

Rules of procedure of The Research Ethics Committee of the University of Hradec Králové

Article 1

Establishment and scope of the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Hradec Králové

- 1) The Research Ethics Committee of the University of Hradec Králové (hereinafter referred to as the “*Committee*”) is established by the Rector on the basis of Article 8 of the Rules for the Internal Governance of the University of Hradec Králové.
- 2) The Committee is an integral part of the system for quality assurance and compliance with ethical standards in research at the University of Hradec Králové (hereinafter referred to as the “*UHK*”).
- 3) The Committee deals with the ethical aspects of research conducted at the UHK involving mainly human subjects (including work with biological material of human origin), but also other activities requiring ethical consideration.
- 4) The assessment of ethical aspects of research is carried out in particular:
 - Where the research involves humans in any way (including work with biological material of human origin);
 - When the approval by the Ethics Committee is required by the funds provider (e.g., H2020 research projects, etc.);
 - When the approval by the Ethics Committee is a condition for publication in reputable journals.
- 5) An assessment of ethical aspects of research carried out within the framework of final theses of the UHK students is carried out in exceptional and duly justified cases only.
- 6) The Committee acts on the initiative of the applicant, who is usually an academic staff member or student of the UHK.

- 7) In assessing research, the Committee proceeds in accordance with the principles of free research and the assessment is based in particular on the resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 17 August 2005 No. 1005 by which the Government took note of the Ethical Framework for Research, and on the recommendations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic.

Article 2

Committee Membership

- 1) The Committee members become members by appointment. Members of the Committee are appointed by the Rector for a term of office identical to that of the UHK Rector. Members of the Committee are obliged to participate actively in the Committee activities.
- 2) The Committee has five permanent members including the Chairperson. The chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Rector on the proposal of a majority of all members of the Committee. The Committee is composed in such a way as to be able to ensure a complete ethical review of the applications submitted.
- 3) Such person may become a member of the Committee who:
 - a) Consents to his/her Committee membership and to the publication of his/her Committee membership and other facts arising from his/her activities and Committee membership;
 - b) Undertakes to keep the content of applications under consideration confidential so that the information contained in the application under consideration cannot be misused;
 - c) Undertakes to declare in advance any conflict of interest which may arise in connection with his/her Committee membership, i.e., undertakes to refrain from making comments to applications in the successful processing of which he/she has a personal interest.
- 4) A member of the Committee may be reappointed. The list of Committee members is published on the UHK website.
- 5) Committee membership is terminated upon the resignation of a member at his/her own written request, the expiration of his/her term of office, or removal by the Rector.

Article 3

Activities of the Committee

- 1) The Committee's mission is to ensure the protection of the dignity, freedoms, health, quality of life and safety of all persons involved in research.
- 2) The administrative and technical activities necessary for the functioning of the Committee are carried out by the Secretary who is not a member of the Committee.
- 3) Within its powers at the UHK, the Committee in particular ensures that all research projects submitted to it for comments are evaluated by a competent, objective and independent process. In its evaluation, the Committee pays particular attention to the protection of vulnerable or dependent persons involved in the research.

Article 4

Application procedure

- 1) An application for the assessment is filed by the main author/investigator of the research project, who usually is an academic staff member or a student of the UHK.
- 2) The particulars of an application for consideration by the Committee are set out in the Annex to these Rules of Procedure (hereinafter referred to as the Application).
- 3) The Application is sent to the Secretary of the Committee electronically. The Secretary registers it and forwards it with all supporting documents to the Chairperson of the Committee.

Article 5

Processing of the application

- 1) Where a project assessment is the subject of the Application, the Application may be considered provided that the project has not started yet and the time for consideration of the Application before the project starts is sufficient.
- 2) During the course of already approved projects solving, the project revisions only can be discussed.

- 3) If the project was started before the establishment of the UHK Ethics Committee and must be assessed by the Ethics Committee, it is exceptionally possible to assess the project during its solving.
- 4) Upon receipt of the Application and supporting documents from the Secretary, the Chairperson of the Committee notifies the remaining members that the Application has been accepted and forwards also the Application and supporting documents to them for preliminary consideration.
- 5) The Committee may, by agreement, seek an expert opinion from consultant(s). The consultants may only be experts included in a list drawn up for this purpose and published on the UHK website.
- 6) The members of the Committee send their preliminary opinion to the Chairperson of the Committee within a specified time limit.
- 7) The Committee always issues a written opinion on the Applications under consideration. After receiving an electronic notification, the opinion may be collected in person from the Secretary of the Committee or sent to the applicant by post.

Article 6

Committee meeting

- 1) Meetings of the Committee are convened and chaired by the Chairperson or, in his/her absence, by a member of the Committee designated by him/her.
- 2) The Committee has a quorum for the purpose of considering an Application if more than half of its members are present.
- 3) Unless the Chairperson decides otherwise, meetings of the Committee are not public. The meetings of the Committee may be attended by consultants who provide the Committee with expert opinions on the Applications under consideration and by other guests, in particular applicants for assessment.
- 4) The Secretary attends the meeting of the Committee and takes written minutes of it.
- 5) The meeting is not convened if all members of the Committee give their consent to the application submitted in accordance with Article 5(6) and the consultants give a favourable opinion (see Article 5(5)). In this case, the procedure laid down in Article 7(3) of these Rules of Procedure is followed and the meeting is not held.

Article 7

Committee voting

- 1) The Committee votes by acclamation at the meeting; the Chairman may decide on a secret ballot in justified cases. Voting by the Committee is always non-public.
- 2) A member who has declared a conflict of interest in relation to an Application under consideration does not take part in the vote.
- 3) For Applications on which all opinions recommending approval by the Committee have been issued (see Article 5(6)), the Committee may vote per rollam without prior discussion at a Committee meeting. Applications on which at least one non-recommending opinion has been issued may be voted on per rollam after prior discussion of such Application at a meeting of the Committee. The conditions for a per rollam vote are laid down by the Chairperson.
- 4) Approval of a proposal requires the consent of an absolute majority of voters, or, in the case of a per rollam voting, the consent of an absolute majority of all Committee members who do not have a conflict of interest in the Application under consideration.
- 5) The voting process and results are recorded in the voting record.

Article 8

Conflict of interests

- 1) A member of the Committee has a conflict of interest in particular if he/she:
 - a) Is an applicant or a member of the research team of the project under discussion;
 - b) Has such personal or professional bonds with the applicant or other members of the research team of the project under consideration that could affect his or her independence in the consideration of that project;
 - c) Submits the project as an applicant or another member of the research team to the same competition to which the project under consideration is submitted (in the case of competitions of larger grant agencies, submission to the same panel or sectoral committee only is considered).

- 2) Members of the Committee are obliged to declare any conflict of interest when voting on the Application. A member of the Committee who has declared a conflict of interest in relation to an Application may not vote on that Application.
- 3) Consultants approached for an expert opinion pursuant to Article 5(5) of these Rules of Procedure are also required to declare any potential conflict of interest.

Article 9

Final provisions

These Rules of the Ethics Committee are valid and effective on the date of their signature and are issued in the form of a Rector's Decree in accordance with the UHK Rules for the Internal Governance effective from 1 February 2018.

In Hradec Králové on 14 May 2018

Prof. Ing. Kamil Kuča, Ph.D., m. p.

Annex No. 1: Application for an assessment by the Research Ethics Committee of the UHK