

Based on Article 4 of the Law on Research-Scientific Activity no. 04/L-135 of the Republic of Kosovo and Article 48 paragraph 1.4. of the Statute of the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj (UASF), the Senate of UASF at the meeting held on 27.04.2022, approves:

REGULATION FOR ESTABLISHING/FUNCTIONING OF RESEARCH ETHIC COMMITTEES (REC)

Article 1

1. INTRODUCTION

The presentation of the understanding of scientific ethics or ethics in science should be based on the understanding contained in the category of *ethics*. Ethics (Greek: *ἠθoς*, ethos - temperament, custom) or in some cases philosophy of morality is a part of philosophy that deals with issues of morality and ethics. Ethics deals with the study and application of the rules of way of life already established in different nations and cultures in human society. In the course of human history, people have repeatedly changed their perceptions of the norm in interpersonal relationships and behaviour. Everyone has his own understanding of the world and on this basis his attitude towards other people is built, as well as towards himself and his surroundings.

The ethics of science includes two main aspects. On the one hand, it is the application of ethical standards to the specific field of science and scientific activity in order to assess and regulate behavior and relations in it, as well as to analyze and solve all emerging value problems. On the other hand, the ethics of science is the professional ethics of scientists, which systematizes the basic values and standards of behavior, as well as their

rights and responsibilities as professionals. The behavior of scientists is regulated in several main types of relationships that build their professional activity:

- 1) Relations between the scientists themselves
- 2) Relations with other countries participating in their activities - employers, guarantors, clients, sponsors, publishers, students, objects of research or activities, etc.
- 3) Relations with society as a whole

The primary responsibility of the research community is to formulate the principles of research, to define the criteria for proper research behavior, to achieve maximum quality and reliability of research and to respond appropriately to threats against or breaches of the integrity of research.

Representatives of the scientific and academic community must follow the principles of scientific integrity and ethics. Within the EU was adopted in 2017 the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. Kosovo in its way of euro-integration has to accept and follow proclaimed principles for research integrity and ethics, and established Research Ethics Committees at the universities to apply these principles.

Article 2

2. PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj is fully committed to the advancement of high-quality academic research and applied research and to ensuring that all research activities undertaken by university employees, or on university premises, are undertaken in compliance with good research practice and ethical principles.

For this reason, the Research and Ethics Committee (REC) established/reinforced at the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj carries a principal role in ensuring that ethical conduct of research undertaken by researchers, students and third parties conducting research on university premises is observed at all times.

If there is a national legislation in this field – should be mentioned

Based on article 4 of the Research-Scientific Activity Act No. 04/L-135 of the Republic of Kosovo and article 48 paragraph 1.4. of the Statute of the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj(USHAF), the Ushaf Senate at the meeting held on 27.04.2022, approves:

If there is a University Code/Regulations for science where requirements to follow the research and science ethics are given, this should be mentioned too

The University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj has approved the code of the ethics where provisions protecting the ethics of research are incorporated.

Article 3

3. RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (REC)

3.1. REC Objectives

The fundamental objective of the Research Ethics Committee is to determine the requirements and standards for ethical conduct of the research within the University, overseeing if the research practice carried out by the researchers, students or third parties on the University's premises and its outcomes are in compliance with determined research ethics standards to the Governing Authority.

Article 4

4. REC DUTIES, FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The REC has the following duties within the HEI:

1. To formulate and set out policies, procedures and best practice documents in relation to ethical research conduct and publishing and ensure that these policies are implemented within the areas of responsibility;
2. To promote and audit the awareness of relevant legislation and ethical principles governing research practice;
3. To foster an environment that encourages taking a responsible and ethical approach in all areas of research conduct and publishing practices;
4. To identify educational needs amongst committee members and researchers related to ethical issues and deliver seminars and trainings to address them;
5. To review best practices in research, consider ethical policy development and promote education within the HEI in matters of research ethics and integrity;

6. To review and report on all submitted applications for ethical review ensuring that the research practices meet the general ethical standards established within the HEI;
7. To audit and review its own functions, procedures and outcomes for the purposes of quality assessment and quality improvement;
8. To determine the standing orders related to governance, quorum, chairmanship etc.

Article 5

5. FUNCTIONS OF THE REC

1. To foster an ethical research culture amongst the university community that embraces the best practice recommendations set out in HEI policies, procedures and guidelines governing research practice and obligations set out in relevant legislation;
2. To provide clear and easily accessible guidance on best ethical practice and regulatory requirements;
3. To offer a support and training to staff, students and third parties engaged in HEI research projects towards enhancing the awareness and maintaining the high ethical standards in research practice;
4. To maintain the ethical review process that allows research projects to be subject to a level of scrutiny in proportion to the ethical risk;
5. To oversee the implementation and audit the HEI research policies and practices, taking an appropriate action where there is evidence of research misconduct.

Article 6

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF REC

The REC is responsible for:

1. Acting in the full interest of research participants and communities, taking into account the needs of the researchers and having a regard for the requirements of relevant regulatory agencies and applicable laws;
2. Conducting an independent, competent and timely review of the proposed research before it is carried out and for ensuring that there is a regular evaluation of the ethics of ongoing research projects that receive their approval.

Article 7

7. PROCEDURE FOR ESTABLISHMENT/CONSTITUTION OF REC AT THE UNIVERSITY

The Commission for Academic Ethics at the University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj is a public body elected by The Academic Council of University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj / Governing Authority of the University, within its mandate, in implementation of the adopted by the university Code of Ethics. Usual practice is Rector to propose to the Academic council/ Assembly names of nominated members. Rector also proposes Chair of the Ethics committee.

The REC consists of 5 or 7 members (depends of the size of the structure/ university) – If there are many scientific areas covered by the university, then it should include one representative from a scientific area, as well as one representative of administrative staff and students.

There are examples where the REC also includes external members in accordance with the specific requirements of a Committee. The REC members might come from different institutions/organisations connected to the university, i.e. from business or Governing Authorities

Research Ethics Committee serves for the duration of the Rector's mandate. If it is 4 years, then -4 years. - There should be maximum mandates for serving – i.e. maximum two mandates (if a mandate is for 4 years, then maximum of 8 years).

The REC reports to the Vice Rector for Science and Rector. If at the university is established a Control Commission – to it too. If there is a Research Ethics Commission at the Ministry of Education and Science – to it too.

All members are expected to uphold the policies and operating procedures of the REC.

REC members are expected to:

1. Assist in the development and implementation of best ethical standards and practices in all research activities undertaken within the HEI;
2. Act to promote the awareness of the University's ethical policies and procedures within, facilitate HEI members to submit appropriate applications and advise on ethical issues relevant to their application;

3. Consider, decide and report on ethical issues related to all categories of research studies undertaken within HEI;
4. Facilitate an ongoing review and discussion on matters of ethical issues and ensure, as best as possible, that they are conversant with all appropriate best practice and legislation.

The REC members are required to fulfill the serving terms.

Serving Terms:

1. Members are required to regularly attend the meetings;
2. Members are required to send apologies/justification by email to the Research Ethics office if they are unable to attend;
3. Members are required to provide comments by email on revisions, application reviews and any other relevant issues required by the Chair of the REC;
4. The work of the REC should be conducted via official HEI communication system that the members are expected to use accordingly for security reasons;
5. Members who do not make a contribution to the work of the Committee, or do not attend three consecutive meetings may, at the discretion of the Committee, may be asked to step down and a replacement member may be sought accordingly.
6. Members have a responsibility to declare any conflict of interest which could affect their role as members of the committee.
7. Members have a responsibility to declare any conflict of interest which could affect their performance and to declare absence from the relevant discussion, i.e. meeting.

Article 8

8. RESIGNING FROM A COMMITTEE - THERE SHOULD BE GIVEN OCCASIONS WHEN A MEMBER MAY RESIGN (DEATH, RETIREMENT, ETC.)

The REC member who intends to resign must, in written, notify the Committee Chair about his/her intention to step down. The REC member who resigns should be removed from all the REC communication lists and should be accordingly replaced with a new qualified member.

Article 9

9. MEETING QUORUM

Usually meeting quorum is with simple majority. If there is a Research Ethics Committee of 5 people, simple and qualified majority equal to 3. Choice for this is more important for bigger number of members.

Each REC meeting must have a quorum in order to proceed with a meeting agenda. To be quorate a committee, meeting must have a simple majority of the current membership in attendance.

Article 10

10. FINAL PROVISIONS

1. This regulation enters into force from the day of approval in the Senate.
2. Changing and supplementing this regulation is done according to the same approval procedure.

Prof. Dr. Agron BAJRAKTARI, Rector

[Signed]

Chairman of the University Senate