



RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY TRAINING POLICY

ORYX UNIVERSITY

In Partnership with Liverpool John Moores University

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1. Purpose

This policy defines the mandatory requirements, structure, and governance of Research Ethics and Integrity (REI) training at Oryx University. It ensures that all research activities conducted under the University's name comply with:

- Qatar National Research Ethics and Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements
- Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council principles of responsible research and innovation
- International standards of ethical research conduct and academic integrity

The policy aims to ensure that all researchers are fully equipped to conduct research responsibly, protect participants and data, and uphold the highest standards of scientific integrity and accountability.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals engaged in research activities under Oryx University, including:

- Academic staff (full-time, part-time, visiting, adjunct)
- Postgraduate and undergraduate students conducting research projects
- Research supervisors and principal investigators
- External collaborators and co-supervisors affiliated with Oryx University projects
- All research activities involving:
 - Human participants
 - Personal or sensitive data
 - Industry or government collaboration (including QRDI-related projects)
 - Cybersecurity, AI, or critical infrastructure domains

This policy applies to both funded and non-funded research activities.

3. Policy Statement

Oryx University is committed to ensuring that all research is conducted ethically, transparently, and in compliance with applicable national and international frameworks.

The University requires that:

All researchers complete approved Research Ethics and Integrity training prior to engaging in any research involving ethical approval requirements.

This ensures:

- Protection of research participants and stakeholders
- Integrity and credibility of research outputs
- Compliance with Qatar IRB and QRDI governance expectations
- Strengthening of institutional research quality and reputation

4. Mandatory Training Requirements

Research Ethics and Integrity training is **compulsory** for all eligible researchers prior to:

- Submission of any research ethics application to the University IRB
- Commencement of data collection involving human participants
- Participation in QRDI-funded or nationally governed research projects
- Acting as principal investigator or research supervisor for regulated research

Approved Training Pathways

Researchers must complete one of the following approved options:

- 1. CITI Program (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative)**
 - Internationally recognised standard for human research ethics training
 - Required for many IRB-governed projects globally
- 2. Oryx University Internal REI Training Programme**
 - Institutionally designed and aligned with Qatar National Ethics Standards
 - Approved by the Research Ethics Committee (REC)
- 3. Equivalent Training (Subject to Approval)**

- External institutional ethics certifications
- Must be reviewed and validated by the REC for equivalency

Validity

- Certificates may have a validity period depending on project type or funding requirements
- Renewal may be required for long-term or QRDI-funded research projects

5. Research Ethics Training Framework

The training programme is structured into mandatory domains that reflect Qatar's national research governance priorities and QRDI expectations.

5.1 Qatar National Research Ethics Principles

This section ensures compliance with national ethical standards and cultural considerations in Qatar.

Key principles include:

- **Respect for persons:** safeguarding dignity, autonomy, and informed decision-making
- **Beneficence:** maximising research benefits while minimising harm
- **Justice:** ensuring fair recruitment and equitable treatment of participants
- **Cultural sensitivity:** respecting local norms, values, and societal expectations
- **Regulatory compliance:** adherence to Qatar IRB and national research policies

Researchers are trained to apply these principles across all stages of the research lifecycle.

5.2 Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

This component ensures research is conducted with honesty, accountability, and professionalism.

It includes:

- Definition and prevention of research misconduct (fabrication, falsification, plagiarism)
- Proper data collection, analysis, and reporting standards
- Ethical authorship, attribution, and publication practices

- Transparency in methodology and results reporting
- Proper documentation and traceability of research processes
- Responsible collaboration and supervision practices

5.3 Human Subjects Research Ethics

This area governs all research involving human participants.

It includes:

- Informed consent: clear, voluntary, and documented participation agreements
- Participant rights: right to withdraw without penalty
- Risk identification: physical, psychological, reputational, and legal risks
- Vulnerable populations: additional protections for minors, students, or dependent groups
- Confidentiality: protection of identity and personal information
- Data anonymisation and pseudonymisation techniques
- Ethical recruitment strategies

5.4 Data Governance and QRDI Alignment

This section aligns research practices with QRDI expectations for secure, responsible data management.

It includes:

- Secure data storage (encrypted and access-controlled systems)
- Data minimisation principles (collecting only necessary data)
- Data retention schedules and secure deletion protocols
- Controlled data sharing and cross-border transfer considerations
- Protection of sensitive and national strategic data
- Compliance with institutional cybersecurity standards
- Alignment with QRDI expectations for innovation integrity and data responsibility

5.5 Ethical Approval and Institutional Governance

This section ensures compliance with institutional IRB processes.

It includes:

- Step-by-step ethics application preparation
- Risk–benefit analysis requirements
- Documentation standards for submission
- IRB review stages and decision outcomes
- Amendment procedures for protocol changes
- Ongoing monitoring and annual review requirements
- Conditions for research continuation or suspension

5.6 Academic Integrity and Research Misconduct

This section protects the credibility of research outputs.

It includes:

- Plagiarism detection and avoidance strategies
- Proper citation and referencing standards
- Duplicate publication and self-plagiarism issues
- Peer review ethics and confidentiality
- Consequences of misconduct under institutional regulations
- Reporting mechanisms for suspected violations

5.7 Conflict of Interest and Professional Responsibility

This section ensures transparency and independence in research.

It includes:

- Identification of financial and non-financial conflicts
- Disclosure requirements in funding and publication
- Management of dual roles (e.g., supervisor and evaluator)
- Industry collaboration transparency (including QRDI-funded projects)
- Avoidance of bias in data interpretation and reporting

5.8 Emerging Research Ethics (Cybersecurity, AI, and Digital Research)

This section addresses modern research domains relevant to Oryx University.

It includes:

- Ethical considerations in cybersecurity research (e.g., penetration testing, vulnerability research)
- Responsible AI development (bias, fairness, explainability, accountability)
- IoT, OT, and critical infrastructure research ethics
- Ethical hacking boundaries and legal compliance
- Digital and online research ethics (web scraping, user data, social platforms)
- Cross-border data and jurisdictional challenges

5.9 Applied Ethics and Scenario-Based Learning

This section ensures practical understanding of ethical principles.

It includes:

- Real-world case studies from academia and industry
- IRB decision-making simulations
- Ethical dilemma resolution exercises
- Group-based discussion and peer learning
- Discipline-specific scenarios (cybersecurity, engineering, data science)

6. Assessment and Certification

Completion of training requires:

- Completion of all mandatory modules
- Successful completion of embedded quizzes or assessments
- Demonstrated understanding of ethical principles
- Issuance of a formal certificate (CITI or institutional equivalent)

Certification Requirements

- Certificates must be verifiable and officially issued
- May be required for submission to IRB applications
- May be audited for QRDI-funded projects
- Renewal may be required based on institutional policy

7. External Collaboration and Recognition of Training

For collaborative research (including QRDI-linked or international partnerships):

- Researchers must comply with the **most stringent applicable ethics requirements**
- External training certificates may be accepted only after REC evaluation
- Qatar IRB requirements take precedence in all human subject research conducted in Qatar
- Reciprocity agreements may be developed between institutions for mutual recognition of ethics training

8. Compliance and Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Rejection or delay of ethics approval applications
- Suspension of research activities
- Withdrawal of supervisory or PI responsibilities
- Reporting to institutional governance bodies
- Impact on eligibility for QRDI-funded research participation

9. Policy Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy will be reviewed every **three years**, or earlier if required to reflect:

- Updates in Qatar national research ethics regulations
- Changes in QRDI governance frameworks
- International best practices in research ethics and integrity
- Institutional strategic research priorities