

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL FOR
THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
(HSSREC)
TERMS OF REFERENCE AT UKZN**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (hereafter referred to as "HSSREC") is mandated to fulfil its function by the Senate of the University of KwaZulu-Natal through the University Research Ethics Policy V and the Research Strategy Group (RSG), to which HSSREC will report annually in writing. The HSSREC Terms of Reference are aligned with the National Health Act 61/2004 and the Department of Health's Ethics in Health Research Guidelines (2015). The National Health Act per s 73 requires institutions to establish RECs which are registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council (NHREC) and requires all 'health research' involving human participants to undergo prior ethics review by a registered ethics committee. Such committees are registered by the NHREC after an evaluation of eligibility and compliance with the governing legal and ethics framework.

2. AUTHORITY

The essential purpose of HSSREC is to protect the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of all human participants in non-biomedical, human participant research. HSSREC will do this through independent, prospective and ongoing ethics review of all social science and humanities research projects undertaken by members of staff, registered students and affiliates of the University. HSSREC is available to review, advise on, and approve or reject research protocols submitted to it by researchers at UKZN and, at the discretion of the Chair, in the any of the provinces of the Republic of South Africa who are not UKZN staff members, students or affiliates. Research to be reviewed will be in accordance with the provisions of the National Health Act (Act 61 of 2004).

The overarching ethics guidance for the HSSREC will be the SA Department of Health (2024) *South African Ethics in Health Research Guidelines: Principles Processes and Structures*. Where relevant major international guidelines (including, but not restricted to: The Declaration of Helsinki, current version; The Belmont Report; and The CIOMS Guidelines) will apply. When strict compliance with the letter of a particular requirement of these declarations and codes is not possible, HSSREC will ensure that the proposed research is nonetheless in keeping with the spirit of the declarations and codes.

The UKZN HSSREC is registered with NHREC in accordance with the National Health Act 61/2004. Its registration number is **REC-040414-040**

