Policy of Scientific Research and Its Ethics at the Arab Open University

Approval of the University Council 63
11 July 2018

Table of Contents

_____

Policy of Scientific Research and its Ethics at the Arab Open University   July 2018   3
_____

Introduction:

This document is divided into two parts:

The first part, which includes the "Policy of Scientific Research at the Arab Open University".

The second part, which contains the "Bylaws of Scientific Research Code of Ethics at the Arab Open University".

Article (1): Title

This document is called " Policy of Research and its Ethics at the Arab Open University".

Part One: Scientific Research Policy

Article (2): Reasons / Objectives of the Policy

As the university gradually transforms from an educational institution to an educational research institution, there is a need to formulate a research policy that identifies the priorities and responsibilities of scientific research as well as the stimulating research projects, and defines the research management system and procedures to improve the performance of the university and its research capabilities.

The stimulating research projects of the Arab Open University are presented as detailed in the Research Grants Policy at the Arab Open University. The ethical aspects and controls of professional scientific research will be presented in the second part of this document.

Article (3): Research Types and Priorities

In general, research is defined as any sort of fact-finding in an organized manner aimed at contributing to the development of human knowledge. There are four types of research, namely:

1. Basic Research
2. Strategic Research
3. Applied Research
4. Experimental Research

Basic and experimental researches aim at "building new theoretical or empirical knowledge, where the process of thinking systematically stimulates about the causes of certain natural or human phenomena to achieve the fundamental objective of increasing knowledge for understanding." (1)

As for applied researches, they are "the real research for new knowledge directed specifically at a specific practical goal." (2)

Taking into account the current stage of developing the research process at the university and efforts to contribute effectively to the economic and social development of the community (including civil society and the public and private sectors), the Arab Open University focuses on applied researches, and that the internal grants of the University attach particular importance to this type of researches; however, this does not mean that the other types of research should be completely eliminated.

The university should identify some areas of strategic research (applied) in different colleges. The areas of strategic research include those aspects that constitute sources of research power capable of attracting sufficient numbers of researchers from all branches to form the required research cluster. Such research also has the potential to obtain and attract third parties for the purpose of cooperation and / or funding, which is an important aspect of community development.

Article (4): Responsibility of Faculty Members and University

The contribution to the development of human knowledge through high quality research is an essential element of the mission of the University as it is in line with its aspirations and strategy. Therefore, all full-time faculty members must conduct research. The research classification of the university depends on the total of the researches carried out by faculty members or other university employees and students. The faculty members have the largest share of research contributions, and their researches contribute to the development of knowledge that in turn enhances and enriches the learning experiences of students.

The conduct of research is one of the conditions stipulated in the contract between the University and the full-time faculty members and is an essential element in the contract renewal process.

While faculty members are keen to develop themselves personally and professionally, the University is committed to providing support for the development of its staff. As for the research aspect in the development of university staff and the development of research projects in general, the university works on the following:

- Establishing and building appropriate administrative structures and infrastructure to support research activities and continuing education

- Developing plans to develop research consistent with the mission of the University and its strategies, and works to provide an environment conducive to the implementation of these plans

- Providing grants and other incentives to encourage innovative researches

- Developing and providing a secure research environment that takes into consideration the ethics of conducting researches

- Increasing the number of employees and their continuity and increase their chances of excellence in the field of research

Article (5): Research Development and Management:

The management and development of research involves several circles which complement one another:

- The Principal Researcher
- The Dean and Research Development Committee at the College
- Scientific Research Committee at the university in the country of the Branch
- Higher Committee for Scientific Research
- Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

First: The Principal Researcher

A. The principal researcher is responsible for conducting the research and providing the direct supervisor with a report on the progress s/he has made, as well as publishing the results. The principal researcher, in her/his primary capacity to conduct the research, must undertake two tasks: administrative responsibility (project management) and academic

1. In the administrative side, the principal researcher shall:

   - Identify funding opportunities (if required by research).

   - Prepare the request for support in consultation with the University's designated bodies, and ensure compliance with the ethical standards followed and the security standards and other regulations and laws required by the University and sponsor / financier.

   - Manage funding in compliance with the applicable and agreed laws, and submit the required financial reports.

   - Report on the progress of the research and propose any changes or differences from the agreed research conditions, and the need to obtain prior approval if that difference has an impact on the agreement.

   - Oversee all administrative aspects of the project and assume their consequence responsibilities.

2. On the academic side, responsibilities include the following:

   - Determining the scope of work

   - Selecting team members

   - Supervising all stages and aspects of the work and ensuring that it follows the established plan and within the research ethics in force at the Arab Open University with the highest level of professionalism and quality.

- Preparing reports according to the financer's directives and the highest standards of quality, as well as working on publishing the results in accordance with the provisions of the agreement.

- Making the necessary arrangements with the concerned parties in the University regarding intellectual property as necessary.

B. Some research projects need more than one principal researcher when research is branched in terms of subjects, disciplines and geographical distribution. It is difficult for one researcher to manage the project on her/his own, so it is possible that some projects may require the appointment of an assistant researcher for the principal researcher.

Second: Dean and Research Development Committee at the Deanship (College)

A. The Dean has the full authority to encourage faculty members in the Deanship (college) and encourage them to engage in research activities. The Dean forms the Research Development Committee representing the branches, composed of high-level faculty members active in conducting researches.

B. The tasks of the Research Development Committee include:

- Organizing periodic seminars on research methods (and their development at the global level) as serving the specializations represented by the college.

- Preparing research plans in line with the mission and strategies of the University and the strategy of the College, in addition to supporting and monitoring these plans and following-up implementation.

- Facilitating the formation of research groups between branches to carry out a specific project or long-term project, reporting on the submission of applications for external funding, and obtaining funding from the Central Regulatory for Research Development.

- Assisting faculty members in identifying sources of funding through the preparation of a list and information on external funding agencies related to research conducted by the College.

- Supporting the junior academic staff through a project for training on conducting and supervising researches.

- Encouraging cooperation with researchers from other universities, research centers and the community.

- Stimulating and encouraging interdisciplinary and multi-faceted researches at the branch level, as well as among branches.

    − Submitting periodic reports to the Vice President's Office for Academic Affairs through the Dean.

Third: The Committee of Scientific Research at The University Branch

A. The committee is composed of faculty members of the highest academic level active in the research, and all the colleges are represented in the branch in this committee. The Director appoints the head and members of the committee.

B. The Scientific Research Committee at the University in the country of the branch shall undertake the following tasks:

    − Organizing seminars on university policies as well as preparing research manuals. This committee may request assistance from the Higher Committee for Scientific Research or the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

    − Ensuring training of research grants administrators who will assist applicants for internal and external support (the training process should be centralized).

    − Announcing and receiving research projects for internal grants and to make the selection process (see Research Grants Policy and Contract Management).

    − Gathering information on local research funding agencies, and encouraging requests for external funding from within and outside the branch country.

    − Using the electronic portal for research in the branch in all issued and received correspondence and information.

Fourth: Higher Committee for Scientific Research

A. The Higher Committee for Scientific Research is responsible for supervising and managing research projects at the university. The committee includes members of faculty with high academic ranks who are responsible for the development of research, as well as the vice president for academic affairs, as well as the deans. This committee is supported by the Central Research Office.

B. The tasks of the Higher Committee for Scientific Research include the following:

    − Reviewing and supporting plans for the development of research in the colleges and provide advice and consultancy.

    − Managing the central scholarships of the University assigned to it (for more details see the Open University Research Grants Policy as well as the Research Grants and Contract Management Manual).

- Building and developing strategic research partnerships with universities, research institutes and key institutions in the community as well as regional and international development agencies.

- Looking for opportunities to fund research in the form of gifts from agencies specializing in the development and support of research, and from charitable organizations.

- Organizing conferences and seminars on contemporary issues related to the interests of the university.

- Encouraging and supporting research projects among branches and colleges.

- Training of research grants administrators in branches (at least two from each branch) as well as at the headquarters, to assist faculty members in selecting projects, and applying for internal and external support.

- Assisting the research committees in the branches in organizing seminars on the research policies of the University and its guide when asked to do so.

- Receiving and giving feedback on periodic reports issued by the research development committees at the college and in the branch, on the progress made.

- Using the electronic portal for research in all issued and received correspondence and information.

Fifth: The role of Vice President for Academic Affairs at the Level of Scientific Research:

A. The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be responsible to the President of the University for all research projects at the University through the administrative and technical support received by the Vice President from the Central Research Office and other entities.

B. The Vice-President shall assume the following tasks:

- Formulates research strategies, policies, laws and regulations and submits them through the President of the university to obtain the approval of the concerned authorities at the university.

- Prepares the central budget for research and expenditure control in line with the general framework of the budget and the laws and financial regulations in force.

- Chairs the Higher Committee for Scientific Research.

- Receives reports on research activities from deans, branch directors and the Central Research Office.

- Reports on research activities to the concerned authorities at the university through the President of the University.

- Manages the intellectual property rights at the university in collaboration with the Central Research Office.

Sixth: Central Research Office

A. The Central Research Office is the central unit for the management and coordination of research activities at the University. The Office provides administrative and technical support to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Higher Committee for Scientific Research.

B. The Central Research Office carries out the following tasks:

- Gathers reports from the Research Development Committee of the College and the Research Development Committee in the branches and prepares them for submission to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and to the Higher Committee for Scientific Research.

- Monitors compliance with internal rules and those established by the supporter / sponsor of all research projects submitted for external funding. The Center also examines and manages applications for internal funding submitted to the Higher Committee for Scientific Research (see the Open University Research Grants Policy).

- Sets up a centralized list and gathers information about supporting agencies to support research of interest to the Arab Open University in the countries of the branches of the university, and at the regional and international levels, in cooperation with the committees of scientific research in the branches and the research development committees in colleges, and works to make that list available and that information through the research electronic portal.

- Manages the content of the research portal of the headquarters.

- Assists in organizing the process of training on research manual and policies in branches as needed.

Article (6): Research Values and Social Responsibility

A. The university must create a research environment that respects moral values and cultural aspects and provides transparency and objectivity, confidentiality, safety, integrity and justice, in addition to responsibility and social responsibility.

B. While researchers have the freedom to choose research subjects and methods of collecting data to reach results, they must fully adhere to the above values in

pursuing research methods and conducting research and results (for more information see the Code of Conduct and Ethics of Research).

C. When conducting research, researchers must comply with all university policies, rules and procedures, as well as with the conditions set by the sponsor for externally supported research. The results of their efforts must be subject to scrutiny by their colleagues.

D. All researchers of faculty members, students or any other researcher conducting research on behalf of the Arab Open University shall receive training on how to conduct the research responsibly, and the deans and the committees of scientific research in the colleges, directors and scientific research committee at the university in the country of the branch should ensure that researchers obtain adequate training in this area, through training by all possible means (electronic or face to face) in groups.

Article (7): Evolution in The Conduct of Research

A. Because dissemination of knowledge is one of the University's main objectives, the University is committed to the evolution and diversity of the research process and believes that the results of the research should be available to all through publication or any other means. However, this vision of the University may need to be scrutinized and investigated if The University or the external funding agency had the intellectual property right, and the need to protect intellectual property value that could likely
be commercial in nature required a delay in the publication process. In this case, the delay and duration of the delay shall be agreed upon in the agreement with the financier.

B. The university does not accept faculty members or students to conduct researches on its campus or use its funding / support which is confidential. If the researcher or university receives confidential essential information from the funding agency or a third party, the confidentiality obligation and the privacy of such information should not prevent the right to publish the results of the research, or else this data should not be used.

C. It is the responsibility of the Principal Researcher to inform the authorities of the University which s/he provides them with any information in accordance with the confidentiality of the terms of the agreement with an external funding agency prior to the signing of the agreement. If the funding agency is given the right to publish the results of the research and any amendments have been made without the consent of the researcher and the university, it is the right of the university and researcher to remove their names from the list of researchers participating in the research.

Article (8): Ownership and Preservation of Research Records

A. Research records must be properly saved and documented. This is the primary responsibility of the Principal Researcher and the University. These two parties are entitled to use these records. If there is no other agreement with the sponsor, the ownership resulting from the research conducted under the supervision and care of the university will belong to it.

B. Research records shall include documents, records and research materials that are essential for the purpose of documentation, reconstruction of research, evaluation and investigation of the research results, events and procedures leading to the acquisition of such documents (3).

C. These records include - within other forms - administrative information (original, photocopied or electronic), documents, recorded text correspondence or interviews (blog or audio).

D. The responsibility of the University - and not necessarily the exclusive responsibility - involves maintaining the records when needed for the following reasons (4):

  – Commitment to agreements signed with funding agencies.

  – Protection of intellectual property resulting from research.

  – Ensure that the business is managed properly including the human element.

  – Facilitate and ease the verification of the absence of any violations of professional behaviour and ethics.

  – Maintain the rights of those involved in research processes to access information and records.

  Records must be maintained throughout the period in which these uncertainties can remain, and the records of students shall be kept until they graduate. When the researchers leave the university, they are entitled to take copies - not the original - of their research records. If the principal researcher moves to another institution before the completion of the project, and there are no arrangements to complete the research within the university, the records can be transferred to the new institution with the approval of the President of the University.

Article (9): Research Leave

A. A faculty member may apply for a research leave with the approval of the Director of the University, in consultation with the Dean concerned and the Scientific Research Committee at the University, if the following conditions are met:

  1. The faculty member has spent at least 6 consecutive years in the service of the university at the beginning of the date of the request for leave.

2. The faculty member should have a solid research plan leading to the production of high-quality research.

3. The faculty member must have a good research record during her/his service at the university.

4. The director of the branch and the head of the unit shall make the necessary arrangements, without any financial implications, to cover his teaching duties and any administrative responsibilities during her/his leave.

B. The duration of the research leave may be up to 12 months, in which the faculty member receives 75% of her/ his full salary, and 25% of the salary is deferred until completion of the leave period according to what is customary and to the fullest extent. The faculty member must submit a report within three months of termination of her / his leave.

C. If the Director and the Dean are positive about the proper implementation of the leave plan, then the 25% deferred salary shall be paid. If no agreement is reached between the Dean and the Branch Director, the President of the University shall make the appropriate decision. The faculty member should sign a commitment to serve the university for two years after the research leave. The University may take whatever it deems appropriate to continue to contract with the faculty member or not.

Article (10): Research Centers

Researches play a pivotal role in the development and enhancement of the research aspect of the university and in achieving its mission. The research centers actively contribute to enriching academic life and increasing interaction with the local community, as well as building new and fruitful relationships in various fields and disciplines.

First: Principles

The following are the general principles governing the establishment of research centers in the Arab Open University:

A. The Arab Open University Research Centre is an officially established university unit. Its establishment must be approved by the University's Board of Trustees, according to the following:

1. The research centre should have a professional message and objectives that are consistent with the university's mission and objectives and with the college's strategy (if centres are established within a particular college).

2. The centre should be in its nature - but not necessarily - multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, and shall witness cooperation between faculties and branches.

3. To include a number of researchers at the university, so that they have knowledge of the University's goals and scope of work, and committed to allocate part of their time for this purpose.

4. Has adequate funding sources and is able to bring in external funding.

5. Cooperation with researchers from other universities, research centres, civil society organizations and industry.

6. The centre can be established in partnership with other institutions or institutions.

7. The appointment of new full-time faculty members is not usually required.

8. Focus and contribute mainly to research, but research, training and / or consultancy services can be combined to recover costs.

Second: Governance

The research center should:

1. The Centre shall have its own regulations, specifying the mission of the Center, its objectives, geographic location, partnerships, membership, limits of liability, composition of the Board and its meetings, as well as clarifying the manner of appointment and selection of the Director, and disclosure of funding sources and systems for the delivery and reporting of information.

2. To be managed by its Board of Directors on the recommendation of the President of the University and with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

3. It shall have a manager responsible to the Dean, who shall also be responsible to the Vice President for Academic Affairs if the Center is established within the College. Otherwise, the Director shall be directly responsible to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

4. The Centre shall be subject to successive reviews whose nature and manner shall be detailed in the Regulations.

5. The terms, responsibilities and rights of membership should be fully defined.

6. To mention the name and logo of the University next to its name.

Article 11: Intellectual Property Rights

This section includes the University's policy towards intellectual property rights for the work done by faculty members and students.

First: Copyright, Patents and Invention (5)

The copyright concept of copyright is "the possession and control of intellectual property in the original works that are created." Being subject to certain limitations and expectations, the copyright owner has the absolute right to reproduce the work, derive other works from it, distribute the copies by sale, and to publicly display or implement the work.

− The invention is defined as a good and useful idea related to operations, machines, manufacturers and materials.

− A patent is an authorization issued by a government or a consortium of governments (such as the European Union) that grants the inventor the right, except for others, to produce, use or sell the invention within the limits of the authorization government.

Second: Property, Disclosure and Governance (6)

A. The University reserves the right to own the copyright in the following cases:

− University-funded works.

− Works initiated by the University for specific purposes.

− Works that have been produced over a period of time, building on the results of the work of a group of faculty members and / or students.

− The scientific material of the courses.

− Works produced by faculty members of the university and its students mainly using university materials.

− Works produced by university staff within the scope of their regular employment.

B. In all such cases, the employees of the University and its students who make the authorizations shall have the copyright for their work, unless such rights are granted and given to a third party.

C. Ownership of works by external persons or institutions employed by the University as consultants or contractors to such persons shall not be affected unless otherwise indicated in the agreement.

D. Authors may request a re-transfer of copyright ownership of their works which the University has retained for one of the reasons stated above. In such a case, the President of the University shall be the authority to approve the transfer or rejection it. In the case of approval of the transfer of ownership of the author, the university shares with the author any returns from this work.

E. The authors retain moral rights in their work which is under the ownership of the university. They have the right to use it for non-profit purposes, but they are not entitled to transfer it to a third party unless the President of the University approves such transfer. In such case the third party is not entitled to use it for commercial purposes.

F. If the authors estimate that their business has the potential to become commercially valuable, they must fill out a disclosure form indicating the nature of intellectual property and how such works can be of commercial interest to the University. The University will then decide what it deems appropriate if it claims ownership of the intellectual property, participation therein, licensing them or assigning them to the authors.

G. The Department of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is managed and supervised by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Central Research Office. If the authors object to the decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, they can appeal the decision to the President of the University, who in turn forms a committee to meet with the author and raise its recommendation to the President of the University to make the final decision.

Article (12): The Research Electronic Portal

The Research Portal is a repository of all information related to research at the Arab Open University. The portal provides access to all research policies and booklets, and allows research projects to be monitored and followed up for further progress (see Arab Open University Research Grants Policy).

– Colleges and branches can use e-portal to send electronic research reports, through a form available on the portal.

– The portal can be used in all correspondence related to research activities at the Arab Open University. It should be noted that the section of the portal, which contains lists of completed research is still under preparation in the Arab Open University, in addition to other materials aimed at announcing the publication of the results of research conducted at the Arab Open University.

Part Two: The Ethics of Scientific Research in the Arab Open University

Article (13): Introduction

Academic freedom means freedom of teaching and learning, research follow-up without undue interference or restrictions of law or institutional regulations, or public pressure.

Freedom of research means the freedom of researchers to investigate any subject of intellectual and human interest and to present results in a occupational and professional manner without any control or censorship. However, integrity, accountability and responsibility for research are the cornerstone of any research institution, whether academic or non-academic, and the violation of well-known research standards and research principles is a major affront to both the research institution and the community seeking to develop knowledge.

Recognizing the importance of the principles that define research ethics, the Arab Open University identifies through this part the ethics of its scientific research. These principles apply to all faculty and student researchers and anyone who uses the University's facilities for the purpose of carrying out supported or unsupported research.

This section aims to encourage and maintain sound research practices by providing clear scientific principles for reviewing the research ethics procedures of the Arab Open University.

While scientific research is defined as any kind of systematic research and investigation that contributes to the development of human knowledge, the ethic of scientific research is the application of ethical principles and professional conduct regulations governing research from planning to data collection and analysis to announcement and dissemination of results.

Commitment to ethical principles leads to the achievement of research objectives and results, and adherence to these principles promotes objectivity and originality in research to achieve the highest standards.

As the process of research is based on collective effort and coordination between individuals and institutions, ethical principles such as justice, trust, respect, confidentiality and shared responsibility to protect collaborators, both at the individual and institutional levels, reinforce the values that are essential to collective action.

The implementation of ethical principles and rules confirms the commitment of researchers to the principle of accountability to public opinion by avoiding the behaviours that harms scientific research, ways of dealing with it if it occurs, and the definition of conflict of interest and disposal, protection of members of the research sample, and animal care.

As the process of adhering to ethical and professional standards for research helps support the research process, institutions often support and fund research projects if they are proven to be of quality and integrity. Many ethical standards in research aim to promote many social and ethical values. In general, the ethics of scientific research at AOU address ethical issues related to non-clinical research only.

First: Purpose and Scope

‒ The Regulations of Research Ethics at the AOU aim to provide the standards and principles of proper practices in all faculties and branches of the University

- All the provisions of these regulations shall apply to anyone who carries out research duties at the University or on its behalf, including faculty members, students, visiting professors, colleagues and advisers.

- These regulations define the University's commitment to the development of laws governing the research process. They also work through the university's systems, laws and policies to enable all researchers to identify the ethical, practical and intellectual challenges that accompany the pursuit of excellence in scientific research.

Second: Essential Ethical Values

Below is a set of general ethical values and practices that apply not only to scientific and academic researches in general, but to all aspects of social behaviour, and have been highlighted in this section due to their relevance to scientific research.

A. Honesty and Transparency:

Honesty and transparency are essential factors in the relationship between the researcher, the research sample and other interested parties. The researchers should be honest and transparent about their researches and others'. They must ensure that the research objective, designs, methodologies, data and results are scrutinized in terms of their compliance with the laws of protection and confidentiality and morally justified.

Researchers should also ensure the accuracy of the data and the validity of the results, in addition to recognizing the contributions of others and not committing any irregularities or omissions. Participants should also have the opportunity to view and listen to the results of their research, if appropriate, after making statements, and institutions should work to create a culture that establishes the principles of honesty and transparency in scientific research.

B. Integrity and Objectivity:

General principles of integrity and objectivity are essential in all research activities. Integrity and objectivity must be available when conducting research, and being bias and prejudice should be avoided when designing experiments and observations, analyzing data and interpreting results. The fabrication and falsification of ideas, data or research results of any party is considered a violation of accepted scientific research principles, and this behaviour is categorically rejected.

Researchers should ensure that the research is properly reviewed, administrative and funding approvals are obtained, and what is related to the ethics of scientific research at the internal level - that is, the University - and the external level.

Researchers must disclose any real or potential conflict of interest, including disclosure of personal or financial interests that may affect the research, and seek advice and take steps to resolve it.

Research work is ethically and professionally justified if there is a reasonable probability that the community (part of whose members were taken as a sample to participate in the research will benefit from the results of this research) and the accountability for whether the research was conducted impartially rests with the researcher.

C. Justice and non-discrimination:

The ethical principle of distribution justice is based on the equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of the research within a particular group. Individuals who are vulnerable and unable to protect their interests must not be exploited for research activities. Research participants should not be selected simply because they are available, or because they are easy to lead and control, as a result of their personal, social and economic circumstances. Distributive justice requires non-discrimination against individuals or groups who can benefit from developments in scientific research.

Researchers should not discriminate in their selection or exclusion of participants unless the decision to select or exclude a particular group is necessary for research purposes (e.g., race, race, age, disability, religion, sex, male or female); social status, occupation, marital status, language, or religious, moral and political beliefs).

When selecting a research team, researchers should not discriminate against colleagues or students on any other grounds that are not related to scientific competence and integrity.

D. Legitimacy and Accountability:

It is the researchers' responsibility to know all government policies, legal, administrative, and ethical requirements, including regulations on practices and professional bodies in countries where any aspect of research is undertaken. They must also ensure that any research they undertake complies with the agreements, the terms of the research project and the availability of auditable, controlled and inspected records. All researchers, whether they are individuals or institutions should be aware that, throughout their period of work, they are accountable to the public and must act accordingly.

E. Social Responsibility and Cultural Sensitivity:

Researchers must work to improve social conditions, prevent or mitigate social damage through their researches. Research is morally successful if it has a role in knowledge development and benefits the community. In order to carry out researches in communities outside her/his own area, the researcher must respect the attitudes, values, accountability systems, articles, and actions that form the culture and customs of other societies. Above all, it is necessary to obtain the approval and support of the group that will participate in the study before the start of field work.

Cultural sensitivity in the process of research means respecting the decision of groups not to participate or not to continue in participating at any time. If the research is to obtain information and materials based on interpersonal trust, the rights, interests and cultural and intellectual property of the research participants must be preserved. The

contributions of the group involved in the research should be recognized and demonstrated when the results are published.

F. Confidentiality:

Personal information concerning individuals shall be treated with full confidentiality and guarantees. If this condition is violated, the case may be referred to a civil court. Where possible, participants should know how their information will be used and have an opinion on how to use it. It is essential that persons other than researchers and supervisors who have access to the data sign a confidentiality agreement.

It is common for researchers to take the explicit consent of each person to obtain, retain and use their personal information. Personal information should be encoded as early as possible. It should be noted that the issue of confidentiality is not absolute in law, and may be overridden in exceptional cases in matters as important as protecting individuals from harm. As the limits of confidentiality increase, potential participants must be informed of the nature of these limits, but these should be specified in the protocol / charter of the research.

G. Respecting Others

The concept of respect involves recognizing the dignity and beliefs of people (including cultural and religious beliefs), as well as the confidentiality and independence of the persons involved in the research (whether they are members of the research sample or research colleagues). These persons have the right and freedom to decide whether to participate or not in the research or to withdraw from it without giving reasons.

Third: Ethical Principles of Good Practices

The principles and general ethical principles referred to above affect all aspects of research and must be adhered to. The ethical principles of the correct practices in this section relate to all stages of research and are organized from the process of designing the research, data collection, processing, archiving and even dissemination and publishing results. This section also covers any irregularities or disputes that arise during the research process.

1. Excellence:

Institutions and researchers must work to elevate research and strive for excellence by planning and conducting high-level research and high ethical standards.

2. Authenticity:

Authenticity in scientific research means excellence before all; original research projects become intellectual ammunition that contributes to the development of human knowledge. Researchers must do their best to prove the authenticity of their research objectively and accurately. They must acknowledge the results of research conducted

by other researchers, and they must, morally and legally, respect the intellectual property rights of other researchers.

3. Impersonation / Literary plagiarism:

Researchers may not - and with their knowledge - use published or unpublished works as their own research, nor may they assist anyone else to do so. The use by the researcher of works performed by others and / or works carried out by him or her must be documented as is customary.
Literary theft falls under the so-called lack of academic honesty, which is considered an offense that requires the most disciplinary punishment. Students' impersonation / plagiarism practices are dealt with in accordance with student regulations and policies in this regard.

Anyone from inside or outside the university can report any case of plagiarism by any of the university staff. This should be brought to the attention of the President of the University, who in turn will form a committee of inquiry. Based on the results of the investigation, the appropriate procedures shall be taken in accordance with the disciplinary regulations of the University staff.

4. Research Using Human Samples:

Human specimens are those living or dead persons whose data have been obtained by the researcher. Data are obtained in the following ways:

- Through direct communication

- Through questionnaires or recorded oral interviews

- Through stored data

When conducting research on human samples, researchers must reduce damage and risk and maximize benefits such as respect for human dignity, confidentiality and independence, taking care of people at risk, and fair distribution of research benefits and burdens.

5. Protection from Damage:

Researchers should do their utmost to minimize the risks of any physical or psychological harm to any participant, researcher, institution, financial institution or any other person. Each research project should conduct a risk analysis, and if there is high risk, a risk management strategy and damage reduction should be developed in the protocols and the research charter.

Some research projects may pose risks to the researcher. However, these risks should be identified and minimized. Safety factors should be considered when the interviewer conducts interviews individually. Research may cause damage to communities, societies and institutions. Researchers should be aware of this when writing the results. The impact of inevitable risks and damage - including harassment of participants - is measured by comparing the potential benefits and benefits that will accrue to

participants and the community. In determining whether the research is committed to ethical standards, the risk and harm factor should be taken into consideration and the possible effects can be assessed.

6. Prior approval:

Researchers should give people who are expected to participate in the research information about the nature of the research project and its purpose in a way that they understand. Reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that the participants in the research are aware of the nature of the research, the extent to which they have participated in it, and that they have agreed to participate of their own volition. The research process must include a procedure for obtaining approval. Researchers in the request for ethical approval should discuss how to obtain and clarify prior consent. Verbal consent may be obtained, especially if it is consistent with the prevailing culture, or if the participant has not been able to give written consent, either because of the disability or may cause him or her some risks, or for any other reason that prevents documentation approval in writing.

Participants have the right to withdraw their consent to participate in the research at any time, and if engaging in research in certain circumstances without consent - such as research of a confidential nature - this requires a separate justification.

7. Data:

Data includes methodology for obtaining results, actual research results, analysis and interpretation by researchers. Integrity of research relies on integrity in all aspects of data / information management, including data collection, use, and sharing with others. All researchers should be keen to provide integrity in their research record.

The collection of data and research materials must be done safely and fairly, and researchers may not publish any data as true when they realize that it is false or is the result of deliberate fraud. Researchers should be very clear about themselves and others about the research methodology used in data collection and analysis. A critical decision on the method of selection and analysis should be made before research is initiated, where possible, and data must be organized in a way that is easy to verify and validate it.

In exceptional cases, starting from the principle of confidentiality and laws that respect intellectual property and the need to obtain data, after the publication of the data, it must be provided and accessible to any entity that makes a logical and reasonable request, giving justification for the need to review and examine such data. Between the researcher and the requesting party, the matter shall be referred to the Committee for Research Ethics.

8. Joint research / with an External Party:

In the case of joint research with another institution, the principal researcher in each of the cooperating institutions must obtain the necessary approval from her / his institution. Each researcher participating in a joint research shall ensure that all members of the research team or participants consider ethics of scientific research.

If the research is conducted in another country outside the country of the researcher, the researchers must adhere to the laws, regulations and culture prevailing in that country. However, adherence to the ethical principles in the country in which the research will be conducted is not considered a substitute for obtaining the required approval of the scientific ethics of the Arab Open University.

9. Publication of the Results:

There is a moral obligation that the researchers publish their research findings correctly and responsibly, as they are familiar with, and are aware of the consequences of publishing the results in the open media. Research results that do not comply with the principles stipulated in these regulations may not be published.

The dissemination of research results is necessary as a means of communication with specialists worldwide, so that researchers can benefit from the results of the research and build on it. All the participants in the research should get the results of that research.

10. Authoring:

The published research should indicate the role and efforts of all authors in carrying out the research. In the case of more than one author who actively contributed to the research, the decision to order the names must reflect the contribution of each of them to the research. In the absence of agreement between researchers (including students), the following rules of authorship should be applied:

- − The authoring process includes all persons involved in the research who are responsible for and accountable for the results.

- − The order of the names of the authors depends on the quality of the contribution and the extent of responsibility and accountability in relation to the results and customs used in this field.

- − The mere relationship of a person to research administratively only (such as technical support, provision of materials or facilities) does not qualify that person to be a co-author.

- − Authorization is not affected by the fact that researchers have been paid for their research contribution and their position.

- − The Arab Open University does not recognize the honorary authorship.

If joint research is mainly based on students' dissertations for a master's or doctorate, students should be given priority in arranging the names of the participating authors. Finally, the contributors to the research must agree on how to distribute the rights of authoring / publishing among themselves.

11. Misconduct:

Misuse of scientific research means any actual behaviour or attempt in this direction, including collusion with others and facilitating them through fabrication, forgery, plagiarism or deception when proposing the research project, conducting it and announcing its results, or deviating from the correct methods. Conducting research, either as a result of negligence or deliberate intent.

Misuse also includes failure to follow the proper and customary procedures for conducting research, especially if this failure causes damage to other humans or vertebrates or the environment, and includes unauthorized use, disclosure, deletion or damage to the property of others' research.

Misconduct does not include unintended error or unintended variations in design, implementation, interpretation, or judgment in the evaluation of the research methodology or its results, or abuse that is not related to the research procedures. It does not include low-level research and student work that is examined and audited, which falls within the disciplinary regulations for students. As for the details of how scientific research is conducted, it is often only known to project personnel, so detection of misconduct only comes from people close to the project.

The issue of reporting misconduct and scientific research is the duty of all members of the academic community (whether they are from within or outside the institution). Reports on such cases should be submitted to the Vice President for Planning and Development, or to any Branch directors at the University, who in turn will submit them to the competent authority at the University for investigation.

All reports are treated with confidentiality as much as possible, and no criminal / disciplinary action shall be taken either directly or indirectly against the person directing the allegation in good faith.

Article (14): Good Moral Conduct

All research conducted at the Arab Open University (which is described in this document and which includes human samples is required to obtain good moral conduct before it begins. Ethical approval is obtained from the Ethics Committee of Scientific Research.

First: Scientific Research Ethics Committee

The Scientific Research Ethics Committee is defined as an independent multidisciplinary body entrusted with the task of reviewing research involving human elements to ensure that their dignity, integrity and rights are protected and guaranteed. There are two levels of the for Scientific Research Ethics Committee:

1. University-level committee:
   The Scientific Research Ethics Committee at the university level reviews the research projects that:

–   It includes university-level research and researchers from different branches and / or researchers from outside the university.

–   Were forwarded from the Branch Committee to the Committee of the University for advice and guidance (e.g., cases involving damage and risks).

–   Were rejected by the Branch Committee and referred to the Committee of the University in the form of an appeal.

2.   Committee at the Branch Level:

The committee of scientific research ethics in the branch reviews all projects that do not include researchers from other branches and / or from outside the university. The Branch Committee may decide to refer the draft research to the Committee of the University, and in the case of complex ethical issues, a further opinion of assistance is required.

Second: Forming a committee of scientific research ethics

The two committees of research ethics in the branches and at the university should include multiple disciplines. They should consist of faculty members with expertise in scientific research ethics issues, and regular training workshops should be held especially for the new members of the committee. When the Scientific Research Ethics Committee examines any research project, the Committee may request advice from a third party, if deemed appropriate.

Third: Ethical Review Procedures

These procedures are as follows:
–   The Principal Researcher should fill out the request for good ethical conduct and attach all required information. The request shall contain all the necessary information, which will enable the Committee of Scientific Ethics of the University to conduct the review process. Even in cases where the principal researcher does not see a need for good moral conduct, he must fill out the application.

–   Cases of exemption from ethical approval are limited to anonymous surveys aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning, which are used only at university level. In the case the research got a third-party ethical conduct (such as a funding agency), the document must be submitted to the Ethics Committee, in addition to the research project, and a copy of the request for moral conduct from the third party. The Scientific Research Ethics Committee then decides to accept the Code of Ethical Conduct or needs further review. In case of insufficient information in the moral conduct presented by the principal researcher, or if further clarification is required, the researcher should be informed of this and requested to complete the necessary information.

–   The Scientific Research Ethics Committee in the Branch may return the research project to the researcher twice if it does not meet the required requirements. If the Committee

is not satisfied that the minimum requirements are met after a second re-examination, then a decision may be made to reject the research project, and the researcher has the right to appeal to the University's Ethics Committee.

- After reviewing the appeal, the University's Ethics Committee may agree on good conduct or return the project to researchers for further information. In the event that the university is not satisfied - after the project is returned – with meeting the minimum requirements, the committee can reject the request and ask the researchers to submit a new request to the Scientific Research Ethics Committee in the branch after three months.

- For research projects that reach the Scientific Research Ethics Committee at the University, these projects are subject to the same procedures used to review research projects from the branches. Appeals to decisions of the Committee of the University shall be referred to the President of the University, who may form a special committee to hear the appeal.

- In returning any project for further clarification, the Scientific Research Ethics Committee clearly identifies the ethical requirements that were not available in the research project, and what steps and requirements are required to complete the deficiencies.

- Unless the percentage of damage or risk is high at the time of initial review, the branch committee may appoint the student's supervisor, a member of the committee or another faculty member to sign the applications for admission to student projects. This applies to research projects that do not constitute a high degree of damage or risk when reviewed, in which more than one member of the Committee is involved, other than the Committee's decision, which is signed by the Rapporteur of the Committee.

Part Three: Appendix

Application for Good Conduct for the Ethics of Scientific Research

List of requirements:

1. What are the objectives of the research you will conduct?

2. What is the design of the research?

3. What are the methods of data collection?

4. Who are the participants (the research sample), how many are they, and what are the selection criteria?

5. What are the procedures for securing prior consent? How will you document the initial and continuing approval?

6. What are the terms of use set by those who give secondary data?

7. Do you have all the skills and resources to conduct the research? Describe them.

8. What are the expected results of the research?

9. What are the benefits to participants and / or third party?

10. What are the methods / means of communicating information and getting feedback from participants?

11. Have you conducted a risk assessment to find out:

    A. potential if there are moral issues and whether moral review is required?

    B. hazards to the institution and to the research, or the health and safety of researchers and research participants?

12. C. Measures taken to ensure confidentiality, privacy and data protection.

13. Will your research comply with all relevant legal and ethical requirements and guidelines, including those issued by institutions of other organizations and / or other countries, if necessary?

14. Will research comply with all legislative requirements and proper health and safety practices?

15. Has the research been subjected to any review of the ethics of scientific research by another party?

16. Does the research require any monitoring and auditing requirements?

17. Are you committed to any financial agreements or guidelines related to the project?

18. Have you reached an agreement on intellectual property, publishing and authorship?

19. Have you reached an agreement on joint cooperation (if that applies to the situation)?

20. Have the roles of researchers, management and supervision responsibilities been agreed upon?

21. Have all issues related to conflict of interest been identified, disclosed and discussed?

22. Are you familiar with the directives issued by all institutions / organizations related to misconduct in scientific research?

Resources of the Regulations

These regulations are derived - with some modifications - from:

- Office of Integrity of Scientific Research in the UK (2009): **Regulations of Scientific Research Ethics.**
- Economic and Social Research Office (UK - No date): **The Framework of Scientific Research Ethics.**

Concluding Notes:

The concluding observations are on page 11 of the English version.

1. University of the Western Cape,2009, P.1
2. Department of Education and Training, Government of Australia, 2015, P.5
3. University of Alberta, 2013, web document–no page number.
4. The part of this section following the endnote mark draws on Stanford University, Chapter one of the web document accessed in November, 2015, no page numbering.
5. Ibid, questions are extracted from Chapter Nine, no page numbering
6. This section draws on: Northwestern University (2015), Stanford University (web accessed in December, 2015), and Victoria University of Wellington (web accessed in December 2015).

Part Four: References

While all the websites were accessed in November and December, 2015, the list used the following sources and locations, and derived the information from them:

1- Stanford (2015), Do Research, Research Policy Handbook
https://doresearch.stanford.edu/policies/research-policy-handbook

2- Kingston University (2015), Concordat to Support Career Development of Researchers.
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/policies-and-guides/concordat-to-support-the-career development-of-researchers/

3- Northwestern University (2015), copyright Policy
http://invo.northwestern.edu/policies/copyright-policy

4- Harvard (2015), Principles and Guidelines for the Establishment of Centres.
http://provost.harvard.edu/principles-and-guidelines-establishment-centers

5- University of British Colombia Board of Governors (1995), Research.
http://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/files/2014/03/policy87.pdf

6- McGill University (2013), Policy on Research Centres.
https://www.mcgill.ca/research/files/research/research_centres_policy_on_3.pdf

7- McGill University (2015), Research Administration-Roles and Responsibilities.
Policy_FINAL_9_2015.pdfhttps://www.mcgill.ca/research/files/research/research_administration_roles_and_responsibilities_2015.pdf

8- Boston University (2011), Policy on Principal Investigator Status.
http://www.bu.edu/research/files/2015/09/PI-Policy_FINAL_9_2015.pdf

9- Boston University (2105) Responsible Conduct of Research.
http://www.bu.edu/orc/programs-committees/rcr/

10- University of Toronto (2007), Copyright Policy.
http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppmay302007.pdf

11- University of Toronto (2013), Research Administration Guideline.
http://www.research.utoronto.ca/wpcontent/uploads/documents/2013/11/Guideline_Research Administration_2013-10-30.pdf\

12- University of Toronto governing Council (2007), Publication Policy.
http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppmay302007ii.pdf

13- University of Toronto (2015), Guidelines regarding Eligibility to Be a Principal Investigator.

http://www.research.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/documents/2013/09/Guideline_PI-Eligibility_20130809.pdf

14- McMaster University (2011), Research Leave Policy- Tenured and CAWAR Faculty.
http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/faculty/Leaves/SPS_C1-Research_Leave-Tenured_and_CAWAR.pdf

15- Flinders University (2001), Policy on Research Practice.
http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/research/research-practice.cfm

16- Flinders University (2015), Research Service Office.
http://www.flinders.edu.au/research/researcher-support/rso.cfm

17- Victoria University of Wellington of Wellington (2013), Intellectual Property Policy
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/research-policy/intellectual-property-policy.pdf

18- University of Manitoba (2013), Research Centres, Institutes and Groups.
http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/research/377.html

19- University of the Western Cape (2009), Research Policy of the University of Western Cape.
https://www.google.com/search?q=university+of+the+western+cape%2C+Research+policy+of+the+university+of+western+cape&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8

20- Department of Education, Australia (2015), Higher Education Research Data collection
https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-research-data-collection

21- University of Alberta (2013), Research Policy
https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Policies/Research-Policy.pdf

22- University of Alberta (2004), Research administration and Procedures
https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Procedures/Research-Administration-Procedure-Roles-and-Responsibilities.pdf

23- University of Western Australia (2015), Finding Research Funding: Grants, Awards, Fellowships and schemes.
http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/funding

24- University of Oxford, "Academic integrity in research: Code of practice and procedure"
http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/researchintegrity/

25- European University Institute, "Code Of Ethics In academic Research"
http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/CodeofEthicsinAcademicResearch.pdf

26- The University of the West Indies, "Policy And Code On Research Ethics For The University Of The West Indies":
http://www.mona.uwi.edu/fms/sites/default/files/fms/uploads/Ethics%20Policy%20and%20Code%5B1%5D.pdf

27- University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, "Code Of Ethics For Research On Human Subjects",
http://www.wits.ac.za/academic/researchsupport/19111/code_of_ethics.html

28- University of Pittsburgh, "Guidelines for Responsible Conduct of Research",
http://www.provost.pitt.edu/documents/GUIDELINES%20FOR%20ETHICAL%20PRACTICES%20IN%20RESEARCH-FINALrevised2-March%202011.pdf

29- Resources for Research Ethics Education, "Research Ethics":
http://research-ethics.net/

30- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, "What is Ethics in Research & Why is it Important" May 1, 2011.
http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/index.cfm

31- The University Of WARWICK, "Research Code of Practice"
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/rss/researchgovernance_ethics/research_code_of_practice/

32- UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), "Code of Practice for Research",
http://www.ukrio.org/publications/code-of-practice-for-research/
33- Brunel University London, "Code of Research Ethics"
http://www.brunel.ac.uk/research.

34- The Open University, "Ethics Principles for Research Involving Human Participants"
http://www.open.ac.uk/research/main/sites/www.open.ac.uk.research.main/files/files/OU%20Ethics%20Principles%20for%20Research%20Involving%20Human%20Participant.pdf

35- Massey University, "Code Of Ethical Conduct For Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participations"
http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/research/research-ethics/human-ethics/code-ethical-conduct.cfm

36- University Of Leicester, "Research Ethics Code Of Practice"
http://www2.le.ac.uk/institution/committees/research-ethics/code-of-practice

37- United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), "Ethical Review"
http://www.uaeu.ac.ae/en/dvcrgs/research/ethical_review.shtml

38- ZAYED University, "Ethical Clearance For Research"
http://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/research/for_researchers/research_integrity/ethical_clearance.aspx

39- University Of Oxford, "Research Integrity and the Responsible Conduct of Research-Checklist for Research Students and their Supervisors at the University Of Oxford"
https://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/oxfordlearninginstitute/documents/overview/rsv/Integrity_checklist_August_2014.pdf

40- The University of Hong Kong, "Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties"
http://www.rss.hku.hk/HRECNCF/guidelines.pdf

41- The University of Adelaide, "Research Ethics- Approval: Guidelines, Application and Reporting"
http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ethics/human/guidelines/

42- Cairo University, Faculty of Medicine, "Ethical Review Board Policies & Procedures Manual"
http://www.medicine.cu.edu.eg/beta/images/stories/docs/research/fp7/cairo-procedure-manual.pdf

43- Economic & Social Research Council (E.S.R.C) "Research Ethics Framework"
https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/Research/Research_docs/ESRC_Re_Ethics_Frame_tcm6-11291.pdf

44- ENCYCLOPEDIA.COM "Research Ethics"
http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-researchethics.html

45- BioMed Central & BMC Ethics 2012, "Review of National Research Ethics Regulations in Middle Eastern Arab Countries"
http://www.biomedcentral.com/bmcmedethics/content?page=7&itemsPerPage=25

46- Research Ethica.ca, "Research Ethics":
http://www.researchethics.ca.