UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Faculty of Humanities

Guide to Research Ethics

Research with Human Participants

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Researcher, Supervisor, Teacher or Head of a Department or Research Institute:

UCT's Faculty of Humanities, along with many other bodies engaged in research in South Africa and more widely, is cognisant of the importance and relevance of well-defined and properly supported codes, protocols and standards to govern the ethics of research on or with human participants, or using individually-identifiable data on human subjects. The Faculty is committed to ensuring that all research is subject to appropriate ethics review, whether including clearance or deliberation, as well as deepening awareness of ethics matters in the Faculty.

A great deal of research on or with human participants is conducted in this Faculty, at every level – undergraduate, graduate and among academic staff. The Guidebook is for use by all departments, research institutes, other academic units, research teams or groups, or individual student or non-student researchers within the Faculty. It assists members of the Faculty in understanding why the ethics of research on human participants is of concern to all of us and in managing the way we oversee such research. The Guidebook seeks to explain ethics review procedures to both researchers (whether they are undergraduate or postgraduate students, staff or visitors) and the staff who are responsible for the administration of review procedures (either through departmental committees or as individual supervisors).

The Guidebook does not deal with the ethics of research on or with animals, for which separate university procedures exist.

A comprehensive statement on why it is important to apply proper and appropriate standards for research involving human participants may be found in the Faculty Policy on Research on Human Participants (Appendix A; see also the Faculty's website). The Guidebook should be read in conjunction with UCT policies for responsible research. These are available on the UCT website:

http://www.uct.ac.za/about/policies#research

Along with Faculty-specific policies and processes, we have also included some case studies that demonstrate ethical judgements and deliberation processes. These are intended as a guide.

PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES FACULTY

Researchers in the Humanities Faculty conduct considerable and diverse research that involves human participants. Such research is conducted by students (usually postgraduate but sometimes undergraduate) as well as staff members and external researchers affiliated with or linked to UCT in some way. Much of this research involves specific groups who might be considered especially 'vulnerable', such as children, people who experience stigmatisation, migrants or refugees, the poor, patients in health care, or prisoners. The policy of the University and Faculty is that *all* research involving human participants (or individually-identifiable data) must be subjected to some kind of ethics review according to faculty policy and guidelines, overseen by each faculty's Research Ethics Committee (REC), and in accordance with with UCT's Code for Research involving Human Participants and its Statement of Values (included below as Appendix B), as well as with the University's various statutes and policies (available at: http://www.uct.ac.za/about/policies#research).

This might sound restrictive. Don't worry: The purpose of the ethics review procedures in the Humanities Faculty is to assist researchers in conducting research responsibly. The purpose is *not* to prevent responsible research *nor* to impose unreasonably onerous obligations on researchers. The procedures in the Humanities Faculty are designed to promote responsible research with the minimum bureaucratic burden.

The basis of the Humanities Faculty's approach is the recognition that the requirements of "ethics review" differ according to the nature of the research. The Faculty encourages researchers to be familiar with and observe the ethical guidelines published by professional societies in most disciplines, recognizing that disciplines have diverse understandings of what constitutes ethical and unethical research. Responsibility for ethics review is therefore generally devolved by the Humanities Faculty REC to departments and research institutes. Most departments or large research institutes have their own RECs, which are ultimately responsible for research ethics review in those departments and institutes. It is in individual departments and institutes that appropriate expertise in the application of research ethics procedures is generally located. This devolution reflects the principle of 'subsidiarity' that is enshrined in the Faculty's policy. Departments and institutes are best placed to decide what kind of review is appropriate for any particular project, in light of the general requirements and recommendations of UCT, the Humanities Faculy and the professional societies in each discipline.

The basic choice for researchers in Humanities is 'between' a process of *clearance*, i.e. project proposals are reviewed and approved by an appropriate individual or committee prior to commencement, or a process of *deliberation*, meaning that the researcher participates in discussion of ethical issues at appropriate stages of the research. Often research requires some combination of both project-focused clearance and researcher-focused deliberation, so the choice is not always 'between' these as much as over how they should be combined. The appropriate balance between clearance and deliberation varies according to the research and the discipline, and thus between departments and institutes across the Humanities Faculty. Some departments place more of an emphasis on clearance, whilst others place more of an emphasis on deliberation.

Why are different forms of review appropriate? Consider the differences between a stereotypical medical research project (such as a clinical trial for a new drug or procedure) and much research conducted in the humanities and social sciences. The stereotypical medical research project has certain characteristics:

- It is thoroughly *planned* in advance;
- It involves a clear *intervention* (most often, the administration of a drug or other medical treatment);
- There is often a clear *asymmetry of power* between the researcher and the human participants in that the latter are participating because they have a health condition such that they hope will benefit from treatment; in other words, participants are likely to feel that they are dependent (at least in part) on the medical researcher for access to treatment and hence improved health;
- The intervention entails real possibilities of *harm* to participants through negative effects on health (including through the denial of health-improving alternatives);
- There is also a real possibility of significant harm through the *disclosure of confidential information* about participants' health and treatment to other people;
- Researchers may be motivated or influenced by the possibility of *private financial gain* (through the development of new and profitable treatments) such that they have strong incentives to ignore ethical considerations.

Disputes over medical research have given rise to both harm and litigation, and the consequence has been the development of what is sometimes called a "medico-legal" model of ethical review. In this model, research projects must be cleared, i.e. approved, prior to commencement. Researchers may not

Some research in the Humanities Faculty has some or all of these characteristics. Such research must be cleared by a responsible research ethics committee. For example, a team of social scientists (including students) might collaborate on a survey that covers sensitive topics – whether sexual behavior, political preferences or simply earnings –

with a large sample of people across Cape Town. Or a researcher might propose psychological or other experiments with human participants. These kinds of research projects require prior ethics clearance or approval.

Other research in the Humanities Faculty does not share all or even any of these characteristics. For example, a researcher in Political Studies might propose to interview government ministers, or a student at Michaelis proposes to take photographs of people in public places in Cape Town, or a researcher in History proposes to use materials that are already in the public domain. In these cases, it is often more appropriate for ethics review to focus on the individual *researcher* rather than the specific research *project*, and to entail ongoing *deliberation* over ethical challenges rather than a once-off, prior *clearance*. Deliberation might entail ongoing discussions between a student and his or her supervisor, or ongoing discussions in departmental seminars about research ethics issues. Departments are expected to ensure that all researchers – whether staff or students – participate in appropriate deliberations over research ethics.

Table 1 sets out some of the differences between different kinds of research. It should be noted that much research falls somewhere between these two poles.

How does an individual researcher know what is required of him or her? Most importantly, individual researchers themselves cannot decide whether review should take the form of *clearance* (of a project) or ongoing participation (by the researcher) in *deliberation* (or both of these). In the cases of students, supervisors or lecturers are usually responsible for making the decision. In the cases of staff members, the decision should rest with a member of the department's ethics review committee or Head of Department. These decisions should take into account the risks of harm involved in the research and according to the policy of the relevant department or research institute. Across the Humanities Faculty as a whole, procedures are more standardized for postgraduate students than they are for non-student researchers. The first step for any researcher is to read the departmental policy on research ethics. If your department or research institute does not have a policy, ask your supervisor or HOD. If your department or research institute does not seem to have any procedures, or you are unsure of who to contact at the departmental level, or if at any stage there is any dispute or disagreement within the department over your proposed research, then you should contact the Faculty of Humanities REC through its servicing officer (whose details are available on the Faculty's research ethics website: http://www.humanities.uct.ac.za/hum/research/ethics).

All researchers in the Humanities Faculty are urged to recognize that the responsible conduct of research generally involves ongoing deliberation over ethical challenges. If

any researcher is in any doubt about the ethics of any aspect of his or her research, he or she should discuss this with his or her supervisor, colleagues, the Head of Department or members of the REC in the department or institute.

Table 1: The two poles of research and appropriate forms of research ethics review		
Characteristics of the research design		
Research is minutely *pre-planned*	⟷	Research evolves and moves in unexpected directions
It involves a clear, often biomedical *intervention*	⟷	There is no intentional intervention
Research often entails a *team* of researchers	⟷	Research often entails a single researcher
Research usually over short period of time	⟷	Research sometimes over extended period of time
Relationship between researcher(s) and research subject(s) or participant(s)		
Pronounced *asymmetry of power* between the researcher(s) and the subject(s) (because of the dependence of the latter on the former)	⟷	the relationship between researcher and participant(s) is *more egalitarian*, and can even entail a *partnership* with reciprocal claims and obligations (but note that research might involve 'vulnerable populations')
Researchers may be motivated by *private financial gain*	⟷	Limited possibilities for private financial gain
Research subjects are always *private individuals*	⟷	Research participants may be *public figures* or *communities of people*
Risks of harm		
Possibilities of harm are largely anticipated, arise through design, and can be specified in consent forms	⟷	Possibilities of harm are difficult to anticipate, and arise through human interactions in the research process
Major possibilities of *harm* to individuals through negative health effects	⟷	No health effects
Major possibilities of harm to individuals through the disclosure of private or confidential information	⟷	Limited possibility of harm through the disclosure of private or confidential information and consequent reputational harm
High expectation of privacy and confidentiality	⟷	Sometimes no expectation of privacy or confidentiality
Little or no risk of direct harm to *groups* of people	⟷	More risk of reputational or indirect harm to *groups* of people
Direct harm to individuals is unacceptable	⟷	Harm may be warranted
Ethics review		
Purpose = primarily to regulate	⟷	Purpose = primarily to facilitate high standards and to education researchers
Emphasis = on prior *clearance* of research proposals	⟷	Emphasis = on ongoing *deliberation* over ethical challenges and dilemmas
Record-keeping through register of cases and decisions	⟷	Record-keeping of deliberation
Good rules for research	⟷	Good judgement by researchers
Standardised, "one-size-fits-all" procedures	⟷	Flexible procedures
The *medico-legal* model	⟷	The *deliberative* model

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY MEAN FOR ME AS A POSTGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCHER?

As a student and researcher, you must always be attentive to ethical issues that arise in the course of your research. You should discuss these informally and formally with your peers, supervisor and other members of your department. You should encourage your department to organise occasions when researchers can deliberate over research ethics in general or specific challenges. You will also be required to comply with formal procedures. These are designed to be only as onerous as is necessary to promote ethically responsible research.

All postgraduate students conducting research in the Humanities Faculty have to sign an annual MOU with their supervisors, countersigned by the Head of Department. In the new MOUs introduced in late 2014, PhD and Research Masters students and their supervisors should confirm prior to initial registration that the student has read the Faculty Guidelines (i.e. this document) and the relevant Departmental Policy, and they must commit that they *will* comply with the requirements and keep an appropriate record of this. Prior to the second or subsequent year of registration, students and their supervisors are required to confirm again that the student has read the Faculty Guidelines and Departmental Policy, and that the student *is* compliant with their requirements and an appropriate record has been kept (by the Department). At the end of each year, Departments must confirm to the Faculty that all postgraduate students are compliant with the Research Ethics requirements of the Faculty and Department.

What any student is required to do therefore depends on the policy of the Department in which the student is registered. Most departments in the Humanities Faculty have one or other of the following kinds of requirement:

1. The 'clearance' model: In some departments (such as Education), *all* research students must submit a formal application to the Departmental REC, whose approval is required prior to the student commencing his or her research.
2. A 'deliberative' model: Some departments might not require any formal application prior to research, but require that students participate in deliberation (e.g. over the ethics of representation).
3. A hybrid model: Other departments (such as Sociology) require that students complete a simple form setting out the proposed research, and the supervisor(s) then assess(es) the risk of harm; if the risk of harm is significant, then the student's project must be reviewed by the Departmental REC and the student participates in appropriate deliberations over research ethics; if the risk of harm

is low, then the supervisor must ensure that the student participates in appropriate deliberation only.

Students and supervisors are jointly responsible for ensuring that students comply with the specific requirements of their department. Heads of Department are responsible for reporting annually to the Faculty REC on the research ethics review procedures as well as on the compliance with faculty and departmental requirements of every postgraduate student in the department.

Most departments and institutes will require that students proposing to conduct research that involves human participants will need to complete a short form that summarises the proposed research and the risks of harm that can be anticipated. If students propose to conduct research directly with individual participants (whether using a structured survey instrument or less structured interviews) then the students will usually be required to submit information sheets in appropriate languages, and may be required to submit a copy of the draft interview guidelines or questionnaire. If participants will be asked to complete a consent form, then this should also be included with the form. Students will generally be required to explain what participants will be told about the research, how they are to be selected, how the research is to be conducted, and how data collected will be used by the researcher. Students must consult the policy of the department or institute concerned so as to comply with precise requirements.

Later in this Guidebook we provide and discuss some examples of student (and other) research and the kinds of review that is likely to be appropriate in terms of departmental and faculty policies.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY MEAN FOR ME AS A NON-STUDENT RESEARCHER?

Researchers in the Humanities Faculty who are not registered UCT students are also required to undergo ethics review if their research involves human participants or individually-identifiable material or data. The basic principles are the same as for students: First, review can comprise either or both of clearance of the project or participation by the researcher in deliberation, according to the policy of the department or research institute; second, the researcher him or herself cannot decide which is appropriate. The procedures for non-students differ from those for students, however, because non-student researchers do not have formal supervisors nor complete annual MOUs.

Departments and research institutes should have policies setting out the procedures that each researcher needs to follow. Typically they will involve the submission of a form similar or identical to the form completed by students, but this will be submitted to the REC or research ethics convenor in the department or institute concerned. (If there is no REC, then the form would usually be submitted to the Head of Department). The REC or its chairperson or someone else acting on its behalf (or the Head of Department, in the absence of any REC) would decide, in consultation with the researcher, whether the risk of harm is significant enough to warrant full clearance prior to the research and/or what kinds of deliberation the researcher should participate in.

Every department and research institute is required to keep records of and report each year on the reviews including deliberation undertaken that year.

Most departments and institutes will require that researchers proposing to conduct research that involves human participants will need to complete a short form that summarises the proposed research and the risks of harm that can be anticipated. This may be the same form that is completed by students. If the researcher proposes to conduct research directly with individual participants (whether using a structured survey instrument or less structured interviews) then they will usually be required to submit information sheets in appropriate languages, and may be required to submit a copy of the draft interview guidelines or questionnaire. If participants will be asked to complete a consent form, then this should also be included with the form. Researchers will generally be required to explain what participants will be told about the research, how they are to be selected, how the research is to be conducted, and how data collected will be used by the researcher. Researchers must consult the policy of the department or institute concerned so as to comply with precise requirements.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY MEAN FOR ME AS A LECTURER TEACHING A CLASS IN RESEARCH METHODS?

Several departments in the Humanities Faculty offer Masters, Honours or even senior undergraduate classes in research, for which students do or might be required to practice research with human participants. Practice in doing research is widely viewed as an indispensable aid to learning how to be a researcher. There may, however, be some possibility of harm arising from such research. In addition, it is imperative that students learning to conduct research learn what it means to do so in an ethically responsible manner. As a lecturer on such as course, you need to comply with the policies of your department. Affected departments therefore need to provide for such research training in their Research Ethics policies.

The issue of research training is the subject of ongoing discussions between the Humanities Faculty, the Director of Student Affairs and the Registrar. In the meantime, departments are advised that departmental policy should require that:

- all courses on research should include an appropriate component on research ethics, and students should be required to be familiar with departmental and faculty policies, i.e. deliberation over research ethics should be integral to the course;
- if students are required to conduct research as an exercise in the course, the exercises should avoid research in which there is significant risk of harm to human participants;
- any course that requires students to practice research with human participants should be reviewed within the department as if the research exercises constituted a single, discrete research project; this would usually entail completing a single form for the course as a whole, and someone who is not involved in the course – either the research ethics convenor, or a member of the REC, or the Head of Department – would need to review this, as per departmental policy for research projects;
- only if students are required to define and conduct their own research exercise is it necessary for each individual student project to be reviewed, usually using the departmental application form that postgraduate students would complete for their own dissertation research; if students are required to write a proposal as part of the course then it is especially appropriate for them to go through this kind of review process; each student's proposal would be reviewed by the course lecturer or convenor.

As with all research in the Humanities Faculty, it is important to ensure that the administrative burden of research ethics review is proportionate to the risk of harm.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY MEAN FOR A DEPARTMENT OR RESEARCH INSTITUTE?

The Humanities Faculty requires that all departments and research institutes that conduct research involving human participants appoint a Research Ethics Convenor and/or a Research Ethics Committee (REC). The Head of Department him- or herself *might* serve as Convenor or chair the REC, or this role could be assigned to another department member. If a Department or Institute does not conduct any research involving human participants then it is not necessary to appoint a Convenor or REC.

The functions of the Convenor/REC are:

- to advise researchers in the department as to the appropriate review procedures for research involving human participants;
- to facilitate deliberation over research ethics issues as appropriate, and promote participation by researchers in such deliberation;
- to ensure that projects that require clearance are reviewed appropriately and in accordance with departmental policy;
- to ensure that the department has user-friendly and accessible policies or protocols for research ethics, as necessary;
- to report annually, through the Head of Department, to the Faculty REC on the research ethics review practiced in the department; this annual report should list all projects that were reviewed for clearance (indicating the outcome of the review) as well as a summary of deliberative practices involving researchers.

In some departments or institutes, the focus may be primarily on deliberation. For example, students and researchers at Michaelis should participate in deliberations over ethical issues in their research, such as over the representation of human participants. But they may never need to apply for clearance for a specific project. Similarly, researchers in Political Studies who occasionally interview government ministers or other figures in public life should participate in deliberations over ethical issues in their research, but are unlikely to need to apply for clearance prior to any particular interviews.

In other departments or institutes, more attention may be paid to ensuring that specific projects are cleared prior to the commencement of the research. Clearance may require review by a committee of researchers, or by a single researcher; reviewers should not be involved in the research under review. In the case of student research, the supervisor may provide clearance, although departments and institutes are encouraged strongly to ensure that all student researchers are involved actively in ongoing deliberation also. In

the case of research conducted by students as part of a course, for example a course in research methods, the research would need to be cleared by someone other than the course lecturer. In such cases there is unlikely to be any need to review individual students' research; students' research may be reviewed collectively.

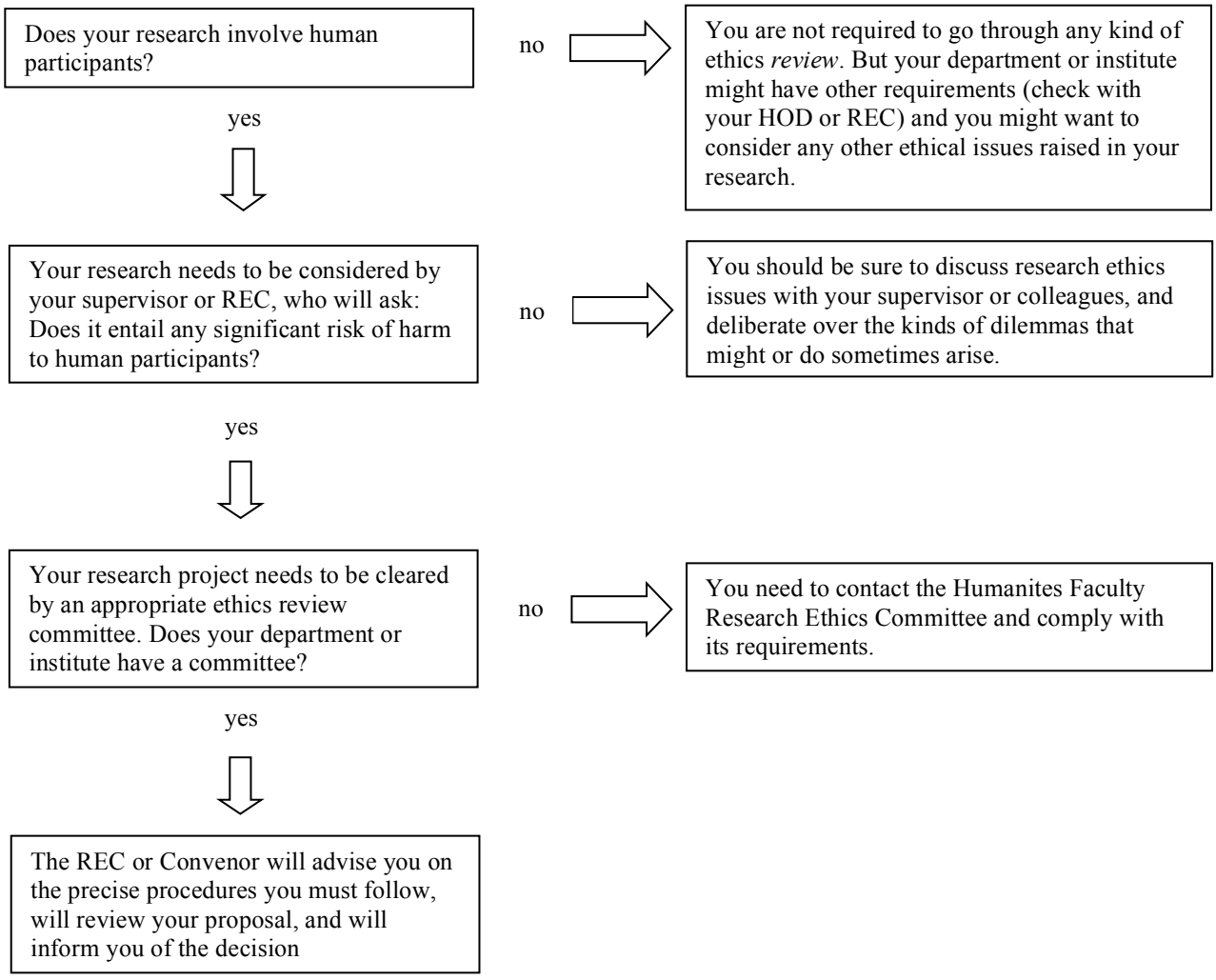
The Faculty REC has examples of the various forms (in excel) that most departments and research institutes will need to have:

1. An application form for researchers, whether students or non-students, that is not unduly onerous but includes the information required for an independent reviewer to assess what kind of review (if any) is appropriate; the form should explain clearly what supporting documents are required;
2. A form that sets out the policy of the department or institute with regard to the requirements and procedures for applications, reviews (including deliberation) and appeals.
3. Forms for departments and institutes to report annually on the reviews conducted (including deliberation).

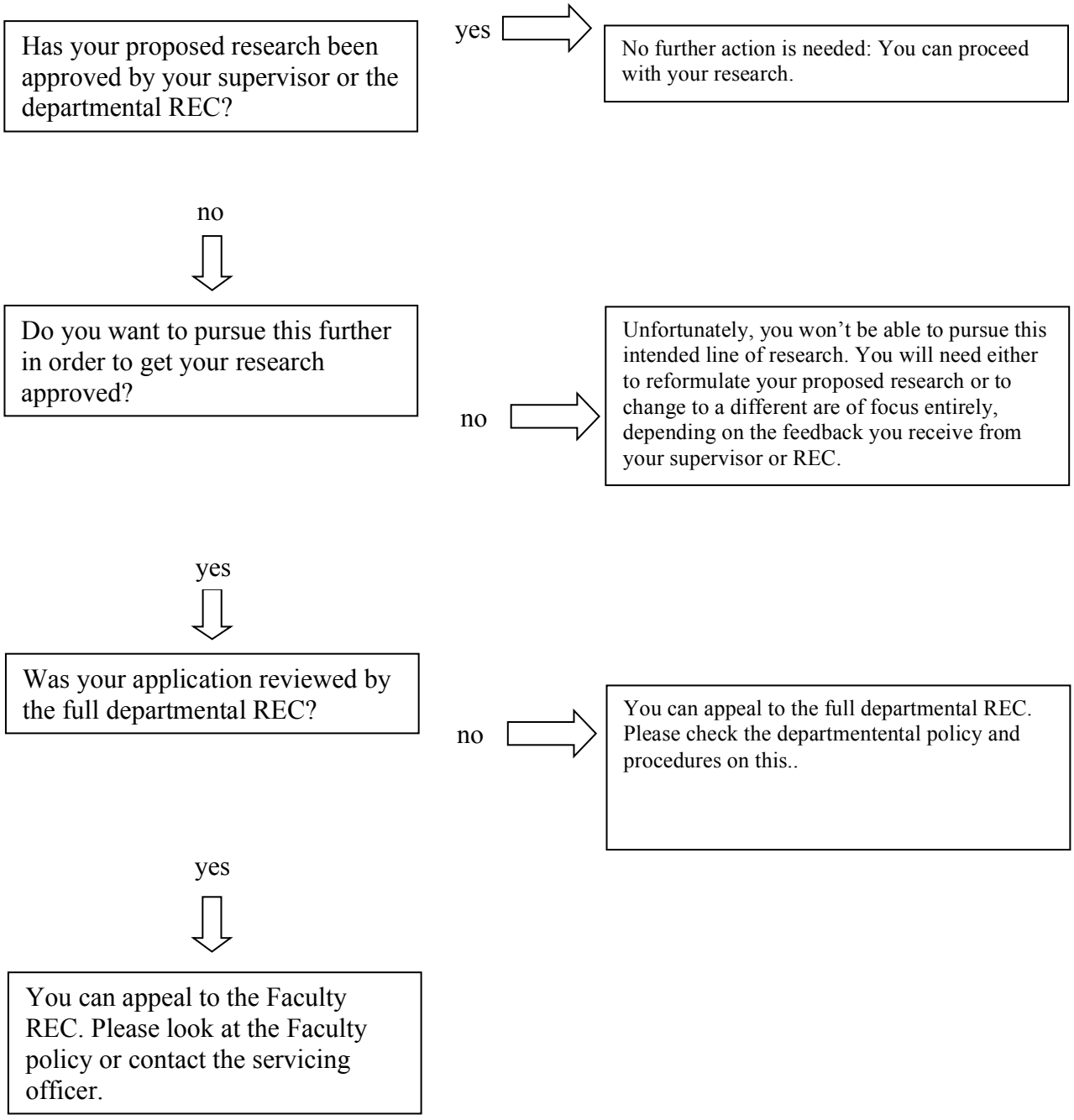
Pdf versions of these forms are included as Appendices C, D and E below.

Departments and institutes are encouraged to use standard forms, or amend as necessary, so as to facilitate the Faculty's own reporting to the University.

HOW DO I ENSURE THAT MY RESEARCH UNDERGOES THE REQUIRED ETHICAL REVIEW?



WHAT IF MY PROPOSED RESEARCHER IS NOT APPROVED?



PROCEDURES FOR HEALTH-RELATED RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES

Researchers in UCT's Humanities Faculty conduct a wide range of health-related research. This includes research on mental health (primarily in the Psychology Department), mental or physical disability (in the Department of Social Development), understandings and other social aspects of diseases such as HIV and AIDS (in Sociology and Social Anthropology), aspects of health policy (including in Political Studies and Sociology), and even representations of health and the body (in literature and the arts).

The basic premise of UCT's research ethics procedures, as set out in Senate policy, is that responsibility is devolved to the faculties in which the researchers are based, on the grounds that this is where relevant expertise is located and review procedures are most likely to be appropriate for the research being conducted and the risks of harm involved. Research by Humanities Faculty researchers is thus subject to some form of ethical review – whether project-specific 'clearance' procedures or researcher-oriented deliberation – within the Humanities Faculty. Usually responsibility for review is devolved to departments or research institutes.

Health-related research entails some complications, however, because of the requirements of:

- the Western Cape Department of Health,
- national South African legislation, and
- UCT's commitments with respect to the US government's "Federal-Wise Assurance".

In addition, health-related research sometimes involves significant risks of harm to human participants. Because of these factors, researchers in the Humanities Faculty are *sometimes* required to submit their research projects to the Human Research Ethics Committee in the Faculty of Health Sciences at UCT, or the Humanities Faculty might need to co-opt researchers from outside of the Faculty onto the relevant REC within the Humanities Faculty to review research proposed by Humanities Faculty researchers.

When and why are Humanities-based researchers conducting health-related research subject to review through HUM procedures, and when and why might they need to be subject to review by the Faculty of Health Sciences REC? The formal requirements are complex:

- The Western Cape (WC) Department of Health (DOH) requires that research conducted in WC-DOH facilities must be reviewed through the Health Sciences REC. This only concerns research conducted in those facilities, and does not

concern research conducted in private facilities or in public facilities in other provinces.

- UCT's 'filing' for the US Government's "Federal-Wise Assurance" (FWA) imposes some obligations on the University. In short, any institution (such as UCT) that receives funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services (which includes grants from the US National Institutes of Health) and conducts research with human participants must ensure that research has been 'reviewed and approved by an IRB designated in the FWA'. UCT's FWA-designated IRBs are the Health Sciences REC and the Senate Ethics in Research Committee, which oversees all research ethics involving human participants at UCT. UCT's filing for the FWA committed UCT to requiring that any research in a list of specified WC DOH and selected other facilities be reviewed by the Health Sciences REC.
- South Africa's 2003 National Health Act requires that all "health research" is reviewed through a recognised REC. The Act itself defined "health research" very broadly, but –a after strong criticisms from universities – new 'Regulations Relating to Research with Human Participants' were gazetted in September 2014. These required that: 'health research' be reviewed by a health research ethics committee that is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council; research involving children, the mentally disabled, prisoners and 'persons in dependent or hierarchical relationships' (including even employees and employers) be subject to broadly reasonable restrictions to limit harm to participants; and participants provide informed consent for all health research (which appears to prohibit covert research relating to health). Whilst the Regulations appear to be very encompassing, it is the view of the Humanities Faculty that their intention is to ensure especially careful review of 'therapeutic' research such as clinical trials, and that the Act and Regulations were not intended to cover all research with any bearing whatsoever on health.

What does this mean in practice? If you are a researcher in the Humanities Faculty, and you want to do health-related research with human participants, then:

- if you require access to a WC DOH facility, you *must* apply for clearance through the Health Sciences REC.
- if your research involves 'therapeutic' health-related research, such as a clinical trial, then you *must* apply through the Health Sciences REC, even if you are not accessing any WC DOH facility or receiving US government funding;
- if you are receiving funding from the US Government, including through the NIH, then you can *choose* to apply through either (a) the Health Sciences REC or (b) the Senate Ethics in Research Committee (EiRC). The EiRC delegates

authority to the Humanities Faculty REC, which in turn delegates authority to departmental and institute RECs. If you choose to apply through the EiRC/Humanities route, then it would be prudent to suggest to your departmental REC that they co-opt onto the REC people with appropriate expertise from Health Sciences in the event that the regular members of the REC do not have this expertise.

- if you apply for clearance through the Health Sciences REC, then you might choose to submit your application *also* through the REC in your department or institute (i.e. within the Humanities Faculty); some departments or institutes might require that you do so;
- if you do *not* require access to a WC DOH facility, you are *not* funded from the US Government, and your research is *not* 'therapeutic', then you should proceed through the appropriate research ethics procedures in your department or research institute.

You should also bear in mind the following:

- the purpose of ethics review is not primarily to police research, but to ensure that research is conducted responsibly; if you are in any doubt about research ethics, you should consult a variety of opinions, including in Humanities; even if you submit an application to Health Sciences, you might be advised to do so also through Humanities procedures so as to canvas additional advice;
- if your research involves children then you need to pay very close attention to research ethics: is it necessary to involve children? Have you anticipated all of the risks of harm? How do you get informed consent from children (as well as their guardians, where appropriate)?
- the implications of the National Health Act are unclear: you should be aware that even research that is ethically defensible and has been approved through regular Humanities procedures *might* not be considered to be fully compliant with the requirements of the Act;
- if your research involves access to a non-WCDOH facility, then it is possible that the facility is one of the facilities specified on UCT's FWA and you will need to apply through the Health Sciences REC; the Office for Research Integrity at UCT can advise you on the facilities that are specified on UCT's FWA.
- health-related research is often very personal, and may raise difficult dilemmas regarding representation, anonymity and confidentiality; you are strongly encouraged to deliberate with other researchers about these dilemmas;
- if you make data available to other researchers, you should bear in mind that deidentified and limited datasets – i.e. datasets in which all identifiers are removed and are limited to the specific data needed by the other researchers – reduce the risk of privacy-related harm to participants.

If you are in any doubt, please contact your department or institute's REC, the Faculty REC, or the university's Office for Research Integrity.

CASE-STUDIES OF RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW IN THE HUMANITIES

Procedures for research ethics review in the Humanities Faculty require the exercise of judgement in assessing the risk of harm arising from the research, and thus whether the proposed research needs to be amended or the researcher needs to take other action. It is the goal of the Faculty to strengthen the capacity for well-informed and reasoned judgement among all researchers, through ongoing deliberation. The following case-studies are provided as examples of the kind of thinking that informs judgements on various challenges arising from and in research.

Case-study 1: Low risk of harm

Much of the research involving human participants that is conducted in the Humanities Faculty involves a very low risk of harm. For example, a student in Sociology proposes to conduct research into university students' perceptions of and attitudes towards different occupations (to contribute to an understanding of how and why students tend towards some occupations whilst avoiding others).

This student would need to complete the application form used in the Sociology Department, and (in terms of the policy of the Sociology Department and Faculty) would discuss this with his or her supervisor. The student would be expected to confirm that they are familiar with the Faculty and Department's policies on research ethics. The supervisor would need to be satisfied that the student has considered some standard issues, including:

- how interviewees would be selected (i.e. the sampling strategy);
- whether (and how) the researcher would protect the identities of the interviewees: would interviewees be given the choice between being identified in the student's dissertation or being rendered anonymous? and would any information be regarded as confidential?
- how the research would be explained, perhaps in an information sheet to be made available to prospective interviewees (in the appropriate language(s)); such an information sheet would usually explain the purpose and proposed use of the research (i.e. in the student's dissertation and possible subsequent publications), how the individual interviewee was selected, and what the researcher would do with regard to the anonymity of interviewees or the confidentiality of information provided;

- whether the interviewee, understanding the nature of the research, would be asked to consent to the interview either in writing or verbally (bearing in mind that written consent is often but not always advisable if it is likely that interviewees will be quoted);
- what issues might arise when using information collected, in terms of how individuals, groups or organisations are represented;
- what if any harm might arise from the research.

In the Sociology Department, the policy is that, once the supervisor is satisfied that the risk of harm is low and the student understands the importance of ethically responsible research, the supervisor would sign off on the student's research. He or she would also ensure that the student participates in ongoing deliberation over ethical issues that arise in the student's or other researchers' research. This would include deliberation over the ethics of representation in terms of how to report findings if, for example, specific social or demographic groups had distinct attitudes.

In this case, the objective of promoting ethically responsible research by ethically aware researchers can be achieved through deliberation and a minimally-burdensome procedure.

Case-study 2: Acceptable possibility of harm to human participants who have chosen to make themselves available for public scrutiny

In some fields of research – especially medical research – it is entirely unacceptable to for a researcher to conduct research knowing that there is a high chance of causing harm. In the Humanities, however, there are various kinds of research that entail a significant risk of harm, but which are nonetheless generally considered to be ethically sound. Consider two examples:

- a drama student attends and writes a critical review of a public performance: this might cause harm insofar as the review criticizes the performance of named actors;
- a graduate student in Political Studies proposes to interview politicians holding public office, anticipating the possibility that the resulting analysis would be critical of some of the politicians.

In both cases, the human participants in the research – actors in the first case, politicians in the second – have chosen to make themselves subject to public assessment of their performance. In both cases, it is generally considered acceptable to conduct research

that might harm the participants, as long as there are good reasons for any criticisms that are made.

In these cases, the students' supervisors would need to ensure that the students have thought about the ethics of representation of performers or politicians, and will probably ensure that the students participate in ongoing discussions about the ethics of representation with other students and staff in the department. Some departments might require that a student completes a standard form prior to undertaking such research; other departments might not require this.

Case-study 3: Covert research

Do employers discriminate by race or gender in South Africa? A researcher in Sociology proposes to conduct research into discrimination using a method that has been used widely in the USA and India: applying for real jobs using fictitious identities and CVs, without disclosing to the prospective employer that this is a research exercise. The student proposes, first, to submit CVs and job applications for fictitious applicants, and then analyses whether race or gender affect the probability of being invited for an interview; and, secondly, to work with student actors to play the part of individuals called in for interviews, to see whether race or gender affect the outcome.

There are strong arguments for and against this kind of research. In general, the use of deception is not considered ethical. A cost is being imposed on employers in that they must process the applications and conduct interviews. On the other hand, there is a strong public interest in revealing the extent of racial and gender discrimination in employment. In the USA, the Supreme Court itself has upheld this kind of covert research, on the grounds that the public interest outweighs the private costs.

This proposed research clearly involves the possibility of harm. In the Sociology Department, the supervisor (in the case of a student researcher) or REC chairperson (in the case of a staff researcher) would flag this as a proposal that would need to be scrutinized carefully by the entire REC. The REC would need to be satisfied that any harms to individual participants are minimized – through appropriate undertakings on anonymity, for example – and might require that some kind of debriefing is provided to the participating firms. The REC would probably choose to organize some deliberative event within the Department so that the issues involved are discussed widely. The REC would probably also want to put in place procedures to monitor the research on an ongoing basis. If the REC was unsure, it might ask the Humanities Faculty REC for advice and guidance.

Case-study 4: Unethical research

Suppose a student proposes to research vigilantism by conducting the following public experiment: The student will, in the street or public place, accuse a bystander of theft or harassment, and then monitor how other members of the public respond.

It is certainly in the public interest to understand better how, when and why vigilantism occurs, but this proposed research project entails clear and disproportionate risks to individuals. The accused bystander might be assaulted, resort to violence in self-defence, or simply be humiliated or traumatized by the accusation. Exposing members of the public to this kind of risk of harm is simply not ethical.

In this case, the student's supervisor or the REC (depending on the department) would surely deny the student authorization to conduct this research. The supervisor or REC would probably use this as an opportunity to host an event where the relevant issues in research ethics might be discussed generally within the Department. It is possible that, through a process of deliberation, a way forward might be revealed that allows for the redesign of the research so that it is ethically defensible.

If the student is unhappy with the decision, he or she is entitled to appeal to the Humanities Faculty REC.

MORE COMPLEX EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH ETHICS IN THE HUMANITIES

Many of the ethical challenges that arise in the course of research are hard to anticipate, which is one reason why it is important to have an ethics review framework that focuses on the researcher as much as the individual research project. Some challenges can be anticipated, however. It is imperative that researchers both think about possible challenges in advance and deliberate with others when they arise. This section considers some examples of challenges that might arise in the course of research.

Case-study 5: Distress among human participants

The "UCT research ethics code for research involving human participants", states:
Section C (f): "Researchers must minimise or avoid exposure of participants to foreseeable legal, physical, psychological, or social harm or suffering that might be experienced in the course of research."

Qualitative researchers across many academic disciplines have face-to-face fieldwork interactions with human participants, through various methods, such as survey interviews, in-depth or oral history interviews, focus groups and participant observation. Both within and outside these formal research encounters it is common for researchers to experience moments where human participants are close to crying, or cry to varying degrees of intensity. Students appropriately tend to ask versions of the following three questions:

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(1) If the research participant "cries" during the course of my interview/fieldwork, have I breached research ethics?

A participant "crying" itself does not constitute a breach of research ethics. Crying by an interviewee/research participant is an affective reaction that might be triggered by a range of factors. These might include talking about past losses they experienced in their life time, such as the death of loved ones or being retrenched from a job. Crying is also often an emotional response to speaking about the violent harm that others have inflicted on the participants such as torture or rape. And (paradoxically) some people cry when talking about meaningful or even joyful events in their lives. This all noted, however, "crying" might be linked to actual ethical breaches such as the researchers' use of offensive language or bullying the participant into talking about sensitive topics.

(2) If the research participant "cries", have I traumatised or re-traumatised the person?

"Crying" itself does not constitute trauma but many trauma survivors do have an increased propensity to cry. Researchers working in fields such as post-conflict/violence studies face an increased risk of evoking intense emotional reactions (both in participants and themselves). In this research field there is academic debate over whether such emotional expressions constitute a "re-traumatisation" of the human participant. The majority academic view is that researchers working on highly sensitive topics, especially when asking detailed personal questions, might "surface" existing post-traumatic symptoms/legacies within the participant. This "surfacing" of symptoms/legacies is not "re-traumatisation" and is not in of itself an ethical breach. But it is crucial to note, that if students and staff engage in post-conflict/violence studies without adequate training, preparation and support there is an increased risk of evoking unnecessary emotional distress in the research participant, and hence, an increased risk of breaching research ethics.

(3) If the research participant "cries", what do I do?

There is no perfect formula but here are some guidelines. If the participant begins to cry, but continues talking, it is best for to keep listening and to stay attuned to their stories and emotions. Interrupting or changing the topic at this moment is inappropriate. But when the participant stops talking and there is a natural pause in the dialogue, there are two recommendations. Firstly, the researcher should sensitively acknowledge the participant's sadness and/or tears in a few, simple words. Secondly, immediately thereafter, the researcher should offer the participant the option to temporarily withdraw to re-compose them-selves. But note: it must be the participant who chooses what happens next, not the researcher. At such moments, participants might experience their own feelings as "out of control" or "overwhelming" hence, giving a participant a sense of control in the situation is critical. This recommendation, together with sustained empathic listening, usually helps the participant to regain a degree of emotional containment, especially if they have been crying profusely. Moreover, at these moments, it is crucial the researcher remains calm and sensitive in their responses and behavior.

Another crucial issue: It is neither the job nor responsibility of researchers to "cure/heal" research participants in distress. On the one hand, attempting to "cure/heal" participants without having the appropriate professional training constitutes an ethical breach. On the other hand, researchers have an ethical responsibility to respond appropriately (and not ignore) the distressing emotions and/or suffering that their research interventions may have surfaced in the participant.

How far that responsibility extends is a matter of academic debate and differs from discipline to discipline. In some disciplines, "suggesting" psychotherapy or counselling to the participant is recommended but this depends on the context and it may or may not be appropriate even to suggest this. If the "suggestion" is offered by the researcher it must be carefully articulated to avoid evoking feelings of stigmatization (or pathology) in the participant. It is also possible to suggest that the participant draws on the support of family, friends, elders or others such as priests or teachers. Many researchers also conduct follow-up meetings or phone calls to "check-in" on the research participant.

(Parts of the above have been adapted from: Sean Field, "'What Can I Do When the Interviewee Cries?': Oral History Strategies for Containment and Regeneration" in Philippe Denis and Radikobo Ntsimane (eds.) *Oral History in a Wounded Country: Interactive Interviewing in South Afica*, 144-168. Durban, South Africa: KwaZulu-Natal University Press, 2008.)

Case-study 6: Confidentiality and privacy

Recently a master's student in psychology expressed concern about the digitization of her dissertation. The University, in line with higher education institutions worldwide, is moving to an open access system, where dissertations and theses among other things are available on the Internet. When the student heard about this, she was worried about the fact that her dissertation would now be widely available and easily accessible, and that this might compromise her participants' confidentiality and privacy.

The student's research focused on a psychotherapeutic programme in which six pre-adolescent boys with learning difficulties and their parents participated. Obviously the material is psychologically sensitive, and included the boys' psychometric profiles and referral problems. The student was worried that, given that there were only six families participating in the study, they could be identified.

The original study had been approved by the departmental REC in line with departmental policy. In the proposal the student had addressed extensively the issues of informed consent, assent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity. In terms of confidentiality, the student undertook to keep all private information confidential in that the names and all identifying details would be excluded from her final report, and data would be kept secure under lock and key. In terms of anonymity,

participants were promised that all contributions to the final report would remain anonymous, and specific individuals would not be linked to specific findings. The REC was satisfied that the student had addressed the ethical issues involved in the research. No one anticipated, however, that the student's dissertation might become readily available over the internet, and therefore no one had considered explicitly the challenges that this raised.

It is useful to think about the differences between privacy and confidentiality, because these are the issues raised by the student. Confidentiality refers to the obligation of a researcher or organisation to safeguard entrusted information. This clearly is not the issue the student is concerned with here. There is no evidence that this obligation was neglected or violated, and that someone accessed the data. Indeed, the student promised confidentiality quite explicitly to all participants, as stated above.

Privacy is a different matter, and this is the specific issue that troubled the student, some time after the thesis had been deposited in the University Library. The privacy of research participants is placed at risk in research if they can be identified in the report or dissertation, because they may suffer harm as a result of the disclosure of personal information. It is useful to point out in this case that privacy risks arise at all stages of the research cycle: in this case, it arose at the dissemination stage of the study.

The best way to ensure a participant's privacy is to rely on anonymous information in the study; i.e. the information never have identifiers associated with it, as when one completes an anonymous survey that asks for no identifying information. In the present case of course this was not possible, because the boys and their families were known to the student and to the managers of the psychotherapeutic programme. The best way to proceed in such a case is to rely on anonymised information, as the student promised to do, and in fact thought she did sufficiently. Anonymised information is stripped of direct identifiers, done in such a way that it will not be possible to re-link the individuals with their data.

The question raised by the student in this case was whether the data were sufficiently anonymized. She was concerned, when she was informed that the dissertation will be available via the Internet, that this was not the case. In particular, in the "Method" section, there is a table which provides some socio-demographic and scholastic information about each of the child participants, although names are not provided. If someone were to know that a specific child took part in this intervention at a specific place and time, and be aware of some aspects of the child's demographic and scholastic

background, they could potentially identify a specific child from the information provided.

We took a number of considerations into account when deciding what to do about this.

The student's research has had ethical clearance and the data should have been sufficiently anonymised.
Libraries provide appropriate digital scholarship services to support postgraduate students, particularly in these rather grey areas of research data management and intellectual property management.
The dissertation has been in the library, and thus publicly accessible, since 2008.
A dissertation is a public document, and its contents cannot be embargoed.
In the end the committee decided to err on the side of caution, even though it thought it was unlikely that participants could be identified. It recommended that the table in question would be obscured in the dissertation, but with a note explaining that this was done to protect the privacy of the participants and that the table could be requested from the supervisor. It was thought that removal of the table would not affect the reading of the work, and the results would still be perfectly understandable.

This case taught us several leasson:

1. Ethics in research is an ongoing process, and not a once-off event;
2. Due care should be taken by the student to understand how anonymity and confidentiality could be safeguarded;
3. Students and supervisors realise the public nature of dissertations; and
4. Identifiability of participants requires particular consideration.

Case-study 7: Research using social media

A researcher proposes to analyse journalists' and journalism students' use of social media (including Twitter, Facebook and blogs), including how participants interact with their readers.

A good principle is to try to maintain contextual integrity, which involves thinking carefully about what people might reasonably expect from you in a particular context. The hard part here involves making sure you understand the 'insider' expectations that inform other people's behaviour in that context as well.

For example some famous celebrity journalist might well be considered a public figure, who can reasonably expect scrutiny from the public. Also, that person wouldn't have any particular expectations of you.

If the person is a student in your journalism class, or was a colleague of yours while you were an intern, you have a relationship with them and this changes the context. Think about it this way - if you bumped into them in the lecture theatre or in the newsroom they would likely expect you to greet or chat and to introduce yourself and your study and ask permission before you start treating them as data.

In addition, institutions like universities often have rules about doing research with their students. Check these and get permission where necessary.

Another aspect of contextual integrity involves understanding their practices in relation to the site/s you're studying: Do you need to log in, or have a "friends" relationship to access their profile? Even if you do not need to log in to see their page, they might not realise how public it is. If they mostly use the internet on a cellphone they may not even see the privacy options on their interface. Finally a journalist's expectations about their Twitter stream may be very different to their expectations about their family photos on Facebook … or their Grindr profile.

Then think about three principles: The potential to harm and help, power and vulnerability, and personally identifiable information.

- Potential to harm / help: Is there any potential for harm to the journalism student? i.e. if you write a scathing critique of the student and someone finds it when they do a Google search, could it harm them and their career prospects in some way? Is there potential to help the journalist by telling them about your research? i.e. if you write something that could be good for their reputation, help them get promoted etc.
- Power: Is there a significant power gradient or particular vulnerability involved in writing about this person? i.e. very different power relationships apply between you and a student in your tutorial group (who is subject to your grading decisions) vs. a journalist at *The New York Times*.
- Personally identifiable information: If you download and analyse anonymised aggregate data from blogs, social media etc, permissions are not required. "Of the 20 journalistic blogs in the sample, 10% included comment spam promoting diet pills." As soon as you discuss individual case studies, and particularly if you want to use direct quotes from individuals the situation becomes a bit trickier. A direct quote run through a Google search can often be used to identify the

individual even if you anonymise. I would recommend not only getting permission but also chatting to the person and making sure they understand the fact that it might be difficult to anonymise their data i.e. there may only be one journalism student from Piketburg in the class at UCT.

Consider what this might mean for a research project on discourses about race and gender in the Facebook group of a group of student activists.

Here you should aim to maintain contextual integrity. In this case it's not only your relationship with individual participants but a more demanding task of understanding the context created by interacting in that group. The way to achieve that is by studying the way the group is set up and understanding its written and unwritten rules.

Social media users are prolific and generate huge amounts of data which is not always easy to collect systematically if you don't have proper training or use the correct tools. It's particularly important to avoid a 'smash and grab' approach – grabbing a juicy piece of data without spending the time to understand it in context and to see whether it is a useful case study for qualitative research, or whether it can be treated as a representative text in a quantitative study.

Platform rules: Check the Facebook Terms of Service and apply for any necessary permissions. Be aware that these change from time to time. Consult your supervisor before deciding to break the Terms of Service, even if you think they are unethical. You could lose access to your research site completely if you don't.

Group rules: Is the group set up as a members' only group, or as a group where anyone can publish? Requiring membership is a strong signal that the group will have specific expectations about privacy. You should apply to join the group and signal that you are also asking for permission to conduct a research project. Find a way of informing the group and especially its administrators about your project e.g. set up a research blog and link to it.

The exact role you play will depend on your research objectives, but in most cases you should aim to play a relatively active role in the group and work hard to understand group norms, practices, and discourse, much as a group 'insider' would. You can ask questions and keep mentioning your research to ensure that new members or those who didn't see your initial application are aware of your project. When you have something written which you want to share with them, upload it on your blog or email it to group administrators or key informants and ask for comments.

If you are going to write any individual case studies or quote people from the group you need to take care to get individual permission or, if this is not possible, take steps to protect the anonymity of members.

- Potential to harm/help: Are the activists planning illegal activities? Could your research expose them to unwanted state scrutiny? Are there others who many be

harmed by their actions? Remember that your own friends list and list of groups you belong to can identify a group or individuals even when you have tried to anonymise the name of the group and its members in your dissertation and publications. It's usually better to complete your own training as a researcher before taking on a complex project such as this.

- Power: Is there something about you (university or political party affiliation, language, ethnic identity) which might mean that group members' interactions with you might be forced, not voluntary, or unrepresentative?
- Personally identifiable information: Do a Google search to see whether messages posted to the group can be recovered via a search engine. Remember that the search engine index often changes. Think about changing names, not using profile pictures, and tracing any photographs (so that the picture can be used in your analysis without identifying the people in the photograph). What will happen to the unanonymised data you initially collected? How will you look after your data when your research project is complete?

Case-study 8: Research ethics or professional ethics?

UCT students can be involved in activities related to their training where professional codes of practice may differ in subtle ways from the university's expectations regarding research ethics.

Consider the case of a journalism student who was asked to give copy approval on a story, or to allow the interviewee to approve the final text or 'copy' of a story. In normal circumstances, journalists do not give 'copy approval' to interviewees, as this can constitute a form of prior restraint censorship or media manipulation for public relations purposes, which is of particular concern when the interviewee is rich and powerful.

By contrast, several approaches to research value the dialogue with the interviewee, so that, for example, oral historians may return a transcribed interview to the interviewee for corrections – the interviewee has the right, after all, to see what will be deposited in the archives under their name. Similarly, in reflexive ethnography, although participants may be anonymised, researchers value their feedback on the research, which can enrich the research and help to place researcher and participant on a more equal footing.

Similarly, while researchers are generally expected to anonymise participants, journalism relying on anonymous sources is discouraged.

In cases of such a clash, it is best to adhere to the usual best practices for research ethics, or alternatively to present your departmental research ethics committee with a suitably convincing professional or public interest case explaining why you would need to depart from such usual practice. In particular, you should always ensure that informed consent process includes

interview or media release forms if you will need to identify interviewees or participants. Most important is to always discuss your dilemma and explore your options with your supervisor or a more experienced researcher.

AUTHORSHIP GUIDELINES

These guidelines offer researchers some indication of how to handle the sometimes complex questions around authorship.

The Faculty's guidelines for authorship are stronger than those of the University and are binding on Humanities Faculty researchers. Students should keep a record of matters relating to authorship, intellectual property and data sets in their Memoranda of Understanding. Staff and others are requested to keep a written record of discussions of authorship on file.

1: Definition of a publication:
A *publication* is any document produced by a member of staff or student in the Faculty of Humanities, including project reports (and interim project reports), monographs, peer-reviewed articles and electronic media.

2: Authorship and co-authorship:
The Faculty of Humanities defines authorship as *substantial* participation in a publication. Substantial participation shall mean:

(a) conception and design of the project; or
(b) analysis *and* interpretation of data; and
(c) drafting or revising the article critically for important intellectual content; and,
(d) final approval of the version to be published.

Where substantial contributions (as defined above) are made by several persons to a common project, they will be *joint authors of the product*. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. One of more authors should take responsibility for the integrity of the work from inception to published article.

Authors should be able to provide a description of what each contributed. All others who contributed to the work who are not authors should be named in the Acknowledgements, and what they did should be described.

Order of author names on a jointly authored document:

(a) Different levels of contribution: The person who has made the greatest contribution to the paper (often the project leader) is to be listed first with the remaining authors listed in order of their contribution.

(b) The same level of contribution: Normally the person who led the production of the document is listed first. Remaining authors will be listed alphabetically. Where there is no principal author, all names are to be listed alphabetically, and where all authors are regarded as having made an equivalent contribution, this should be noted in the author credits.

Authorship agreement:
Authorship is a matter that should be discussed between colleagues at an early stage in a project, and reviewed whenever there are changes in participation. The project leader must initiate this discussion. The agreement may be altered by mutual agreement during the course of the project. Please keep a record of the agreement.

3: Student-staff-supervisor co-publication:
The conditions listed in (a) to (d) in clause 2 above apply in the first instance. In the case of a co-authored publication by a student and her/his research supervisor that is substantially based on the student's dissertation or thesis the student will normally be the first author. This condition may be waived if the student plays little or no role in the preparation of the work for publication. In such an instance, the student will be the second author.

4: Exclusions

(a) Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not justify authorship.

(b) General supervision or leadership of a research group is not by itself sufficient for authorship.

(c) Mere possession of an institutional position, such as Department Chair, does not justify authorship credit. Minor contributions to the research or to the writing for publications are appropriately acknowledged.

5: Acknowledgements of contribution to a research project:
It is good practice to acknowledge those who contribute to a publication. The Faculty should follow an inclusive principle of acknowledgement as far as possible. The significance of the contribution of those who are acknowledged should be signaled.

6: Disputes
Disputes concerning any aspects of authorship described above should in the first instance be resolved between the researchers concerned. Where this is not possible, the head of the department or research centre within which the principal researcher or

student is based is responsible for arbitration. If this mechanism fails and the departmental research ethics committee is also unable to resolve the dispute, the matter may be referred to the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities for arbitration. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, it is escalated upwards.

BREACHES OF ETHICS CODES AND ALLEGATIONS OF RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

Breaches of Ethics Codes and Research Misconduct are serious matters. In the event of an allegation or instance of breach or misconduct you are advised first to address it within your Department/Unit. The Faculty has an independent Advisor who may be approached in confidence to advise, guide and assist. The Advisor is located in the
Faculty's Research Committee and may be accessed through the Faculty's Deputy Dean of Research. If the Department/Unit is not the appropriate place to address the issue (e.g. because of conflicts of interest), the matter is reported to the Dean who reports it to the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research. The latter will institute an inquiry. Full
definitions of research misconduct and details of the process of dealing with it are
provided in UCT's research policies available here
(http://www.uct.ac.za/about/policies#research)

APPENDICES

A Faculty Policy

B UCT Code for Research

C Statement of Values

D Useful Forms

APPENDIX A: ETHICS POLICY

POLICY ON RESEARCH ETHICS, FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Overview and Introduction

Location:
The Research Ethics Committee (henceforth, REC) of the Faculty of Humanities is a sub-committee of the Faculty Research Committee. Its concerns are also represented in the Senate Ethics in Research Committee of the university.

Purpose:
The REC exists to support the efforts of the Faculty to meet appropriate international standards for ethics in research on human participants. It is tasked specifically to oversee the ethics of research on human participants carried out by anyone in the Faculty, wherever this occurs (staff, graduate, and undergraduate). Its aim is to assist all researchers in the Faculty to do their research confident in the knowledge that they are meeting best practices in researching human participants, with respect to methodology, substance, and accountability to those researched.

Activity:
The work of the REC includes:

- policy development and advice,
  - responsibility for seeing that all research on human participants is ethically assessed and cleared prior to its commencement, and
  - responsibility for building awareness of ethical issues in the Faculty through education, provision of information and identification of appropriate training programmes.

Mandate:
The mandate of the REC covers all research on human participants. It has the power to refuse ethical clearance for any particular piece of research, in which case such research should not be carried out until all relevant issues are resolved. It does not include dealing with issues of plagiarism, and it is not a court or tribunal. It does not deal with animal research ethics, for which the university has a separate committee.

Subsidiarity:
The method by which the REC addresses the ethics of research in the Faculty of Humanities is

governed by the 'principle of subsidiarity', as explained below. This places a significant part of the initial responsibility for ethical clearance of research on human participants in the hands of departments, units and institutes, where the greatest competence to assess research on human participants normally resides in a faculty with such highly diverse disciplines. Because competence cannot be assumed where research ethics protocols and procedures still remain relatively uneven or undeveloped, the principle of subsidiarity also means that such competence be established and enhanced appropriately as a general policy of the faculty.

What follows describes the context of the ethics of research on human participants, the current status of research ethics in the Faculty of Humanities, codes and standards, the principle of subsidiarity, proposed department, unit or institute responsibilities, and the constitution of the REC.

1. The Context of Research Ethics in the Faculty of Humanities

In the first instance, a concern for the ethics of research carried out on human participants forms a crucial part of the transformation of the university, as research as a whole takes form in relation to histories of domination, resistance, globalisation and markets. At the same time, following on the key shift that was part of the Nuremberg trials after the Second World War, a concern for research ethics is increasingly a part of the global picture, to the point where any research on human participants must now demonstrate responsible and accountable methods and procedures.

In addition, many agencies that oversee such research or provide funds for it, more and more require guarantees that all research on human participants has ethical clearance.
Similarly, a growing number of nations are also beginning to regulate research on human participants, with South Africa likely to follow suit in the near future.

While some of this concern is fuelled by a fear of litigation (the negative ground for establishing proper ethical controls), by far the more significant issues have to do with the rights and well-being of the research participants themselves and the accompanying responsibilities of the researcher towards them (the positive reason for taking research ethics seriously).

A key issue is the relationship and balance between individual rights and the common good[10] in assessing what is ethically acceptable and what is not. A further issue of

[10] The notion of the common good, the basic presumption of European ethics prior to the Reformation and the rise of ethics based on the individual, with some resonance in classical African ethical positions that emphasize responsibilities to the community, is no longer self-evident, and we do not pretend to resolve the existing debates

importance is the relationship between procedural correctness and substantive concerns for beneficence, respect and justice, as laid out in the Belmont Report.[11]

Finally, debate on research ethics ought to be a vibrant component of the UCT's self-reflection on its scholarly activities. Moreover, a Southern African voice on research ethics needs to find expression: While UCT's decisions on research ethics may be guided by foreign professional associations; they should take form in relation to local concerns and debates.

2. The Current Status of Research Ethics in the Faculty

The broad range of disciplines in the Faculty of Humanities, some of them linked to external professional bodies that have binding and established codes of ethics, some of them generally doing no research on human participants, means that a fixed common code of ethics is not possible or perhaps even desirable, except at the most general level of principles.

Yet some faculty wide policy on the ethics of research on human participants is necessary. While appropriate procedures and protocols have been improved over the last years, there is great unevenness across the faculty in their extent, use and quality. In part, this is also a reflection of considerable uncertainty among many staff and students about what is needed and why.

Thus, in 2005, while many Departments reported comprehensively on their research ethics activity and procedures and indicated that Research Ethics were a priority, almost a third of Departments within the faculty failed to report at all, and some
Departments that did report offered vague and unhelpful accounts of their procedures and teaching on the subject.

Whatever the reasons for this – which likely include a combination of an overload of administrative tasks, a perception that this constitutes another extension of an audit culture within the University, and a failure to recognise the importance of research ethics – it weakens the credibility and scientific integrity of research within the Faculty, and has an impact on how research funding is viewed or allocated. Equally, it opens up

around just how to define or measure what counts as a common good except to note that it presumes that individual rights do not always trump other kinds of rights or responsibilities.

[11] These three latter criteria were established by the *Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Participants of Research* produced by a USA Congressional Commission in 1979, and since then they have become a widely used international framework for research ethics.

the possibility that those people who are the participants of research are being compromised.

It is worth noting that the faculty is not alone in this. We may refer to the recent HEQA's observations (item 14) that decisions on research ethics involving human participants are not currently pursued evenly across the University. During the interviews that led to this judgement, the Faculty of Humanities was complimented for the moves that have been made to deepen a culture of responsibility for research ethics within the Faculty, and similar appreciation has also come from our own Senate committee. But it was also identified as having some way to go to meet expected standards.

3. Codes and Standards

Codes for ethical research are a crucial part of a university's intellectual tools, and they are an important resource for guiding researchers in various disciplines and using various research methods. Codes represent the sum of current professional expertise around research ethics, and set standards that are incumbent on good researches.

At the same time, they can never substitute for ongoing personal professional experience, insight, judgement and decision, always required in complex, tricky or controversial instances, when the issues are grey, ambiguous, in need of consideration, requiring consultation, and perhaps in need of new judgements. Such an understanding should underlie any application or use of codes.

The *UCT Code of Ethics for Research Involving Human Participants* is a minimum standard that ought to be upheld across all Departments in all Faculties.[12] Over and above this, within the Faculty of Humanities, many disciplines – especially (but not only) those linked to professional associations – have existing ethical guidelines or codes of conduct to which researchers are accountable.

Each of these codes and/or guidelines requires interpretation in relation to specific contexts. For example, a decision on what constitutes ethical conduct in Film and Media may be grounded in an ethics of exposé, in which the notion of 'public interest' may outweigh other concerns. But an anthropologist, for whom potential harm to a research participant is paramount, might approach the issue differently.[13]

- 12 See Appendix B or go to http://www.uct.ac.za/about/policies#research.
- 13 See Spiegel 2005, From exposé to care: Preliminary thoughts about shifting the ethical concerns of South African social anthropology. *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 28((3 & 4) 2005): 133-141.

This range of disciplinary and professional concerns presents a very different situation to that of a faculty such as the Health Sciences in which a single policy may be reasonably considered adequate across all of its departments. Moreover, determining which guidelines are appropriate for each research project is not as simple as determining in which department it is undertaken. Many pieces of research cut across disciplines: Ethnographic research may be undertaken in research within Linguistics or Education; researchers in Politics or Sociology may want to archive interviews; a researcher in Religious Studies may focus on material heritage.

The key issue is how the faculty should deal with this situation and context, what approach it should take to research ethics within the Faculty. This has to do with where responsibility resides for processing ethical clearance for research on human participants and maintaining credible records of what has been decided.

4. Subsidiarity: The Existing Policy Framework

One way of formulating the issue is to ask: Do Departments want to pass the responsibility for ethical clearance on to a central committee and be subject to that committee's decisions (if that is even a viable option logistically and operationally)? Or are Departments willing to take responsibility for decisions on research ethics, within the context of faculty-wide accountability?

The REC has since 2003 taken the view, generally speaking, that decisions on research ethics are most appropriately made at the level of the department, unit or institute concerned. Its policy, communicated to heads of departments, units and institutes, is based on the *principle of subsidiarity*. This principle presupposes:

a. That decisions need to be made at the lowest appropriate level at which colleagues are able to make a competent decision, rather than by a centralised structure within a hierarchy; and

b. that referrals upwards should occur only when
    i. there is doubt about a case,
    ii. the relevant decision-maker feels insufficiently competent to make a decision,
    iii. a larger matter or principle is involved that needs wider discussion, or
    a. iv. the issue is complex enough to require a wider discussion and decision.

The principle of subsidiarity has the further benefit of placing the issue of research ethics in the hands of those who must most directly apply ethical standards and procedures, and who best understand the relevant constraints and requirements of their field. It democratizes the process. Finally, in a faculty burdened by high costs and limited finances with multiple priorities to meet, it is the most cost-effective way of managing what are estimated to be hundreds of pieces of research being carried out on human participants across a large faculty in any one year.

In practice, this has meant that since 2004, Departments or other academic units have been held to be responsible for assessing the ethics pertaining to research conducted by staff and students, with difficult or complex cases being referred to the REC.

The latter has the advantage of stimulating debate on issues which are vital to effective research. However, if the latter route is chosen, there is a need to propose benchmarks for acceptable participation by Departments and other academic units, and a need for a mechanism for supporting those that need it.

There are important concerns attached to an effective implementation of the principle of subsidiarity:

- In particular, departments, units and institutes who have researchers at any level engaging in research on human participants need to have in place, or put in place, their own peer review mechanism for assessing the ethics of such research.
- Second, those who are carrying out such assessment need to be competent to understand what is required in clearing (or not) such research in respect of ethics.
- Third, because it is relatively common within the Faculty of Humanities that researchers are bridging disciplines, it may be necessary to have others from cognate disciplines be part of such assessment and decision-making.
- Finally, attention would have to be paid to the composition of any decision-making body at departmental, unit or institute level in respect of current international standards (which are likely soon to be nationally required standards in South Africa), such as the inclusion of an appropriate gender and racial balance and the presence of an informed lay person on any such body.

5. Subsidiary Departmental Responsibilities

In order for 'subsidiarity' to be recognised by the University as a valid, workable and externally defensible means by which the Faculty attends to ethics in its research, some benchmarks of acceptable voluntary participation by Departments and other academic units

need to be identified and agreed upon. These include:

5.1 Every department or other academic unit, as appropriate, would be required to establish an internal structure for dealing with research ethics, a representative of which will be nominated as a respondent of the REC.

5.2 The appropriate composition of a committee would be: [14]

A minimum of three academics who have an acquaintance with the ethical requirements of research on human participants;[15]

At least one of whom should be from a cognate discipline;[16]

Representative membership as far as possible (race, gender, etc.).[17]

The feasibility of including a lay member at levels below the Faculty REC will be assessed after one year of this policy coming into effect.

5.3 The tasks of the research ethics committee of the academic unit will include:

perusal of every relevant new project;
advising on ethical considerations;
granting approval (ethical clearance) for projects to proceed;
communicating resultant decisions to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

5.4 Academic unit procedures should include:

- a clear statement on the professional codes of research ethics to which student and staff are expected to be accountable, over and above the UCT
- Code of Ethics on Research Involving Human Participants;
- a statement of procedure for obtaining ethical clearance from the academic unit;
- teaching on research ethics involving human participants at a graduate and an undergraduate level;
- and at a graduate or academic unit level, a consideration of debates regarding the interpretation of codes of ethics.

5.5 Accountability to the Faculty for decisions made: Decisions and debates need to be reported on to the REC annually

[14] What follows is drawn largely from guidelines for Institutional Review Boards that have emerged in recent years, based on widespread experience of identifying ways of dealing with the more difficult aspects of assessing research on human participants.

[15] To allow for sufficient debate and insight and a reasonable consensus.

[16] To allow for wider judgements and experience and to facilitate a growing level and depth of expertise within

the faculty.

[17] To allow for a more sensitive approach to ideological aspects of research on human participants.

5.6 Where it is not appropriate for a department or other academic unit to have its own research ethics sub-committee or structure – because of the nature of its work does not involve research on human participants; or because such research is too infrequent or unusual to warrant it – relevant research should be directed toward the Faculty REC for clearance.

5.7 Larger departments or academic unit (or cognate groupings of such if this is best), where considerable research on human participants takes place and solid expertise in research ethics exists, should nominate a competent person to be part of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee, in order to maximize the expertise in the REC and its competence to make relevant and fitting judgements.

6. Communication and education

A key issue in the successful implementation of this policy involves ongoing communication within Departments and other academic units on matters pertaining to research ethics, and within the Faculty REC as such.

6.1 Reporting on all decisions made in the course of each semester on all research projects may be made simpler by providing each Department or academic unit with a simple website template (perhaps set up with the assistance of CHED), accessible only to that unit and the REC.

6.2 Such a template could include:

- a list of current staff and student research projects; a brief description of research goals and methods;
- issues highlighted for ethical consideration,
- the name of the person signing off on the decision to approve the project, and
- notes (e.g. of problems arising, or other approval received from elsewhere[18]).

6.3 A website would also be a useful place to include resources on research ethics, and a forum for discussion within Departments or other academic units.

6.4 Discussion and comparison is needed within the Faculty of key cases and issues. In this regard, an annual interdepartmental and interfaculty seminar on research ethics is proposed (possible themes, for example, include: research involving

[18] That researchers need ethical approval from more than one body is by no means unusual.

children; research on HIV/Aids; the protection of 'indigenous' or traditional knowledge; the complexities of research on businesses and livelihoods).

7. Constitution and functions of the REC

7.1 Authority

The REC is a sub-committee of the Faculty Research Committee; it reports in the first place, via the Chair, to the Deputy Dean for Research, who acts on behalf of the Dean.

7.2 Membership

7.2.1 The REC should consist of one committee member from every large department, other academic unit or cognate grouping, as identified in 5.1 above, together with a chair and deputy chair who shall be appointed by the Dean, either from such identified members or otherwise, with the Chair representing the REC ex officio on the Faculty Research Committee.

7.2.2 The members should represent the broad spread of disciplines or cognate disciplines within the Faculty.

7.2.3 The REC may, where necessary, co-opt additional members from time to time who would offer particular expertise in specific cases.

7.2.4 The REC should be as balanced as possible in terms of gender and racial criteria.

7.2.5 A competent lay person from outside the university should be a member of the REC, as an honorary appointment by the Dean.[19]

7.2.6 The REC should not exceed 12 (twelve) members, and not be less than 6 members.

7.3 Responsibilities of Members

Members of the REC should:

7.3.1 attend all standing and special meetings of the REC as a matter of course;[20]

[19] To allow for someone without vested interests in the university community to assist in making judgements.

7.3.2 contributing to its general work as required;

7.3.3 be tasked with ensuring full participation from the departments or groups they represent;

7.3.4 report on processes and decisions in that Department or other academic unit in order to increase the committee's general knowledge and under-standing of what is happening in the Faculty in respect of research ethics;

7.3.5 report on the inclusion of teaching on research ethics, e.g. in graduate courses.

7.3.6 undertake to maintain confidentiality on all cases that it deals with

7.4 Executive Powers of the REC

7.4.1 Where control over ethics procedures and protocols appears inadequate, the REC may nominate a subcommittee of representatives to assist that Department or academic unit in developing a set of procedures. Such a subcommittee would comprise Faculty members whose areas of research are close to that of the academic unit in question.

7.4.2 Where decisions have been found to be inadequate, the REC would be responsible for review.

7.4.3 The Senate ethics committee could be a further resort for problems or difficulties that cannot be resolved internally (e.g. because there is dispute about what is required for a particular piece of research).

7.4.4 Should it become clear that approval has been given for research projects that seem clearly problematic and/or potentially harmful to research participants or the University, the REC may recommend appropriate action to the Dean, who may instruct the REC to act on the Dean's behalf (See section 7.5).

7.4.5 The REC will carry out an annual audit of research ethics procedures, practices and decisions in the Faculty, based on reports from departments or other

[20] Currently four standing meetings per annum (quarterly) are held, but this might need to increase as Faculty activity around research ethics grows.

academic units, such audit to be communicated to the Senate Ethics in Research Committee as well.

7.4.6 The REC is responsible for overseeing that relevant Faculty or University wide policies are communicated to all concerned, including providing accessible information on policies that have to do with the ethics of authorship, intellectual property, and inappropriate behaviour (e.g. sexual harassment, unprofessional conduct, in the process of conducting research).

7.4.7 The REC will attempt to assist all those who need it to develop their competence in handling the ethics of research in human participants, either by virtue of competence held within it, or by recommending other programmes or avenues.

Normally this does not include students per se, who should be receiving this training as part of their degree studies.

7.5 What happens in the case of unethical behaviour?

7.5.1 Any dispute or allegation of misconduct with regard to ethics in research must be dealt with promptly.

7.5.2 An Advisor may be appointed by the Deputy Dean of Research in the Faculty.

This person will offer unbiased support to the complainant and will assist with the appropriate processes for resolving the matter or escalating it. The complainant has the right to confidentiality if necessary. If the complainant is a student, the Deputy Dean of Research shall appoint the Graduate Director as the Advisor.

7.5.3 Attempts should be made to resolve the matter by reasonable discussion among those involved.

7.5.4 If not resolved, the REC shall act as mediators to investigate and attempt to resolve the matter.

7.5.5 If the matter involves a member of the REC, she or he shall recuse themselves.

7.5.6 If for any reason any party involved in the dispute should object to such mediation, the Deputy Dean for Research shall be informed and shall nominate a senior

researcher, who is acceptable to all parties, to act as mediator.

7.5.7 If necessary, the Deans may take other steps to attempt to resolve the matter.

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7.5.8 The University's policy on this may be found at http://www.uct.ac.za/about/policies#research.

7.6 Administrative Support

Administrative support is usually given by the Servicing Officer for the Faculty's Research Committee.

Administrative support for the most basic functions of the proposed policy of subsidiarity outlined here should include the following:[21]

7.6.1 Secretarial service to the REC for its operations, including meetings, seminars and educational events; as a first point of contact in relation to queries from departments, units, institutes and other bodies or persons (e.g. researchers from outside the university); and for document and record keeping.

7.6.2 Support for website management, in particular, updating records, protocols and procedures, and electronic publication of other relevant items.

[21] Note, were the Faculty to process all ethical issues for research on human participants through a central committee such as the existing REC, as happens for example in the Faculty of Health Sciences, administrative support and cost implications would necessarily be very substantial.

APPENDIX B: UCT RESEARCH ETHICS CODE FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

A PREAMBLE

UCT sets itself the aim of doing research

- with scholarly integrity and excellence with social sensitivity and responsibility
- with respect for the dignity and self-esteem of the individual and for basic human rights
- with reference to clearly specified standards of conduct and procedures that ensure proper accountability

In the pursuit of this ideal, UCT subscribes to the interdependent principles of scholarly responsibility, integrity and honesty, of human dignity and of academic freedom and openness. In the research context, these principles manifest in the relationships between the researcher and

- the research community and its ethos
- research participants
- society as a whole
- sponsors of research

UCT affirms the requirement that all research involving human participants be subject to prior ethics review, according to faculty guidelines. Review might entail either the approval of research proposals or appropriate deliberative procedures for researchers.

B RESEARCHERS AND THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

a. Research should be carried out in a scholarly and responsible manner. Researchers must recognize their responsibility for
   - The design, methodology and execution of their research; o Planning so that the findings have a high degree of validity;
   - Indicating where appropriate the possibility of alternative interpretations;
   - Reporting findings, and their limitations, to ensure accessibility and opportunities for peer-review.

b. No single research paradigm is preferred. Researchers have the right to research from a variety of paradigms and to use a range of methods and techniques.

c. In reporting findings, researchers should adhere to the principles of honesty, clarity, comprehensiveness, accountability and openness to public scrutiny.

d. Discipline-specific codes of ethics should be acknowledged and honoured when conducting research in those disciplines.
e. Ethics clearance is linked to a particular Principal Investigator and falls away when the Principal Investigator leaves the project before it is completed. Standard Operating Procedures must address this point and ensure that an application for an amendment to the proposal is made if a new Principal Investigator is to be appointed.

C THE RESEARCH PROCESS

a. When planning research, researchers should consider and articulate the ethical acceptability and foreseeable consequences of their research in the research proposal.
b. Researchers should keep in mind the requirement of prior research ethics review and clearance when planning the timeframes for their research.
c. Research participants should not be harmed in the course of or as a consequence of research, except in those cases in which the research participants have no moral claim not to be harmed in the ways that the research may harm them. Researchers wishing undertake research that may harm participants must demonstrate that, according to faculty guidelines, the participants have no moral claim not to be harmed in the relevant ways.
d. Research participants should give informed, voluntary consent, when appropriate, to participation in research. Researchers should provide information that explains the aims and implications of the research project, the nature of participation and any other considerations that might reasonably be expected to influence their willingness to participate. This information must be provided in language that is understandable to the potential participants. Note: this point does not preclude research that uses observation or deception as part of its methodology but such research must comply with best practice ethics codes within the specific discipline.
e. Researchers should respect the right of individuals to refuse to participate or, having agreed to participate, to withdraw their consent at any stage without prejudice.
f. Researchers must minimise or avoid exposure of participants to foreseeable legal, physical, psychological, or social harm or suffering that might be experienced in the course of research. The risk of harm and the likelihood of direct benefit to participants must be discussed as part of the consent process. Researchers should be especially sensitive to the interests and rights of vulnerable populations such as minors, elderly persons, very poor and/or illiterate persons.
g. The privacy and confidentiality interests of participants must be taken into account in the research process. Subject to c. above, information that may identify individual persons should not be used in research findings unless the person has expressly agreed to its release, having had the opportunity to consider the implications of such

release.

D CODES FOR RESEARCH ETHICS

UCT is committed to upholding this Code, but recognises that research is a human endeavour and, as such, is dependent also on discretionary decisions for which individual researchers must accept ethical and scholarly responsibility. The scholarly and ethical standards of researchers are central to the research endeavour and efforts to sustain and develop these standards are integral components of research at UCT. This Code and the more detailed discipline-specific versions aim to be educative rather than coercive in raising awareness of the standards and ethos that imbue research at UCT. However, researchers are expected to comply with the various codes and policies. Breaches or violations of the codes policies are dealt with in accordance with the Research Misconduct procedures.

Minimum procedural standards (or Standard Operating Procedures) are required in each discipline-specific code. Note: before research may be conducted using UCT students or staff members, both ethics clearance and permission to access contact details must be obtained: see *Ethics Clearance and Permission to Access: Standard Operating Procedure*.

Ethical reasoning requires thought, insight, sensitivity and familiarity with various research ethics codes. As with scholarly work, peer-review is important. Ethics peer-review includes the larger intellectual community, society at large, and research participants. Seeking ethics clearance should be seen as an opportunity for informed ethical reflection and discussion with peers who are familiar with the relevant ethics codes.

In this spirit, ethics review is required in terms of the principles of this Code, as supplemented by discipline-specific codes, for

- research undertaken by staff and students of the university that involve participation by humans;
- research undertaken by researchers external to the university that involve members of the university as participants.

Note: research that proposes to use current students and/or staff as participants must undergo ethics clearance procedures. In addition, as a separate process, permission to access contact details of students and/or staff members must be obtained. In the case of students, application should be made to the Executive Director (ED) of Student Affairs; for staff members, application should be made to the ED of Human Resources.

Faculty-level Research Ethics Committees are charged with responsibility for processing ethics clearance and for reporting to the Senate-level Ethics in Research Committee.
Faculty-level committees may devolve this responsibility to department-level committees.

E RESEARCHERS AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE

The university is committed to conducting research that will contribute to health and quality of life and that strives to serve humanity and South African society as a whole rather than any sectional interest, unless otherwise justified.

The University of Cape Town recognises society's right of timely access to research findings and to open debate on their implications. Consequently, UCT is committed to upholding the principle that research findings should be made responsibly and freely available to the public and not be unreasonably withheld.

F RESEARCHERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The University is committed to conducting ethical research while being mindful of its responsibilities towards the environment.

G CONTRACT RESEARCH

Contract research is subject to this policy, the codes for research ethics and UCT's contract research policies. Any remuneration for researchers must be specified in research contracts. All conflicts of interest must be declared.

[Last updated March 2012]

http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/policies/humanresearch_ethics_policy.pdf

APPENDIX C: STATEMENT OF VALUES FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN AND ITS MEMBERS

https://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/policies/UCT_Statement_of_Values.pdf

Council 6 June 2001 and 15 June 2013
Institutional Forum 26 September 2001 and May 2013

The University is a community of scholars, teachers, students and staff. A community implies the shared acceptance by its members of common values. The concept of values implies not only rights but also obligations, for the community itself and for its individual members.

The Statement of Values provides a framework that informs and governs what is considered by the University community to be appropriate and acceptable behaviour.The Statement also serves as the foundation for a range of University policies and guides the management of particular aspects of University life.

As a community, the University commits itself, and aspects all its members, to exemplify and uphold these values and to reflect them not only in institutional and personal relationships, but also in all other aspects of University life, including work, sport, recreation, and cultural, intellectual, religious and other activities.

As a value-based community, we aspire to an encompassing ethos which:

- Promotes academic excellence and the attainment of the institutional goal of becoming a world-class African University.
- Preserves what is valuable in the history of the institution and of his country, and responds to the challenges posed by past injustices and unfair discrimination.
- Achieves social transformation, empowerment and participative governance.
- Affirms and protects the fundamental human rights enshrined in the Constitution.
- Encourages the institution and all its members to accept responsibility for the welfare of the community and for behaving in accordance with these community values.

Values

We commit ourselves to:

- Truth, fairness, consistency, and integrity in both academic and other work, and in all personal and institutional relationships.
- Compassion, generosity and concern for the needs and the aspirations of others, and in particular for the changes faced by less privileged in our society.

- Respect and tolerance for cultural, religious, political, and other differences and acknowledgement of the value of diversity in society.
- Respect for individual privacy, dignity, and the right to personal choice.
- Intellectual honesty, vigour in debate, openness to alternate ideas and respect for other views, beliefs and opinions.
- Commitment to high standards, personal fulfillment and the pursuit of excellence.
- The protection and responsible use of the University's assets and resources.
- Concern for the personal safety, health and welfare of all members of the community.
- The protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources.

APPENDIX D: USEFUL FORMS

The following pages contain two useful forms for your use.

1. The first is the standard form from the Faculty of Humanities for **Ethical Clearance for Research Involving Human Participants**.
It is recommended that all researchers use this unless there are reasons for using another form or undergoing an approved different ethics deliberation process.

2. The second form is a **Sample Consent Form**.
This form cannot be photocopied as is, and it should be modified to meet the needs of the particular piece of research. This may take the form of creating two rather than one document (see below).

It is **important to note** that a Consent Form, on its own, is not enough. The information required under the labels *What's involved, Risks, Benefits, Costs,* and *Payment* has to do with providing the subject(s) of research with clear and unambiguous information about the research and all of its implications for the subject(s). In other words, as a general rule, consent has to be 'informed consent'.

The Faculty strongly endorses this principle. However, there may be some instances where research requires legitimate deception (which must be carefully explained and justified in research protocols), an informed consent procedure may be inappropriate. Please discuss these matters with your academic unit's ethics committee to find out best practice under such circumstances, and keep a record of the decision. If there is uncertainty, the committee will seek advice from the Faculty Ethics Committee.

It is not unusual for researchers to generate *two* documents to cover these needs:

- an ***Information Sheet*** that outlines the nature of the research, what it involves (e.g. how long it will take, participants' roles and rights – including to withdraw without penalty), risks, benefits, costs and payments (even if there is none, this should be stated);
- and a simple ***Consent Form*** for signature, which includes an acknowledgement that one has seen the Information Sheet, read it, and understood it.

See the Centre for Popular Memory's site for an example of a **Copyright Release Form**:
http://www.cpm.uct.ac.za/resources/

Not all research makes use of written consent forms. For example, where participants

are illiterate, an informed consent form might not be the best way of recording consent. Here, other methods for obtaining consent must be sought and a record kept. ***However please note that if the research is medical, the National Health Act requires written informed consent in all instances.***

University of Cape Town
Faculty of Humanities

Ethical Clearance for Research Involving Human Participants

Section A – Proposal & researcher details

1. Title of the proposal:

_____

_____

_____

2. Has this protocol been submitted to any other Ethical Review Committee (REC)?	Yes	No
2.1 If so, list which institutions and any reference numbers	_____ _____ _____ _____	
2.2 What was/were the outcome/s of these applications?	_____ _____ _____	
3. Is this proposal is being submitted for ethical clearance for research related to or expanding on research previously approved by the Faculty of Humanities REC?	Yes	No
3.1 If so, what was the previous REC reference number?		

4. Researcher Details

4.1 Principal Researcher:

Title	Initials & Last Name	Department and Institution	
	Phone	Email	
	Signature		Date

4.2 UCT Principal Researcher (If different to 4.1 above)

Title	Initials & Last Name	Department and Institution	
	Phone	Email	
	Signature		Date

4.3 Co-researchers:

Title	Initials & Last Name	Department and Institution	
	Phone	Email	
	Signature		Date

Title	Initials & Last Name	Department and Institution	
	Phone	Email	
	Signature		Date

Title	Initials & Last Name	Department and Institution	
	Phone	Email	
	Signature		Date

5. Is the research being undertaken for a higher degree?	Yes	No
If yes,		
5.1 What degree?		
5.2 Student name:		
5.3 Supervisor name:		
5.4 In what department is the degree?		

Section B – Checklist

	Tick	
Detailed research proposal	3 hard copies + electronic copy	
Covering letter and all other relevant correspondence	3 hard copies + electronic copy	
Consent forms (include translations if indicated)	3 hard copies + electronic copy	
Subject/s information sheet (if separate from consent form)	3 hard copies + electronic copy	
Approval from Head of Department or Research Grouping (signature)	Departmental stamp	

Section C – Research information

15. Estimated number of participants:

16. Estimated duration of study:

17. Location of study:

Section D – Financial and Contractual Information

18. Is the study being sponsored or funded?	Yes	No
If yes		
19.1 Who is the sponsor/funder of the study?		
19.2 What is the total budget / sponsorship for the study?		
19.3 Into what fund is the sponsorship being paid		
19.4 Are there any restrictions or conditions attached to publication and/or presentation of the study results?	Yes	No
19.5 Does the contract specifically recognise the independence of the researchers involved?	Yes	No

(Note that any such restrictions or conditions contained in funding contracts must be made available to the Committee along with the proposal.)		

Section E - Statement on Conflict of Interest

The researcher is expected to declare to the Committee the presence of any potential or existing conflict of interest that may potentially pose a threat to the scientific integrity and ethical conduct of any research in the Faculty. The committee will decide whether such conflicts are sufficient as to warrant consideration of their impact on the ethical conduct of the study.

Disclosure of conflict of interest does not imply that a study will be deemed unethical, as the mere existence of a conflict of interest does not mean that a study cannot be conducted ethically. However, failure to declare to the Committee a conflict of interest known to the researcher at the outset of the study will be deemed to be unethical conduct.

Researchers are therefore expected to sign *either* of the two declarations below.

a) As the Principal Researcher in this study (name:_____), I hereby declare that I am **not aware** of any potential conflict of interest which may influence my ethical conduct of this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

b) As the Principal Researcher in this study (name: _____), I hereby declare that I am **aware** of potential conflicts of interest which should be considered by the Committee:

Signature: _____ Date:_____

Below is a sample consent form[9] that you can adapt to suit your particular research project.[1]

University of Cape Town
Faculty of Humanities

Sample Consent Form

Title of research project:

Names of principal researchers:

Department/research group address:

Telephone:

Email:

Name of participant:

Nature of the research:

_____

[1] Based on the standard consent form of the British Patient database for research and training, www.patsy.ac.uk/www/Consent.doc.

Participant's involvement

What's involved:
Risks:
Benefits:
Costs:

- I agree to participate in this research project.
- I have read this consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions about them.
- I agree to my responses being used for education and research on condition my privacy is respected, subject to the following:
- I understand that my personal details may be included in the research / will be used in aggregate form only, so that I will not be personally identifiable (*delete as applicable.*)
- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this project.
- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.
- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Signature of Participant / Guardian (if under 18): _____

Name of Participant / Guardian: _____

Signature of person who sought consent: _____

Name of person who sought consent: _____

Signatures of principal researchers: a)_____ (name)

b)_____ (name)

c)_____ (nam

Date: _____

APPENDIX E: RESEARCH ETHICS RESOURCES

All UCT research projects are expected to abide by the UCT Code of Ethics Involving Human Participants *as a minimum standard. The disciplinary codes listed here are guidelines to additional standards that are likely to be appropriate for departments' research, but depending on the nature of the research and methodology different codes of ethics may apply. It is up to the researcher to ascertain which codes of ethics ought to be consulted as primary guidelines.*

African & Gender Studies, Anthropology & Linguistics

Please select the resources appropriate to your academic unit and project.

African Studies
http://www.africanstudies.uct.ac.za/cas/academic

African Studies Association
Guidelines of the African Studies Association for Members' Ethical Conduct in Research and Other Professional Undertakings in Africa:
http://www.africanstudies.org/about-asa/ethical-guidelines

Linguistics
British Association for Applied Linguistics
Recommendations on Good Practice in Applied Linguistics:
http://www.baal.org.uk/dox/goodpractice_full.pdf
Keren Rice, University of Toronto
Ethical Issues in Linguistic Fieldwork – An Overview:
http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/lingfieldwork/pdf/2.pdf

Social Anthropology
Anthropology Southern Africa
Ethical Guidelines and Principles of Conduct for Anthropologists:
http://www.socanth.uct.ac.za/research/research-ethics
American Anthropological Association
Code of Ethics: http://www.aaanet.org/profdev/ethics/
American Society for Applied Anthropology
Ethical and Professional Responsibilities: http://www.sfaa.net/sfaaethic.html
Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth:
http://www.theasa.org/ethics.shtml

Dance

Australian Dance Council
Code of Ethics for Dance Teachers: http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/code-of-ethics-for-dance-teachers
Royal Academy of Dance Canada
Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers of Dance:
http://www.radcanada.org/studiodirectory/codeofethics.htm

Drama

Association for Theatre in Higher Education (American)
A Code for Teachers of Theatre in Higher Education:
http://www.athe.org/associations/12588/files/EthicsCode.pdf

Education

Ethics form to be completed for any research involving human subjects: http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/educate/download/ethicsform.rtf
British Educational Research Association
Research Guidelines: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/Ethical%20Guidelines
National Education Association (American)
Code of Ethics of the Education Profession: www.nea.org/assets/docs/2013-NEA-Handbook-Code-of-**Ethics** .pdf
University of Cape Town School of Education
Ethics resources for education students:
http://www.education.uct.ac.za/edu/resources

English Language & Literature

See general list on page 50

Film & Media Studies

Students from CFMS are required to complete the departmental Ethics Form in consultation with their supervisor. The form is available on the CFMS Postgrad Vula site. Please consult the following additional resources as needed:

Association of Internet Researchers Ethics Guide
http://aoir.org/documents/ethics-guide/
Ethics in Film
The Online Journal for Teaching Ethics with Film:
http://www.colorado.edu/philosophy/eif/
journalism.co.za
Codes of ethics and guidelines: http://www.journalism.co.za/codes-&-guidelines.html
Code of ethics and conduct for South African print and online media
http://www.presscouncil.org.za/ContentPage?code=PRESSCODE
Society of Professional Journalists (American)
Media Ethics Online: http://www.stlouisspj.org/ethics.htm
South African National Editors' Forum
SANEF Guidelines: http://www.sanef.org.za/programmes/ethics/

Fine Art

Association des illustrateurs et illustratrices du Québec (site in English)
Code of Ethics: http://www.illustrationquebec.com/sites/default/files/iq-code-of-ethics.pdf
College Art Association (American)
Professional Practices for Artists: http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/practices.html
A Code of Ethics for Art Historians and Guidelines for the Professional Practice of Art History: http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/histethics.html
Curators' Committee (American)
Curator's Code of Ethics: http://www.curcom.org/ethics.php
Forensic Art
Code of Ethics for Forensic Artists: http://www.forensicartist.com/IAI/ethics.html

Historical Studies

Link to departmental research ethics guidelines:
http://www.historicalstudies.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/149/150/HSTEthicsGuidelines.pdf
Copyright release/consent form for interviews:
http://www.historicalstudies.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/149/Ethics%20form.pdf
Materials release form for depositing materials such as photos, documents or interview collections:

http://www.historicalstudies.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/149/Materials%2BReleaseForm.pdf
Student/supervisor joint ethics statement form (signed-off after the ethical clearance of proposal)
http://www.historicalstudies.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/149/student%20and%20supervisor%20joint%20statement%20-%20ethics.pdf

American Association for State and Local History
Statement of Professional Standards and Ethics: http://www.aaslh.org/ethics.htm
American Historical Association
Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct:
http://www.historians.org/pubs/Free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm
Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations
Code of Ethics and Professional Standards:
http://www.historians.org.au/acpha/bm~doc/code-2.pdf
Oral History Society (British)
Ethical Guidelines for interviewers and custodians of oral history: http://www.oralhistory.org.uk/ethics.php
Centre for Popular Memory
Copyright and material release forms:
http://popularmemory.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=32&I temid=22
National Council on Public History (American) http://ncph.org/cms/?page_id=40
Oral History Association (American)
Evaluation Guidelines: http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/oral-history-evaluation-guidelines-revised-in-2000/

Languages & Literatures

Modern Languages Association
Statement of Professional Ethics:
http://www.mla.org/resources/documents/rep_profethics/repview_profethics

Library & Information Studies

Departmental information
http://www.lisc.uct.ac.za/lisc-ethics-approval-process

American Library Association

Code of Ethics: http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics

Chartered Institute of Library and Information (CILIP)

Code of Professional Practice for Library and Information Professionals http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/policy/ethics/pages/code.aspx

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

Code of Ethics, by Country: http://www.ifla.org/faife/professional-codes-of-ethics-for-librarians#nationalcodes

Music

Incorporated Society of Musicians (American)

Performers & Composers Section Code of Ethics: http://www.ism.org/advice/article/ism_code_of_practice_for_performers_and_comp osers

International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians

Code of Ethical Audition Practices: http://www.icsom.org/manual/docs/13D-audition-code-of-ethics.pdf

The National Association for Music Education (American)

The Music Code of Ethics: http://musiced.nafme.org/about/position-statements/the-music-code-of-ethics/

Philosophy

American Philosophical Association

Statements on the Profession: http://www.apaonline.org/APAOnline/About_APA/Statements/APAOnline/About_The_APA/Statements/Statements.aspx

Political Studies

Registered students, please see departmental Vula site.

American Political Science Association

Ethics in Political Science: https://www.apsanet.org/section_513.cfm

British International Studies Association

Code of Conduct: http://www.bisa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62&Itemi

d= 186

Psychology

Departmental site
http://www.psychology.uct.ac.za/psy/studentresources

American Psychological Association
Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct: http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx
British Psychological Society
Code of Ethics and Conduct: http://www.bps.org.uk/what-we-do/ethics-standards/ethics-standards
The Professional Board for Psychology, Health Professions Council of South Africa
Ethical Rules of Conduct:
http://www.hpcsa.co.za/downloads/ethical_rules/ethical_rules_of_conduct_2011.pdf

Religious Studies

Departmental site
http://www.religion.uct.ac.za/religion/postgraduates/ethicsclearance

Social Development

American National Association of Social Workers
Code of Ethics: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp
International Federation of Social Workers
Ethics in Social Work – Statement of Principles: http://ifsw.org/policies/statement-of-ethical-principles/
National Codes of Ethics: http://ifsw.org/resources/publications/national-codes-of-ethics/
South African Council for Social Service Professions
Code of Ethics: http://www.sacssp.co.za/website/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Code-of-Ethics.pdf

Sociology

Departmental site
http://www.sociology.uct.ac.za/research-ethics
American Association of Public Opinion Research
Ethics and Standards: http://www.aapor.org/Standards_and_Ethics/5102.htm
American Sociological Association
Code of Ethics:
http://www.asanet.org/page.ww?section=Ethics&name=Code+of+Ethics+Table+of+Contents
Association of Applied and Clinical Sociology
Code of Ethics: http://www.asanet.org/about/ethics.cfm
British Sociological Association
Statement of Ethical Practice: http://www.britsoc.co.uk/about/equality/statement-of-ethical-practice.aspx
Human Sciences Research Council
Code of Research Ethics: http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/about/research-ethics/code-of-research-ethics
International Sociological Association
Code of Ethics: http://www.isa-sociology.org/about/isa_code_of_ethics.htm
Statutes: http://www.isa-sociology.org/about/isa_statutes.htm

Research Groupings

African Cinema Unit *see Film and Media Studies*
African Gender Institute Centre for African Studies
see African Studies
Centre for Contemporary Islam *see Religious Studies*
Centre for Creative Writing *see English Language & Literature*
Centre for Curating the Archive *see Fine Art*
Centre for Popular Memory see Historical Studies
Centre for Rhetoric Studies *see Film and Media Studies*
Centre for Social Science Research
Gordon Institute for Performing AND Creative Arts (GIPCA) Institute for Comparative Religion in Southern Africa (ICRSA)
see Religious Studies
Institute for Humanities in Africa (HUMA)
Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research *see Religious Studies*
Lucy Lloyd Archive Resource & Exhibition Centre (LLAREC) *see Fine Art*

General

American Association of University Professors
Statement on Profession Ethics:
http://www.aaup.org/report/statement-professional-ethics
American Statistical Association
Ethics Guidelines for Statistical Practice:
http://www.amstat.org/about/ethicalguidelines.cfm
Association of American Universities
Framework for Institutional Policies and Procedures to Deal With Fraud in Research: http://www.aau.edu/news/reports.aspx?id=7322
Authorship Guidelines, University of Cape Town
http://www.uct.ac.za/about/policies#research
The Belmont Report
http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html
Canadian Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans: http://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/
The Center for Academic Integrity http://www.academicintegrity.org/
EthicsWeb.ca
Creating a Code of Ethics for Your Organisation: http://www.ethicsweb.ca/codes/
The Social Research Association
Ethical Guidelines: http://the-sra.org.uk/sra_resources/research-ethics/ethics-guidelines/
Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, University of British Columbia
Ethical Principles in University Teaching:
http://cll.mcmaster.ca/programs/faculty_and_instructors/ethical_principles.html
Stanford Human Research Protection Program Policies and Procedures
http://humansubjects.stanford.edu/hrpp/manual.html
United States Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Human Research Protections: http://www.hhs.gov/ohr