



The University of Agriculture Peshawar

Policy for Research Ethics

Purpose

This policy establishes principles, practices, and procedures to ensure ethical research and scholarship at The University of Agriculture Peshawar.

The purpose of this policy is to establish principles, practices and procedures to guide and ensure the ethical conduct of research and scholarship carried out under the auspices of The University of Agriculture Peshawar.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all individuals engaged in research under the auspices of The University of Agriculture Peshawar, including faculty, students, and collaborators.

This policy is applicable to:

- a. Permanent, contracted or visiting faculty members that are employed by The University of Agriculture Peshawar
- b. Individuals who are engaged in research activities within The University of Agriculture Peshawar boundaries or on the behalf of The University of Agriculture Peshawar.
- c. Graduate and undergraduate students and their supervisors are engaged in research.
- d. Researchers that are in collaboration with The University of Agriculture Peshawar for conducting research.
- e. Funded research or unfunded research that includes
 - i. Human Involvement
 - ii. Information Privacy
 - iii. Additional research specific ethical decisions

Ethics Review Required

An ethics review is required when research involves data collected from human participants including the following:

1. Data collected from alive people by interaction like interviews, questionnaires, surveys, and focus groups or through intervention (the contributor is affected in some way by being placed in a situation to be studied);
2. Secondary non-public sources that identify an individual. Sources include Data collected by some other investigator or institution for another reason that shows identity of a person (e.g., individual interviews); Data collected by the researcher for another reason identifying the individual (e.g. information from a private database, such as information from a hospital or school that contains private information from the individual(s)).
3. Observation method used to test the actions of the subjects in a natural habitat: Since research experience can be expected to affect behavior, naturalistic observation usually means that the participants do not know that they are being studied and thus cannot have given their free and informed consent.

Ethical Principles

The University upholds the highest standards of ethical conduct in research, ensuring the safety, dignity, and rights of participants are respected at all times.

The University of Agriculture Peshawar emphasizes ethical research practices across all its faculties, including Production Sciences, Protection Sciences, Animal Sciences, Nutrition Sciences, Social Sciences, Business, and Computer Sciences. Ethical principles include:

1. Ensuring sustainability and eco-friendly practices in agricultural production and protection.
2. Upholding animal welfare in all research involving livestock, poultry, and other animals used for agricultural purposes.
3. Conducting nutrition research that prioritizes human safety and community health.
4. Respecting cultural and social norms in studies involving communities, ensuring informed consent and data privacy.
5. Promoting transparency and data security in research involving agricultural business models and computational tools.
6. Adhering to national and international ethical guidelines to foster innovation and sustainability while safeguarding the rights and dignity of participants.

These principles ensure the alignment of research activities with the university's commitment to sustainable agriculture and ethical excellence.

The Policy accepts and promotes the following ethical principles:

Research Principles in relation to human subjects

- i. Scientists must guarantee the safety of contributors from damage caused either physically or psychologically, throughout the study procedure as well as safety of their own physical and psychological well-being.
 - a. Researchers need to obtain full and well-informed consensus from participants before integrating them into the research process, unless there is a clear justification for no or minimal consent. A consensus must only be obtained after providing participants of all the important details, possibly resulting in a change of decision of willingness to become part of the study that also enables them to explain any ambiguities. Participants should have the right to not participate in the investigation.
 - b. Participants should also have the authority to remove their agreement of contribution. But the scientists allowed mentioning specific point where the option of withdrawal of consent is allowed.
 - c. Written agreement of participants should be obtained from all participants where the research area is sensitive.
 - d. Additional steps and protocols must be prepared and enforced when working with vulnerable participants in the research project such as young children, patients etc.
- ii. The rules and regulations regarding the privacy policy must be followed in case of hidden observations. In a research study where covert observation is required, if consent has not been obtained before collecting data, post research consent may be taken if possible.
- iii. It is the duty of researcher that any part of his/her study may not offend any group of the society.

- iv. Researchers may be permitted to attach rewards or benefits to participants only to encourage participants but not to compel the participants or affect their responses.

Principles of Data Confidentiality, Storage and Access

- i. The University of Agriculture Peshawar requires that researcher must keep data of primary research for five years after completion of research. While he/she may increase this time limit if required by a research funding organization.
 - a. Data confidentiality requirements must be met if the data is related to individuals that can be identified and all other guarantees/assurances given by researchers to participants must also be kept.
 - b. The University of Agriculture Peshawar also expects researcher to meet the confidentiality requirements of the identity of participants and other data throughout the tenure of research. It is necessary for researcher to anonymize the data where individuals are identifiable, before publishing or making it public.
- ii. Generated data must have an accurate, complete and clear record, also record of research procedures utilized in research and obtained results must be kept in an accurate, complete and clear manner.
- iii. Scientists are obliged to ensure complete, clear and accurate records of the information gathered, following the research procedures and the results obtained either in print or online. This not only validates the conduct of research and results but also ensures that the right research methodology has been adopted.
- iv. It is the obligation of the researcher to confirm that measures are in place to preserve the integrity and safety of research data.

Ethical Principles

The University upholds the highest standards of ethical conduct in research, ensuring the safety, dignity, and rights of participants are respected at all times.

- i. Researcher must follow all the national and international laws while conducting the research.
- ii. Researcher is expected to be truthful and honest in their actions while conducting research and also their responses to the actions of other researchers.
- iii. Cases of plagiarism, piracy or changing the results and any other same actions of researchers shall not be tolerated. HEC clearly defines the plagiarism policy which is to be obeyed by researchers.
- iv.
 - a. It is the personal responsibility of anyone who is mentioned as author on research article, to ensure that he/she is well known about the contents of the article, and they have recognized their contribution in it.
 - b. Without any contribution nominal or honorary authorship must be avoided.
- v. Acknowledgement of the contribution of all collaborators and everyone who helped and supported directly and indirectly, must be recognized.
- vi. It is the duty of principal investigator and research supervisors to take all necessary procedures in order to complete research in compliance with sponsors, legal, ethical and moral duties while managing research projects.
- vii. Researchers are expected to complete their research in compliance with suitable standards and practices as described by the funding agencies and scientific societies.

Research Ethics Committee

The University of Agriculture Peshawar has established a Research Ethics Committee to oversee and certify the ethical conduct of research activities.

The University of Agriculture Peshawar has notified the research ethics/bio ethics committee which will review the cases and issue certificate if ethical requirements are fulfilled.

Research Ethics/ Bio Ethics Committee Structure

1. The Vice Chancellor (Convener)
2. Director Advanced Studies and Research
3. Director ORIC
4. Dean of each faculty
5. Co-opt Member (Legal Member if required)