



Ethics Committee

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1. Introduction

UPES is a State Private University established in the year 2003 through UPES Act (2003) of the State Legislature of Uttarakhand and listed under Section 2(f) of UGC Act. The University is multidisciplinary with eight Schools focused on Engineering, Computer Science, Design, Law, Business, Health Sciences, Modern Media and Liberal Arts. Located in Dehradun, Uttarakhand with an area of over 40 acres across 2 campuses, the University offers over 141 programs to more than 12000 students and employs over 1000 faculty and staff. UPES is NAAC Grade A accredited University with five of its School of Engineering programs NBA accredited as well.

The NIRF 2021 ranked the University amongst Top 100 Universities in India (Rank 100) with School of Engineering ranked at 91, School of Law at 25 and School of Management at 46.

The university is QS Four-Star rated, as well as the first University to receive the IACBE accreditation for two of its School of Business programs. Apart from this the institution has been awarded the Advanced E-LEAD (E-Learning Excellence in Academic Digitization) certification by the QS I-GAUGE ranking agency, and has been ratified as a 'Great Place to Work' by the Great Place to Work® Institute.

2. Background

Research is defined as "the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions". The policy covers all research involving human participants, their tissues or data, but it should also be applied more broadly, to activities such as enterprise and innovation or service evaluation and audit where there are material ethical issues.

These policies applies to all studies carried out in connection with UPES, by staff and students. For studies where external ethical approval has been secured, there is no need to duplicate this process. The relevant University Ethics Committee shall be notified of the approval, and provided with a copy of the approval. The Ethical Committee shall ensure that no further approval is required for the study.

This policy applies to all those conducting research within, or on behalf of the University, including staff, persons holding honorary University appointments, visiting researchers, undergraduate, and postgraduate taught and research students (including visiting scholars and students).

In cases where a research project is being conducted by academics from more than one institution, it is expected that the relevant ethical clearance for the project is sought from the lead institution (normally the institution at which the Principal Investigator is employed) and

that other partner institutions are informed of outcomes and issues.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish and promote the highest possible standards of ethical practice in the conduct of academic research.
- 3.2 The University is committed to protecting the rights, dignity, safety and privacy of research subjects, the wellbeing of animals and ensuring the protection of the environment. It is also concerned that risks to the health and safety of researchers is minimized and their academic freedom is maintained
- 3.3 The Institutional Ethics Committee of UPES will review and approve all types of research proposals involving human participants with a view to safeguard the dignity, right, safety and well-being of all actual and potential research participants. The goals of research, however important, would never be permitted to override the health and well-being of the research subjects.

4. Guidelines

- 4.1 Researcher associated with UPES should approach the Ethics Committee for approval. The ethical review process should ensure compliance with the following policy documents of UPES.
 - Policy for Promotion of Research
 - Plagiarism Policy
 - Patent Policy
 - Consultancy Policy
- 4.2 The University requires the ethical review of all research projects involving primary research with human beings (or their data), irrespective of funding source in the majority of cases, a review would be undertaken by an Research Ethics Committee.
- 4.3 All projects involving living persons, human tissues, or data or tissues relating to recently deceased persons, or animals (including animals living in their natural habitat) should have a serious research, educational or training purpose.
- 4.4 All research involving human participants, human material or human data requires ethical approval. The requirement for ethical review does not include research where information about human participants is publicly and lawfully available (for example census data, population statistics published by government departments, court reports and personal letters/diaries in public libraries).
- 4.5 The University has a Code of Ethics for Research which includes a set of fundamental principles to ensure the protection of human participants.
- 4.6 The University requires that all research falling within the scope of this policy satisfies these principles and the Code of Ethics

- 4.7 University's own policies, committees and sub-committees must take into account relevant professional ethical codes and the policies of research sponsors. In cases where it can be demonstrated that there exists a difference in ethical standards between the University policy and those of the relevant professional body or research sponsor, committees shall apply whichever is considered the highest standard of ethical practice.
- 4.8 Research ethics committees should ensure they are appropriate to the context of the disciplinary mix of research they will be reviewing, the requirements of specific funding or professional bodies, relevant legislative requirements and the anticipated volume of work.
- 4.9 In addition to taking responsibility for reviewing and approving all research falling under its jurisdiction each research ethics committee should develop and approve research ethics toolkits, including standard consent forms, participant information sheets and protocols relating to security, confidentiality, anonymization and retention of data.
- 4.10 All research ethics committees should keep comprehensive records of their proceedings and decisions.

5. Application and Appeals Procedure

5.1 Applications for Ethical approval

5.1.1 In considering applications for ethical approval, Institutional Research Ethics Board ethical committee of the will have regard to the following matters, where they are relevant to the project:

5.1.1.1 The risk of physical, emotional or reputational harm to research participants, and steps to be taken to mitigate it;

5.1.1.2 The risk of physical or emotional harm to the researcher, and steps to be taken to mitigate it;

5.1.1.3 Arrangements for recruiting research participants, and for obtaining informed consent, including, for example, copies of participant information sheets and consent forms;

5.1.1.4 Justifications for the use of observation or covert surveillance, or the employment of methods that are not transparent to research participants;

5.1.1.5 Arrangements for assuring the security and confidentiality of personal data and of any personal artefacts or human tissues collected for the projects, especially any to be stored or processed off-site;

5.1.1.6 Arrangements for retention, anonymization and disposal of personal data, artefacts or tissues at the end of the project or as otherwise required by research sponsors or legal provisions;

5.1.1.7 Arrangements for debriefing research participants;

5.1.1.8 Arrangements for reporting and dealing with any adverse reactions to the

project;

5.1.1.9 Ensuring that Ethical Board checks at the appropriate level (where this is required) are undertaken where researchers propose to work in settings where children or vulnerable adults may be present.

5.1.2 In cases where ethical approval is not granted, or significant modifications to the proposed research are required, detailed written feedback must be provided to the applicant and, in the case of research students, to the student's Director of Studies or Lead Supervisor, whichever is applicable.

5.1.3 Where it is not possible to resolve the issue informally, applicants shall have the right of appeal.

5.2 Appeals

5.2.1 Where there are statutory requirements that dictate different arrangements for considering appeals, these will take precedence over the procedures set out in this Policy.

5.2.2 Researchers who are subject to their own professional code of conduct should note that:

5.2.2.1 Their own ethics policies may be more stringent than those set out in this policy and that their own professional codes will bind the researcher; and

5.2.2.2 Failure to comply with ethics approval may amount to serious professional misconduct which the University is obliged to report to the researcher's professional body.

6. Institutional Research Ethics Board

There shall be Institutional Research Ethics Board to ensure that the research activity carried out by the participant(s) is fully compliant with the regulations of the university regarding research ethics and the protection of human/non-human subjects in research.

The board shall comprise of the following members

- i. Chancellor
- ii. Vice Chancellor
- iii. Dean (Academic / Innovation)
- iv. Director / Dean of the school of the applicant
- v. Dean — R&D