



ELON MUSK

UNIVERSITY OF EAST AFRICA

Boundaries Erased- Knowledge Unleashed- Minds Empowered

**The University's
Research Ethics Policy**

Version 1.0

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Foreword

It is with great commitment and responsibility that I present the **Research Ethics Policy** of the **Elon Musk University of East Africa (EMUEA)**. As a university founded on innovation, digital transformation, community engagement, and **Placement-Based Education for Impact (PBEI)**, **EMUEA** recognizes that research is not merely an academic exercise, but a powerful social responsibility with the capacity to shape lives, influence systems, and transform societies.

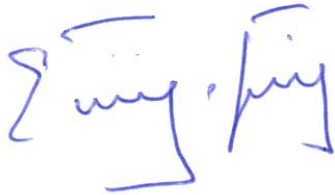
In today's rapidly evolving world—characterized by technological advancement, digital interconnectedness, artificial intelligence, sociopolitical complexity, and expanding health and social challenges—the ethical conduct of research has become more important than ever. Research must not only pursue knowledge and innovation, but also uphold human dignity, protect communities, respect cultural contexts, and maintain public trust. At **EMUEA**, we strongly believe that scientific progress without ethical responsibility risks causing harm rather than advancing humanity.

This policy therefore establishes the ethical foundation upon which all research activities at **EMUEA** shall operate. It provides guidance for students, academic staff, researchers, collaborators, and placement-based practitioners in conducting research that is responsible, transparent, scientifically rigorous, culturally sensitive, and socially accountable. The policy further reflects **EMUEA's** commitment to protecting research participants, safeguarding data and confidentiality, promoting integrity in scholarship, and ensuring responsible use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence in research environments.

Importantly, this policy aligns with **EMUEA's** broader institutional philosophy of integrating learning, practice, innovation, and societal impact. Through our distributed and digitally enabled educational ecosystem, research extends beyond traditional academic spaces into communities, workplaces, health systems, digital environments, and real-world practice settings. Such an approach demands strong ethical oversight, contextual awareness, and continuous accountability.

This document also demonstrates **EMUEA's** aspiration to align with internationally recognized ethical principles and best practices while remaining responsive to local realities, African contexts, and the evolving global research landscape. Ethical research is essential not only for academic credibility and institutional quality assurance, but also for ensuring that knowledge generation contributes meaningfully to human wellbeing, justice, equity, and sustainable development.

I therefore encourage all members of the **EMUEA** community and our external collaborators to uphold the principles and standards articulated in this policy with integrity, professionalism, and responsibility. Together, let us cultivate a research culture that advances knowledge while protecting humanity, respecting communities, and contributing to positive societal transformation.



Dr. Evariste Erwin Sebahutu, PhD, MPH

Founder & Project Lead

Elon Musk University of East Africa (EMUEA)

erwin.ndaruhutse@gmail.com | +250 786 007 344

Table of Contents

I.	POLICY FOUNDATIONS	8
1.	Preamble	8
2.	Purpose of the Policy	8
3.	Scope and Applicability	9
4.	Definitions of Key Terms	10
5.	Core Ethical Principles.....	10
II.	ETHICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH	12
1.	Respect for Persons	12
2.	Beneficence and Non-Maleficence	12
3.	Justice and Equity	13
4.	Integrity and Scientific Rigor	13
5.	Cultural Sensitivity and Contextual Ethics	14
6.	Responsibility to Communities and Society.....	14
III.	ETHICS REVIEW AND APPROVAL SYSTEM.....	15
1.	Establishment of Research Ethics Committee (REC/IRB)	15
2.	Ethics Approval Requirements.....	15
3.	Submission and Review Procedures	16
4.	Expedited vs Full Review.....	16
5.	Approval, Rejection, and Conditional Approval.....	17
6.	Ongoing Monitoring of Approved Research	18
7.	Documentation and Record Keeping.....	18
IV.	INFORMED CONSENT	19
1.	Principles of Informed Consent	19
2.	Consent Procedures	19
3.	Special Populations	20
4.	Waiver of Consent	20
5.	Documentation of Consent.....	21

V.	PROTECTION OF PARTICIPANTS	22
1.	Risk–Benefit Assessment	22
2.	Minimization of Harm	22
3.	Safeguarding and Confidentiality.....	23
4.	Protection of Vulnerable Populations	23
5.	Right to Withdraw.....	24
6.	Protection During and After Research.....	25
VI.	DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY IN RESEARCH	26
1.	Data Collection Ethics	26
2.	Confidentiality and Anonymity	26
3.	Data Storage and Security.....	27
4.	Data Sharing and Use.....	27
5.	Ethical Use of Digital and Health Data.....	28
6.	Data Breach and Incident Response	28
VII.	RESEARCH IN DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS	29
1.	Ethical Use of Online Data	29
2.	Consent in Digital Research	29
3.	Privacy and Anonymity in Online Research	30
4.	Ethical Risks in Digital Research.....	30
5.	Use of Social Media Data in Sensitive Contexts.....	31
6.	Institutional Oversight of Digital Research	31
VIII.	RESEARCH IN PLACEMENT AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS.....	32
1.	Ethical Conduct in Real-World Environments.....	32
2.	Dual Roles and Role Clarity	32
3.	Community Engagement and Respect.....	33
4.	Avoidance of Exploitation	33
5.	Feedback and Benefit to Communities.....	34
6.	Protection in Sensitive Contexts	35
IX.	RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND MISCONDUCT.....	36

1.	Principles of Research Integrity	36
2.	Plagiarism and Misrepresentation.....	36
3.	Fabrication and Falsification	37
4.	Authorship Ethics.....	37
5.	Handling Research Misconduct	38
6.	Promotion of Ethical Research Culture.....	39
X.	USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN RESEARCH.....	40
1.	Ethical Use of AI in Research.....	40
2.	AI in Data Analysis and Research Processes	40
3.	AI in Academic Writing and Reporting.....	41
4.	Transparency and Disclosure	41
5.	Risks and Ethical Considerations.....	42
6.	Institutional Oversight of AI Use.....	42
XI.	PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION ETHICS	43
1.	Responsible Reporting of Findings.....	43
2.	Avoidance of Harmful Misinterpretation	43
3.	Acknowledgment of Contributions.....	44
4.	Open Access and Knowledge Sharing	44
5.	Dissemination to Communities and Stakeholders.....	45
XII.	MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE	46
1.	Monitoring of Approved Research	46
2.	Reporting Adverse Events.....	46
3.	Compliance with Approved Protocols	47
4.	Audits and Reviews	47
5.	Enforcement and Sanctions	48
6.	Continuous Improvement through Monitoring.....	48
XIII.	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	49
1.	Institutional Responsibilities.....	49
2.	Researcher Responsibilities	49

3.	Research Ethics Committee (REC) Responsibilities	49
4.	Participant Rights	50
5.	Shared Responsibility Framework	50
XIV.	IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW	51
1.	Policy Implementation	51
2.	Training in Research Ethics	51
3.	Policy Review Cycle	51
4.	Continuous Improvement.....	52

I. POLICY FOUNDATIONS

1. Preamble

The Elon Musk University of East Africa (EMUEA) Research Ethics Policy establishes the institutional framework for ensuring that all research conducted under the University is **ethical, responsible, and scientifically sound**.

EMUEA recognizes that research—particularly in areas such as public health, social systems, and community environments—has profound implications for individuals, communities, and society. As such, all research must be conducted with the highest standards of:

- **Respect for human dignity and rights**
- **Protection from harm and exploitation**
- **Integrity, transparency, and accountability**
- **Cultural sensitivity and contextual awareness**

This policy applies to all forms of research, including:

- Academic and student research
- Community-based and field research
- Digital and social media research
- Health and population-based studies

The policy ensures that EMUEA research contributes to knowledge and innovation while **safeguarding participants and maintaining public trust**.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

2.1. Establish ethical standards for research

Define principles and requirements for conducting ethical research.

2.2. Protect research participants

Ensure the safety, dignity, and rights of individuals and communities involved in research.

2.3. Promote research integrity

Ensure honesty, transparency, and accountability in research processes and outputs.

2.4. Regulate research practices

Provide clear procedures for ethics review, approval, and monitoring.

2.5. Support responsible innovation

Ensure that research, including the use of digital tools and artificial intelligence, is conducted ethically.

2.6. Align with international standards

Ensure compatibility with globally recognized ethical frameworks and practices.

3. Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all research conducted under EMUEA.

3.1. Types of Research Covered

The policy applies to:

- Human participant research
- Community-based and field studies
- Health and clinical-related research
- Social and behavioral research
- Digital, online, and social media research
- Secondary data analysis where ethical considerations apply

3.2. Stakeholders

This policy applies to:

- Students conducting research
- Academic and research staff
- Collaborators and external partners
- Placement-based researchers

3.3. Contexts

The policy applies across:

- Institutional research settings
- Community and field environments
- Digital and online platforms
- Placement-based research contexts

4. Definitions of Key Terms

For the purpose of this policy:

- **Research:**
A systematic investigation designed to generate new knowledge or understanding.
- **Research Participant:**
An individual or group involved in a research study.
- **Informed Consent:**
Voluntary agreement to participate in research based on full understanding of its purpose and implications.
- **Confidentiality:**
Protection of participant information from unauthorized disclosure.
- **Anonymity:**
Removal of identifying information so that participants cannot be identified.
- **Research Ethics Committee (REC):**
A body responsible for reviewing and approving research proposals for ethical compliance.
- **Vulnerable Populations:**
Groups that may require additional protection due to limited autonomy or increased risk.

5. Core Ethical Principles

Research at EMUEA is guided by the following fundamental ethical principles:

5.1. Respect for Persons

All individuals must be treated with dignity and autonomy, including:

- Voluntary participation

- Informed consent
- Respect for individual rights

5.2. Beneficence and Non-Maleficence

Research must:

- Maximize potential benefits
- Minimize potential harm
- Avoid unnecessary risks

5.3. Justice and Equity

Research must ensure:

- Fair selection of participants
- Equitable distribution of benefits and burdens
- Avoidance of exploitation

5.4. Integrity and Scientific Rigor

Research must be:

- Honest and transparent
- Methodologically sound
- Free from fabrication, falsification, or bias

5.5. Cultural Sensitivity and Contextual Ethics

Research must:

- Respect cultural norms and values
- Adapt to local contexts
- Avoid harm through cultural misunderstanding

II. ETHICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH

1. Respect for Persons

EMUEA recognizes the inherent dignity, autonomy, and rights of all individuals involved in research.

1.1. Autonomy and Voluntary Participation

Researchers must ensure that:

- Participation is fully voluntary
- Individuals are free to decline or withdraw without penalty
- No coercion, undue influence, or manipulation is used

1.2. Informed Decision-Making

Participants must:

- Receive clear and understandable information
- Have sufficient time to make decisions
- Be able to ask questions and seek clarification

2. Beneficence and Non-Maleficence

Research must aim to **benefit individuals and society** while avoiding harm.

2.1. Maximizing Benefits

Researchers should:

- Design studies with potential positive impact
- Contribute to knowledge, policy, or practice
- Consider long-term societal benefits

2.2. Minimizing Harm

Researchers must:

- Identify potential risks

- Implement measures to reduce harm
- Avoid unnecessary or disproportionate risks

3. Justice and Equity

EMUEA ensures fairness in the conduct and outcomes of research.

3.1. Fair Selection of Participants

Participants must be selected:

- Based on research relevance
- Without discrimination or bias
- Without targeting vulnerable groups unnecessarily

3.2. Equitable Distribution of Benefits and Burdens

Research must ensure:

- No group bears excessive risk
- Benefits are not restricted to privileged groups
- Findings contribute to broader societal good

4. Integrity and Scientific Rigor

Research must be conducted with **honesty, accuracy, and methodological soundness.**

4.1. Research Integrity

Researchers must:

- Report findings truthfully
- Avoid fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation
- Maintain transparency in methods and results

4.2. Scientific Quality

Research must:

- Use appropriate and rigorous methodologies
- Be designed to answer meaningful questions

- Avoid poorly designed or unethical studies

5. Cultural Sensitivity and Contextual Ethics

EMUEA emphasizes the importance of **context-aware research**.

5.1. Respect for Cultural Contexts

Researchers must:

- Understand and respect local norms and values
- Engage with communities appropriately
- Avoid cultural harm or misinterpretation

5.2. Contextual Adaptation

Research methods and approaches should:

- Be adapted to local realities
- Reflect social, cultural, and political contexts
- Avoid imposing external frameworks without consideration

6. Responsibility to Communities and Society

Research at EMUEA extends beyond individuals to communities and systems.

6.1. Community Engagement

Researchers should:

- Engage communities respectfully
- Consider community perspectives
- Ensure that research is relevant and beneficial

6.2. Avoidance of Harm at Community Level

Research must avoid:

- Stigmatization or misrepresentation of groups
- Reinforcement of harmful narratives
- Negative social or political consequences

III. ETHICS REVIEW AND APPROVAL SYSTEM

1. Establishment of Research Ethics Committee (REC/IRB)

EMUEA shall establish an independent **Research Ethics Committee (REC)** (also referred to as an Institutional Review Board, IRB) responsible for reviewing and approving research involving human participants.

1.1. Composition

The REC shall include:

- Academic staff with relevant expertise
- Professionals in ethics, law, or health sciences
- Members with knowledge of community and cultural contexts
- Where possible, independent or external members

1.2. Independence and Objectivity

The REC shall:

- Operate independently of research investigators
- Ensure impartial and unbiased decision-making
- Avoid conflicts of interest

2. Ethics Approval Requirements

All research involving human participants must receive **ethics approval** before commencement.

2.1. Mandatory Approval

Ethics approval is required for:

- Student research projects
- Faculty and institutional research
- Community-based and field studies
- Digital and social media research involving identifiable data

2.2. Exemptions

Limited exemptions may apply to:

- Research using fully anonymized secondary data
- Studies with minimal or no risk

Such exemptions must still be **reviewed and confirmed by the REC.**

3. Submission and Review Procedures

Researchers must submit proposals for ethical review.

3.1. Submission Requirements

Submissions must include:

- Research proposal and objectives
- Methodology and data collection plan
- Risk-benefit analysis
- Informed consent procedures
- Data protection and confidentiality measures

3.2. Review Process

The REC shall:

- Evaluate ethical risks and safeguards
- Assess scientific and methodological soundness
- Review participant protection measures
- Provide feedback or required modifications

4. Expedited vs Full Review

The REC may apply different levels of review depending on the nature of the study.

4.1. Expedited Review

Applicable for:

- Low-risk research
- Minimal participant impact

4.2. Full Review

Required for:

- Research involving vulnerable populations
- Studies with potential risk or sensitive topics
- Complex or high-impact research

5. Approval, Rejection, and Conditional Approval

Following review, the REC may issue:

5.1. Approval

Research is approved where:

- Ethical standards are met
- Risks are minimized
- Safeguards are adequate

5.2. Conditional Approval

Approval may be granted subject to:

- Required modifications
- Additional safeguards

5.3. Rejection

Research may be rejected where:

- Ethical risks are unacceptable
- Safeguards are insufficient
- The study lacks scientific or ethical justification

6. Ongoing Monitoring of Approved Research

Ethics oversight continues after approval.

6.1. Monitoring Requirements

Researchers must:

- Adhere to approved protocols
- Report any changes to study design
- Inform the REC of adverse events

6.2. Review

The REC may:

- Conduct periodic reviews
- Request progress reports
- Suspend or terminate approval where necessary

7. Documentation and Record Keeping

All ethics review processes must be documented.

7.1. Records

Records include:

- Submitted proposals
- Review decisions
- Conditions and approvals
- Monitoring reports

7.2. Transparency

Documentation ensures:

- Accountability
- Traceability
- Readiness for audit and accreditation

IV. INFORMED CONSENT

1. Principles of Informed Consent

EMUEA requires that all research involving human participants is based on **valid informed consent**.

1.1. Core Principles

Informed consent must be:

- **Voluntary** – free from coercion or undue influence
- **Informed** – based on clear and complete information
- **Comprehended** – understandable to the participant
- **Documented** – properly recorded where required

1.2. Respect for Autonomy

Participants must:

- Make their own decisions regarding participation
- Be free to withdraw at any time without penalty

2. Consent Procedures

Researchers must follow structured procedures when obtaining consent.

2.1. Information to Participants

Participants must be provided with:

- Purpose and nature of the study
- Procedures and duration
- Potential risks and benefits
- Confidentiality and data use
- Contact information for questions or concerns

2.2. Communication

Information must be:

- Presented in clear and simple language
- Appropriate to the participant's context and understanding
- Delivered in a culturally sensitive manner

3. Special Populations

Additional protections are required for vulnerable populations.

3.1. Examples of Vulnerable Groups

These may include:

- Children and minors
- Individuals with limited decision-making capacity
- Socially or economically disadvantaged groups
- Individuals in dependent or hierarchical relationships

3.2. Additional Safeguards

Researchers must:

- Obtain consent from legally authorized representatives where required
- Ensure participation is genuinely voluntary
- Provide additional protections against coercion or harm

4. Waiver of Consent

In limited cases, the requirement for informed consent may be waived.

4.1. Conditions for Waiver

A waiver may be considered where:

- The research involves minimal risk
- Obtaining consent is impractical or impossible

- Participant rights and welfare are not adversely affected

4.2. Approval

All waivers must be:

- Justified by the researcher
- Approved by the Research Ethics Committee (REC)

5. Documentation of Consent

Consent must be properly documented where applicable.

5.1. Forms of Documentation

Documentation may include:

- Written consent forms
- Digital or recorded consent
- Verbal consent (where appropriate and approved)

5.2. Record Keeping

Researchers must:

- Maintain secure records of consent
- Ensure confidentiality of participant information
- Make documentation available for review where required

V. PROTECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Risk–Benefit Assessment

All research must undergo a systematic **risk–benefit assessment** before approval.

1.1. Identification of Risks

Researchers must identify potential risks, including:

- Physical risks (where applicable)
- Psychological or emotional distress
- Social or reputational harm
- Legal or economic risks

1.2. Evaluation of Benefits

Researchers must demonstrate:

- Potential benefits to participants, communities, or society
- Contribution to knowledge or practice
- Relevance and justification of the study

1.3. Ethical Balance

Research is approved only where:

- Benefits outweigh risks
- Risks are minimized and justified
- Adequate safeguards are in place

2. Minimization of Harm

Researchers must actively reduce potential harm.

2.1. Preventive Measures

These include:

- Careful study design

- Use of appropriate methods
- Avoidance of unnecessary exposure to risk

2.2. Ongoing Protection

During the study, researchers must:

- Monitor participant wellbeing
- Respond to emerging risks
- Adjust procedures if necessary

3. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

EMUEA ensures protection of participants' identity and personal information.

3.1. Confidentiality

Researchers must:

- Protect personal data from unauthorized access
- Limit disclosure of identifiable information
- Use anonymization where possible

3.2. Safeguarding

Participants must be protected from:

- Abuse or exploitation
- Psychological or social harm
- Misuse of information

4. Protection of Vulnerable Populations

Special care is required when working with vulnerable groups.

4.1. Ethical Considerations

Researchers must:

- Justify inclusion of vulnerable populations

- Ensure additional safeguards
- Avoid exploitation or coercion

4.2. Enhanced Protection

Measures may include:

- Additional consent procedures
- Increased monitoring
- Engagement with guardians or community representatives

5. Right to Withdraw

Participants have the right to withdraw from research at any time.

5.1. Conditions

Participants may:

- Withdraw without penalty or consequence
- Decline to answer specific questions
- Request removal of their data where appropriate

5.2. Researcher Responsibility

Researchers must:

- Respect withdrawal decisions
- Ensure no harm or disadvantage results
- Clearly communicate this right during consent

6. Protection During and After Research

Participant protection extends beyond data collection.

6.1. During Research

Researchers must:

- Ensure safe and respectful interaction
- Monitor participant wellbeing
- Respond to concerns promptly

6.2. After Research

Researchers must:

- Ensure responsible use of findings
- Avoid harm through misinterpretation or misuse
- Consider feedback or benefit-sharing where appropriate

VI. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY IN RESEARCH

1. Data Collection Ethics

All data collection must be conducted in a manner that is **ethical, necessary, and proportionate**.

1.1. Principles

Researchers must:

- Collect only data that is relevant to the research objectives
- Avoid unnecessary or excessive data collection
- Ensure transparency with participants regarding data use

1.2. Consent and Awareness

Participants must be informed about:

- What data will be collected
- How the data will be used
- Any potential risks associated with data collection

2. Confidentiality and Anonymity

EMUEA requires strict protection of participant identity and information.

2.1. Confidentiality

Researchers must:

- Protect identifiable information from unauthorized access
- Limit access to authorized personnel only
- Use secure methods for storing and handling data

2.2. Anonymity

Where appropriate, researchers must:

- Remove or code identifying information
- Ensure participants cannot be identified in reports or publications

- Use anonymized datasets whenever possible

3. Data Storage and Security

All research data must be securely stored and managed.

3.1. Security Measures

Researchers must:

- Use secure digital or physical storage systems
- Implement access controls
- Protect data from loss, theft, or unauthorized disclosure

3.2. Data Retention

Data must be:

- Retained only for necessary periods
- Managed in accordance with institutional policies
- Safely disposed of when no longer required

4. Data Sharing and Use

Data sharing must be carefully controlled and ethically justified.

4.1. Conditions for Sharing

Data may be shared only when:

- It aligns with the purpose of the research
- Confidentiality and privacy are maintained
- Appropriate permissions are obtained

4.2. Secondary Use of Data

Secondary use of data requires:

- Ethical justification
- Approval where necessary

- Compliance with original consent conditions

5. Ethical Use of Digital and Health Data

Special care is required when handling digital and health-related data.

5.1. Sensitive Data

Researchers must exercise caution with:

- Health and medical information
- Psychological or behavioral data
- Sociopolitical or sensitive contextual data

5.2. Risk Management

Risks are mitigated through:

- Enhanced confidentiality measures
- Careful interpretation and reporting
- Avoidance of harm through misuse or misrepresentation

6. Data Breach and Incident Response

EMUEA requires immediate response to data breaches.

6.1. Response Actions

In the event of a breach:

- The incident must be reported promptly
- Measures must be taken to contain and mitigate the breach
- Affected participants must be informed where appropriate

6.2. Prevention

Researchers must:

- Follow institutional data protection guidelines
- Maintain vigilance in data handling
- Participate in training and awareness

VII. RESEARCH IN DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS

1. Ethical Use of Online Data

EMUEA recognizes digital environments as valid research contexts, but requires that all use of online data is conducted **ethically and responsibly**.

1.1. Sources of Online Data

Digital research may involve:

- Social media platforms
- Online forums and communities
- Digital communication records
- Publicly available online content

1.2. Ethical Considerations

Researchers must:

- Consider whether data is truly public or contextually private
- Respect the expectations of users in digital spaces
- Avoid harm through misuse or misinterpretation of content

2. Consent in Digital Research

Consent requirements vary depending on the nature of digital data.

2.1. Public vs Private Data

- **Public data:** May be used without individual consent where ethical and appropriate
- **Private or restricted data:** Requires informed consent

2.2. Contextual Integrity

Even where data is public, researchers must:

- Respect the context in which information was shared
- Avoid exposing individuals to harm or identification

3. Privacy and Anonymity in Online Research

Protecting identity is essential in digital research.

3.1. Anonymization

Researchers must:

- Remove identifiable information
- Avoid direct attribution where it may cause harm
- Use paraphrasing where necessary to protect identities

3.2. Risk of Re-identification

Researchers must consider:

- Whether individuals can be traced through quotes or data
- Potential unintended exposure

4. Ethical Risks in Digital Research

Digital research presents unique risks.

4.1. Potential Risks

These include:

- Misinterpretation of online behavior
- Amplification of harmful content
- Stigmatization of individuals or groups
- Violation of privacy expectations

4.2. Mitigation Strategies

Researchers must:

- Use careful interpretation and contextual analysis
- Avoid sensationalization or harmful framing
- Apply ethical judgment in data selection and reporting

5. Use of Social Media Data in Sensitive Contexts

Special care is required when analyzing sensitive sociopolitical or psychological content.

5.1. Sensitive Topics

Research involving:

- Conflict, ethnicity, or political issues
- Mental health and distress
- Social tensions or vulnerable groups

must be conducted with heightened ethical awareness.

5.2. Responsible Reporting

Researchers must:

- Avoid reinforcing harmful narratives
- Ensure balanced and contextualized interpretation
- Consider potential impact on individuals and communities

6. Institutional Oversight of Digital Research

All digital research is subject to ethical review.

6.1. Ethics Approval

Researchers must:

- Submit digital research proposals to the REC
- Justify use of online data
- Demonstrate risk mitigation strategies

6.2. Monitoring

The University ensures:

- Compliance with ethical standards
- Ongoing oversight of sensitive research

VIII. RESEARCH IN PLACEMENT AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS

1. Ethical Conduct in Real-World Environments

Research conducted within placement or community settings must adhere to **the same ethical standards as formal institutional research**, with additional safeguards for real-world contexts.

1.1. Integration with Practice

Researchers must ensure that:

- Research activities do not disrupt normal operations of the placement site
- Learning and service delivery are not compromised
- Ethical standards are maintained at all times

1.2. Institutional Oversight

All such research must:

- Receive prior ethics approval
- Be aligned with EMUEA policies and programme objectives
- Be monitored through academic and ethical oversight mechanisms

2. Dual Roles and Role Clarity

Students and staff may occupy dual roles (e.g., **student and researcher**, or **practitioner and researcher**), which require careful management.

2.1. Risk of Role Conflict

Dual roles may create risks such as:

- Power imbalances
- Coercion or perceived obligation to participate
- Blurring of professional and research boundaries

2.2. Mitigation

Researchers must:

- Clearly distinguish between service and research roles
- Avoid recruiting participants under pressure or influence
- Ensure voluntary participation

3. Community Engagement and Respect

Research in community settings must be conducted with **respect, collaboration, and sensitivity**.

3.1. Engagement Principles

Researchers should:

- Engage communities respectfully and transparently
- Consider local perspectives and needs
- Build trust and mutual understanding

3.2. Cultural Sensitivity

Researchers must:

- Respect local norms, values, and traditions
- Adapt methods to fit the context
- Avoid actions that may cause cultural harm

4. Avoidance of Exploitation

EMUEA strictly prohibits exploitation of individuals or communities in research.

4.1. Ethical Requirements

Researchers must:

- Ensure that participation is voluntary and informed
- Avoid extracting data without meaningful purpose or benefit

- Ensure that research does not disproportionately burden communities

4.2. Safeguards

The University ensures:

- Ethical review of all community-based research
- Monitoring of researcher conduct
- Mechanisms for reporting concerns

5. Feedback and Benefit to Communities

Research should provide value to participating communities.

5.1. Feedback

Researchers should:

- Share findings in accessible formats
- Provide feedback to participants and communities where appropriate

5.2. Benefit

Research should aim to:

- Contribute to local knowledge or practice
- Support community improvement
- Avoid purely extractive research practices

6. Protection in Sensitive Contexts

Additional care is required when research involves sensitive environments.

6.1. Sensitive Settings

These may include:

- Health facilities
- Vulnerable communities
- Sociopolitical or conflict-related contexts

6.2. Enhanced Safeguards

Researchers must:

- Conduct thorough risk assessments
- Apply heightened ethical scrutiny
- Ensure participant and community protection

IX. RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND MISCONDUCT

1. Principles of Research Integrity

All research conducted under EMUEA must adhere to the highest standards of **honesty, accuracy, transparency, and accountability.**

1.1. Core Expectations

Researchers must:

- Report data and findings truthfully
- Use appropriate and rigorous methods
- Maintain accurate records of research processes
- Disclose limitations and uncertainties

1.2. Accountability

Researchers are accountable for:

- The integrity of their work
- Ethical conduct throughout the research lifecycle
- Compliance with institutional and ethical standards

2. Plagiarism and Misrepresentation

EMUEA strictly prohibits plagiarism and misrepresentation.

2.1. Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes:

- Using another person's work without proper acknowledgment
- Presenting ideas, data, or text as one's own
- Improper citation or paraphrasing

2.2. Prevention

Researchers must:

- Properly cite all sources
- Use original analysis and interpretation
- Acknowledge contributions of others

3. Fabrication and Falsification

Fabrication and falsification are serious violations of research integrity.

3.1. Fabrication

Fabrication involves:

- Making up data or results
- Reporting non-existent observations

3.2. Falsification

Falsification involves:

- Manipulating research materials or data
- Altering results to misrepresent findings

3.3. Prohibition

Such practices are strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action.

4. Authorship Ethics

Authorship must reflect genuine contribution to the research.

4.1. Criteria for Authorship

Authorship is granted to individuals who:

- Contribute significantly to the research design, execution, or analysis
- Participate in writing or reviewing the work
- Approve the final version

4.2. Acknowledgment

Individuals who do not meet authorship criteria must be:

- Properly acknowledged
- Not listed as authors

4.3. Avoidance of Misconduct

Practices such as:

- Ghost authorship
- Gift or honorary authorship

are not permitted.

5. Handling Research Misconduct

EMUEA provides procedures for addressing misconduct.

5.1. Reporting

Suspected misconduct must be:

- Reported through designated institutional channels
- Supported with available evidence

5.2. Investigation

The University shall:

- Conduct fair and confidential investigations
- Ensure impartial review of cases
- Protect all parties involved

5.3. Outcomes

Where misconduct is confirmed, actions may include:

- Correction or retraction of research outputs
- Disciplinary measures
- Reporting to relevant authorities or journals

6. Promotion of Ethical Research Culture

EMUEA promotes a culture of integrity through:

- Training and awareness
- Clear policies and guidelines
- Support for responsible research practices

X. USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN RESEARCH

1. Ethical Use of AI in Research

EMUEA permits the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in research, provided it is used **ethically, transparently, and responsibly**.

1.1. Guiding Principles

Use of AI must:

- Support, not replace, human intellectual contribution
- Maintain integrity and originality of research
- Be aligned with ethical and academic standards

2. AI in Data Analysis and Research Processes

AI tools may be used to support various research activities.

2.1. Acceptable Uses

AI may be used for:

- Data organization and analysis
- Literature review and information retrieval
- Pattern identification and modeling
- Support in drafting or structuring research outputs

2.2. Limitations

Researchers must:

- Verify accuracy of AI-generated outputs
- Avoid over-reliance on automated analysis
- Ensure that interpretations are human-driven

3. AI in Academic Writing and Reporting

AI may assist in writing, but must not compromise academic integrity.

3.1. Acceptable Support

AI may be used for:

- Language improvement and editing
- Structuring content
- Generating ideas or outlines

3.2. Prohibited Practices

AI must not be used to:

- Generate entire research outputs without human contribution
- Misrepresent authorship
- Fabricate or distort findings

4. Transparency and Disclosure

Transparency in the use of AI is required.

4.1. Disclosure Requirements

Researchers must:

- Declare the use of AI tools where relevant
- Describe how AI contributed to the research

4.2. Accountability

Researchers remain fully responsible for:

- Accuracy and validity of findings
- Ethical compliance
- Integrity of the research

5. Risks and Ethical Considerations

AI introduces potential risks that must be managed.

5.1. Risks

These include:

- Bias in AI-generated outputs
- Misinformation or inaccuracies
- Loss of originality or critical thinking
- Ethical misuse of data

5.2. Mitigation

Researchers must:

- Critically evaluate AI outputs
- Cross-check with reliable sources
- Apply ethical judgment in all uses

6. Institutional Oversight of AI Use

EMUEA maintains oversight of AI use in research.

6.1. Ethics Review

The Research Ethics Committee (REC) may:

- Review AI use in research proposals
- Require justification and safeguards

6.2. Continuous Monitoring

The University shall:

- Monitor developments in AI technologies
- Update policies and guidance as needed

XI. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION ETHICS

1. Responsible Reporting of Findings

All research outputs must be reported **accurately, transparently, and responsibly**.

1.1. Accuracy and Honesty

Researchers must:

- Present findings truthfully and without distortion
- Avoid selective reporting or omission of key results
- Clearly distinguish between data, interpretation, and opinion

1.2. Transparency

Researchers must:

- Describe methods and limitations clearly
- Provide sufficient detail for understanding and evaluation
- Disclose any conflicts of interest

2. Avoidance of Harmful Misinterpretation

Researchers must consider the potential impact of how findings are presented.

2.1. Risk Awareness

Findings must not:

- Reinforce harmful stereotypes or stigma
- Be presented in a way that could incite harm or misunderstanding
- Be taken out of context to support harmful narratives

2.2. Responsible Framing

Researchers must:

- Provide balanced and contextualized interpretations
- Avoid sensationalism

- Consider social and cultural implications

3. Acknowledgment of Contributions

All contributions to research must be properly recognized.

3.1. Authorship

Authorship must:

- Reflect genuine intellectual contribution
- Follow established authorship criteria
- Avoid inappropriate inclusion or exclusion

3.2. Acknowledgments

Researchers must:

- Recognize contributions that do not meet authorship criteria
- Acknowledge funding sources and institutional support

4. Open Access and Knowledge Sharing

EMUEA encourages responsible sharing of knowledge.

4.1. Accessibility

Where appropriate, research outputs should:

- Be made accessible to broader audiences
- Support dissemination beyond academic communities

4.2. Ethical Sharing

Sharing must:

- Respect participant confidentiality
- Avoid misuse of data
- Align with consent and ethical approvals

5. Dissemination to Communities and Stakeholders

Research findings should be communicated to relevant stakeholders.

5.1. Community Feedback

Researchers should:

- Share findings with participating communities
- Use accessible formats and language
- Promote understanding and application

5.2. Policy and Practice Impact

Research dissemination should:

- Inform policy and decision-making where relevant
- Contribute to societal improvement
- Avoid misapplication of findings

XII. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

1. Monitoring of Approved Research

All research approved by EMUEA is subject to **ongoing monitoring** to ensure continued ethical compliance.

1.1. Monitoring Mechanisms

Monitoring may include:

- Periodic progress reports from researchers
- Review of data collection and research activities
- Oversight by academic mentors and supervisors
- Review of adherence to approved protocols

1.2. Purpose of Monitoring

Monitoring aims to:

- Ensure continued protection of participants
- Detect deviations from approved protocols
- Identify emerging risks or ethical concerns

2. Reporting Adverse Events

Researchers must report any adverse events or unexpected issues.

2.1. Definition of Adverse Events

Adverse events include:

- Harm or distress experienced by participants
- Breaches of confidentiality
- Ethical concerns arising during the study

2.2. Reporting Requirements

Researchers must:

- Report adverse events promptly to the REC
- Provide details of the incident and response
- Cooperate with further review or investigation

3. Compliance with Approved Protocols

Researchers are required to strictly adhere to approved research protocols.

3.1. Protocol Adherence

Researchers must:

- Conduct research as approved by the REC
- Avoid unauthorized modifications
- Seek approval for any significant changes

3.2. Amendments

Any changes to the research must:

- Be justified
- Be submitted for REC approval
- Be implemented only after approval

4. Audits and Reviews

EMUEA may conduct audits to ensure compliance.

4.1. Internal Audits

Internal audits may:

- Review research documentation
- Assess adherence to ethical standards
- Evaluate data management practices

4.2. External Reviews

Research may be subject to:

- External audit or accreditation review
- Collaboration-based compliance checks

5. Enforcement and Sanctions

Non-compliance with ethical standards is subject to action.

5.1. Types of Non-Compliance

Non-compliance may include:

- Failure to follow approved protocols
- Misconduct or unethical behavior
- Failure to report adverse events

5.2. Sanctions

Sanctions may include:

- Suspension or termination of research
- Withdrawal of ethics approval
- Disciplinary action
- Reporting to relevant authorities or institutions

6. Continuous Improvement through Monitoring

Monitoring outcomes are used to strengthen research ethics systems.

The University shall:

- Identify systemic issues
- Improve policies and procedures
- Enhance training and awareness

XIII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Institutional Responsibilities

EMUEA is responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining research ethics policies and frameworks
- Ensuring compliance with ethical, legal, and regulatory standards
- Providing resources for ethical review and oversight (REC/IRB)
- Promoting a culture of ethical research and integrity
- Monitoring implementation and addressing risks

2. Researcher Responsibilities

All researchers (students and staff) are responsible for:

- Conducting research in accordance with ethical principles and approved protocols
- Obtaining ethics approval before commencing research
- Protecting participants and ensuring informed consent
- Maintaining data confidentiality and security
- Reporting adverse events and ethical concerns
- Ensuring integrity and transparency in research and publication

3. Research Ethics Committee (REC) Responsibilities

The REC is responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving research proposals
- Assessing ethical risks and safeguards
- Providing guidance to researchers
- Monitoring approved research
- Investigating ethical concerns and non-compliance

4. Participant Rights

Participants in research have the right to:

- Be informed about the research and its purpose
- Voluntarily participate or decline
- Withdraw at any time without penalty
- Have their data protected and kept confidential
- Be treated with dignity and respect

5. Shared Responsibility Framework

Ethical research at EMUEA operates under a **shared responsibility framework**, where:

- The institution provides governance and oversight
- Researchers conduct ethical and responsible studies
- The REC ensures independent review and monitoring
- Participants are protected and respected

XIV. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

1. Policy Implementation

This policy shall be implemented across all EMUEA research activities.

Implementation includes:

- Integration into academic programmes and research processes
- Alignment with related policies (QA, Digital Safety, Assessment)
- Clear communication to all stakeholders

2. Training in Research Ethics

EMUEA shall provide training for:

- Students (research methods and ethics)
- Academic staff and researchers
- Members of the Research Ethics Committee

Training ensures consistent understanding and application of ethical standards.

3. Policy Review Cycle

This policy shall be reviewed:

- At least every five (5) years
- Earlier where necessary due to:
 - Changes in research practices or technologies
 - Regulatory developments
 - Institutional feedback

4. Continuous Improvement

EMUEA commits to continuous improvement through:

- Monitoring and evaluation of research practices
- Feedback from researchers and participants
- Adaptation to emerging ethical challenges