2.6.4 The University may require research results to be kept confidential for a limited period to enable the University to protect its intellectual property rights. Researchers should protect the interests of the University in this regard.

## **2.7 Consultation**

If researchers should have any doubt about their authority and responsibilities or about the ethical implications of their work, they should consult their colleagues, peer researchers, the relevant ethics committee, dean of the faculty or the Executive of the University.

## **2.8 Safety**

Researchers have a responsibility to adhere to prescribed safety procedures.

# **3. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN RESEARCH MISCONDUCT IS ALLEGED**

## **3.1 Definition of research misconduct**

- 3.1.1 The term research conduct means the following: non-fulfilment of the prescribed rules, procedures and prescriptions of a relevant ethics committee; research undertaken beyond the provisions of an approved research protocol; neglect to obtain approval before commencing with research (when approval is a requirement); fabrication and falsification of research data and results; plagiarism; violation of research confidentiality; misuse of research funds; unlawful or unauthorised use of University property in the context of research; improper canvassing of research funds; violation of the University's intellectual property rules and guidelines; practices that deviate materially from customs that are generally acceptable within the academic research community. (The latter includes among other things neglect to acknowledge work that was primarily done by a research student/research fellow or assistant).
- 3.1.2 An honest difference in the interpretation or assessment of data does not constitute research misconduct.

## **3.2 Procedure**

- 3.2.1 All cases of research misconduct are referred to the chairperson of the relevant ethics committee of the faculty concerned.
- 3.2.2 The chairperson of the relevant ethics committee, in consultation with the chairperson of the Senate committee for Research Ethics and Integrity appoints a committee comprising three persons to investigate the misconduct in terms of a procedure upon which the committee decides with due consideration for the rules of fair administrative process. The aforementioned committee reports to the faculty committee as well as to the chairperson of the Senate Committee for Research Ethics and Integrity.

- 3.2.3 The faculty committee takes the corrective steps that it deems effective in the circumstances, including the exercising of its authority to instruct the researcher to cease all research immediately.
- 3.2.4 When the chairperson of the Senate Committee of Research Ethics and Integrity is of the opinion that the research misconduct is of such a nature that it justifies disciplinary steps, he/she refers the matter to the Vice-chancellor and Principal.
- 3.2.5 The Vice-Chancellor and Principal takes the corrective steps that he/she deems appropriate. These steps include the exercising of his/her authority to require that disciplinary action be taken, in terms of the disciplinary code and procedure of the University, against a person that, in the opinion of the above committee, is guilty of research misconduct.
- 3.2.6 The above-mentioned procedure does not contain anything that prevents the Vice-Chancellor and Principal from using his discretion to apply another procedure to investigate a complaint of research misconduct when, in his opinion, such a procedure is required.

### **3.3 Reporting**

- 3.3.1 The chairperson of a faculty ethics committee reports twice per year to the faculty board on the activities of the ethics committee concerned.
- 3.3.2 The Chairperson of the Senate committee for Research Ethics and Integrity reports twice per year to the Committee regarding complaints of research misconduct in the University and the subsequent steps taken.