

UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS



RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

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SECTION A

This section covers the scope and fundamental principles of Ethics as practiced in the University. The Objectives of the policy are also highlighted here as well as the core research governance and responsibilities of the University to Researchers.

1. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

- 1.1 The University of Lagos Research Ethics Policy ('the ethics policy') applies to all University staff and registered students (undergraduate or postgraduate) who undertake research activities (including those in a visiting or contract capacity), funded or unfunded, irrespective of whether the research activity takes place within or outside the University premises.
- 1.2 All individuals or third parties (e.g. research subcontractors, collaborators, staff of other institutions) who, although not members of the University, undertake research with University of Lagos staff or students or on its premises, are expected to adhere to the University's ethics standards guiding research conduct.

3.0 FUNDAMENTAL (GUIDING) PRINCIPLES

2. The University of Lagos Research Ethics Policy is guided by a determination to promoting an institutional ethos conducive to the responsible conduct of ethical research driven by integrity, accountability, and promoting intellectual discourse, diversity, while affirming academic freedom, researchers' autonomy, human dignity, non-maleficence, social justice and fairness.

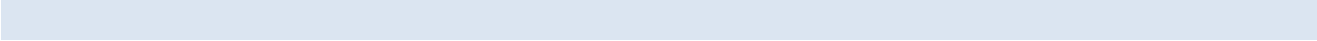
2.1 The fundamental principles guiding this research ethics policy are: respect for persons, autonomy (voluntariness), non-maleficence (do no harm) and beneficence. These principles reflect the importance of respect of research participants, regard for the rights and interests of others, serving the best interests and well-being of others, including humans, animals, and the integrity of the environment.

2.2 The University of Lagos Research Ethics Policy recognizes that the primary responsibility of ethical conduct in research lies with the researchers themselves, and thus devolves the responsibility of operationalizing the policy through research ethics procedures to the Faculties and funding units with the university providing oversight to all research.

2.3 Furthermore, in recognition of the diversity of research activities within the University and the varying ethical issues relating to ethics of research in different specialties/professions, formal ethics reviews of research proposals would best be conducted by the affected Faculties, applying the broader principles outlined in the University Research Ethics Policy.

2.4 Thus, in the process of designing research, researchers are expected to carefully consider the ethical issues that may be raised by their proposed research and provide justification for the procedures involved in the research. Such ethical issues include (but are not necessarily limited to) the following:

- i. The physical health and safety of participants
- ii. The psychological health and safety of participants
- iii. Balance of risks and benefits of the research to humans, animals and the environment
- iv. Human participant autonomy (including informed consent, autonomy of vulnerable subject and those unable to give consent)

- vii. Confidentiality and data protection
 - viii. Intellectual Property Protection
 - ix. Funding sources and relationships to funders (conflict of interest)
 - x. Monitoring and audit of research procedures
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3. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

3.1 The objectives of the research policy are to:

- a) Clearly stipulate the University's position on research ethics for all research conducted under the aegis of the institution
- b) Protect the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of human and animal participants r subjects in research conducted under the auspices of the University of Lagos
- c) Ensure that ethical and intellectual culture prevails in the conduct of research in the institution.

3.2 The University benefits from these core objectives, as the maintenance of good transparent ethics in research will preserve, promote and protect the autonomy, quality, legitimacy and credibility of research conducted in the University of Lagos. By defining the policies for Research Ethics, the Institution has clearly demonstrated a commitment to high quality, transparent and accountable research ethics.

3.3 The Ethics Committee guided by this document, will thus be able to provide guidance on research ethics to all staff and students of the institution. An independent policy of this nature will also strengthen the eligibility and quality of the University research funding applications to qualify for external grants.

3.4 Finally, it is expected that this Policy when in operation will serve to mitigate research misconduct and minimize risk of litigation emanating from breaches of established global norms relating to research ethics. Thus enhancing the University's reputation with the society, within the academic professions and with funding bodies and other stakeholders and policy makers.

5.0 RESEARCH GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The University seeks to ensure that all research for which it has responsibility satisfies the fundamental ethical principles described above and is in consonance with the principles and standards described in this research ethics policy. To facilitate this:
- 5.2 The University shall establish a University Research Ethics committee hereinafter called the UNILAGREC
- 5.3 Each Faculty shall establish a Faculty Research Ethics Committee hereinafter called the FREC as a subcommittee of the Faculty board of studies.
- 5.4 The College of Medicine shall establish a College of Medicine Health Research Ethics Committee. All Faculties at the College of Medicine will operate through the CMUL HREC
- 5.5 Research Governance will encapsulate the conduct of the science and ethics and is the guidance for reviewing ALL research (human, animal and environmental).
- 5.6 The properly constituted University Research Ethics Committee will be registered with the appropriate national and international bodies from where the Faculty Ethics Committee draws from. This is important as the University takes responsibility for ALL research conducted in the University.
- 5.7 The Faculty Research Ethics Committees shall also be properly constituted and work under the guidance of the University Research Ethics Committee.
- 5.8 In recognition of the fact that the primary responsibility for ensuring ethical conduct of research lies with the researchers themselves, all researchers will mandatorily undergo research ethics training relevant to the field of research.

4. INTRODUCTION

The conduct of research is a core organizational value intrinsic to the University of Lagos mission of adding value to humanity through the creation and dissemination of knowledge. The University unequivocally subscribes to the concept that the conduct of research is a key aspect of scholarship. As a leading national tertiary institution, the University of Lagos has a strategic and crucial role in undertaking research that addresses national, regional and global challenges, culminating in the development of paradigms, practices and policies that will be beneficial to humanity.

In achieving its research focus, the University is committed to fostering research practices characterized by excellence, and aspires to the highest standards of research integrity. The University subscribes to fundamental ethics principles and values governing research involving human participants, animals, and the environment. These principles include, but are not limited to those clearly stipulated in international and national research ethics guidelines. The ethics guiding research across various disciplines address principles relating to honesty, objectivity, integrity, carefulness, professionalism, openness, respect for intellectual property, confidentiality, responsible publication, responsible mentoring, respect for colleagues, social responsibility, non-discrimination, competence, legality/adherence to legislative requirements, humaneness and animal care, and human participants protection.

Adherence to these norms is imperative to sustaining research as it promotes the aims of research and values required in collaborative work, encourages accountability to the public, beneficiaries of research, funders of research, and ensures adherence to important moral and social values.

This policy sets out the foundation for ethical research conduct and research ethics governance at the University of Lagos, and provides guidance on the application of these principles. The policy is geared towards nurturing research, and will necessarily be amenable to modification, reviews and updates to ensure that it continues to align to international best practice while retaining national relevance.

SECTION B

This Section covers the central guidelines for the University for Defining Membership of Research Ethics Committees as well as the guidance and governance available within the policy for monitoring the planning and research. It also addresses the key actions taken in the events of malpractice and misconduct of research.

6.0 MEMBERSHIP OF RECS

- 6.1 The membership of said Research Ethics Committees shall receive guidance regarding numbers and constitution
- 6.2 The onus for developing, implementing and monitoring of research ethics policies is on the University's Research Ethics Committee UNILAG REC. The membership shall consist of the Director, Research and Innovation, Dean, school of Postgraduate Studies and Chairs of Faculty Research Ethics Committees including a lay person drawn from the community, a priest/Muslim cleric/community leader etc.) . This will ensure the Community's interests are represented.
- 6.3 The UNILAG REC shall be the registry for ALL research conducted in the University. Consequently, protocols submitted /approved by Faculty REC should be forwarded to UNILAG REC. An electronic database of submitted and approved research from Faculty REC shall be domiciled in UNILAG REC.
- 6.4 Appeals from faculty REC on a reviewed protocol shall be forwarded to the UNILAG REC for consideration.
- 6.5 Broad-based multidisciplinary research covering 2 or more faculties shall be submitted to the UNILAG REC following recommendation from the Faculty REC.

7.0 GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

7.1 Overall responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of research ethics policies will lie with the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC). The membership of the UREC shall consist of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academics and Research (Chair), the Dean of the Post Graduate School, the Chairs of Faculty Research Ethics Committee, a lay member and the CMUL HREC chair.

7.2 The UREC is responsible for approving the terms of reference, membership, procedures and annual reports of Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FRECs) and giving guidance to FRECs as required.

7.3 The UREC will consider specific ethical matters on an ad hoc basis, for example, if a FREC is unable to reach a decision on a research proposal for whatever reason or if a researcher wishes to appeal against the decision of a FREC. In addition, it will undertake an annual audit of decisions taken by Committees, particularly those decisions taken by expedited review.

7.3.1 Given the diversity of approaches to research and the specialist nature of some of the issues raised by research projects (e.g. educational research, health research) the University believes the majority of research proposals should be assessed by FRECs.

7.3.2 The FRECs will be constituted to reflect the diversity of expertise within the Faculty, and will take direction for its membership from existing and/or emerging recommendations for constitution of FRECs in the relevant discipline

7.3.3 FRECs will operate in various ways appropriate to their constituencies, but all FRECs will provide an annual report to the UREC in a specified format.

7.3.4 The CMUL HREC will be constituted in accordance with the National Health Research Ethics Committee guidelines and the National Code of Health Research Ethics.

7.3.5 The CMUL HREC will be under the office of the Provost of the College of Medicine

7.3.6 The CMUL HREC will have responsibility of reviewing research involving human participants and pertaining to health.

7.3.7 In addition, the CMUL HREC will be responsible for reviewing research emanating from the Faculties within the CMUL i.e. the Faculties of Clinical Sciences, Basic Medical Sciences and Dental Sciences.

Institute.

7.3.9 The CMUL HREC will be responsible for ensuring that all the registration of the HREC is always up to date

8.0 GENERAL ISSUES RELATING TO GOVERNANCE

8.1 The Chair of each Faculty Research Ethics Committee shall provide an annual report to the University Research Ethics Committee. The annual reports to the University Research Ethics Committee will include the following:

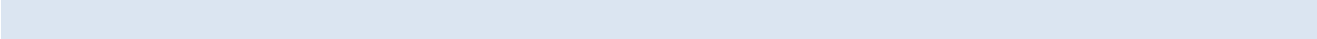
- i. The current Committee membership.
- ii. Details of any suggested or agreed changes to the approved procedures; Where appropriate, the number of cases referred to external ethics committees;
- iii. Where appropriate, details of high risk projects identified and under review;
- iv. Any issues for consideration by the University Research Ethics Committee.
- v. Summary of action taken by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee including details of the number and title of applications considered by expedited review and full Committee review, the decisions taken and any particular difficulties encountered or consequent action taken;

8.2 University Research Ethics Committee will consider the annual reports, offer advice and recommendations as appropriate, and report to the Senate on any major policy issues or outstanding difficulties.

8.3 Faculties with nothing to report will be required to submit a statement to that effect.

9.0 GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR RECS

- 9.1 The UREC, FREC and CMUL HREC will function independently of the researcher(s) proposing the research. Whenever a REC member has a research proposal considered by their Committee they should normally recuse themselves from the discussion unless required to clarify issues for the other members.
- 9.2 Quorum for Committee meetings will be a majority of members. If there are absent members, decisions taken on research proposals can be confirmed by the Secretary obtaining agreement from sufficient absent members after the meeting. When considering research proposals Committees should strive to reach unanimity. If unanimity cannot be achieved, decisions to approve proposals will require the support of at least two thirds of the Committee membership.
- 9.3 Ethical review will normally take place when the research proposal has been confirmed e.g. a grant application has been approved for funding.
- 9.4 As well as the University's own policies, Committees must take into account relevant professional ethical codes and the policies of research sponsors. If there is a difference in ethical standards between the University's policy and those of the relevant professional body or research sponsor, Committees shall apply whichever is considered the highest standard of ethical practice.
- 9.5 In cases of collaborative research with other institutions, the research participation of University of Lagos members of staff must be considered by the relevant University of Lagos REC. Ethical approval by another institution is not sufficient to allow the research to proceed.
- 9.6 Research which involves human participants will always require ethical approval. However in many cases the risks will be minimal. In such cases FRECs should refer to the UREC which will send to relevant Health Research Committees for expedited review. The following Human research may involve more than minimal risk and should normally be considered by a full Committee:
- 9.6.1 Research involving vulnerable groups – for example, children and young people, those with a learning disability or cognitive impairment, or individuals in a dependent or unequal relationship
- 9.6.2 Research involving sensitive topics – for example participants' sexual behaviour, their illegal or political behaviour, their experience of violence, their abuse or exploitation, their mental health, or their gender or ethnic status
- 9.6.3 Research involving groups where permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial access to members – for example, ethnic or cultural groups, native peoples or indigenous

- 9.6.4 Research involving deception or which is conducted without participants' full and informed consent at the time the study is carried out
- 9.6.5 Research involving access to records of personal or confidential information, including genetic or other biological information, concerning identifiable individuals
- 9.6.6 Research which would induce psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or cause more than minimal pain
- 9.6.7 Research involving intrusive interventions – for example, the administration of drugs or other substances, vigorous physical exercise, or techniques such as hypnotherapy.
- 9.7 FRECs should consider the potential impact of research on the environment and the questions of environmental sustainability and the sustainability of research.
- 9.8 Individual FRECs will have their procedures approved by the UREC.
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10.0 MONITORING RESEARCH

- 10.1 Committees must identify projects on, which ethical issues raised are such that monitoring during the life of the research is required and this will become a condition of approval. Researchers will be given details of the form and frequency of the monitoring which will be proportionate to the nature and degree of risk entailed in the research.
- 10.2 RECs may consider conditional approval for an application, requiring annual review and approval (or more frequently as deemed necessary by the FREC) to continue the project. Requests for continuing approval must be appropriately documented.
- 10.3 It is the responsibility of the FREC to consider which projects impose a high risk from an ethical standpoint, including any reputational risk to the University and the political sensitivity of the research.
- 10.4 Details of identified high risk projects must be reported to UREC in the Annual Report.

11.0 APPEALS

- 11.1 Researchers can appeal against the decisions taken by a FREC either to reject or require significant modifications to research. Initially the appeal should be to the FREC taking the decision. If this is not successful the researcher can request the appeal be considered by the UREC.
- 11.2 Appeals referred by a FREC to the UREC will be considered by a sub-committee. This sub-committee will comprise all UREC members with the exception of the FREC Chair referring the appeal for consideration. The sub-committee will receive verbal statements from the relevant FREC Chair and the project researcher. The relevant FREC Chair and project researcher will subsequently be informed in writing of the sub-committee's decision.

12.0 RESEARCH MISCONDUCT


12.1 Anyone suspecting misconduct on the part of a researcher has an obligation to report this in accordance with the procedures described in the following section. Such ‘whistleblowers’ must not investigate or take action on their own account but must observe appropriate procedures.

12.2 No one reporting such suspicions shall suffer any disadvantage or action for doing so. The University is wholly committed to the protection of all bona fide whistleblowers whatever their status and will regard any subsequent victimization as a disciplinary offence.

12.3 Where there is a genuine concern about disclosing their own identity, a confidential approach may be made directly to the Chair of the UREC, who will then consider whether to refer the case on through the normal procedures. Allegations raised anonymously will be considered only at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor.

12.4 Research misconduct includes the following, whether deliberate, reckless or negligent:

- i. failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research
- ii. deception in relation to research proposals
- iii. unethical behaviour in the conduct of research
- iv. unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially
- v. deviation from good research practice, where this results in unreasonable risk of harm to humans, other animals or the environment
- vi. fabrication, falsification or corruption of research data
- vii. distortion of research outcomes, by distortion or omission of data that do not fit expected results
- viii. dishonest misinterpretation of results
- ix. publication of data known or believed to be false or misleading
- x. plagiarism, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources
- xi. misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors
- xii. inappropriate attribution of authorship
- xiii. fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment
- xiv. attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct
- xv. inciting others to be involved in research misconduct
- xvi. collusion in or concealment of research misconduct by others
- xvii. failure to comply with relevant legislation, including that relating to health and safety, data protection, intellectual property and animal experimentation.

- 12.5 The University has a responsibility to investigate allegations of research misconduct fully and expeditiously. It also has a responsibility to protect researchers from malicious, mischievous, or frivolous allegations.
- 12.6 Alleged misconduct by postgraduate Students are considered under the procedures of the Postgraduate School.
- 12.7 Anyone who has good reason to suspect misconduct should report it in confidence to their Head of Department or Faculty Dean. Those who raise concerns in good faith will not be penalised. Allegations should normally be made in writing, accompanied by any available supporting evidence. All allegations will be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedure (staff or student).
- 12.8 In cases where an allegation implicates someone who is not subject to the University's disciplinary procedures, the Vice-Chancellor shall bring the matter to the attention of their employer or any other appropriate body.
- 12.9 Where the research is funded in whole or part by an outside grant, the Vice-Chancellor shall have regard to the guidance issued by the relevant funding body. The Vice-Chancellor shall ensure that any such body is given appropriate and timely information as to the instigation and progress of an investigation and any referral under disciplinary regulations.
- 12.10 In the event of a finding of misconduct, where the person responsible is subject to the regulation of a professional body, the Vice-Chancellor shall consider whether it is appropriate to inform the professional body of any finding.
- 12.11 Where the person responsible has published research, especially research to which the misconduct relates, the Vice-Chancellor shall consider whether it is appropriate to inform journal editors or others of any finding.
- 12.12 If an allegation has been made publicly, the Vice-Chancellor shall consider whether it is appropriate to make public the outcome of its investigation into the matter.
- 12.13 If at any stage an allegation is found to have been malicious or mischievous in nature, the matter may result in disciplinary action being taken against those making the allegation.
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SECTION C

This Section describes the strategy for capacity building and establishment of good research practice, while also stating the caveats for human participation, animal participation and the core structure for protecting data confidentiality

13.0 TRAINING

- 13.1 The University will subscribe to the CITI Ethics Training Programme under the University of Florida. This is an online Training course that makes primary research ethics learning easier and cost-effective. All students and staff should take this course renewable every 3 years.
- 13.2 All members of RECs (UNILAG REC, FREC and HREC) will undertake appropriate training in research ethics. Training in research ethics will also be available to all staff and research students through the relevant institutional offices such as the Research and Innovation office or the CMUL Research Management Office, or through Faculty initiatives for research ethics training.
- 13.3 An induction meeting will be held for all new members of FRECs. The meeting will introduce them to the University's Research Ethics Policy.
- 13.4 Chairs of FRECs will be appointed by the Dean of the Faculty. The Dean will brief the Chair on the responsibilities attached to the role. New Chairs will attend an induction meeting with any new members of the FRECs.
- 13.5 Training will be provided for all new members of FRECs. It is a requirement that all new members undertake this online training during their first year of membership of the Committee.
- 13.6 Training workshops will be held at least once each year, when members of FRECs and UREC will have the opportunity to hear about and discuss issues in research ethics.

14.0 GOOD PRACTICE IN RESEARCH

- 14.1 All researchers within the University of Lagos have a duty to society, to their profession, to the University and to those funding their research, to conduct their research in the most conscientious and responsible manner possible. The University seeks to encourage and foster an environment where good research practice is encouraged and where there is adequate mentoring and supervision at all relevant levels. It is a responsibility of Departmental heads and Faculty Deans to convey clearly the standards for research in their departments and relevant areas, and to ensure that adherence to those standards is a matter of course.
- 14.2 Many professional associations and research funding bodies have ethical codes and guidelines for the conduct of research. The University would expect that compliance with this Code of Good Research Practice will meet the generic requirements of such bodies, but where additional specialist requirements are incorporated, University personnel are expected to comply as appropriate.
- 14.3 Honesty: At the heart of all research endeavour, regardless of discipline or institution, is the need for researchers to be honest in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of other researchers. This applies to the whole range of research, including experimental design, generating and analysing data, publishing results, and acknowledging the direct and indirect contributions of colleagues, collaborators and others.
- 14.4 All University personnel must refrain from plagiarism, piracy or the fabrication of results and any instances of such acts will be taken most seriously and the relevant University disciplinary procedure invoked, if appropriate.
- 14.5 Openness: while recognising the need for researchers to protect their own research interests in the process of planning their research and obtaining their results, the University encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work with other researchers and with the public. Once results have been published, where appropriate, the University expects researchers to make available relevant data and materials to others, on request.
- 14.6 In addition, the University expects researchers to observe any appropriate standards of practice set out in guidelines published by funding bodies, scientific societies and other relevant professional bodies.
- 14.7 Leadership and co-operation in research groups: Within the University, it is the responsibility of all senior staff to ensure that a climate which encourages good practice in research is maintained. Thus, within a research group, the group leader is expected to create a research environment of mutual co-operation. in which all members of a research team are encouraged to develop their skills

- 14.8 Researchers must state the funding source clearly on their proposal and must consider the ethical implications of the source of funding, including any reputational risks for the university.
- 14.9 Data protection: Throughout their work, researchers are required to keep clear and accurate records of the research procedures followed and of the results obtained, including interim results. This is necessary not only as a means of demonstrating proper research practice, but also in case questions are subsequently asked about either the conduct of the research or the results obtained. For similar reasons, data generated in the course of research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form, as appropriate.
- 14.10 Publication of research finding: It is usually a condition of research funding that the results are published in an appropriate form, usually papers in refereed journals. This has long been widely accepted as the best system for research results to be reviewed and made available to the research community for verification or replication.
- 14.11 Authorship: The issue of authorship is important in the context of good research practice. The University expects anyone listed as an author on a paper to accept personal responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the contents of the paper, and that they can identify their contributions to it. The practice of honorary authorship is unacceptable.
- 14.12 Acknowledging the role of collaborators and other participants - In all aspects of research, the contributions of formal collaborators and all others who directly assist or indirectly support the research must be properly acknowledged. This applies to any circumstances in which statements about the research are made, including provision of information about the nature and process of the research, and in publishing the outcome. Failure to acknowledge the contributions of others is regarded as unprofessional conduct. Conversely, collaborators and other contributors carry their share of the responsibility for the research and its outcome.
- 14.13 Responsibility for ensuring new researchers understand good research practice lies with all members of the community, but particularly with departmental heads, group leaders and the supervisors of research students.
- 14.14 Integrity in submitting research proposals - Principal Investigators and other named investigators should take all reasonable measures to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information which is contained in applications for funding.
- 14.15 Integrity in managing research projects - Principal Investigators and other named investigators should take all reasonable measures to ensure compliance with sponsor, institutional, legal, ethical and moral obligations in managing projects.
- 14.16 Conflict of Interest - Anyone involved in any way in the conduct or management of research

14.17 Principal Investigators have a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of staff working on their projects. They should assess potential risks and harm and should not require any researcher to undertake research that is likely to expose them to physical or psychological harm.

14.18 All researchers also have a responsibility to consider their own safety and well-being and should raise any concerns with their Principal Investigator or other research manager.

15.0 HUMAN PARTICIPANTS RESEARCH

- 15.1 Informed consent - The researcher should, where possible, inform potential participants in advance of any features of the research that might reasonably be expected to influence their willingness to take part in the study.
- 15.2 Where the research topic is sensitive, the ethical protocol should include verbatim instructions for the informed consent procedure and consent should be obtained in writing.
- 15.3 Where children are concerned, informed consent may be obtained from parents or teachers acting in loco parentis, or from the children themselves if they are of sufficient understanding. However, where the topic of research is sensitive, written informed consent should be obtained from individual parents.
- 15.4 Failing to inform participants of the specific purpose of the study at the outset is not normally considered to be deception, provided that adequate informed consent and debriefing procedures are proposed.
- 15.5 Covert observation is a legitimate method of research where it is impossible to use other methods to obtain essential data. Covert research must observe current legislation on privacy. In cases of covert research in non-public settings if informed consent has not been obtained prior to the research it should be obtained post hoc wherever possible.
- 15.6 Right to withdraw - Where possible, participants should be informed at the outset of the study that they have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty.
- 15.7 In the case of children, those acting in loco parentis or the children themselves if of sufficient understanding, shall be informed of the right to withdraw from participation in the study.
- 15.8 Protection from Harm - Researchers must endeavour to protect participants from physical and psychological harm at all times during the investigation.
- 15.9 Note that where stressful or hazardous procedures are concerned, obtaining informed consent (60) whilst essential, does not absolve the researcher from responsibility for protecting the participant. In such cases, the ethical protocol must specify the means by which the participant will be protected, e.g. by the availability of qualified medical assistance.
- 15.10 Where physical or mental harm nevertheless does result from research procedure, investigators are obliged to take action to remedy the problems created.
- 15.11 Researchers should, where possible, provide an account of the purpose of the study as well as its procedures. If this is not possible at the outset, then ideally it should be provided on completion of the study.

15.13 Ethics protocols may need to specify procedures for how this will be achieved. For example, transcriptions of the interviews may be encoded by the secretary so that no written record of the participant's name and data exist side by side.

15.14 Ethical principles of professional bodies - This set of principles is generic and not exhaustive of considerations which apply in all disciplines. Where relevant professional bodies have published their own guidelines and principles, these must be followed and the current principles interpreted and extended as necessary in this context.

16.0 RESEARCH INVOLVING ANIMAL SUBJECTS

- 16.1 Until suitable alternatives become available, use of animals is necessary in some areas of research within the biomedical and biological sciences.
- 16.2 All projects involving animal research are underpinned by a commitment to maintaining humaneness in use of animals in research. The Committee tasked to oversee research involving animals in each Faculty where this is relevant should include lay representation as well as veterinary and animal care expertise as is required by global best practice.
- 16.3 The ethical review process also ensures that high standards of animal care, welfare and accommodation are maintained, and that persons working with animals for research receive appropriate guidance and training.
- 16.4 Alternatives to animals should be utilized wherever possible, such as computer modeling, tissue culture, cell and molecular biology, and research with human subjects.
- 16.5 Rats and mice are the main animals of choice for research in the College of Medicine. Although other animals like dogs and possibly cats may also be involved, their use is infrequent
- 16.6 In the Biological Sciences of the faculty of Science, a greater variety of animals are used including all types of rodents and animals such as fish, crabs and insects (e.g. grasshoppers, mosquitoes)
- 16.7 In the Faculty of Science there are departments that (sub) specialize in the study of animals i.e. Department of Zoology, Department of Cell Biology and Genetics, and The department of Marine Sciences.
- 16.8 In view of the above, the Committee for the use of experimental animals must therefore be constituted and should include the concerned departments
- 16.9 All organs of the UNILAG REC should issue a booklet of Guidelines specifying the ethical issues of their specific concern. Such a booklet would be made available in the University of Lagos Bookshops for Researchers to buy at affordable prices. Apart from being a more effective way of creating ethics awareness among researchers, it is also a source of revenue for the University.

17.0 DATA CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS

- 17.1 Researchers must ensure appropriate open access to primary data resulting from publicly funded research after its current use in research. Data relating to identifiable individuals must be held in accordance with the principles of data confidentiality legislation and any guarantees given to data subjects. Such data must be anonymized before it is made publicly available and researchers may place an embargo on access when anonymity and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- 17.2 Researchers must decide what constitutes ‘primary data’ in each research project. This will normally be an archival data set, but may also include laboratory notebooks, completed questionnaires, video and audio files, and interview transcripts.
- 17.3 The University expects that primary research data is held securely for a period of ten years after the completion of a research project, or for such longer period as may be required by a research funder. The University has an obligation to ensure that appropriate storage facilities are available. Non-current primary data from research funded at the University must remain in storage at the University when a member of staff changes job to another institution.
- 17.4 Publications arising from publicly funded research should be available through a system of open access wherever possible. Articles should be deposited in the University research repository in accordance with current guidelines and should be available through open access publication wherever possible.
- 17.5 Other research reports should be available in open access form unless prevented by commercial or official secrecy requirements.
- 17.6 In the event of exchange and sharing of human tissue samples with external (international) collaborators, a Materials Transfer Agreement shall be entered into between the relevant authorities at the local institution and the recipient organization outside Nigeria. The format and template for executing an MTA with respect to human participants’ research will be in accordance with the recommendations and stipulations of the National Code for Health Research Ethics.
- 17.7 Research activity must comply with any requirements relating to data protection, stipulations of National Guidelines on Research Ethics (including the National Health Research Ethics Committee guidelines and the National Code of Health Research Ethics). Due consideration must be given to any implications of the University of Lagos’ Intellectual Property legislation.

18.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS

18.1 **Definition of research:** creative investigation, conducted systematically to contribute to new knowledge and creative outputs, or validate previous research findings, and to increase scientific and technological knowledge.

18.2 **Definition of a researcher:** A member of staff of the University of Lagos undertaking research (irrespective of status in the research group), or a student undertaking research for undergraduate or postgraduate awards, or a visiting research scholar.

18.3 **Meaning of research ethics:** the critical reflection and application of internationally accepted criteria, norms, and values for research conduct involving human subjects, animals, the environment and creative research in the arts.