

TUT RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE¹

Date: April 2nd, 2009

1. REPORTING LINE

The Research Ethics Committee (REC) is a standing sub-committee of the Central Research and Innovation Committee (CRIC).

2. FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Evaluate, approve and monitor research that involves humans, animals and the environment within a framework of generally accepted research ethics guidelines; so that the protection of the welfare and rights of humans, animals and the environment can be ensured in the course of research.
2. Evaluate research-related questionnaires intended to be distributed amongst TUT staff members and/or students.
3. Develop and advise on policies related to research ethics.

3. MEMBERSHIP

1. One representative from each Faculty; inclusive of one representative of the Directorate: Higher Education Development and Support. Each Faculty may also nominate one secundus who will attend the REC meeting when the faculty representative is unable to do so.
2. One member who is versed in the laws of the country and the regulations and policies of TUT.
3. One representative of the Directorate: Research, Innovation and Partnerships (DRIP).
4. Chairperson of the Animal Research Ethics Committee.
5. One member who has professional training in qualitative research methodologies.
6. One member who has professional training in statistics.

¹ The following documents contain detailed information regarding the mandate and functioning of the Research Ethics Committee and its standing sub-committees: 1) Policy on Research Ethics, 2) Research Ethics Committee: Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines, and 3) Evaluation of Research-related Questionnaires where Staff Members and/or Students are the Target Respondents.

7. One lay person.
8. Additional members may be co-opted by the REC from relevant interest groups.
9. Chairperson of the CRIC (*ex officio* member).
10. Administrator (non-voting member).

Member type	Number of members
Faculty representatives; RICH representative	8
DRIP representative	1
Lay person	1
Chairperson: Animal Research Ethics Committee	1
Law expert	1
Qualitative Research expert	1
Statistician	1
Co-opted members	Optional
Administrator (non-voting)	1
Chairperson: CRIC (<i>ex officio</i>)	1
Consultants (non-voting)	Optional
TOTAL: Voting members	14 plus Co-opted members
TOTAL: Non-voting members	2 plus Consultants

4. ADMINISTRATOR

The REC administrative office is situated within the DRIP. The Administrator is appointed by the university to ensure that all processes related to the functioning of the REC proceed efficiently.

It will be the responsibility of the Administrator to:

- Receive research proposals and proposal-related documents submitted for ethics review;
- Compile the agenda on behalf of the Chairperson;
- Send the agenda to all REC members at least seven days in advance of the meeting;
- Receive apologies from members who cannot attend the REC meeting;
- Invite the researchers and/or their supervisors whose projects will be evaluated, to attend the REC meeting;
- Keep the minutes of all REC meetings;
- Notify all relevant structures and/or persons on the deliberations of the REC;
- Compile annual reports for submission to: i) DRIP and ii) CRIC;
- Maintain and secure the confidential storage of all REC documents; and
- Arrange and document research site visits and audit visits.

5. NUMBER OF MEMBERS REQUIRED FOR DECISION-MAKING

Quorum: 50% plus one

6. MEETINGS

Timing and frequency of meetings: A minimum of four times a year, but preferably eight times a year.

7. DOCUMENTATION

Documentation for discussion at meetings should:

- Reach the Administrator by the agenda's closing which is usually two weeks before the date of the meeting; and
- Be provided in electronic format.

8. SUB-COMMITTEE: ANIMAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AREC)

1. The AREC evaluates and approves research proposals that involve the use of vertebrate animals.
2. Membership of the AREC:
 - One representative of the Faculty Science. The Faculty may also nominate one secundus who will attend the AREC meeting when the faculty representative is unable to do so.
 - One member who has professional training in quantitative research methodologies.
 - One veterinarian registered with the South African Veterinary Council.
 - One veterinary technologist registered with the South African Veterinary Council.
 - One representative from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NSPCA).
 - Additional members may be co-opted from relevant interest groups.
 - Administrator (non-voting).

Member type	Number of members
Faculty of Science representative	1
Veterinarian	1
Veterinary technologist	1
NSPCA representative	1
Quantitative research expert	1
Co-opted members	Optional
Administrator (non-voting)	1
Chairperson: CRIC (<i>ex officio</i>)	1
TOTAL: Voting members	5 plus Co-opted members
TOTAL: Non-voting members	2

9. SUB-COMMITTEE: QUESTIONNAIRE EVALUATION

1. The Questionnaire Evaluation Sub-Committee evaluates research-related questionnaires intended to be distributed amongst TUT staff members and/or students.
2. Membership of the Questionnaire Evaluation Sub-Committee:
 - Chairperson - elected by the REC.

- One statistician.
- Expert members – co-opted for their expertise in the development and utilisation of questionnaires for research purposes.
- One expert staff member from the faculty where the project is registered.
- Administrator (non-voting).

10. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The REC will evaluate its activities annually by means of a year report. The report will be submitted to the DRIP and CRIC for notification.

REC/Terms of Reference