

SPH DRC and HREC process for degree students: PhD and Masters (MPH, MMed, MPhil)

Step 1: Registration for your Masters dissertation at the Faculty of Health Sciences PG Office

Log in to PeopleSoft to complete the MoU following the steps on the link:

- You must have a topic AND a supervisor in order to do this
- Fill in the MoU on PeopleSoft and let your supervisor know when you have completed so they can also fill in their part

Step 2: Develop your full research proposal

Work with your supervisory to develop your full research proposal

Consult the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) [site](#) for details on ethical considerations including document guidelines, policies, requirements for expedited review

Once you have completed your research proposal, you are ready to apply to obtain ethics clearance

Step 3: Complete the required forms for ethics

Download the latest required ethics forms from <https://forms.uct.ac.za/>

- FHS013 - New protocol application form
- FHS014 - Pointers for preparing a synopsis
- FHS015 - Guide to preparing a research proposal/protocol

Together with your supervisor, you must complete and sign the latest version of the FHS013 form and provide supporting documents

- [SPH Pointers for new protocol submissions](#)

Step 4: Submit to the SPH DRC

Submit to the DRC for internal review: sph-drcethics@uct.ac.za

Submit a single combined pdf including:

- Cover letter to HREC with motivation for expedited review (where applicable),
- Synopsis of your research
- Research protocol,
- Any other supporting documents

The DRC will review the application and may send you queries or corrections.

Once final, DRC and HOD will sign off and you will receive an email communication from the DRC with your signed application package and instruction to submit to HREC.

NOTE: if you are doing a purely document review (e.g., systematic or policy document review) and your supervisor thinks ethics approval is not required

- Follow all steps up to here including completion of HREC forms
- Motivate clearly in your cover letter for waiver of ethical review
- DRC will review and feed back

Step 5: Submit to HREC

Submit your final full signed pack to HREC per the DRC email instructions: HREC-submissions@uct.ac.za

Once reviewed, your HREC number and approval letter will be sent to you and your supervisor

Upload your HREC approval letter to PeopleSoft

Step 6: Before you start your research

If your research is being conducted in South Africa, involving public sector staff/clients or facilities:

- you will need to get the relevant government department clearance (e.g. the provincial DoH, the National DoH)

If your research is being conducted outside of South Africa,

- you will need to check whether local ethical clearance and institutional approval are required and comply with all requirements where applicable.

Proceed with your study

- only begin to collect data or to analyse your secondary data once you have all required approvals

Step 7: Continuing ethical review

Annual renewal: Submit an annual report and renewal to HREC every year before your ethics approval expires.

- Download FHS016 from <https://forms.uct.ac.za/>
- Ethical approval must be kept active until all research activities including publication of the thesis or related publications are complete

Amendments: If you need to make changes to your protocol submit an amendment to HREC

- Download FHS006 from <https://forms.uct.ac.za/>

Together with your supervisor complete the required forms

Email to hrec-enquiries@uct.ac.za

Protocol amendments and annual reports are submitted directly to HREC and do not go via the DRC

- Expedited review protocols can be submitted at any time. We do recommend adhering to the DRC and HREC deadlines for full committee review meeting dates even if you are motivating for expedited review just in case your motivation is declined.
- Consult your supervisor and your degree handbook for more details on the dissertation process and submission.