

<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>4.b Ethical Research Policy (ERP)</b>		
<b>Policy Number:</b>	RS-PO-4B	<b>Date Created:</b>	29-05-2013
<b>Responsible:</b>	Vice President Research and Excellence	<b>Approved by:</b>	Board of Trustees

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that research connected with the University is consistent with principles of Canadian University Dubai policies, procedures and values. This Policy covers all research activities connected with Canadian University Dubai and constitutes a preamble to the Applied Research Ethics Policies.

Research Ethics is defined a set of moral principles researchers use when researching a topic. These principles encompass all areas of the research project especially those related to participants in the study.

Research is defined as the “systematic investigation of [an area of study] aimed at uncovering new information (discovering data) and/or interpreting relations among ... the parts (theorizing)” (Vogt, 1993).

**Scope**

This policy covers all research activities connected with Canadian University Dubai. The Research Ethics Policy is not concerned with evaluating the research design. The Policy is concerned that research conducted should conform to Canadian University Dubai policies and procedures.

**Definitions – Generative and Assistive AI**

- Generative AI tools are systems that can create text, images, code, audio, video, or other content in response to prompts (e.g., large language models, image generators).
- Assistive AI tools are systems that support tasks such as translation, summarization, transcription, coding assistance, or statistical analysis.
- Automated decision systems are AI tools that provide predictions, classifications, or recommendations used to support or make decisions about individuals, groups, or policies.

This Policy applies to all uses of such tools in design, conduct, analysis, and reporting of research connected with Canadian University Dubai.

**Rationale**

The reason for having a *Research Ethics Policy* is to minimize the University’s liabilities associated with research at the institution or research undertaken by members of the University community who may use the University name to gain access to other settings. These liabilities include, but are not limited to, guarding against ill effects to participants.

**Use of Generative and Assistive AI in Research**

1. Human accountability: AI systems cannot be listed as researchers or authors. Principal Investigators and supervisors remain fully responsible for all research decisions, data, analysis, and outputs, regardless of AI assistance.
2. Transparency: Researchers must disclose the use of AI tools in proposals, ethics applications, and research outputs (e.g., methods sections, acknowledgements), including what tools were used and for what purpose (e.g., transcription, drafting, coding support).
3. Integrity: AI tools must not be used to fabricate or falsify data, sources, analyses, or citations. AI-generated content must be critically checked and validated by researchers.
4. Privacy and confidentiality: Personally identifiable or confidential information under CUD’s custody must not be entered into external AI tools unless this has been explicitly approved by the Research Ethics Committee and is consistent with data protection obligations and sponsor agreements.
5. Bias and fairness: Where AI tools are used to analyse, classify, or interact with human participants, researchers must consider potential bias, discrimination, or unfair treatment and describe how they will assess and mitigate these risks.
6. Compliance with laws and contracts: AI use must comply with UAE regulations, institutional policies (e.g., IP, data governance, academic integrity), and any contractual restrictions with funders or data providers.
7. CUD uses a CUD-Approved Originality Checking Software to detect plagiarism, AI misuse, and other forms of academic dishonesty in all submitted research materials and student work.

## Accountabilities

This policy will be administered by the Research Ethics Committee. The Committee is responsible for reviewing research projects as outlined in the procedures section and ensuring that a complete review of the application has been conducted. The day-to-day operation of the committee will be managed by the Applied Research Manager. The committee will be overseen by the Executive Provost.

## Membership

The members of CUD Research Ethics Committee will be selected through consultation with interested members of CUD. The membership and terms will be established according to the tri-council statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, Canadian Council on Animal Care, Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals, Guide Vol. 1 (2nd Ed.), 1993 and the Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines (1996 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgsp/ols-bsl/index.html>

Terms of office will be two years. The Chair will be elected by the committee every two years. For the first year, the Chair and half of the committee members will serve for 3 year-terms, helping to stagger committee members' term of appointment. Members of the committee will be trained in using the standards of the committee when reviewing proposals. The committee will review its membership every year. The evaluation processes will be determined by the first Research Ethics Committee.

The Student Research Ethics Committee will be chaired by a member of the CUD Research Ethics Committee and its members are representatives of the 3 CUD schools. Its members are not necessarily members of the CUD Research Ethics Committee.

An orientation session will be conducted for the committee anytime there is more than a 50% change in membership.

## When Should Research, Projects Be Presented To the Committee?

All research projects that are in any way connected with Canadian University Dubai should be reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee. These projects include those where:

- The University name or affiliation is used in a proposal or contract bid to outside research supporting agency or in a proposed partnership or alliance, or in the research activity; or
- The University participates as a sponsor financially or through provision of release time, study leave, use of facilities, use of University personnel, administration of a grant from an outside agency, or other University resources; or
- University employees or students are participants or subjects for whom the University has responsibilities to regulate legal or ethical aspects of the research or where databases will be used which contain information about the aforementioned groups.

### This includes:

- Requests received from Canadian University Dubai employees who wish to do research (e.g., part of academic studies); or intend to use their position at the university for applying for or obtaining research funds; or,
- Research proposals that name Canadian University Dubai employees, who conduct research external to Canadian University Dubai and who use their status at the University to gain entry to the research site and/or participants, must be submitted to the Research and Ethics Committee for approval.
- Requests to do research within Canadian University Dubai community received from persons or organizations external to Canadian University Dubai.

In the case of tight timelines for grant applications, preliminary approval based on the agreed upon quorum will be given only to allow a grant to be requested to be sent for funding review. Evaluation of the proposal will continue to focus on the attached procedures and evaluation process, but in a less in-depth process. When the study is funded, and the research design is finalized, the full proposal shall go through the in-depth committee review.

Ongoing information gathering activities that are part of normal University operations do not necessarily fall within the mandate of the Research Ethics Committee (e.g., First Year Student Survey; Student Success Survey; curriculum development, data collection to support University direction; teacher directed course assignment projects; course evaluation). There is an understanding that the research should follow minimum ethical standards such that if it were submitted to this committee for review, it would be acceptable. This committee may be asked to periodically review ongoing research projects and provide guidance on their ethical implications.

### Student Ethics Committee

- Faculty who are supervising student research projects are responsible for determining if a student's research is required to undergo ethical review and are responsible for advising their students on the process.
- Student research should undergo ethical review at departmental level in consultation with the Student Research Ethics Committee.
- Submission for ethical review is the responsibility of the Faculty supervising the research protocol. Supervisors must be closely involved with their students' submissions.
- Academic Departments are responsible for training students, including training about ethical conduct in research, and for supervising the research projects completed during the course of their studies.
- Academic Departments should ensure that student research projects comply with the Canadian University Dubai policies and that they were granted the approval of Student Research Ethics Committee before the start of the project.
- All supervisors and Head of Departments must familiarize themselves with United Arab Emirates regulations and culture prior to the commencement of any research involving students as co-investigators or participants.
- Students should be provided with training on responsible use of generative and assistive AI in research (including integrity, privacy, and disclosure).
- Student research proposals should explicitly state any AI use and that supervisors review AI-related risks before submission.
- The CUD Research Ethics Committee may require an understanding of specific ethical procedures of each department for undergraduate and graduate research.
- Canadian University Dubai Office of Institutional Research & Planning may conduct a sample audit of these research projects on an annual basis to investigate the a priori approval of the CUD Research Ethics Committee.

### Decision Making

Every effort will be made to reach decisions by consensus. Committee members will be required to declare any conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest arises, then the committee member(s) will be asked to leave the room and/or abstain from the committee's discussion of and decision on the project.

University staff, faculty and external experts may be consulted on an ad-hoc basis as needed. In all cases, confidentiality will be maintained. Voting will be in person, in writing, or by voice or electronic mail on or before the meeting date. In the event consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will be sufficient. If there is no consensus and no majority vote is reached with the committee's decision, the Provost will be consulted for resolution. The Vice President's decision will be conveyed in written form to all concerned. If the researchers receive a "permission is denied" response, they will have the option of re-submitting their proposal. Their re-submission should include a letter outlining how the issues that were stated in the letter of denial from the Provost are addressed in the revised proposal.

Outcomes possible from a review include:

- Accepted without revisions
- Accepted with revisions noted
- Permission denied with reasons outlined (e.g., student survey fatigue) and an opportunity for re-submission possible. The re-submission should include a letter outlining how the issues that were stated in the letter from the committee or Provost are addressed in the revised proposal.

### Meetings

The meetings schedule must comply with the Tri-Council Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, Canadian Council on Animal Care, Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals, Guide Vol. 1 (2nd Ed.), 1993 and the Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines (1996 2nd ed.), <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgsp/ols-bsl/index.html>

### Cross Reference Document

Intellectual Property Policy and Procedures

TRI-Council Statement, Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, Canadian Council on Animal Care, Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals, Guide Vol. 1 (2nd Ed.), 1993.

Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines (1996 2nd ed.), <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgsp/ols-bsl/index.html>

Archive

Selected non-confidential final reports from projects that have obtained ethical approval will be available in the Learning Resource Center.

Contact Person

Vice President Research and Excellence (VPRE)

Procedures for Obtaining Research Ethics Review

a) Application for Research Ethics

This form is to be used in the following instances:

- The University name or affiliation is used in a proposal or contract bid to outside research supporting agency (e.g., Change Foundation) or in a proposed partnership or alliance, or in the research activity; or
- The University participates as a sponsor financially or through provision of release time, study leave, use of facilities, use of University personnel, administration of a grant from an outside agency, or other University resources; or
- The University employees or students are participants or subjects for whom the University has responsibilities to regulate legal or ethical aspects of the research or databases will be used which contain information about the aforementioned groups.

This includes:

- Requests received from CUD employees who wish to do academic research (e.g., part of academic studies); or,
- Requests to do academic research within the CUD community received from persons or organizations external to CUD.

Note: A copy of this application is available in electronic format.

Answer only those questions relevant to your proposal.

Name of Principal Researcher \_\_\_\_\_

Institution Name \_\_\_\_\_

Institution Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of other applicants and employment/affiliations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are any of the applicants CUD Employees? Yes/No

Name of Advisor (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed start date of project: \_\_\_\_\_

Completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

Where is the research to be conducted (e.g., in class, on campus, off campus)?

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Has the study been reviewed by other research committees? If yes, attach copy of decision and application.

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Status of Funding:

1. Pending
2. Funded
3. Other
4. None

Research Sponsor or Funding Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary**

Provide a brief (less than 300 words) summary of the proposed study using layperson’s language. Include the rationale, purpose/objective/goal, procedure for collection and analysis, reporting, and benefits to the University (where applicable).

**Body of Proposal**

The following are guidelines to assist you with identifying the information which the committee may require concerning your project. Not all items listed below will be relevant for all projects. Please discuss your project using these questions as a guideline. The “Guidelines for Assessing Applications” (see attached) will be used to evaluate the comprehensiveness of your application.

**Protocol**

- What is the purpose of the study?
- What is the relevance or significance of your study?
- What is the setting?
- What sample/population will be used? How will you choose your sample. What is your sample size? How was the sample size determined?
- What is your design? (e.g., pre-test/post-test, descriptive). What is the timeline?
- What are the treatments, interventions or manipulations?
- What will the sample/population be asked to do? Give a step-by-step listing of your procedures.
- List the instrumentation, interview guides or protocol to be used and attach copies. Describe the psychometric properties of the instruments.
- What are the projected results?
- Will generative or assistive AI tools be used in designing the study, collecting data, analysing data, or drafting outputs?
- If yes, please specify the tools, providers, and the nature of their use (e.g., coding assistant, transcription, language editing, data analysis, synthetic data generation).

**Informed Consent**

- How will participants be approached to be a part in your study? (attach copies of advertisement, information sheets, etc.)
- How will participants be informed and their consents obtained? (attach copy of consent form)
- Describe the relationship between the researcher(s) and the participant(s).

- Are participants competent to consent? If not, describe the alternate source of consent. If a minor, describe the procedure to be used.
- What procedures will be followed for participants who wish to withdraw at any point during or after the study?
- Will participants interact directly with AI systems (e.g., chatbots, automated interviewers, adaptive apps)? If yes, how will this be explained in the consent process, and how will you ensure participants understand they are interacting with an AI system rather than a human?
- Will any audio, video, text, or other personal data be processed by third-party AI services? If so, describe the data flow, storage, de-identification, and legal/contractual safeguards.

**Benefits and Risks to CUD and Participants**

- What are the benefits to the participants, the University community, or society that would justify asking for their participation?
- What inducement or compensation is offered to participants? Will they be reimbursed for expenses? If yes, provide details.
- What are the ethical implications and considerations?
- Will the participants be fully informed about the nature and the purpose of your research, and about any risk to them? If no, please elaborate.
- Is there any potential for emotional distress? If yes, please elaborate.
- Will the participants be alone (isolated) with the researcher at any time?
- Is there any potential for physical harm? If yes, please elaborate.
- Is there any potential for infringement of rights (e.g., confidentiality, privacy and human rights)? If yes, please elaborate.
- How will confidentiality be maintained in data collection, storage, and disposal? Where and how will the data be stored, and who will supervise access to the data to ensure confidentiality is maintained?
- Are there any risks related to AI-generated misinformation, hallucinated content, biased outputs, or opaque decision-making that could harm participants or mislead stakeholders?
- Are there risks that AI tools may undermine confidentiality or data security (e.g., cloud-based models retaining prompts)? How will these be mitigated?
- Are there any other potential risks of any kind? If yes, please elaborate.
- For any of the above risks which you may have described, please indicate how they will be minimized or removed.

**Impact on CUD**

- Are there any implications for the reputation of CUD? If yes, please elaborate.
- Describe anticipated use of CUD resources (e.g., class time, space, materials).
- Will the use of AI tools in this project have implications for the reputation of CUD (e.g., controversial use of synthetic media, deepfakes, or automated profiling)? If yes, please elaborate and describe safeguards.
- What are the benefits to the University?
- Will the results be published? Will the University be identified in the final report?

Please describe other pertinent information.

**Note: After approval, the committee must be notified if any changes are made in the protocol.**

Principal Researcher (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Researcher (Name Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact Vice President Research and Excellence of CUD if you have questions or would like your proposal critically reviewed before sending it to the committee. Results of the review will indicate which areas may need to be revised.

Within six months of completion of your project and preparation of your report, a full copy of the report should be forwarded to the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee.

Note: Freedom of Information Document must accompany this form.

b) Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Agreement

This agreement is made between \_\_\_\_\_ (name of researcher), referred to below as the researcher, and CUD, referred to below as the University.

The researcher has requested access to the following records or information or persons which may lead to collecting personal information which is under the custody or under the control of the University: (describe the records below):

The researcher understands and promises to abide by the following terms and conditions:

1. Information will be only disclosed in aggregate form so as to protect the identity of individuals.
2. The researcher will not use the information in the records for any purpose other than the following research purpose unless the researcher has the University’s written authorization to do so: (describe the research purpose below).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The researcher will give access to personal information in a form that ensures that the individual to whom it relates can be identified only to the following person: (name the person below).
4. Before disclosing personal information the person mentioned above, the researcher will enter into an agreement with this person to ensure that he/she will not disclose it to any other person.
5. The researcher will keep the information in a physically secure location, access to which will be restricted the researcher and to the person mentioned above.
6. The researcher will destroy all records linking individual identities in the information by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
7. The researcher agrees not to transmit personal or confidential information obtained from the University to external generative or assistive AI services (including large language models and cloud-hosted analytics tools) without prior written authorization from the University and explicit reference in the approved ethics protocol. Where such authorization is granted, the researcher must ensure appropriate contractual, technical, and organizational measures are in place to protect privacy and confidentiality.
8. The researcher will notify the University in writing immediately upon becoming aware that any of the conditions set out in this agreement has been breached.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ (day) of \_\_\_\_\_ (month) \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

Principal Researcher (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Researcher (Name Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Representative of CUD (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Representative of CUD (Name Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

C) Instructions for Preparation Consent Form

Consent forms must be written in a simple, direct style using terms and language which the participant understands and must incorporate the following information:

1. Identities of the researchers and sponsoring institutions;
2. Title of study;

3. Statement of general purpose(s) of the study;
4. Description of the procedure(s) involving the participant including their purpose, nature, duration and frequency;
5. Description of any physical risks such as side effects, discomforts and inconveniences and psychological or social discomforts which might accompany or result from participation;
6. Benefits or lack thereof;
7. Description of any device to be investigated;
8. Statement of provisions for confidentiality;
9. Details of the manner in which subjects will have access to the results of the study and if appropriate, indicate the way a subject can request results of the study;
10. Details of any scheme of remuneration, if any, and in the case of long-term projects, the manner in which the compensation is to be given if the subject withdraws from the study prior to its completion but after partial participation;
11. State that the participant is free to abstain from or to withdraw, at any time, from the project without adversely affecting present or future status at the institution;
12. Name and telephone number of contact person in case of emergency;
13. Name and telephone number of principal researcher to answer general questions;
14. Name and telephone number of Chair, Research Ethics Committee member for ethical concerns;
15. Statement that the participant consents to take part in study; and
16. Signature line for participant or for relative in case of a minor.

**The consent form must be on letterhead or bear the proper heading of the principal researcher's home institution.**

#### d) Standards for Assessing Applications

The following guidelines are set out with the understanding that in all cases the true representation of the study be evident in the proposal.

##### 1. Identification

- Is it clear who will carry out the research and who will be responsible for its supervision and conduct of the research team?

##### 2. Purpose

- Are the purpose(s) and justification clearly stated?
- Is the research proposal related to the University's mission?

##### 3. Risk/Benefit

- Are all the risks and benefits clearly stated and dealt with appropriately?
- Will there be any direct benefits to the participants? If not, will this be clearly understood?
- Given consent, where there are risks, are these outweighed by potential benefit(s)?
- Is there a need for monitoring this study?
- Are there any risks/benefits to the University which should be reviewed with people outside the committee?
- Does the proposal clearly describe any use of AI tools and associated risks/benefits?
- Are data protection and privacy risks from AI tools adequately addressed (e.g., data will not be shared with external AI services, or safeguards are clearly justified and documented)?
- Where AI is used to generate or analyze data about individuals or groups, are bias and fairness considerations adequately discussed?

##### 4. Procedures

- Is the research design outlined clearly?
- Are the procedures clearly outlined and described in layperson's language?
- Is the timeline clearly outlined?
- Is it clear how AI tools will be used and how human oversight will be maintained?

##### 5. Population

- Are the nature and manner of obtaining the participants' consent clearly stated?
- Are special populations involved, such as minors? Is a cogent justification for this provided?

## 6. Relationship

- Is it clear who will actually contact participants?
- Does any prior relationship exist between participant and researcher such as teacher/student? Are special procedures for obtaining free consent required? Are adequate special procedures proposed?

## 7. Informed Consent

- Is it clear what information will be given to participants?
- Is the information adequate as to the purpose, risks/benefits and procedures of the research?
- Is it expressed in lay terms?
- Is there any deception involved in the information given participants? If so, why is such deception felt to be necessary? Is it justified?
- Will the participants be under any kind of pressure to consent?
- Are appropriate procedures for consent of special populations described?
- Are the participants made aware they are free to withdraw or discontinue participation?
- If verbal and not written consent is proposed, is adequate justification given for this?
- Will participants be given a written information sheet to retain?

## 8. Use of Existing Records

- Is the nature of any data, their source and the method whereby they are obtained stated?

## 9. Confidentiality of Data

- Are there adequate safeguards: to obtain the consent of both participants and/or others having authority over the data; and to maintain the confidentiality of the data?

## 10. Compensation

- If there is any compensation, is it used in such a way or is the amount such that it can be construed as inducement of participants?

## Reference

Vogt, W.P. (1993). Dictionary of statistics and methodology. A non-technical guide for the social sciences. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.

## Policy Revision History

Version No.	Update Brief	Approved Date
V1.0	New policy	29-05-2013
V2.0	Revised and updated	13-03-2023
V3.0	Revised to address AI concerns	25-11-2025