

## **INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. Rationale**

The Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) has in place a faculty-based model for the review of research proposals for all qualification levels and for non-qualification research. The Institutional Ethics Review Board (IERB) is a monitoring committee with representatives from all faculty Research Ethics Committees (RECs). It operates within the framework of an evolving CPUT structure and policy for research ethics and in line with the strategic goals of the institution. This IERB will contribute to promoting and ensuring a high standard of ethics within all faculties by:

- monitoring practice in the faculty RECs
- creating inter-faculty networks
- building research ethics capacity
- developing policy and procedure
- developing standards for ethics in research

### **2. Identity**

The IERB is a standing committee of Senate. All research at CPUT, including research not related to further qualifications, must serve at a faculty REC and not at the IERB. The IERB will play the role of monitor for research at CPUT involving human participants, and/or animals, and/or juristic/artificial persons (e.g. corporations, universities, municipalities, trade unions, etc.), and/or the environment, with regard to ethics. The IERB will be authorised to audit faculty approval processes and will furthermore advise on all matters pertaining to research ethics in the institution.

### **3. Objectives**

- 3.1 To promote and guide ethical standards of practice in research performed at the institution.
- 3.2 To protect research participants from harm or exploitation and to guard the research participants' rights.
- 3.3 To consider issues of moral/ethical responsibilities and actions between individuals and juristic persons in the research context.
- 3.4 To maintain a research environment that is concerned for researchers and investigators.
- 3.5 To develop CPUT as an institution recognised for high ethical standards in all research conducted at this institution.

#### **4. Roles**

The IERB functions from the stance that quality research can benefit individuals and our society. The IERB will therefore promote good research, and wherever possible, assist faculties and researchers to meet the required ethical research standards.

**In order to fulfil these aspirations, the roles of the IERB are to:**

- 4.1 Audit ethics applications for master's and doctoral degrees and non-qualification research approved by the faculty RECs.
- 4.2 Audit ethics applications for all research conducted through any CPUT unit, e.g., HIV/Aids Unit.
- 4.3 Monitor progress and problems related to ethics of all research conducted at this institution.
- 4.4 Support the faculties in the investigation of allegations of scientific and ethical misconduct and take action where necessary and/or make recommendations for appropriate recourse, e.g., referral of matter to a disciplinary committee.
- 4.5 Act as arbitrator should a CPUT researcher or student researcher appeal against any decision made in a faculty REC.
- 4.6 Inform faculties on internal and external opportunities for research ethics capacity building and involvement.
- 4.7 Attend meetings of Senate, Senate Research Committee and the Higher Degrees Committee (HDC) as required. This will be through attendance by the Chair or delegated member of the IERB.
- 4.8 Advise Senate, Senate Research Committee, the HDC and CPUT Management on matters related to the ethics of research involving humans, animals, and the environment, and on ethics in the broader sense (e.g. plagiarism, conflict of interest etc.).
- 4.9 Collaborate with faculty RECs, all research entities at CPUT and any other stakeholders in order to inform, initiate and contribute to capacity development within the institution with regard to research ethics through discussion, workshops, seminars, conferences, mentoring, etc.
- 4.10 Liaise with external organisations and institutions in order to strengthen research ethics at CPUT and to become part of the national and international research ethics community.

## **5. IERB Membership**

Director: Research Directorate (ex officio)

Manager/Coordinator: Research Writing, Information, Publications; Research Directorate (Secretariat)

Director: Postgraduate Studies

Chairperson (or delegate) of all faculty Research Ethics Committees:

Applied Sciences

Business

Education & Social Sciences

Engineering

Health & Wellness Sciences

Informatics & Design

Representative of CPUT units where research is taking place:

HIV/Aids Unit

Other

Any person/s whom the committee appoints on the basis of specific expertise.

### **The principles that determine membership of the IERB are:**

- 5.1 Members should be people who value morality and demonstrate an awareness of and sensitivity to all humans, animals and the environment. They should defend the continued advancement of science in the interests of society, with particular attention to research needs in South Africa and Africa.
- 5.2 The IERB should have technical competence and judgement to engage in ethics audit and monitoring of all research at CPUT.
- 5.3 The IERB must operate in a framework of being a self-monitoring board answerable to Senate.
- 5.4 Members to serve on the IERB as faculty or unit representatives and be responsible for feedback to the respective faculty/unit.
- 5.5 Each member will retain their individual autonomy in the process of board procedure and decision making.

## **6. Operating procedures**

- 6.1 Standard meeting procedures will apply.
- 6.2 The committee shall meet a minimum of once a term.
- 6.3 Meeting dates to be confirmed on the institutional calendar, not later than December of the previous year, in order to inform the IERB members, faculties and management.
- 6.4 Meeting agendas will be circulated to members at least five (5) days before a scheduled meeting.
- 6.5 The IERB may appoint individuals or task teams to attend to specified matters
- 6.6 In the event of an extraordinary matter, the Chairperson may call for an emergency meeting.

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