

President's Secretariat Research Ethics Committee (PSREC)

President's Secretariat Research Ethics Committee (PSREC) of the Institute will ensure compliance with ethical standards, legal aspects and professional standards in the research process undertaken at IoBM under the supervision of the Rector. The purview of the PSREC committee is to examine the research involving human/animal participants and human data conducted by staff or students at IoBM. Additionally, research funded by external funding agencies must meet their expected standards. This policy is applicable to all faculty and staff members of IoBM.

Composition of the PSREC is as under:

1. Rector	Chairman
2. Director ORIC	Deputy Chair
3. Dean CESD	Member
4. Dean CCSIS	Member
5. Associate Dean CBM	Member
6. Associate Dean CES	Member
7. Director OGS	Member
8. Director QEC	Member
9. One external Member	Member
10. Head Computer Center Data Protection Officer	Member
11. Farah Habib	Secretary to the Committee

Note: Officers from QEC and Two Research Associates will assist the Committee.

The Role of President's Secretariat Research Ethics Committee (PSREC):

The primary purpose of PSREC is to ensure research is conducted ethically. The PSREC is mandated to monitor ethical compliance and ensure that the research process is according to ethical requirements and the land law. The President's Secretariat Research ethics committee is responsible for reviewing ethics applications to ensure that adequate consideration has been given to the ethical aspects of a research project, thus reducing the potential for any sort of harm to the participants. The general role of REC is:

- i. To promote awareness and understanding of research ethics issues throughout the IoBM;
- ii. To promote a culture of ethics in research practices at IoBM.
- iii. To advise ORIC for training and other activities to build capacity for ethical research at IoBM.
- iv. To serve as ethics monitoring and compliance authority for all research at IoBM.
- v. To consider the ethical implications of all research activities carried out under the four constituent colleges of the Institute of Business Management, i.e., College of Business Management, College of Economics & Social Development, College of Engineering and College of Computer Studies & Information Systems.
- vi. To consider the ethical implications of all research activities involving human/animal participants, the processing of personal data of human, etc.
- vii. To set standards, propose and review policy, procedures and practice on the ethical conduct of research throughout IoBM, including delegation of responsibility to the four colleges.
- viii. To consider requests from external researchers wishing to recruit staff and students from IoBM for participation in research projects.
- ix. To report to the President's Secretariat at least once annually through the Chair of the Committee.
- x. To submit a copy of the approved minutes of each meeting to the President's Secretariat.

The Objective:

The objective is to develop a culture of ethics, integrity and academic honesty in the research process at IoBM. To guide researchers, build ethical capacity and ensure compliance accordingly.

The Scope:

The scope of the policy is to provide facilitation to students, staff, and faculty of IoBM for maintaining high standards of ethics in their research process.

General Principles:

The IoBM Research Ethics Policy is based upon widely accepted principles and practices governing research participants. *The key elements are:*

- i. Minimal risk of harm to participants and researchers
- ii. Minimal risk of harm to the environment
- iii. The potential for the benefit to society
- iv. Preserving the integrity and dignity of participants
- v. Voluntary informed consent by participants, or special safeguards, where it is not possible
- vi. Transparency in declaring funding sources
- vii. Confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and anonymity of respondents
- viii. Acknowledgement of assistance
- ix. Appropriate publication and dissemination of research results
- x. Independence and impartiality of researchers

Research Ethics Policy:

Coverage

- i. Research Ethics Policy covers all the research undertakings at IoBM and external collaborators of IoBM who complete any research with IoBM students/faculty/staff, including surveys, observations, focus groups, lab experiments, field trials, human and other forms of investigation.
- ii. The policy covers research activity undertaken by IoBM staff, students, faculty and other persons. The policy covers research undertaking which interacts with humans and objects of IoBM, other organizations, city, state, country, and stakeholders involved in research.
- iii. All types of research projects/consultancies etc. should be channelled through ORIC of IoBM.

Principles

- i. No harmful effect is to be allowed in any kind of research intervention on human/animal and public property.
- ii. No risk or damage to physical, mental, emotional, financial or any other form is to be permitted in any kind of research undertaking.
- iii. No research undertaking is permitted, causing loss of public property, damage to the environment and involving any hazardous activity for people.
- iv. The personal identity of participants, respondents, observed people and others taking part in research must not be disclosed or published without consent.
- v. Integrity and honesty with humans, animals, public property and institutional research must be observed on priority.
- vi. Impartiality and nonbiased approach must be observed in case of ethnicity, religious values, gender and specific groups of people and society.
- vii. No element of force is to be allowed to force persons to take part in the research.
- viii. Consent of participation and understanding of research activity is mandatory.
- ix. Obtaining prior consent is a prerequisite for any research process from the research participants.
- x. Obtaining prior consent is a prerequisite for any research process from the owner/caretaker of the property, public properties selected for research.

- xi. Informed consent is a prerequisite for any research process from the caretaker of children, people with disability, or anyone/anything involved in research, with no ability to provide informed consent.
- xii. A clear explanation of predictable risks and associated benefits is required and must be agreed upon voluntarily by participants for research.
- xiii. Permission is required if humans of other collaborative institutions are involved.
- xiv. A plagiarism report is a prerequisite for any kind of research approval duly signed by Turnitin Focal person.
- xv. Approval of the President's Secretariat Research Ethics Committee (PSREC) is mandatory at the stage of final submission regarding compliance to research ethics.
- xvi. The research supervisor/project head assumes the responsibility of ethical compliance and guidance during the research process.

Legal Aspects

- i. Research ethics policy does not cover anything prohibited in the prevailing laws of the land (Pakistan).
- ii. Research ethics policy and permission of the Committee do not cover permission of humans and animals involved by collaborative institutions.
- iii. The research ethics policy and all the approvals of the Committee are in accordance with the IoBM's rules and regulations.
- iv. The researcher is under obligation to abide by the law of state and country.
- v. The researcher is under obligation to abide by the rules and regulation of collaborative partners involved in research.
- vi. The researcher is under obligation to abide by the expected standards provided by external funding agencies.
- vii. All the approval/permission given to the researcher for conducting research will be considered null and void if, at any stage, the researcher found (in any form) not following the research ethics policy.

Contingencies

- i. The research ethics policy and permission of the Committee do not cover any commitment made by the researcher.
- ii. Any dispute between the researcher and the Committee may be referred to Director ORIC or a subcommittee formed for dispute resolution.
- iii. Any dispute between the researcher and the collaborators/participants/third party may be referred to PSREC.
- iv. The researcher bears the sole responsibility for abiding by generally accepted principles and practices of research ethics.
- v. The notified head of PSREC needs to be approached through the submission of a formal application.

Vulnerable Participants

Some participants may be particularly vulnerable to harm and may require special safeguards for their welfare. In general, it may be inappropriate for the researcher to undertake research projects involving such participants. Particularly vulnerable participants might be:

- i. Infants and children under the age of eighteen
- ii. People with physiological and psychological impairments and learning difficulties.
- iii. People in poverty
- iv. Relatives of sick or recently deceased people
- v. People with only a basic/elementary knowledge of the language of the researcher
- vi. Minorities

vii. Females