



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONTENTS

1. Preamble	2
2. Objectives	2
3. Scope	2
4. Guiding Principles	2
5. Constitution of the Research Ethics Committee	2
6. Roles and Responsibilities	3
7. Research Approval Process	3
8. Quality Research Standards	3
9. Responsible Conduct of Research	3
10. Publication Ethics	3
11. Plagiarism Policy	3
12. Research Data Management	4
13. Human Research Ethics	4
14. Animal Research Ethics	4
15. Ethics in Emerging Technologies	4
16. Research Misconduct	4
17. Complaint Handling and Grievance Redressal	4
18. Capacity Building	4
19. Monitoring and Performance Evaluation	4
20. Documentation and Record Management	5
21. Disciplinary Actions	5
22. Policy Review	5

1. PREAMBLE

GMR Institute of Technology (GMRIT) - Deemed to be University (hereinafter referred to as GMRITDU) is committed to nurturing a research ecosystem that is driven by integrity, innovation, accountability and societal responsibility. As the University expands its research activities through sponsored projects, doctoral programmes, interdisciplinary collaborations and emerging technology initiatives, ethical governance becomes fundamental to ensuring the credibility and impact of its research outcomes. To institutionalize these values, the University hereby constitutes the Research Ethics Committee (hereinafter referred to as REC) as the apex body responsible for promoting responsible conduct of research, ensuring compliance with applicable regulations, protecting research participant and strengthening academic integrity across all disciplines. The Committee shall function under the R&D Cell and serve as the University's central mechanism for ethical oversight throughout the research lifecycle.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Research Ethics Committee is established to promote research integrity by embedding ethical values into the University's research culture. It shall review research proposals requiring ethical clearance, ensure compliance with institutional and statutory guidelines, prevent research misconduct, safeguard the rights and welfare of research participants and promote responsible management of research data. The Committee shall also facilitate plagiarism awareness, encourage ethical publication practices, provide guidance on emerging ethical challenges in interdisciplinary research, maintain institutional compliance records, align research governance with national policies and strengthen the University's reputation as a centre of research excellence.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all research conducted under the auspices of GMRITDU, irrespective of the source of funding. It covers faculty members, research scholars, postgraduate and undergraduate researchers, project staff, visiting researchers and collaborators engaged in research across engineering, sciences, management, humanities and interdisciplinary domains. The policy extends to research involving human participants, biological materials, sensitive data, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, cybersecurity, environmental studies and other emerging areas that require ethical oversight.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The functioning of the REC shall be guided by the principles of integrity, transparency, accountability, fairness, scientific rigor and respect for human dignity. Every research activity shall uphold honesty in the generation and reporting of knowledge, protect the privacy and welfare of participants, maintain objectivity in decision-making and contribute responsibly to society while ensuring compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

5. CONSTITUTION OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Research Ethics Committee shall function under the overall guidance of the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor through the R&D Cell. The Committee shall consist of

Member/Designation	Role
Vice Chancellor	Chairman
Executive Dean	Member
Registrar	Member
All Deans	Members
Controller of Examinations	Member
Finance Officer	Member
Legal Advisor	External Member
Dean-R&D	Member Secretary

The Committee may constitute specialized subcommittees for areas such as human research ethics, publication ethics, data governance, artificial intelligence ethics and grievance redressal whenever the nature and volume of research activities require domain-specific evaluation.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The REC shall serve as the University's primary authority for ethical review and research governance. It shall evaluate research proposals involving ethical considerations, recommend approvals or revisions, monitor compliance throughout project execution and advise researchers on ethical issues arising during their work. The Committee shall formulate institutional policies on research integrity, publication ethics, data governance and emerging technologies while maintaining appropriate documentation of its decisions and activities. In addition to regulatory oversight, the Committee shall promote awareness through training programmes, workshops and orientation sessions, thereby fostering a proactive culture of ethical research rather than relying solely on corrective measures.

7. RESEARCH APPROVAL PROCESS

Research projects involving ethical considerations shall obtain approval from the REC before commencement of data collection or experimentation. The review process shall begin with the submission of a research proposal, followed by preliminary screening to assess completeness and ethical relevance. Proposals shall then undergo ethical evaluation based on scientific merit, risk assessment, participant protection, confidentiality measures and regulatory compliance. Following review, the Committee may grant approval, recommend modifications, seek additional clarification or reject the proposal where ethical concerns remain unresolved. Approved projects may be subjected to periodic monitoring and researchers shall submit compliance reports whenever required by the Committee.

8. QUALITY RESEARCH STANDARDS

The University recognizes that ethical compliance and research quality are mutually reinforcing. Accordingly, the REC shall encourage research that demonstrates methodological rigor, originality, reproducibility and meaningful societal impact. Researchers shall be expected to formulate clearly defined research questions, adopt appropriate methodologies, maintain accurate documentation and present findings honestly without selective reporting or manipulation. The University's research ecosystem shall be continuously strengthened by monitoring quality indicators such as externally funded projects, high-impact publications, patents, technology transfer, interdisciplinary collaborations, citation performance and successful completion of ethically compliant research projects. The emphasis shall remain on research excellence and long-term impact rather than numerical publication targets alone.

9. RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Every researcher associated with the University shall conduct research with honesty, diligence and professional responsibility. Research records shall be maintained accurately, funding sources shall be disclosed appropriately, contributors shall receive fair recognition and confidential information shall be handled with due care. Researchers are expected to uphold ethical standards throughout the planning, execution, dissemination and preservation of their work.

10. PUBLICATION ETHICS

The University encourages publication in reputed peer-reviewed journals indexed in recognized databases while discouraging publication in predatory or unethical outlets. Authorship shall accurately reflect intellectual contributions, acknowledgements shall be appropriately recorded, and conflicts of interest shall be disclosed whenever applicable. The Committee shall promote responsible publication practices consistent with internationally accepted standards.

11. PLAGIARISM POLICY

Originality forms the cornerstone of academic excellence. Every thesis, dissertation, research article and other scholarly work submitted under the University's name shall undergo plagiarism screening using approved similarity detection software. Similarity reports shall be evaluated in accordance with prevailing UGC regulations, and necessary corrective measures shall be initiated whenever unacceptable levels of similarity are identified. The University's approach shall prioritize awareness and responsible academic writing while maintaining appropriate disciplinary mechanisms for confirmed violations.

12. RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

Researchers shall manage research data responsibly throughout its lifecycle by ensuring secure collection, storage, analysis, sharing and preservation of information. Confidential and sensitive data shall receive appropriate protection through suitable technical and administrative safeguards, while data retention and disposal shall follow institutional and regulatory requirements. Wherever feasible, researchers shall be encouraged to adopt principles of transparency and reproducibility that support responsible knowledge dissemination.

13. HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS

Research involving human participants shall respect individual autonomy, dignity, privacy and welfare. Informed consent shall be obtained before participation, confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the study and participants shall retain the freedom to withdraw without adverse consequences. Projects involving vulnerable populations shall receive additional scrutiny to ensure that potential risks remain justified and adequately mitigated.

14. ANIMAL RESEARCH ETHICS

Research involving animals shall be conducted only after obtaining approval from the appropriate statutory committee and shall comply with applicable national regulations governing animal welfare. Researchers shall adopt humane practices and minimize discomfort while ensuring that scientific objectives cannot reasonably be achieved through alternative methods.

15. ETHICS IN EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Technologies, Robotics, Internet of Things, Cybersecurity, and Data Science presents new ethical challenges that require careful institutional oversight. The REC shall evaluate research in these domains by considering issues such as privacy, algorithmic fairness, security, societal impact, environmental responsibility and dual-use implications. This forward-looking approach shall ensure that technological innovation remains aligned with ethical and public interest considerations.

16. RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

The University considers plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, data manipulation, unethical authorship practices and unauthorized use of research materials as serious violations of research integrity. Allegations of misconduct shall be examined through a fair, confidential and impartial process that provides adequate opportunity for all concerned parties to present their views before appropriate institutional action is recommended.

17. COMPLAINT HANDLING AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

The REC shall provide a structured mechanism for receiving and addressing ethical complaints related to research activities. Complaints shall be treated confidentially, investigated objectively and resolved through transparent procedures that uphold the principles of natural justice. The Committee shall recommend corrective, preventive or disciplinary actions wherever necessary while maintaining appropriate documentation of all proceedings.

18. CAPACITY BUILDING

Developing an ethical research culture requires continuous learning and institutional engagement. The Committee shall organize orientation programmes for new researchers, Faculty Development Programmes, workshops on research integrity, publication ethics, data management, artificial intelligence ethics and responsible conduct of research. Ethical awareness shall be integrated into doctoral education and periodically reinforced across the University through dedicated outreach initiatives.

19. MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The REC shall adopt a systematic approach to monitoring the University's ethical research ecosystem through periodic reviews of approvals, compliance audits, training initiatives, plagiarism screening, grievance resolution and research quality indicators. An Annual Research Ethics Report shall be prepared to evaluate institutional performance, identify emerging challenges, recommend policy improvements and support accreditation, ranking and research governance objectives.

20. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD MANAGEMENT

The Committee shall maintain secure and well-organized records of research proposals, ethical approvals, consent documents, meeting proceedings, compliance reports, investigation records, plagiarism assessments and annual performance reports.

21. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Upon completion of the investigation, the REC shall submit a report mentioning the severity of misconduct (Level 1 to Level 4) to the Vice Chancellor. Based on the report, REC may recommend penalties which may include:

Level	Nature of Violation	Recommended Action
Level 1	First-time minor negligence, procedural lapse, or unintentional error with no significant impact on research integrity.	Written warning and mandatory participation in a research ethics or compliance training session.
Level 2	Repeated negligence, carelessness, or a moderate breach of research ethics that indicates non-compliance with institutional standards.	Written warning, temporary suspension of research funding (where applicable), stopping one (1) annual appraisal, and suspension or discontinuation of membership in the URC, SRC, RAC, or other research-related committees.
Level 3	Serious research misconduct, including academic fraud, deliberate misrepresentation, intent to deceive, or actions causing significant reputational damage to the institution.	Removal from the list of eligible PhD supervisors, suspension or demotion from research responsibilities, stopping three (3) annual appraisals or termination of employment in accordance with institutional rules.
Level 4	Criminal conduct, violation of applicable laws or safety regulations, or misconduct involving legal or public safety implications.	All applicable Level 3 actions, along with legal proceedings, reporting to relevant regulatory or law enforcement authorities, and any additional action prescribed by law.

22. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed once every three years or earlier whenever significant changes occur in national regulations, research governance frameworks or institutional priorities. The review process shall ensure that the University's research ethics framework remains contemporary, effective and aligned with evolving best practices.


Registrar