

Ethics Policy

1 Policy statement

Amity University [IN] London is committed to carrying out its research, teaching, enterprise and other activities within a comprehensive ethical framework.

Our aim is to create a dynamic, inspiring and challenging culture which supports innovation and creativity, where work of individuals and teams are recognized and rewarded, where diversity is celebrated and where we can excel within an environment of change. Achieving this aim is set within the context of the following ethical principles:

- We strive to be a socially responsible organisation with high ethical standards and a tolerant, liberal, open-minded community
- We expect our staff, students, governors and partners to adopt the highest standards of professional integrity, giving appropriate consideration to the ethical, social and environmental implications of all our activities.
- Maintaining integrity and high standards is of central importance to the University's commitment to research, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University's research community to maintain professional standards by questioning their own findings, recording their results truthfully, and attributing the contribution of others honestly.

2. Overarching Ethics Policy Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

2. 1. Set out the principles applicable to all research, enterprise, consultancy projects and studies conducted at, by or in the name of Amity University [IN] London;
- 2.2. Provide members of the University with a clear understanding of the ethical review process operated by; Amity University [IN] London and
- 2.3. Support a culture of academic freedom and excellence by providing a framework for review which subjects research proposals and other studies to a level of scrutiny that is in proportion to the risk of harm or adverse effect to participants, researchers, the University and to society as a whole.

3. Scope

The policy applies to all staff and research students at the University engaged in research, and any individual who is not a member of staff or student at the University but is undertaking research using University premises and facilities, and/or in the University's name.

4. Principles of Ethical Research

- 4.1. Studies and research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.

4.2. Participants must be fully informed about the research or study they are invited to participate in and their consent to take part must be made voluntarily, freely and without any coercion. Consents should be recorded, ideally in writing.

4.3. Risks should be managed so that harm and/or damage arising from the research is avoided or minimised wherever possible and measures should be taken to ensure that the benefits of research/study should outweigh any potential harm or damage caused.

4.4. The independence of the research/study must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.

4.5. The same high ethical standards shall apply wherever in the world the study/research is undertaken.

The University meets these principles by communicating its standards and policies to staff through education and training, publication of this and related policies, and through this Ethics Policy and the process for the ethical review of research and studies.

5. Specific Policies and Guidance

This Ethics Policy is supplemented by specific ethics policies and guidance which are set out below:

- Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research
- Policy on use of Animals in Research

In light of the nature of the research and studies covered by these specific ethics policies, the standards set out therein are necessarily more stringent and it is intended for the higher standards described therein to apply.

The University Ethics Sub-Committee may decide to develop additional guidance or policies from time to time which it will make available through these pages and may provide more general guidance on the Research Governance.

6. Ethical Review Process

Amity University is committed to providing a competent, rigorous and independent process of ethical review for the research and studies undertaken proportionate to the risk involved.

The University Ethics Committee has overall responsibility for the ethical review process here at the University, whilst the task of providing ethical review and granting approval for individual projects and studies falls to the Ethics Committees or the approved external body (e.g. National Research Ethics Service). These arrangements will be reviewed annually.

All Professional Services /Units in the University should have in place arrangements with the Ethics Committee to review any research or study they/their staff may undertake. All studies involving human participants must be registered on the University management system. It be the responsibility of the Ethics Committee for deciding the most appropriate method and system for the ethical review of non-human participant studies and research

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 University Ethics Committee

The University Ethics Committee is chaired by the Head of Research and is responsible for developing, keeping under review and monitoring the implementation of the University Ethics Policy, and for sustaining a University-wide awareness of research governance, ethical and related issues. UEC is also responsible for developing guidance in these areas, for receiving reports from the other committees and for ensuring that the members of Ethics Committees at the University receive appropriate training in ethical issues.

At academic unit level, Heads of Units need to ensure the research and studies undertaken in their Unit obtain the appropriate ethical review in accordance with this Overarching Ethics Policy Framework. Further to ensure through its review process that all such projects adhere to applicable University policies, legislation, professional guidelines and best practice.

7.2 Research Governing Office

The primary function of the Research Governance Office (RGO) is to review all the applicable elements of good research governance for higher risk studies involving human participants; and to arrange University sponsorship and insurance for eligible research studies. All researchers conducting Category A studies must insure that they have both “sponsorship” and insurance in place prior to starting their research or any study, (in addition to any external approvals that may be required), and this is applied for by submitting details of the proposed research/study to the RGO before the research or study is commenced.

The RGO is also responsible for monitoring the University’s Ethical review system on behalf of UEC and ensuring that high ethical standards are maintained across the University. In the event that the RGO discovers any failure to comply with this policy or to attain the high ethical standards required by the University in the course of its monitoring, it will refer its concerns to the appropriate FEC, and report on the action it has taken to UEC. The RGO will only directly intervene on a project that has already commenced where it is a Category A study that has not received approval or in any cases where it perceives an immediate risk to the health or well-being of researchers or participants, or to the integrity of the University.

In addition to its regulatory and monitoring role, the RGO provides guidance and training to all units as well as researchers, and provides researchers with a source of support and advice when they are submitting research for external ethical review.

7.3 Researchers

The University expects all researchers (whether staff, visitors or students) to take personal responsibility for familiarising themselves with this Ethics Policy, specific policies and guidance and with the procedures they need to follow for the research or studies they undertake.

It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator for any research study to ensure that all their colleagues involved in that research/study are aware of and comply with the policies of the University and with the contents of the approved ethics application for the research/study.

Notwithstanding any ethical approval that may be obtained, researchers are still required to ensure that their research or other studies are conducted in accordance with the ethical requirements of their funding body and/or any professional bodies or associations relevant to their discipline as well as comply with health and safety requirements.

7.4 Professional Service Departments

The University expects all Professional Services Unit to have arrangements in place to ensure any research/study they or their staff undertake involving human participants receives ethical review. All such research/study shall be registered on and administered through RGO

8. Appeals

Where a researcher has a concern about the decision of a EC to withhold, suspend or withdraw ethical approval of research/study they should attempt to resolve the matter with their EC. In the first instance they should contact the Chair who may decide to convene a different panel from its members to review the application, seek guidance, invite the researcher to resubmit his/her application or confirm the original decision.

In the event that their concerns cannot be resolved at this level, researchers may appeal the decision of the by contacting the Head of the Research Unit at research@london.amity.edu . Appeals will only have permitted on one of the two grounds:

1. That the researcher possesses new evidence that was not available at the time the EC made its decision and it has subsequently refused to consider such evidence; or
2. That there had been a significant failure in the application of procedures which had affected the decision of the EC.

Researchers may not question the judgement of the EC. Upon receiving an appeal, the Head of the Research Unit will refer the appeal to the Chair of Ethics Committee(EC), who may remit the appeal to a differently constituted Panel or reserve it for the decision of EC

9. Sanctions

Any breach of this Ethics Policy will be taken extremely seriously, and may result in disciplinary action including proceedings for gross misconduct where the breach is committed by a member of staff, or formal disciplinary proceedings under the relevant University procedures where it is committed by a student. Visitors breaching this policy may have their visitor status reviewed or withdrawn.