



TYPE: POLICY and PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: Research Ethics

REFERENCE: LWP 27

DATE: 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024

LAST REVIEWED:

12th March 2025

APPROVED BY:

The Board of Directors

## **Preamble**

This policy is aimed at addressing the need of students carrying out research while following courses organised by Learning Works.

### **Research Ethics Committee**

The CEO will appoint persons to form part of the Research Ethics Committee (REC). Members should be in possession of a master's degree and have experience in applying research methods and carrying out research.

The members of the REC are particularly responsible to handle any research queries and issues addressed to it by the lecturing staff of Learning Works.

### **Research Guidelines**

Students who are carrying out research as part of their course requirements, particularly in the writing of dissertations, are in duty bound to follow ethical principles. The key principles include the following:

1. Voluntary participation. The research subject\* is autonomous and has a right to his/her own values and choices.

2. Informed consent. The subject needs to give his/her consent prior to being interviewed or asked to fill in any questionnaire.
3. Anonymity and confidentiality protection of privacy. Subjects cannot be identified in the study.
4. Avoiding potential harm. Any research work should be carried out for the benefit of the subject and is geared to avoid any harm.
5. Results' communication. Results of the study should be communicated to the subject should the subject wish that this be done.
6. Honesty: truthfulness in terms of the study is essential and facts cannot be altered to fit any preconceived results.
7. Justice: research subjects\* are to be treated fairly at all times.

The following research studies require approval by Learning Works:

1. Diagnostic tests where analysis of data is involved.
2. Quality improvement and cost benefit analysis.
3. Surveys and interviews particularly where sensitive information is identified or collected.

\* The research subject is the person who is participating in the research.

### **Responsibilities of students carrying out research**

1. Researchers need to follow the research guidelines indicated above.
2. They need to submit the research consent form attached to this document to Learning Works after it is administered to the research subject.
3. Researchers are to inform the research subjects, in writing, what they will be doing, drawing attention to what could conceivably be objected to. The language to be used must be the one that the research subject fully understands. They need to inform the subjects how the collected data will be used and how and to whom it will be reported.
4. They are to ensure that confidentiality of data is maintained by complying with the General Data Protection Regulations.

### **Responsibilities of supervisors of dissertations**

1. Supervisors of dissertations are responsible for fostering the required skills and competences through one-to-one or small group teaching.
2. Supervisors are to provide guidance and advice to students on projects leading to the writing of a dissertation. Guidance is to be provided at all stages of the dissertation process starting from the origination stage, the planning, the execution and completion of the project till the end resulting in the writing stage. This support is also to be extended on issues related to language competence, information technology, mathematics or statistics.
3. Supervisors related to the student on the basis of consanguinity or affinity are to declare such a relationship and may not proceed with this role in such cases.
4. The supervisory role comes to an end when the dissertation is submitted for examination.
5. Supervisors give feedback intended to improve the quality of work and are not responsible for approving a dissertation.
6. Supervisors are not responsible for proof-reading the dissertation and neither are they responsible for any plagiarism that might be present in the finished dissertation.
7. If a supervisor decides that plagiarism is present in submitted work s/he is at liberty to admonish the student and demand corrective action or report the matter to the institution's Research Ethics Committee. If an admonishment is carried out and a second case of plagiarism is again present, the supervisor is obliged to report the matter to the Research Ethics Committee.
8. Supervisors are expected to keep a written record of supervision meetings , including dates and any critical agreed action and deadlines.

References: *Principles of Procedure on the Supervision of Masters' Dissertations and Doctoral Theses*, University of Malta, 2010

Charlo Bonnici

CEO

## RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

REF: LWP 27

For Office Use	Consent Form Ref. No.
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This form is to be used by students who intend to carry out research as part of their programme of studies. When completed this form is to be presented to the Officer responsible for Student Issues at Learning Works

Title of Project:

Name of Researcher:

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study dated \_\_\_\_\_ and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason without any legal rights being affected.
3. I understand that personal information may be requested and that full anonymity will be observed by the researcher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person giving consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Researcher

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Signature

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Date

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