RHODES UNIVERSITY

Where leaders learn

RHODES UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

SOP 1.2 CONTINUING REVIEW AND RE-CERTIFICATION PROCESSES

Approved by:	Name	Signature	Date
Human Research Ethics Committee	Janet Hayward		12/12/ 2023
Endorsed by:			
VC Legal Unit	G Barker.		31/01/2024.
DVC: RISP	N. Mzilikoz		31 01 2024

COMPILED BY Prof Roman Tandlich, Chair Rhodes University Animal Research Ethics Committee and Dr Janet Hayward, Chair, Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version 1.0 (December 2023)

CONTINUING REVIEW AND RE-CERTIFICATION PROCESSES

1. Purpose

Research ethics are fluid and ever evolving, as are their impact on the quality of data collected and publication of resulting research findings. It is therefore essential to keep research ethics practices up to date, and the purpose of these guidelines is to outline procedures for updating and review of ethics documents pertaining to the operations, procedures and processes of the Rhodes University Human Ethics Committee (RU-HREC).

2. Review of the Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Policy and Terms of Reference

2.1. Research Ethics Policy: Research Involving Human Participants (RU policy) and Terms of Reference (ToR) of all ethics review committees are reviewed every five years.

2.2. The process of review is driven by the chairperson of the respective committee.

2.3. In the case of Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee (RU-HREC), the chairperson will initiate and drive the review and re-drafting of RU policy and ToR.

2.4. This must review and incorporate the latest norms, legislation and other standards/best practices that have been adopted or that are advised to be followed in South Africa and globally.

2.5. Drafts are to be tabled at a regular RU-HREC meeting for member feedback and change suggestions.

2.6. Once changes and suggestions have been incorporated, the updated version of the RU policy and ToR is tabled at the next meeting of RU-HREC for adoption.

2.7. After adoption by RU-HREC, the RU policy and ToR are tabled at the next meeting of all the faculty boards of Rhodes University.

2.8. After adoption by Faculty Boards, the RU policy and ToR go before the Rhodes Senate and Rhodes University Council, both of which must also adopt the documents.

2.9. After adoption by Rhodes Senate and Rhodes University Council, the RU policy and ToR are published on the Rhodes University website and become operational.

3. Review of RU-HREC Standard Operating Procedures

3.1. The Chairperson of RUHEC and all the members of the committee are required to follow and to keep abreast of the latest developments in the research ethics that involves human participants.

3.2. Any significant changes or updates are to be discussed at a regular quorate review meeting of RU-HREC.

3.3. If the meeting deems any such development significant enough to change the way research ethics is understood at Rhodes University, then a particular SOP must be updated to reflect the change, or a new one is to be drafted.

3.4. The chairperson will initiate and drive the review and re-drafting of SOPs

3.5. Drafts are to be tabled at a regular RU-HREC meeting for member feedback and change suggestions.

3.6. Once changes and suggestions have been incorporated, the updated version of the SOP is tabled at the next meeting of RU-HREC for adoption.

3.7. After adoption by RU-HREC, SOPs are published on the Rhodes University website and become operational.

3.8. The longest possible period for one SOP to remain unchanged is three years.

4. Version Control

4.1. Modification history must be detailed in a policy / ToR / SOP Version History Log as a prefix to the document content.

4.2. Version numbers in the format x.x must be assigned to every new issue.

4.3. Minor changes (such as annual review that does not change the content or typographical changes) should result in an increment after the decimal point (e.g. 2.0 to 2.1).

4.4. Major changes should result in a change before the decimal point (e.g. 2.2 to 3.0).

5. Access and Record keeping

5.1. The Human Research Ethics Office will make finalised versions of all documents available on the Rhodes Research Ethics webpage.

5.2. The Human Research Ethics Office will notify RU researchers, RU-HREC members and staff when a new or updated version of a document is published.

6. Effective date of this SOP

12 December 2023 with the next revision date being 12 December 2026, or as deemed necessary by a quorate meeting of RU-HREC.