



University of Fort Hare  
*Together in Excellence*

## HEALTH RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

### STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR UFH HREC PREPARATION OF MEETINGS AND MEETING PROCEDURES

#### 1. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Version No	Reason for revision
11 July 2018	1	Newly formulated
31 January 2022	2	Updated

#### 2. PURPOSE OF THE SOP

The purpose of the standard operating procedure is to outline the formal preparation and procedures for UFH HREC meetings.

#### 3. SCOPE

The preparation and procedure of UFH HREC meetings.

#### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The UFH HREC office bearer, namely the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and the secretary is responsible for ensuring productive and orderly meetings in order to achieve a set outcome.

#### 5. PROCEDURE(S)

##### 5.1 PREPARATION FOR MEETINGS

- Documents handed in for notification, discussion, evaluation or approval are included in the Agenda and sorted under the respective sections.
- The sections are as follows:
  - Attendees and apologies.
  - Correspondence/Announcements.
  - Ratification of the minutes of the previous meeting held on ...
  - Matters arising.
  - Ratification of conditional approvals after all conditions had been met
  - amendment of projects/proposals.
  - New research projects.
    - The following information is given for each study:
      - Student/researcher name and number
      - Supervisor title initials and name
      - Reviewers

- Project title
- A summary of the study in lay terms
- Attachments of all relevant documents
- Expedited Projects
- Progress Reports
- Extension of the Agenda
- Notice of the Next Meeting

## **6. MEETING PROCEDURES**

- The Committee meets monthly as stipulated in the annual programme.
- The meeting dates and submission dates are determined by November of the preceding year and made known to everyone via e-mail.
- A quorum consists of a simple majority.
- In exceptionally urgent cases, a special meeting may be convened with notice thereof given at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Quorum requirements are applicable.
- The attendance list is signed at the meeting.
- The meeting procedure is recorded and saved on a hard disk for record purposes.
- The Secretary takes the minutes.
- The Chairperson of HREC welcomes all the members at the meeting and proceeds with the Agenda.
- The Minutes of the previous meeting are then submitted for approval and seconded by two members. The members are informed of the correspondence.
- As amendments to previously approved studies are evaluated beforehand by the reviewer(s) of the initial application, the Chair or Deputy Chair, these are merely noted during a meeting. If any enquiry about an amendment were to arise, it is referred to the researcher with a request to react to it. On receipt, it is sent to the reviewer who made the enquiry. If he/she is satisfied, approval is granted and then condoned at the next meeting.
- During the discussion of new projects, one of the committee members presents the research study to the other members. The committee member presenting the research study should preferably be one of the reviewers who evaluated the study. The member presenting the research study also shares the comments made by the reviewers during evaluation and indicates whether the answers to enquiries received from the researcher were accepted. Any member has the opportunity to ask questions and/or comment on the study.
- After all questions are addressed, a final decision is made.
- The Chair announces the matters mentioned by the members for an extension to the Agenda, but only discussed in full at the end of the Agenda.
- If there are matters included in a Supplementary Agenda, they are mentioned as a point under “Extension of the Agenda” and discussed in full at the end of the Agenda.
- Decisions are taken down in writing by the Secretary and relayed to the researcher(s) in correspondence. Researchers are notified via e-mail of the decision regarding their ethics application.
- The Chair informs the committee members of the date of the next meeting and appreciates the members for their cooperation and presence.
- The Minutes of the meeting and the attendance list is finalised by the Secretary and sent to the Chair for verification. Thereafter it is sent to the Committee members.

## **7. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

The UFH HREC adopts as its guiding reference the following documents:

- Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (Department of Health, 2015).
- The Rules for the Management of Research Ethics at the University of South Africa, 2016.