OMNES EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER ETHICS BOARD

contact.ethiquescientifique@omneseducation.com

Research Ethics
@ Omnes Education

OMNES Education Research Center

I. Ethical Charter

II. Ethics Committee

I. Ethical Charter
Omnes Education Research Center

I. Purpose

This charter establishes comprehensive ethical principles, governance processes, and a compliance framework for all research across disciplines and topics, conducted at the Omnes Education Research Center, as well as individually within each school's research center. It promotes integrity, quality, transparency and accountability in research. This charter is guided by internationally recognized ethical codes and integrates ethical review and management processes into all stages of research planning and implementation.

II. Ethical Principles

This charter is based on the following core ethical principles aligned with the ALLEA European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity:

A. Reliability - Research will be designed using scientifically sound methods, robust data collection, standardized analysis protocols with quality control checks to ensure scientific validity and minimize bias. Researchers will strive for excellence at all research stages.

B. Honesty - Research processes and findings will be transparently and honestly documented and reported. Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of methods, data, activities, findings, or affiliations are violations of research integrity.

C. Respect - All research participants, team members, stakeholders, ecosystems affected, and cultural heritage will be treated fairly and with dignity. Special procedures must safeguard vulnerable groups.

D. Accountability - Leaders and individual researchers take professional responsibility for the ethical design, conduct and dissemination of research. This spans training, supervision, documentation, consideration of consequences and adherence to policies.

III. Compliance Requirements

The Research Center upholds universal ethical values, international guidelines and complies with all applicable laws and obligations outlined below:

A. Institutional, local, regional and national laws and policies on research ethics, data protection, privacy, intellectual property, sponsorship/donations.

B. Professional association/publisher ethics guidelines.

C. Health, medical safety regulations and environmental protections.

D. Financial management / funding rules, employment/labor laws.

E. Relevant institutional departmental procedures.

IV. Responsible Research Practices

Center researchers responsibly integrate ethical considerations related to processes, methods and potential impacts through activities like:

A. Rigorously develop and validate context-appropriate research methodology.

B. Perform sample size calculations; justify participant selection.

C. Provide clear explanations of research purpose and processes including risks/benefits to participants. Articulate voluntary participation and consent procedures.

D. Have oversight committees frequently review evolving ethical dimensions.

E. Use de-identified data; inform participants of sharing/access plans.

F. Evaluate benefit-harm at all stages; modify to minimize potential harms.

G. Disclose and manage conflicts of interests through reporting to ethics committees.

H. Maintain lab safety norms; obtain biosafety/RAD approvals as applicable.

I. Discuss intellectual property, authorship, and ownership policies with collaborators.

J. Train all project staff, students and faculty on responsible conduct of research.

V. Governance and Oversight

A. The Center leadership appoints an Ethics Committee for policy guidance, reviews/audits, training, investigations.

B. Projects undergo rigorous institutional approval processes from multiple, relevant ethics committees like the Institutional Review Board, Biosafety Committees. Approvals must be renewed through routine follow ups.

C. Committee projects track consent processes, data sharing, secure storage procedures, potential conflicts.

D. The Ethics Committee is composed of senior researchers, university administrators, diverse experts including community representatives and legal advisors. Subcommittees may be formed for specialized areas or complex projects.

E. Should the Ethics Committee be tasked with deliberating on a project proposed by a researcher affiliated with the same institution as one of its members, the latter shall abstain from influencing the votes and will recuse him/herself from the voting process. Nevertheless, the case file, discussions, and deliberations will be duly brought to his/her attention.

F. Center leadership makes decisions on policy updates, incentives or penalties based on Committees' evidence-based recommendations.

VI. Non-Compliance Management

The framework for reporting and investigating alleged cases of misconduct aligned with institutional policies is:

A. Confidential reporting to initiator, ombudsperson or outside agencies.

B. Preliminary assessment of allegations by Expert Committee.

C. In-depth investigation maintaining confidentiality by separate Investigation Committee - can co-opt external experts.

D. Evidence-based final report with impact analysis and disciplinary recommendations to leadership.

E. Leadership implements decisions - aims to prevent recurrence; penalties where necessary after due process (includes retractions, fines, suspension).

F. Whistleblowers/witnesses protected from retaliation.

G. False allegations may result in penalties.

H. Center annual reports will include metrics like compliance, trainings completed, ethics approvals processed, cases reported/investigated while preserving anonymity.

Composition du Comité Ethique

- Hachmi Ben Ameur, Directeur de la Recherche – Centre de Recherche Inseec, membre à part entière avec droit de vote.
- Caroline Gans-Combe, Directrice des Projets Structurés – Centre de Recherche Omnes Education, présidente.
- Catherine Kuszla, Doyen Recherche – Centre de Recherche Omnes Education, membre à part entière avec droit de vote.
- Kirsten Ralf, Directrice de la Recherche – Centre de Recherche ESCE, membre à part entière avec droit de vote.
- Assia Soukane, Directrice de la Recherche – LyRIDS – ECE, membre à part entière avec droit de vote.
- Mariateresa Torchia, Directrice de la Recherche – IUM, membre à part entière avec droit de vote.
- Un expert invité, si nécessaire, pour des domaines spécialisés ou des projets complexes, pour avis consultatif.

II. Establishment of an Ethics Committee for Research Oversight at Omnes Education

OMNES Education Research Center

Un impératif légal et opérationnel

Une exigence européenne en adéquation avec les standards internationaux

Une exigence
L'évaluation éthique s'impose dans les financements de la recherche et la publication

Des standards
Des attentes en matière d'analyse des projets de recherche normées.

Un focus
Sur la collecte et le traitement des données & les consentements

Une organisation agile

Ne pas surcharger les chercheurs tout en étant en conformité avec les attentes actuelles en termes de qualité de la recherche.

Une notice d'information
Claire, simple, téléchargeable

Des documents
Normés, à completer, classifiés en function de la discipline concernée.

Des saisines simples et une temporalité rapide.

Deux procédures :

(1) / projets de recherche ;
(2) / publications

Un maximum de délai de traitement de 120 jours pouvant être accéléré à 30 (procédure d'urgence) ou même 7 (procédure de grande urgence).

Why a Group Ethics Committee?

In the realm of academic research, the pursuit of knowledge and understanding constitutes a fundamental objective. However, this quest must be balanced with the necessity of ensuring that all research is conducted ethically, respecting the rights and well-being of participants, as well as adhering to the guidelines and best practices of the current scientific community. The establishment of a Group Ethics Committee (EC) responsible for overseeing the proper conduct of research is, in this context, a central element in achieving this balance and maintaining the integrity of all proposed protocols.

One of the primary reasons for this ethics committee is to protect the rights and well-being of potential research participants. Indeed, human subjects involved in any research have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. The ethics committee will play an essential role in reviewing research proposals to ensure they respect ethical principles such as informed consent, data confidentiality, and the minimisation of both data collection and risks. By carefully examining research protocols, the ethics committee can identify potential ethical issues and recommend necessary modifications to preserve the balance between research objectives and expectations, and good practices for implementing these operations.

Moreover, an ethics committee will help maintain public trust in the research process. Research misconduct, such as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism, can undermine the credibility of scientific results and erode public confidence in the research community. The presence of an ethics committee serves as a safeguard against such issues by ensuring oversight and guaranteeing that researchers adhere to current ethical standards. By promoting transparency and accountability, the ethics committee will contribute to the overall integrity and reliability of research results conducted within our schools and will play a central role in guiding research practices in full service of our research community.

The Group ethics committee is also there to help researchers resolve complex ethical dilemmas that may arise during the research process. For example, in the fields of management and economics, where the question of treating moral persons often arises, or in artificial intelligence, ethical considerations require in-depth reflection. The committee will provide advice and recommendations to researchers, helping them make informed decisions that prioritise the well-being of participating individuals and the integrity of research practices.

In addition to its role in supporting and monitoring research operations, the ethics committee will also contribute to the development of ethical guidelines and best practices. The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, developed by all European academies (ALLEA), serves as a framework for promoting research integrity throughout Europe (ALLEA, 2023). The ethics committee will use these guidelines as a point of reference when evaluating research proposals and their compliance with ethical standards.

Reference : : https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/)

The ALLEA code is also available on the intranet under the Research & Faculty section.

The ethics committee also plays a crucial role in reviewing and approving publications resulting from research projects. The ethics committee will assess, if necessary, at the request of researchers, whether planned publications comply with ethical guidelines and will address any potential ethical concerns. For example, in the field of social sciences, ethical considerations related to data protection and privacy are paramount. The Group ethics committee may review publications to ensure that sensitive data is handled appropriately, and that individuals' privacy rights are protected.

Furthermore, the ethics committee will assist researchers in addressing ethical challenges related to conflicts of interest, intellectual property rights, and the dissemination of research results. By providing a space for exchange and deliberation, the ethics committee will help researchers make informed decisions that respect ethical principles while advancing knowledge in their field.

BEWARE:

The Ethics Committee does not judge the science; it does not substitute for the researcher in any way. Its role is strictly to ensure the rights and well-being of participants and compliance with the best practices of the profession (cf. ALLEA code).

In any case, this committee must not:

- Approve research protocols that endanger participants or violate their fundamental rights.

- Ignore established ethical standards or current regulations.

- Have undisclosed conflicts of interest that could influence its decisions.

- Excessively delay the review of research protocols without valid reason.

- Disclose confidential information about research projects or participants.

- Impose unjustified restrictions that unnecessarily hinder the progression of legitimate scientific research.

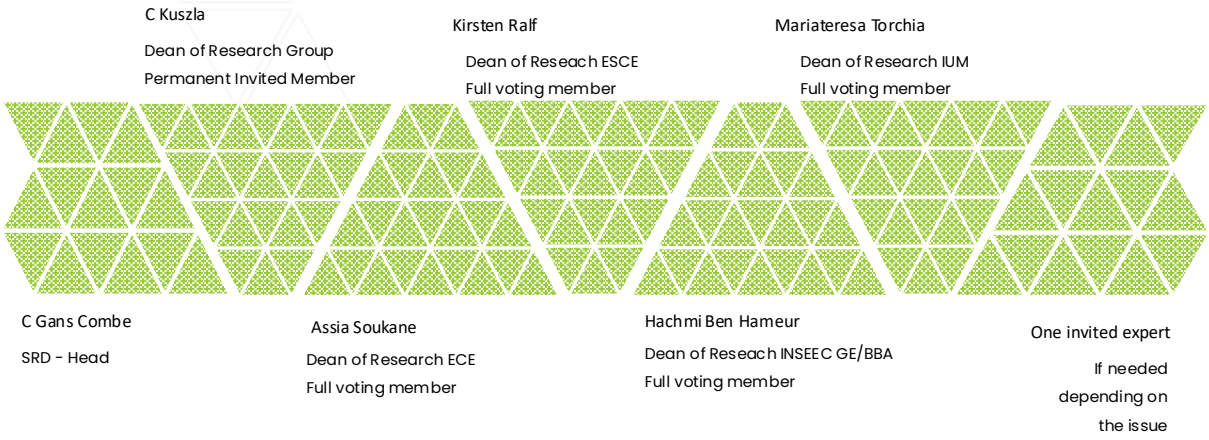
- Neglect the monitoring of approved projects to ensure they continue to comply with ethical standards.

- Discriminate against certain researchers or projects on non-ethical grounds.

- Overstep its mandate by interfering with aspects of research that do not fall under ethical considerations.

- Provide opinions without having thoroughly examined all ethical aspects of the research project.

Composition du Comité Ethique Groupe



Referral to the Ethics Committee

The ethics committee can be called upon:

- Either to validate that any planned research process complies with the rules and good research practices expected in the academic field,
- Or to analyse the compliance of planned publications with these good practices prior to their submission.

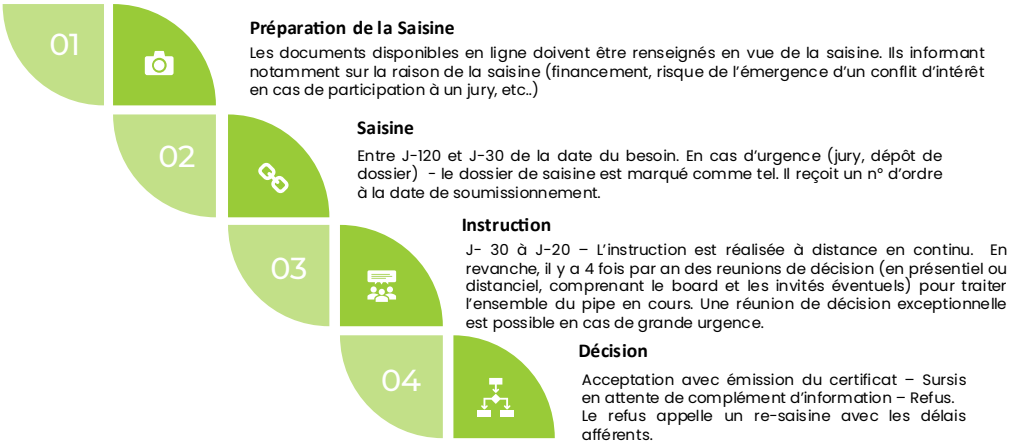
Referral is in no way mandatory, but it is advised, particularly with regard to the expectations of funders and also publishers who may require this type of validation as a prerequisite for any submission.

Each referral will result in the issuance of a decision and, at the end of the process, a numbered and dated certificate validating the compliance of the deployed research processes. No research will be left pending under this process; the objective is 100% compliance.

Referrals should be sent to the following address

saisines.ethiquescientifique@omneseducation.com

Rétroplanning type de la saisine



Sont détaillés ci-après les deux formulaires de saisine :

- Evaluation de projet de recherche,
- Evaluation du respect de l'éthique pour les publications de recherche.

Contact pour toute question hors saisines :
contact.ethiquescientifique@omneseducation.com

Referral for Research Project Evaluation - Model Form

Ethical Evaluation Form for a Research Project (available on the intranet - Research and Faculty Section)

Urgency of the request (low, important, priority)

Response desired within the month ❑, fortnight ❑, or within 5 working days ❑

Is this a first submission ❑ or a re-submission,❑,

If re-submission, specify the initial submission number: _____

and the date of the first submission: _____

Project Information

a. Project title: _____

b. Principal investigator(s):

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

c. Institution(s):

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

d. Funding source(s):

1.
2.
3.
4.

Project Overview

a. Brief description of the research project:

b. Research objectives:

c. Expected duration of the project:

Participant Information

a. Target population :

b. Inclusion and exclusion criteria:

c. Recruitment methods:

d. Number of participants:

e. Compensation or incentives for participants (if applicable):

Informed Consent

a. Describe the informed consent process:

b. Attach a copy of the informed consent form.

Risks and Benefits

a. Potential risks to participants (physical, psychological, social, etc.):

b. Measures to minimise risks:

c. Potential benefits to participants and/or society

Confidentiality and Data Protection

a. Methods to ensure participant confidentiality:

b. Data storage and security measures:

c. Data retention and destruction plan:

Vulnerable Populations

a. Involvement of vulnerable populations (e.g., children, prisoners, mentally disabled):

b. Additional safeguards for vulnerable participants:

Conflicts of Interest

a. Potential conflicts of interest for researchers:

b. Measures to manage conflicts of interest:

Monitoring and Oversight

a. Plans for ongoing monitoring of the research:

b. Procedures for reporting adverse events or unforeseen problems (risk management plan):

Dissemination of Results

a. Plans for disseminating research results:

b. Measures to protect participant privacy in publications or presentations:

Ethical Considerations

a. Discussion of any specific ethical issues related to the research:

b. Justification for the ethical acceptability of the study:

Attachments:
a. Research protocol
b. Informed consent form(s)
c. Data collection instruments (e.g., surveys, interview guides)
d. Recruitment materials (e.g., advertisements, flyers)
e. Other relevant documents

Date :

Signature of principal investigator(s):

For Ethics Committee use only :

Decision identification number :

Decision :

[ ] Approved

[ ] Approved with modifications

[ ] Deferred for further review

[ ] Rejected

Comments:

Signature of Ethics Committee Chair:

Date :

Referral for Publication Project Evaluation - Model Form

Evaluation Form for Ethics Compliance in Research Publications (available on the intranet - Research and Faculty Section)

Urgency of the request (low, important, priority)

Response desired within the month ❑, fortnight ❑, or within 5 working days ❑

Is this a first submission ❑ or a re-submission,❑,

If re-submission, specify the initial submission number: _____

and the date of the first submission: _____

General Information

a. Title of the research publication:
b. Auteur(s) :
c. Affiliation(s) :
d. Submission date :

Ethics Committee (EC) Approval

a. Has the study that is the subject of the publication been approved by an EC or equivalent committee?

❑Yes ❑No

b. If yes, indicate the name of the EC and the approval number:

c. If no, explain why EC approval was not obtained:

Informed Consent

a. Was informed consent obtained from all participants?? ❑Yes ❑No

b. If yes, describe the informed consent process:

c. If no, explain why informed consent was not obtained:

Protection of Participants

a. Have the rights, privacy, and confidentiality of participants been protected? ❑Yes ❑No

b. Describe the measures taken to ensure participant protection:

Risk Assessment

a. Have potential risks to participants been identified and minimised? ❑Yes ❑No
b. Describe the identified risks and measures taken to mitigate them:

Vulnerable Populations

a. Did the study involve vulnerable populations (e.g., children, prisoners, mentally disabled individuals)? ❑Yes ❑No

b. If yes, describe the specific vulnerable population(s) and additional protective measures implemented:

Conflicts of Interest

a. Have potential conflicts of interest been disclosed? ❑Yes ❑No

b. If yes, describe the conflicts of interest and how they were managed:

Data Management

a. Were appropriate data management practices followed (e.g., secure storage, anonymisation)? ❑Yes ❑No

b. Describe the data management practices used:

Animal Research (if applicable)

a. Did the study involve animal subjects? ❑Yes ❑No

b. If yes, was the study approved by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or equivalent? ❑Yes ❑No

c. If yes, indicate the name of the IACUC and the approval number:

Other Ethical Considerations

a. Were there any other ethical issues or concerns not addressed above? ❑Yes ❑No
b. If yes, describe these issues and how they were addressed:

Declaration

By submitting this form, the authors declare that the information provided is accurate and complete to the best of their knowledge. The authors also affirm that the research was conducted in accordance with ethical principles and guidelines of the field and of the Omnes Education Group.

Date :

Signature(s) of the author(s):

For Ethics Committee use only :

Decision identification number :

Decision :

[ ] Approved

[ ] Approved with modifications

[ ] Deferred for further review

[ ] Rejected

Comments:

Signature of Ethics Committee Chair:

Date :