



# RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

## ORYX UNIVERSITY

*In Partnership with Liverpool John Moores University*

Document Reference:	RKEO-POL-Research Ethics Policy
Version:	1.0
Effective Date:	14 February 2026
Review Cycle:	Annual
Next Review Date:	14 February 2027
Document Owner:	Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange
Responsible Office:	Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO)
Approved By:	University President

### Version History

Version	Author	Description of Changes	Date
Version 1.0	Dr. Maher Salem	Created the first version	12 Feb 2026

## Table of Contents

1. Policy Statement .....	3
2. Scope .....	3
2.1 Policy Applicability .....	3
2.2 Subject Matter Covered .....	3
2.3 Policy Independence .....	3
3. Principles.....	4
3.1 Overview .....	4
3.2 Core Principles: .....	4
4. Requirements and Ethics Approval .....	5
4.1 Ethics Approval Required .....	5
4.2 Exempt Activities (Green Light Pathway).....	5
4.3 No Retrospective Approval.....	6
4.4 Ongoing Compliance.....	6
5. Application Process.....	6
5.1 Pre-Application .....	6
5.2 Application Submission.....	6
5.3 Review Process .....	7
5.4 Possible Outcomes .....	7
5.5 Timeline .....	7
6. Special Considerations .....	7
6.1 Research with Vulnerable Populations .....	7
6.2 Sensitive Research Topics and Cultural Impact .....	7
6.3 International Research .....	8
7. Roles and Responsibilities .....	8
8. Non-Compliance.....	8
8.1 Consequences .....	8
8.2 Reporting Concerns .....	9
9. Related Documents.....	9
10. Review.....	9

# 1. Policy Statement

Oryx University is committed to ensuring that all research and knowledge exchange activities are conducted to the highest ethical standards. This policy establishes the principles, requirements, and procedures for ethical review of research involving human participants, their data, or their biological materials.

The University recognizes that ethical research practice is fundamental to:

- Protecting the rights, dignity, and welfare of research participants
- Maintaining public trust in research
- Ensuring the validity and value of research findings
- Meeting legal and regulatory requirements (QATAR and LJMU University partnership)
- Upholding the University's reputation for integrity

## 2. Scope

### 2.1 Policy Applicability

This policy applies to all research and knowledge exchange activities:

- Conducted by University staff, students, or affiliates.
- Using University facilities, resources, or data.
- Conducted in the University's name.

### 2.2 Subject Matter Covered

This policy covers research involving:

- Human participants (including interviews, surveys, observations, experiments).
- Personal data (identifiable information about living individuals) and secondary data sources.
- Human biological samples (tissue, blood, DNA, etc.).
- Sensitive topics or vulnerable populations.

### 2.3 Policy Independence

This policy applies regardless of:

- Funding source (internal, external, or unfunded).

- Location (on-campus, off-campus, domestic, or international).
- Methodology (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods).

## 3. Principles

### 3.1 Overview

All research must be conducted in accordance with:

- The ethical principles set out in this policy
- Applicable laws and regulations of the State of Qatar and host country
- Professional codes of ethics relevant to the discipline
- The standards of our partner institution, LJMU University

### 3.2 Core Principles:

#### 3.2.1 Overarching Compliance

All research must be conducted in accordance with:

- The ethical principles set out in this policy.
- Applicable laws and regulations of the host QATAR State and country of data collection.
- Professional codes of ethics relevant to the discipline.
- The standards of our partner institution, LJMU University (LJMU).

#### 3.2.2 Respect for Persons

- Researchers must respect the autonomy and dignity of participants.
- **Informed consent** must be obtained before participation.
- Participants have the right to withdraw without penalty.
- Privacy and confidentiality must be protected.

#### 3.2.3 Beneficence

- Research must aim to generate benefits (knowledge, social good).
- Risks must be minimized, systematically assessed, and justified by potential benefits.
- Researchers must be competent and appropriately trained to conduct the proposed research.

### 3.2.4 Justice

- Selection of participants must be fair and equitable.
- Vulnerable populations must not be exploited or inappropriately targeted.
- Benefits of research should be accessible to participant communities where appropriate.

### 3.2.5 Integrity

- Research must be conducted honestly and transparently.
- Data must be collected, stored, and reported accurately (**FFP**: Fabrication, Falsification, Plagiarism, is prohibited).
- Conflicts of interest must be declared and managed.

## 4. Requirements and Ethics Approval

### 4.1 Ethics Approval Required

All research within the scope of this policy must receive a favourable ethics opinion from the UREC or an appropriate external ethics committee **before any research activity begins**. This includes:

- Recruitment of participants.
- Collection of data.
- Access to existing data or samples.

### 4.2 Exempt Activities (**Green Light Pathway**)

The following research activities are **exempt** from formal UREC review, provided they adhere to all principles in Section 3 and are registered with the RKEO Office:

- Literature reviews, meta-analyses, and secondary analysis of anonymized, publicly available data.
- Internal quality assurance (QA) or quality improvement (QI) studies designed solely for internal institutional or administrative improvement, where there is no intent to publish findings outside the University.
- Classroom assignments that involve data collection solely for training purposes, are non-sensitive, and are non-publishable.

### 4.3 No Retrospective Approval

Ethics approval cannot be granted retrospectively. Research conducted without appropriate ethics approval:

- May constitute research misconduct.
- Will not be published or used for academic credit.
- May expose the University and the researcher to legal liability.

### 4.4 Ongoing Compliance

Researchers must:

- Conduct research strictly in accordance with the approved protocol.
- Report any adverse events, complaints, or protocol deviations immediately to the UREC Chair.
- Seek approval for any amendments to the approved protocol before implementation.
- Submit annual progress reports for ongoing studies and a final completion report.

## 5. Application Process

### 5.1 Pre-Application

- Complete required research ethics training (*Tentative*).
- Consult guidance documents and templates (**RKEO-GDE-Quick Reference Materials-V1.0**).
- **Supervisor Pre-Screening (MANDATORY):** Student applications (UG/PGT/PGR) **must be reviewed and signed off by the named academic supervisor.**  
*RKEO signature is optional.*

### 5.2 Application Submission

- Complete the appropriate application form (**RKEO-FRM-Ethics Application Form-V1.0**).
- Attach all required supporting documents (Consent Forms, PIS, methodological instruments).
- Submit through the designated electronic system or email process defined in the SOP.

## 5.3 Review Process

Applications are screened for completeness and triaged into the appropriate review pathway (Fast-Track or Full Committee).

## 5.4 Possible Outcomes

Outcome	Meaning	Next Steps
Favourable Opinion	Approved to proceed	Begin research
Conditional Approval	Approved subject to minor changes	Submit revisions, then proceed
Request for Revisions	Significant concerns requiring changes	Revise and resubmit
Unfavourable Opinion	Not approved	May appeal or redesign study

## 5.5 Timeline

- **Fast-Track Review:** 10 working days from completeness check.
- **Full Committee Review:** Decision at next scheduled UREC meeting (typically monthly).
- **Revisions:** 10 working days from resubmission.

# 6. Special Considerations

## 6.1 Research with Vulnerable Populations

Additional ethical and legal safeguards are required for research involving:

- Children and young people (under 18) – requiring assent and parental consent.
- Adults lacking capacity to consent.
- Persons in a dependent relationship (e.g., employees, students, prisoners).

## 6.2 Sensitive Research Topics and Cultural Impact

Enhanced review applies to research involving:

- Illegal activities or behaviours.
- Sexual behaviour or attitudes.
- Religious or political beliefs.
- Experiences of violence, abuse, or trauma. **Cultural Impact Statement:** All applications must include a statement on how the research design and

dissemination strategy mitigate potential harm or offense to local QATAR cultural and religious norms.

## 6.3 International Research

Research conducted outside the University's primary jurisdiction must:

- Comply with local laws and ethical requirements.
- Obtain local ethics approval where required.
- Ensure participant protections are equivalent to Oryx University and LJMU University standards.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
<b>University President</b>	Ultimate accountability; approves policy and disciplinary actions related to ethics.
<b>Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange</b>	Operational oversight; supports UREC; monitors compliance; grants Governance Approval.
<b>UREC</b>	Reviews applications; develops guidance; monitors compliance; reports to the President.
<b>Faculty Deans</b>	Promote ethical culture within their faculty; ensure staff and student training compliance
<b>Principal Investigators</b>	submit applications; ensure ethical conduct; report adverse events
<b>Supervisors</b>	Guide students; must review and co-sign student applications before UREC submission.
<b>All Researchers</b>	Complete training; follow approved protocols; report concerns.

## 8. Non-Compliance

### 8.1 Consequences

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Suspension or termination of research.
- Withdrawal of ethics approval.
- Disciplinary action under University HR or student procedures.
- Reporting to external bodies (funders, regulators, professional bodies).

## 8.2 Reporting Concerns

Concerns about research ethics should be reported to:

- UREC Chair.
- Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange.
- University Whistleblowing procedures (for serious concerns)

## 9. Related Documents

- Research Ethics and Governance Framework Policy (**RKEO-POL-Research Ethics & Governance Framework**)
- Research Governance Policy
- Research Integrity Policy
- Data Protection Policy (**RKEO-POL-Data Protection Research**)
- Conflict of Interest Policy (if any)
- Research Ethics and Governance Standard Operating Procedures (**RKEO-SOP-Standard Operating Procedures**)
- UREC Terms of Reference (**RKEO-TOR-UREC Terms of Reference**)

## 10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect:

- Changes in legislation or regulation.
- Developments in ethical standards.
- Alignment with LJMU University policies.