



# **Research Ethics and Procedures**

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## 1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The main purpose of this policy on Research Ethics and Procedures is to assist the researchers and inform about situations that generate the potential for conflicts of interest or ethical issues while conducting research at NOVA Information Management School (NOVA IMS).

The Ethical guidelines for research apply to academic staff and students at NOVA IMS Community. NOVA IMS encourages its faculty, researchers, and students to use these ethical procedures when engaging in research, in accordance with our academic standards.

Every NOVA IMS researcher needs to become familiar with the guidelines proposed in this policy, including all members of academic faculty, research staff, visiting academics, doctoral, masters, and undergraduate students.

We wish you the best use of this research policy and the ethics checklist, available in the appendix and online.

Yours sincerely,

**NOVA IMS Ethics Committee**

*Prof. Diego Costa Pinto, Prof. Ana Cristina Costa, and Prof. Miguel de Castro Neto*

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## 2. DEFINITIONS<sup>1</sup>

- **Research:** careful or diligent search. Investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws. The collecting of information about a particular subject.
- **Research trainee:** includes students and inexperienced researchers that are being trained for research (e.g., masters and PhDs).
- **Plagiarism:** to use the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.
- **Peer-review:** A scholarly process a process by which research or publication is evaluated by a group of experts in the appropriate field.
- **Research participant:** means an individual who has given informed consent and voluntarily participates in research.
- **Research Misconduct:** Non-compliance with the Research Ethics Policy, such as misuse, wrongdoing, and improper violation of the research procedures.
- **Confidentiality:** containing information whose unauthorized disclosure could be prejudicial to the participants' interest.
- **Anonymity:** the right participants have to remain anonymous in a research.
- **Vulnerability** Participants should be considered vulnerable if they are children, persons lacking capacity, or, individuals in a dependent or unequal relationship.

## 3. RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

The ethical guidelines aim at providing NOVA IMS researchers and students with procedures to support research activity.

1. The NOVA IMS Research Ethics and Procedures integrates the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa (UNL) Ethics Code, which research procedures must be followed.
2. Researchers at NOVA IMS have to carry out meaningful research that:
  - benefits the society and the community around NOVA IMS;

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: Adapted from Meerian-Webster (2020) and Ethical Guidelines from major Universities world-wide.

- acknowledges any funding institution (e.g., FCT, H2020, companies);
  - respects colleagues, students, and the wider academic community.
3. The ethical guidelines relates to all research involving human participants or data from human participants (e.g., datasets, online reviews).
4. The ethical guidelines support NOVA IMS commitments to research excellence and intellectual freedom.
5. The ethical procedures aim at promoting a research culture based on the reflection of ethical implications and responsibility for research ethics.
6. The ethical procedures presented in this document are subject to supervision and revision of the NOVA IMS Ethics Committee.
7. Researchers are required to complete a Research Ethics Review Checklist, before conducting research with human participants (data collection or obtained datasets) at:  
[https://novaims.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eG085IyOwAj6a57](https://novaims.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eG085IyOwAj6a57).
8. Any additional required documents can be submitted for evaluation by the Ethics Committee by email to [ethicscommittee@novaims.unl.pt](mailto:ethicscommittee@novaims.unl.pt).
9. Research projects may require a formal review from the NOVA IMS Ethics Committee whenever appropriate, such as when research involves deception (example, the research objectives are not clear to participants), when participants will have not consented to participate and/or to the use of their data by the researcher(s) (e.g., field observation, datasets), when it involves vulnerable groups or sensitive topics, or when research may cause risk, stress or anxiety to participants.

## 4. PROPER CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

NOVA IMS research should have the following characteristics:

- is responsible, honest, and ethical, respecting the society and the environment;
- follows research best-practices and research excellence guidelines;
- cares about the use of resources (e.g., public, private) while conducting research;
- acknowledges any significant contributors, stakeholders, and funding sources in research;
- transparent communication of research procedures, data information, and findings.

## 5. INFORMED CONSENT

NOVA IMS ensures that researchers obtain informed consent from participants (i.e., permission to use their data for research purposes) and follow the main principles when conducting research:

1. Research participation must be voluntary and include options for withdrawal (e.g., opt-out button).
2. Participants should be fully informed about the purpose, methods, and intended possible use of the research.
3. The confidentiality of participants information must be respected, and the data must be appropriately stored to assure participants confidentiality and anonymity.
4. The health and safety of both researcher and participants must be safeguarded. Research participation should avoid risks and possible harms to participants, such as distress, physical discomfort, personal embarrassment, or other harm.
5. Researchers should ensure that the research methodology is appropriate and needed for the project, excluding unnecessary questions and procedures.
6. Research findings and outcomes should be accessible to NOVA IMS community and the society.
7. To ensure the independence of the research, any external sources of funding or potential conflicts of interest must be declared in the ethical checklist.

## 6. RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND SUPERVISION

1. The research integrity must be assured by following scientific procedures of excellence to contribute to knowledge;
2. The research should be undertaken and supervised by experienced and qualified researchers, providing research trainees appropriate training and supervision (e.g., Master and Doctoral Programs);
3. NOVA IMS requires research supervisors to ensure the research integrity of their studies as well as students' supervision (e.g., checking sources and the validity of the data).

## 7. PUBLICATION OF RESEARCH

1. All research conducted at NOVA IMS should follow the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines;
2. Researchers should ensure that their findings are accurate and properly reported;
3. Research must be original and include accurate and complete references to the work of others. Any form of plagiarism is unacceptable, including the use of similar research findings in several publications or self-plagiarism;
4. The publications must include information on all sources of funding and any potential conflicts of interest;
5. The principal investigator or student's supervisor(s) must ensure that all parties to the research are made aware of any applicable confidentiality agreements which may restrict, delay or limit publication.

## 8. AUTHORSHIP AND COLLABORATION<sup>2</sup>

Academic authorship is an important issue at NOVA IMS and applies to all forms of publication (e.g., papers, conferences, media). To be named as an author, a researcher must have made a substantial contribution such as:

- conception and design of the research project;
- approval of the final version and agreement to be accountable for research accuracy and integrity (e.g., datasets, participants' informed consent, reporting of findings);
- drafting or critically revising significant parts of the work published.

In terms of collaborations, research at NOVA IMS conducted with other institutions (e.g., Universities, Foundations, Companies) must address confidentiality, responsibility for ethics, safety clearances, ownership, intellectual property, and any other policies and requirements affecting the project.

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<sup>2</sup> For details see [ICMJE Guidelines for Authorship](#).

## **9. PEER REVIEW**

1. NOVA IMS encourages participation in peer review processes to provide expert evaluation of the research and improve quality standards;
2. Researchers in peer review must respect confidentiality, ensure fairness of the review process, and declare all possible conflicts of interests;
3. Researchers under peer review must not seek to influence the process or outcomes.

## **10. RESEARCH MISCONDUCT**

NOVA IMS expects all its researchers to have the highest standards in the conduct of their research. Not doing so, may harm the scientific process and research participants, as well as the society. Ethics-related misconduct by researchers is covered by NOVA IMS such as: misrepresentation of research findings, misuse of another's intellectual property by plagiarism, confidentiality rupture, negligence of informed consent, or failing to comply to any applicable regulations, including ethical guidelines.

## APPENDIX: RESEARCH ETHICS CHECKLIST

NOVA IMS expects all its researchers to complete the following ethics checklist (available at [https://novaims.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eG085lyOwAj6a57](https://novaims.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eG085lyOwAj6a57)) when conducting a research.

- Every research project must have the ethics checklist completed and approved before conducting any study (surveys, experiments, in-depth interviews, focus groups, extracting online reviews, data access, etc.).
- This checklist is not applicable for researchers who conduct literature reviews or conceptual research.

**RESEARCH ETHICS CHECKLIST**

<b>Project details</b>	
Project title	
Funding Information (if applicable)	
Details of other institutions involved	
Type of the study or dataset (e.g., survey, focus group, experiment, data set, etc.)	
<b>Applicant details</b>	
Name of researcher (applicant)	
Role	
Email	
Supervisor's name (if applicable)	

<b>Research ethics initial checklist</b>			
Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box:			
	Yes	No	Not applicable
Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary and for academic purposes?			
Can participants opt out?			
Do you inform participants about the research purpose, methods, intended possible use of the research and privacy note in the debriefing?			
Does the study involve participants age 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent?			
Does the research involve potentially vulnerable groups: children, those with cognitive impairment, or those in unequal relationships?			
Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g., cover observation of people in non-public places)			
Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics? (e.g., politics, sexual activity, drug use, diseases)			
Are any food or substances (e.g., food, drinks, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants, or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?			
Could the study induce psychological stress, discomfort, anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?			
Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?			
Will the research involve respondents to be identified (online or offline)?			
Is there a possibility that the safety of the researcher may be in question? (e.g., collecting data outside campus, hiring employed research assistants to collect field data)			
Does the research involve public members being part in participant research?			
Will the research take place outside Portugal?			
Will research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?			
Will financial compensation or gifts be offered to participants?			
Are there any conflicts of interest in undertaking this research?			
Is there any aspect of the proposed research which might bring NOVA IMS into disfavor, such as controversial topics or prejudice?			
<b>Researcher</b>			
Signed:	Date:		
<b>Supervisor (when appropriate)</b>			
Signed:	Date:		

If you have any question or inquiries, please email the NOVA IMS Ethics Committee at  
[ethicscommittee@novaims.unl.pt](mailto:ethicscommittee@novaims.unl.pt)