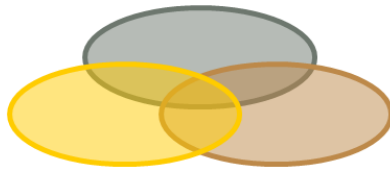


## POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

Without ethical culture, there is no salvation for humanity.

-Albert Einstein



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[The following documents and appendices have been composed from various sources. Professor M. M. Shahidul Hassan contributed the introductory section. The Appendices were contributed by other members of the committee; they include, Professor Chowdhury Faiz Hossain, Dr. Farhana Ferdousi, Dr. Md. Mahatab Uddin, Dr. Reatul Karim and Dr. Suraia Nusrin. Professor Fakrul Alam coordinated the work of the committee and edited the document.]

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## **1. Introduction: Research Integrity and Preventing Academic Misconduct**

The objective of East West University (EWU) is not only to provide high quality comprehensive educational and career enhancing training that are compatible with the changing times and the demands of the marketplace, but also to make use of, and to encourage a wide range of research with which staff members and students can engage. Research integrity and preventing misconduct must be at the core of high quality research and good science. All research work at EWU should adhere to the highest ethical standards; any research work carried out at EWU which has significant ethical implications will have to be submitted for independent ethical review. In any research study involving people, their data, or tissue, the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of participants must also be significant considerations. Research involving animals, pathogens and genetically engineered micro-organisms should also go through a sustained and intensive review process.

Ethical scrutiny in all such cases will be essential. Such scrutiny is intended to assist in protecting research participants from harm, but a further important consideration is that the researcher is facilitated and supported in carrying out research which has the potential to be of benefit for society. In other words, the scrutiny must be carried out efficiently, and according to the highest possible professional and ethical standards.

Another and related ethical concern is to ensure originality and to prevent plagiarism in academic work. To these end, faculty members as well as students will have to familiarize themselves with the plagiarism policy of the university and learn how not to get involved in any kind of practice that makes them vulnerable to charges of academic dishonesty and misconduct.

The guidelines given in this document describe the overall principles and procedures by which the University will make ethical judgments on research investigations that involve human beings as participants or animals, pathogens and genetically engineered microorganisms, and judge cases brought before it of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. In applying these principles, a balance has to be found. On the one hand, the University requires that appropriate safeguards are in place, but on the other, and of course, it does not want to impose unnecessary regulatory barriers that would prevent research from taking place.

Finally, this document comes with appendices and templates that can be used by faculty members and students when research work is to be carried out or writing produced that need to conform to the highest ethical standards.

## **2. EWUREC and Forms of Ethical Review**

**2.1** Research projects that will need the approval of the East West Research Ethics Committee (EWUREC) include the following:

- i) Research involving human participants, their personal data and tissues collected,
- ii) Research that poses a reputation risk to the University or its researchers,
- iii) Externally funded research that need to meet the standards expected of funding agencies,

- iv) Evaluation studies involving human participants,
- v) Research which does not involve human participants but which is high risk, or which has the potential for negative effects on the environment or on society,
- vi) Research that involves experimentation on animals,
- vii) Research involving tissues from protected animals obtained from a third party who must ensure that the material was obtained legally and ethically before transferring any materials to EWU.
- viii) Research involving pathogens and other microbes that may severely impact on nature or could be harmful for individuals.
- ix) Research involving genetically engineered microorganisms that may affect the environment.

## **2:2 Ethical Review and Documentation in Cases of Plagiarism**

Research projects will need to have requisite documentation and acknowledgement when they involve;

- i) Use of published or unpublished sources that need to be acknowledged,
- ii) Use of copyright materials,
- iii) Interaction with human participants from outside the university who have been interviewed and quoted, and whose ideas have been sought and used in the writing

## **2:3 Light Touch Reviews**

- i. “Light touch” reviews may be conducted when the potential of the research to cause harm to participants and others and to the environment are not deemed significant or high risk.
- ii. Researches that do not involve direct participation of living human persons may also be eligible for light touch reviews, unless they significantly affect living persons or the environment.

## **2:4 Exclusion of Ethics Review**

Ethics review is generally not required for projects/researchers that do not involve human or living animal subjects or handle sensitive materials, and for those that draw on published and unpublished material already in the public domain and out of copyright. Such review is also not necessary where the people involved do not contribute to the actual findings. Nevertheless, acknowledgement is an act of courtesy even in such cases.

## **3. Principles and Procedures for Obtaining Ethical Approval**

For all research projects covered by this guideline, approval must be given by the EWU Ethics Committee before work commence. The primary task of the Research Ethics Committee lies in the ethical review of research proposals and their supporting documents, with special attention given to the nature of any intervention and its safety and protection for participants and researchers, to informed consent processes and documentations, and to the suitability and feasibility of the proposal.

A decision by the EWUREC to give ethical approval to a research project does not imply an expert assessment of all possible ethical issues, or of all possible dangers or risks involved; nor does it detract in

any way from the ultimate responsibility which researchers must themselves have for all research which they carry out, and for its effects on human participants.

The committee will address ethical matters information supplied by the researcher. Any Information submitted is expected to be properly researched, full, truthful and accurate.

Any decision to change the University's policies or procedures for ethical review of research does not imply that previous policies or procedures were inappropriate and any such changes do not invalidate ethical approval that has been given.

The following is a step-by-step guide to the procedures to be followed:

- i. Submission of Ethical Application Form and other application paper work (e.g. consent form and participant information sheet, consent of chair of department) to Member Secretary. (see appendices)
- ii. The EWUREC shall make decisions at scheduled meetings at which a quorum is present (see 5.0); regularly scheduled meeting dates shall be announced in advance.
- iii. In order to respond to applications within 8 weeks, applications can be considered between meetings but the Chair is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate level of scrutiny informs the decision.
- iv. Any decision made by the Chair should be on the basis of detailed scrutiny by at least two members of the Committee. The decision will be reported to the next available meeting of the Committee for ratification.
- v. In certain circumstances a 'light touch review' of ethics applications may be appropriate; this means that the EWUREC Chair may approve the project without sending the application for further scrutiny. The Chair's decision will require ratification by the EWUREC at its next meeting.
- vi. In respect of a proposal being put forward by a member of the Reviewing Committee, those involved in the research submission should withdraw from the meeting while the submission is being considered.
- vii. Observers, who should play no part in the Committee's deliberations, may be invited, subject to the prior agreement of members. Observers should be allowed only if they accept in writing the same duty of confidentiality as the Committee members.
- viii. Meetings shall be minuted and there shall be an approval procedure for the minutes.
- ix. EWUREC members shall keep a register of all proposals that come before them. The registers shall form the basis of EWUREC's annual report.
- x. EWUREC should always be able to demonstrate that they have acted responsibly in reaching a particular decision. When EWUREC rejects research proposals, the reasons for that decision shall be made available to the applicants and, where appropriate, opportunities for resubmission provided. Where approved, the basis for that decision should be recorded.
- xi. The EWUREC shall consider valid applications in a timely manner. A decision should be reached and communicated to the applicant, wherever possible, within 8 weeks of the submission of a valid application.
- xii. Once an application is approved, the investigators must not deviate from it as approved. The Chief Investigator must notify the committee of any proposed amendments and allow the committee time to consider and approve them beforehand. Similarly, if there is any change to the personnel

involved in the investigation, the committee should be asked to approve this amendment and should be provided with details of the qualifications and experience of the new investigator(s).

- xiii. Where the application is not approved, this decision, and the reasons for reaching that decision, will be communicated to the Chief Investigator in writing. The Committee may give guidance as to modifications that the applicant may wish to consider with a view to making a new application.
- xiv. Where significant amendments are made to the research protocol, the researcher is responsible for notifying the EWUREC of these amendments for approval.
- xv. If further information or amendments are sought for a particular application from the relevant investigators, the member secretary may be delegated authority by the committee to consider the additional information or changes made, and either to approve it on behalf of the committee, or to return it to the committee for further consideration. The information and amendments must be provided before ethical approval can be given. Any decisions will be reported to the next meeting of the Committee for endorsement.
- xvi. Any adverse events which occur as a result of the research should be notified to EWUREC.
- xvii. Review by Chair's action may be undertaken in the case of staff project proposals which are being submitted for funding from major funding bodies, where ethical approval is a prerequisite. In such cases, full review will be postponed until the outcome of the funding bid is known, but must then be carried out in line with the requirements of both the University and the funding body.
- xviii. Where the research is terminated prematurely, a report shall be provided to the relevant committee within 15 days, indicating reasons for early termination.

#### **4. Obligations of Research Teams**

There is an obligation on all investigators to protect participants, and potential participants, from possible harm and to preserve their dignity and rights.

- i. Investigations should not involve any significant risk to the physical or mental well-being of the participants.
- ii. Confidentiality and privacy of participants must be maintained.
- iii. An appropriate person (the Chief Investigator or equivalent) must take responsibility for the investigation; in particular, in the case of student investigations, the student's supervisor is responsible for the investigation, and must act as the Chief Investigator.
- iv. Transparency and openness, including accurate reporting of data.
- v. Investigations which duplicate other work unnecessarily, or which are not of sufficient standard to make a useful contribution to existing knowledge, are in themselves unethical.
- vi. Investigators should justify the number of participants chosen for each study.
- vii. Consent by or on behalf of participants in an investigation.
- viii. Protecting a person's right to autonomy and dignity, including, but not confined to, bodily integrity, privacy and confidentiality.

#### **5. Complaints**

No appeal can be made against the decision of the Research Ethics Committee. Complaints on procedural grounds should be sent to the Vice Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor will place it to syndicate.