

**MARTIN LUTHER CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, SHILLONG**  
**University Research Ethics Committee**

The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) was constituted on August 17, 2009, by the Board of Governors, in recognition of the need for a system of ethical review for research involving human participants. Martin Luther Christian University (MLCU) acknowledges and accepts the responsibility for protecting the rights and welfare of human research subjects and their community, cultural and environmental milieu. The term 'subjects' used in the context of research includes humans, animals, communities, cultures and the environment as appropriate for the particular topic of research. By obtaining ethical approval, the researcher demonstrates his or her adherence to the accepted ethical standards of a genuine research.

**UREC Policy and Guidelines**

1. Prior to any involvement of study subjects in research, proper consideration will be given to
  - a. the risks to the subjects
  - b. the anticipated benefits to the subjects and others
  - c. the importance of knowledge that may reasonably be expected from the research
  - d. the informed consent process to be employed
  - e. the additional safeguards for vulnerable subjects
  - f. the data protection provisions
2. Researchers working among indigenous peoples should be knowledgeable and sensitive about the worldview, culture and social and governance structures. A participatory approach to the planning and implementation of the research study is essential. Outlining the clear benefits of the research study, obtaining proper informed consent, sharing of the research study results with the community, and giving source credit for the knowledge are the guidelines that must be adhered to.
3. The collection of data involving study subjects will not be permitted until the UREC has reviewed and approved the research protocol, and until informed consent has been obtained in accordance with the abovementioned guidelines.
4. The UREC has the responsibility and authority to review, approve, disapprove and require changes to research activities. The Committee has the authority to suspend or terminate approval of research that is not being conducted as per the policy and guidelines.
5. If for any reason, a research study is abandoned, the researcher shall inform the UREC of his/her decision.
6. The UREC recognizes the need for additional safeguards in research involving vulnerable subjects such as children (under the age of 18), prisoners, mentally disabled persons or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons.



7. Data confidentiality is the protection of individuals against the violation of their privacy, by regulating the processing of personal data. The UREC shall give proper consideration to the principles of proper handling of information.
  - a. Researchers shall obtain the consent from the subjects prior to processing their personal data.
  - b. In obtaining the consent, the researcher shall inform the subjects about the purpose of processing, and about their rights of data confidentiality.
  - c. In order to enable the subject to exercise his right of access, when obtaining consent, the researcher shall provide his identity and habitual residence.
  - d. The principles of good information handling imply that, personal data, which should be collected for a specific purpose, shall be processed fairly and lawfully. Thus the data processed has to be adequate, relevant and not excessive.
  - e. Measures shall be taken to anonymise data if possible and ensure confidentiality.

#### **Member of the UREC, MLCU:**

The University Research Ethics Committee of the Martin Luther Christian University is the body responsible for developing, coordinating and ensuring the implementation of the University's policies and procedures for the ethical conduct of research.

The Committee will be chaired by a Chairman from among the external members who will be appointed by the Vice Chancellor. The committee will consist of the following persons:

- At least 6 members from different disciplines and expertise external to the University
- Vice Chancellor, MLCU - Ex officio
- Secretary, UREC, MLCU - Ex Officio
- Secretary, Doctoral Committee, MLCU- Ex Officio

The names of the members will be proposed and approved in the Board of Management. The Committee may draw upon additional members, as may be necessary for it to effectively fulfill its responsibilities. The term of the members of the UREC is three years from the date of appointment. The Committee will meet at least twice per year.

#### **How to apply**

These procedures will apply to all research that is conducted by University faculty and staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, which involves study subjects.

1. Each university member, student or member of staff, undertaking research will submit an application in the prescribed form, for ethics approval to the Secretary of the UREC of the university, prior to the commencement of the research project.
2. Both the researcher and the supervisor should sign the application form.





3. The completed form along with the research proposal shall be submitted to the Secretary, UREC, for necessary action.
4. The research project can commence only after written approval by UREC.

**Contact us:**

Please feel free to contact the Secretary, UREC, Dr. Melari Nongrum, about any issues relating to research ethics. Email: [melari.nongrum@gmail.com](mailto:melari.nongrum@gmail.com)

  
Secretary, UREC

