Guidelines for Ethical Clearance Application

Faculty of Engineering

University of Peradeniya

Who can apply?

Any activity conforming to the definition of Research needs clearance where human participants (physical testing or any other), testing animals, and using ecosystem resources are involved. Any such investigators, staff or students of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Peradeniya or any other interested individuals/institutions may apply for research clearance through this process. The research proposals will be subjected to review by the Ethical Review Committee of the Faculty of Engineering (ERCFOE). **ERCFOE will meet monthly, and the applications received at least 2 weeks before the meeting date will be processed during the meeting of a particular month.**

Please note that the latest valid version of the application form (ERPApplication.pdf) will be found online under Research/Ethical Review Process (ERP | Faculty of Engineering (pdn.ac.lk)**) Previous versions will not be accepted.**

The Guidelines for filling out the application (ERPApplication.pdf) are as follows:

1. **Research Project Title:** The title should be the same as used in the research proposal.

2. **Principal Investigator:** If the research study is a partial requirement for a degree, the principal investigator (PI) should be the registered student. If a group of students are involved, the supervisor or one of the students could be the PI. The others in the group shall be co-investigators.
   If the research study is not for the partial requirement for a degree, the PI could be the coordinator or any relevant research project team member.

3. **Supervisor (optional):** Provide the details of the supervisor/s. Applicable for Research related to undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Supervisor's role is to ensure that the student/s is/are aware of ethical aspects of conducting research where humans and animals could be harmed physically or mentally and the environment is subjected to any adverse effects by any use of natural resources or disposal of waste.

4. **Study Area**: If the study covers more than one study area, please indicate all relevant areas.

5. **Proposed initiation and completion of data collection**: The application should be submitted two months before the proposed date of **data collection** where the ethical clearance is necessary. **Data Collection must not begin until ethical approval has been granted.**

6. **Location/locations where the study will be conducted:** If the Research is to be conducted at a site requiring administrative approval/consent (e.g., in a school), Please include all consent letters obtained. If the study may cause harm or distress to any person or have adverse effects on the environment or any public property, permission must be sought from local research ethics bodies where available.
   If a qualitative study is conducted where the sites or involvements cannot be predicted, indicate how the approvals will be taken under the methodology of the proposal.

7. **Does the research project have any other research ethics board approvals?**
   Provide copies of approval letters of other research ethics boards if any. For example, for international collaborations, the research may have approvals of collaborative entities. Please include details about them.

8. **Source of funding (if any):** Attach details of the funding agency, if any, with any project registration numbers.

9. **Externally (foreign) funded projects.**
   Please fill only if applicable. If not fill with N/A

10. **If this is a community-based or industry-based study.**
    Please fill only if applicable. If not fill with N/A

11. **Summary of the research proposal (maximum 1000 words)**
    The proposal should cover the following areas:
    - Introduction/Background (in brief)
    - Methodology (please provide a clear methodology with a description of the sample, any observations to be made during the study, or any confidential information to be gathered – attach any questionnaires and interview guides if applicable)
    - Expected limitations and risks.
    - Possible benefits (please explain any potential direct benefit of participant/community from their involvement in the research project)

12. **Data collection methods:** Indicate all relevant data collection methods. If the methods are not given in the list, please specify.

13. **Confidentiality:** Please report how the data will be coded, stored, and destroyed to assure confidentiality.

14. **Fair selection of the study participants:** Give the selection process of participants for study if relevant.

15. **Rewards for Participants:** If the study participants are paid/rewarded financially or in kind, please justify the need for such compensation.

16. **Process of informed consent**: Please report how to get the consent of participants voluntarily without deception, intimidation, and inducement.

17. **Rights of the Participants:** Please report how the participant could withdraw from the study, register any complaints and provisions of access to results of the study.

18. **The scientific significance of the study and validity:** please justify the need for your study through the answers to the questions posed, despite any risks and limitations involved.

19. **Assessment of risks/benefits:** If the answer to any of the questions are yes, you may attach a risk management plan separately.

20. **Effects on Participants/Organisations/Society:** Provide how the participants could report adverse effects.

21. **What are the provisions for safety monitoring and termination of research?**
    Please report any safety procedure related to handling equipment, site visits, encountered crises, etc., and related termination, if necessary. How will you monitor any violation of safety of the research team, any physical or emotional harm to participants, harm to animals and any environmental damages by disposal of items, toxic waste, etc.? How will you terminate the research in such instances?

22. **Conflicts of interest**
    Will the investigators and or their partners or immediate family members receive any personal benefits such as financial, intellectual property rights, employment, consultancies, board memberships, share ownerships, etc. as a result of involvement in this study? If yes, please explain.

23. **Are other concerns deemed relevant not specified above?**
    Please explain any other ethical concerns which you may have but you did not encounter in the above questions.