



**ΜΟ.ΔΙ.Π.**  
Μονάδα  
Διασφάλισης  
Ποιότητας / Διεθνές  
Πανεπιστήμιο  
της Ελλάδος



ΔΙΕΘΝΕΣ  
ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ  
ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ

## **SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES Department of Midwifery**

### **New Postgraduate Program “Reproductive Health – Childbirth – Parenting – Breastfeeding”**

### **CODE OF ETHICS AND GOOD PRACTICE OF I.H.U.**

JUNE 2025

## **Article 1. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

The provisions of this Code, unless otherwise specified, apply to the entire academic community of the International Hellenic University (I.H.U.), which consists of:

- (a) the faculty members (DEP) of I.H.U. of all ranks,
- (b) the auxiliary teaching and research staff of I.H.U. (EDIP, EEP, ETEP, scientific collaborators, adjunct instructors, etc.),
- (c) visiting professors,
- (d) administrative staff and contract workers,
- (e) students (undergraduate and postgraduate),
- (f) doctoral candidates,
- (g) postdoctoral researchers of I.H.U., and
- (h) all academic, administrative, and research activities conducted at I.H.U. under the responsibility of the faculty and other scientific and administrative personnel staffing its services.

## **Article 2. GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT**

1. Members of the academic community must demonstrate dedication, diligence, responsibility, and impartiality, both in the exercise of their official duties and in other interactions and activities that arise in the course of those duties.
2. Relations among members of the academic community are based on mutual trust, solidarity, respect, and appreciation for each other's work.
3. They must make every effort to create a good working environment and harmonious professional relationships, avoid derogatory and offensive expressions about the work of others, and behave in a calm and constructive manner, avoiding tensions and behaviors that hinder dialogue or undermine the collective effort to fulfill the mission of I.H.U.
4. They must treat all individuals equally, without discrimination based on race, ethnic or national origin, religious or other beliefs, disability, age, or sexual orientation and gender identity.
5. Any form of violence, threat, or sexual harassment is unacceptable. No one is permitted to exploit their status, especially their rank or institutional role, in order to coerce other members of the academic community into actions or omissions they are not obligated to make, or to influence their judgment or vote.
6. All members of the academic community are obliged to participate consistently in the collective bodies or electoral assemblies of I.H.U. where they have been appointed or elected, performing their duties with responsibility and impartiality. They must also not unjustifiably refuse participation in ad hoc committees.
7. During their participation in the collective bodies of the Institution, they must defend their views through argument and dialogue. In all cases, the opinion that is accepted by the majority is considered valid and must be respected, even if it is contrary to their own.

## **Article 3. RULES OF CONDUCT FOR TEACHING STAFF**

1. The members of the teaching staff of IHU (faculty members, EDIP, EEP, ETEP, scientific collaborators, adjunct lecturers, etc.) and visiting professors are obliged to

perform the teaching, research, and administrative duties assigned to them by the collective/competent bodies of the Institution with responsibility, integrity, and in accordance with the applicable legislation.

2. They are obliged to respect the views, ideas, and proposals of their colleagues, students, and other members of the academic community, ensuring the creation of a climate of cooperation and solidarity.
3. Except for their obligation to testify before judicial, disciplinary, or auditing authorities, they must maintain confidentiality regarding the private matters of their colleagues and students.
4. They must dedicate sufficient time to guide students, even individually, based on the students' interests and their scientific and academic development.
5. They are required to act impartially and adhere to the principles of meritocracy, equality, equal treatment, and equal opportunities toward students, junior faculty members, and in any evaluative situation they participate in—whether as instructors, examiners, researchers, or members of University committees or bodies.
6. They must refrain from any act that constitutes exploitation of their position toward students or junior teaching/research staff, particularly by assigning tasks that do not fall within their responsibilities.
7. They must treat the administrative staff of the Institution with due respect. Specifically, they must not undermine the dignity of the employees, request duties beyond their remit as defined in the code of ethics, or demand priority handling of personal matters to the detriment of IHU's smooth operation.
8. In their public life outside the Institution, they must avoid misuse of their academic status in ways that may compromise IHU or to gain benefits unrelated to their scientific expertise. When expressing opinions through the media, they must clearly indicate whether they are doing so in their scientific capacity or not.

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#### **Article 4. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS**

1. Students must treat their peers and all members of the academic community and University institutions with appropriate courtesy. They must respect the functioning of collective bodies of the Institution and not obstruct their meetings.
2. They must not litter University premises and must comply with existing safety regulations. They should respect University property, especially electronic and laboratory equipment essential for the educational process.
3. They must arrive on time for classes or labs to avoid disrupting teaching or research activities and behave appropriately in Libraries and Reading Rooms, ensuring they do not disturb other users or staff.
4. They must:
  - (a) not present others' intellectual creations as their own when fulfilling teaching or research obligations,
  - (b) not present collaborative work as individual without naming their partners and their contributions,
  - (c) not resubmit work previously submitted for fulfilling academic requirements,
  - (d) avoid all forms of plagiarism, such as copying others' work without citing the source, during assignments set by faculty.

5. They must appear in person for any examination set within the teaching or research process, related to the assessment of their knowledge, skills, and competencies.
  6. During examinations, they must refrain from all forms of cheating, collaboration with third parties, and use of unauthorized aids, notes, or electronic devices unless explicitly allowed by the examiner.
  7. They must comply with the established rules for conducting examinations. Specifically, they are obliged to remove personal items, especially mobile phones or electronic devices, when requested by invigilators and to show their student ID or valid government-issued ID verifying their identity.
  8. They must periodically evaluate both teaching staff and University structures with the aim of improving the quality of studies.
  9. To manage the safety of laboratory facilities, students must comply with the following:
    - (i) The use of University labs, IT technologies, and resources for illegal activities or gambling is prohibited.
    - (ii) The use of laboratory infrastructure for producing personal profit-driven projects is not allowed.
    - (iii) Access to computers without prior authorization is forbidden, except in reading room areas.
    - (iv) Offices assigned to PhD and postgraduate students must be used solely for research and participation in the Department's educational process.
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## **Article 5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEACHING AND STUDENT EVALUATION**

1. Members of the teaching staff of IHU (faculty, EDIP, EEP, ETEP, scientific collaborators, adjunct lecturers, etc.) and visiting professors must personally carry out the teaching duties assigned to them by the Institution's collective bodies. They may not delegate these duties to others unless approved by the competent Departmental authorities.
2. Teaching staff and visiting professors share a common responsibility when teaching a course offered in multiple Departments. Therefore, they must discuss the syllabus, teaching methods, and any encountered problems, agree on joint solutions, and ensure uniform or equivalently weighted examination topics.
3. They must draft, at their discretion and following MODIP's guidelines, a syllabus outlining the course content, learning objectives, project guidelines, assessment methods, indicative bibliography, etc., which assist students in acquiring as much knowledge and as many skills as possible. In addition, instructors must provide any useful course-related information in a timely manner upon students' request.
4. They must ensure that student registration in labs, clinics, tutorials, or courses with a capped number of participants follows clear and transparent criteria.
5. From the beginning of each semester, they must inform students about the evaluation process and provide an objective opportunity to assess the knowledge and skills gained during the course.
6. They must grade students impartially and transparently. To ensure validity and reliability, the following principles apply:
  - (i) A wide range of assessment techniques is used where possible.
  - (ii) Examinations of any form must cover the entire or majority of the course content.
  - (iii) Oral exams conducted by a single instructor for a single student are not permitted.

- (iv) The final grade reflects a combination of elements—assignments, midterms, final exams, etc.—with known and specific weightings.
- (v) Final grades must relate to specific learning objectives.
7. Teaching staff must show students their marked exams on a specified day and time within 15 days of grade posting, providing adequate justification for the assessment.

## Article 6

### Compliance with Safety Rules

1. Researchers of the International Hellenic University (IHU) must apply all safety rules recognized in their respective scientific field, as well as those specifically defined in the following provisions (rules for the protection of humans, animals, the natural environment, particularly for protection from radioactive or other hazardous substances, etc.). In cases where compliance with safety regulations depends on infrastructure/equipment issues, they must inform the competent authorities so that the necessary measures are taken immediately.
2. Researchers of the IHU who lead research programs must fully and honestly inform participants and take all necessary and scientifically required measures to protect the health of participants and staff in the programs from accidents or side effects that may arise from the specific conditions of the research.
3. **System Security.** The basic principles that all secure systems must incorporate are confidentiality, integrity, and availability:
  - **Confidentiality:** Data must remain confidential and not be leaked. Access to the data must be controlled so that it is only granted to authorized individuals. Mechanisms must also be in place to control the creation of copies and to log all data accesses.
  - **Integrity:** The system must guarantee the integrity of the data, ensuring that the data has not been altered without authorization. If any modification occurs, it must be detectable (e.g., through log creation that records all data access, through encryption that ensures confidentiality and integrity, etc.).
  - **Availability:** The system must be available to users when needed. If a system becomes unavailable (e.g., due to a malfunction or malicious act), it must be restored to normal operation within a reasonable time, or be substituted as necessary (e.g., through an alternative system available to take over operations, based on the principle of availability restoration).

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## Article 7

### Relationships Among Researchers

1. Researchers of the IHU are obliged to show mutual respect and are entitled to equal treatment. Junior researchers deserve respect for their personality and a fair assessment of their abilities. They, in turn, are obliged to respect and acknowledge the experience of senior researchers.
2. The individual contribution of each researcher to collective research efforts must be recognized. Accurately reflecting this contribution, whether in

scientific publications or any public presentation of the research project, is a researcher's right. This responsibility lies with all members of the scientific team, especially the program leaders.

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## **Article 8**

### **Respect for the Rights of Third Parties**

1. Researchers of the IHU, in conducting their research, must show appropriate respect for the dignity, personal autonomy, and individual rights of third parties involved in the research activity. They must respect their private and family life and the beliefs and values they hold. Any form of adverse discrimination based on ethnicity, race, national origin, language, gender, religion, privacy, physical ability, socioeconomic status, or any other factor unrelated to scientific competence and integrity must be avoided.
  2. Researchers of the IHU must provide brief but comprehensible and as complete as possible information, with honesty and adequacy, to individuals who are to participate in their research, regarding its aims. The information must be presented transparently, understandably, and accessibly, in a way that can be perceived and understood by research participants. Information may be provided in writing or through other means, including electronically when appropriate. There is also an obligation to inform individuals who, although not participating in the research, are directly affected by its conduct. Consent from individuals who will participate must preferably be provided in writing. When written consent is not feasible or appropriate due to the nature of the research or specific cultural and other characteristics of the individuals or groups involved, consent may be justifiably given through any clear affirmative action, which constitutes a free, specific, explicit, and informed indication of agreement by the subject for the processing of their data—for example, through a written declaration including electronic means or audio recording. To reinforce the right to be forgotten in the online environment, and the right to delete personal data, if a participant requests it, the Processor must inform the Controller so that any links, copies, or reproductions of the personal data are deleted.
  3. Researchers of the IHU accept that scientific responsibility and social responsibility toward fellow human beings are inseparably connected.
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## **Article 9**

### **Respect for Intellectual Property**

1. In conducting research activities, researchers must take into account and not infringe in any way upon the intellectual property rights of third parties.
2. Any person who formally or informally gains knowledge of the progress or results of the research before their completion and publication is obliged to maintain full confidentiality and refrain from any action that would exploit such knowledge or research product for personal gain.

3. IHU scientists acquire intellectual property rights over the subject and products of their research in proportion to their level of contribution.
  4. Intellectual property includes the right to exploit the research work (property right) and the right to protect the personal bond with it (moral right).
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## **Article 10**

### **Written Declaration**

Researchers, when submitting proposals, applications, or contracts for research execution, must submit a written declaration to the Research & Management Committee stating that they are aware of this Code of Conduct, undertake the obligation to comply with and observe the terms and provisions contained therein, and will promptly inform the Committee of any changes or modifications to the research protocol during the course of the research.

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## **Article 11**

### **Use of University Facilities**

For externally funded research, the facilities and equipment of the IHU may be used, as well as other categories of staff. In such cases, other educational processes and functions must not be obstructed, and permission from the competent body is required. Under the same condition, participation of other categories of IHU staff may also be requested. The use of IHU's facilities and research infrastructure must be for the purposes stated in Article 1.

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## **Article 12**

### **Promotion of Research**

1. Signs, announcements, and other promotional materials related to research programs must be designed and used in a way that serves to inform the scientific community or the broader public, and not to promote research for unfair professional advantage. References to potential sponsors in the activities or materials of research teams must be made with caution, so as not to create confusion about the research body, nor give the impression of advertising a specific product or a permanent association between the sponsor and the University.
2. Promotional signs and printed materials of the programs must mention all scientists who took part in the research.
3. Invocation of an administrative title held by a faculty member in a collective body, for the purpose of securing external funding concerning the academic unit, must be made with the consent of the collective body.
4. IHU members are obliged to mention the University as the principal institution in their research results, publications, presentations, etc.

## **Article 13**

### **Employment of Faculty Members in Research Projects Outside IHU**

Faculty members are required to notify the Research & Management Committee of the International Hellenic University (IHU) of their proposals for lawful participation in research projects conducted at institutions or centers that do not belong to the IHU.

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## **Article 14**

### **Research Ethics and Deontology Committee (R.E.D.C.)**

#### **I. Purpose – Mission of the R.E.D.C.**

The mission of the Research Ethics and Deontology Committee is to provide, on an ethical and deontological level, assurance of the reliability of research projects conducted at the IHU. The Committee checks whether a research project is conducted with respect for the value of human beings and the autonomy of participants, their privacy and personal data, as well as the natural and cultural environment. It also ensures adherence to generally accepted principles of research integrity and the criteria of good scientific practice.

The institutional framework for the operation of the R.E.D.C. is provided by articles 21–27 of Law 4521/2018, decisions of the Governing Committee, and the applicable regulatory framework.

#### **II. Composition – Term of Office of the R.E.D.C.**

a. The R.E.D.C. consists of five (5) regular members and their corresponding alternate members. The members must be scientists specialized in research ethics/bioethics and research deontology. At least one member must have expertise in ethics/bioethics. At least two (2) of the members must be individuals outside the IHU. The academic disciplines of the members should, as far as possible, represent the academic fields of the University.

b. Members of the R.E.D.C. are selected as follows:

i. The Research & Management Committee of the IHU issues and publishes on the University's website a call for expressions of interest to fill the positions no later than three (3) months before the end of the term of each member. The call specifies the exact number of R.E.D.C. members and details the required qualifications according to the scientific fields of the IHU. Applications and supporting documents are submitted electronically by interested parties.

ii. The Research & Management Committee of the IHU evaluates the applications and decides on the composition of the R.E.D.C.

iii. The R.E.D.C. is established by decision of the Chair of the Governing Committee of the IHU. This decision also appoints the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

c. The term of office for R.E.D.C. members is three (3) years, renewable once.

d. If a member of the R.E.D.C. resigns, is absent, or otherwise ceases their term, they are replaced for the remainder of the term by their alternate.

#### **III. Jurisdiction of the R.E.D.C.**

The R.E.D.C. is responsible for verifying whether a specific research project to be carried out at the IHU does not violate the law and is in accordance with generally accepted ethical and deontological principles of research in both content and method. The R.E.D.C. evaluates the research proposal and:



- a. approves it, or
- b. makes recommendations and suggests revisions if ethical or deontological concerns arise. The recommendations and suggestions must be specifically justified.

#### **IV. Scope – Subject Matter of the R.E.D.C.**

- a. Funded research projects that, according to the scientific supervisor, involve human subjects, human-derived materials such as genetic material, cells, tissues, and personal data, animals, or the natural and cultural environment must be submitted to the R.E.D.C. for mandatory approval. The project cannot begin at the IHU without prior approval.
- b. In addition to the research projects mentioned in 4a, the R.E.D.C. may also examine, upon request of an interested party or complaint, other research projects and provide opinions on ethical and deontological matters related to work intended for publication in scientific journals, or to theses or doctoral dissertations in progress.

**V.** The decisions of the R.E.D.C. are binding for the IHU. Furthermore, decisions must be justified and communicated to the concerned parties by all appropriate means.

**VI.** The Committee may require principal investigators to submit any documents deemed necessary or to appear in person to provide clarifications. When appropriate, the R.E.D.C. may invite expert scientists in relevant disciplines to provide opinions.

**VII.** The Committee meets once a month and, exceptionally, when requested by its Chair or the Chair of the Research & Management Committee. R.E.D.C. meetings may be held remotely using electronic means.

**VIII.** The Committee decides by absolute majority of its present members, after making every effort to reach unanimity.

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## **RESEARCH COLLABORATORS AND OTHER PERSONNEL**

### **Article 15**

#### **Obligations of Collaborators**

1. Research collaborators must:
  - a. carry out their research activities with the primary goal of advancing scientific knowledge and benefiting society.
  - b. comply with the legal provisions relevant to the research subjects, principles of ethics, rules of good research practice, and the ethical standards of their profession and this Code.
2. During the research, collaborators enjoy freedom of expression and opinion. At the same time, they must respect the guidance provided by the research supervisor regarding the organization and direction of the research activity.
3. Violation of the provisions of this Code by research collaborators, or failure to comply with instructions regarding ethical and deontological principles issued by supervisors, may result in their replacement.

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## **Article 16**

### **Obligations of Scientific Supervisors**

1. Research supervisors must, during the research:
  - a. comply with applicable legal provisions, fundamental ethical principles, professional ethical standards, and this Code;
  - b. monitor their collaborators' compliance with the aforementioned standards as defined in the previous article.
2. Supervisors of collective research must not appropriate research findings for their own personal recognition or present the results as individual work.
3. In collective research, the team supervisor must ensure all members adhere to fundamental ethical principles and ethical standards. Respect for and recognition of each researcher's contribution, and maintaining transparency and mutual communication, are obligations for all participants. Honesty in publishing and reporting scientific findings, integrity in fulfilling promises and obligations, confidentiality regarding disclosed data during meetings or proposal evaluations, social responsibility, protection of volunteers, and respect for their personalities — especially for vulnerable groups — are fundamental principles of good research practice and must be upheld by all researchers.
4. The delegation of parts of the research or supporting tasks to third parties remains under the responsibility and supervision of the research supervisor. In cases where there are multiple supervisors, all are equally responsible for compliance with the provisions of this article.
5. Violation of this article's provisions by research supervisors may result in termination of the specific research project. Termination is decided by the Research & Management Committee following a recommendation by the Research Ethics and Deontology Committee, issued after a written and signed complaint. Before any recommendation by the R.E.D.C., both the complainant and the research supervisor are invited to present their views orally or in writing regarding the complaint.

## **Article 17**

### **Research Involving Human Subjects**

1. Research involving human subjects primarily aims at the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases, the safeguarding and promotion of health, and generally the improvement of the life of the individual and, consequently, of society as a whole. The specificity and critical importance of research on human beings necessitate the establishment of particular regulatory guidelines.
2. No biological, medical, psychological, social, or educational research involving humans that falls under the jurisdiction of the Ethics Committee for Research Involving Humans (E.H.D.E.) may be conducted without prior thorough information and consent from the participating individual regarding the purpose, scope, and potential risks, in accordance with Article 5 of this Code.

3. Consent is required from all individuals participating in a research project, who must be fully informed about the methodology to be used, the aims of the research, and the potential risks, burdens, or discomforts (see Article 6, paragraph 2 of this Code). Persons legally incapable of giving consent, as well as minors, may participate only after written consent is given by their legal representatives, based on the Oviedo Convention and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and with regard to their own opinion and the right to freely withdraw consent at any time. The consent of legal representatives does not exempt researchers from the obligation to seek assent from minors and individuals not legally capable of consent. All research participants have the right to be forgotten or to request the erasure of their data.
4. Informed consent of participants does not always guarantee, nor exclusively ensure, the protection of the individuals involved. A significant part of the responsibility lies with those designing and conducting the research or clinical study, especially regarding the selection of environments and sources for recruiting volunteers. In certain environments and situations, conditions may objectively affect a person's will and, therefore, limit their freedom and self-determination—such as detention in correctional facilities, hospitalization in psychiatric institutions or intensive care/emergency units, residence in nursing homes or refugee/migrant accommodation, or situations involving domestic, social, or political violence, emergencies due to natural or other disasters, etc. In such cases, researchers bear heightened responsibility and must justify and document that conditions are met to ensure that participants are not reduced to mere “means” of experimentation and research.
5. It is strictly forbidden during or under the pretext of research to exploit the human body—ranging from organs to the genome of a cell—for financial or other purposes, as well as to economically or otherwise exploit the persons participating in the research.
6. Research funded by pharmaceutical companies or companies producing or marketing mechanical or other equipment, products, or applications is allowed only if the company provides written acceptance of the Principles and Ethics Code governing the research activity of the International Hellenic University (Δι.Πα.Ε.).
7. It is prohibited to induce disease, pain, or physical/mental discomfort, or to prolong or aggravate an existing condition, for research purposes.
8. Researchers are strictly obligated to observe the principles of data protection and integrity of personal data collected and processed before, during, and after the research, in accordance with applicable legislation. Research must comply with the principles and rules of the GDPR and Greek law.
9. Laboratories conducting research on microorganisms—including genetically modified ones—capable of causing infection, allergy, or toxicity, or of reproducing or transferring genetic material, must comply with relevant legislation. Microorganisms are classified into four groups based on risk, and research is conducted in specially equipped laboratories.
10. The E.H.D.E. evaluates research proposals that, according to the scientific lead's declaration, include human studies or trials (Law 4521/2018, Article 23, par. 2a), without substituting the competent Scientific Council of the hospital where the study is conducted. The E.H.D.E. must consider any prior

documented evaluation by that Council for a given clinical trial and check whether the submitted proposal is covered by its approval.

11. Research involving human embryos is governed by legislation. Surplus human gametes, zygotes, and fertilized eggs provided for this purpose, per Article 1459 of the Civil Code, may be used in research. This research aims to expand knowledge of human reproduction, improve infertility diagnosis and treatment methods, enhance fertility control (contraception), identify causes of miscarriage and develop ways to address them, and develop techniques for genetic disease and congenital disorder management. It also involves the study of embryonic stem cell biology and potential therapeutic uses. The research may proceed only after approval from the Ethics and Deontology Committee, written consent from donors, previous corresponding animal-model research (unless scientifically unfeasible), and a license from the National Authority for Medically Assisted Reproduction. Researchers must adhere to informed consent principles and ensure data protection.
12. In social research—including that conducted within broader interdisciplinary projects—researchers must respect cultural and individual role and status differences, including those related to age, gender, race, minority status, national origin, religion, sexual preferences, disability, language, and socioeconomic status. They must be sensitive to actual or perceived hierarchical and relational inequalities between researchers and participants and ensure appropriate theoretical, methodological, and research conditions to reflect participants' authentic voices and perspectives. They must not exploit individuals with whom they have consultative or similar relationships that inherently imply inequality (e.g., patients, clients), and must avoid causing harm or exposing participants to risk. They must create, maintain, store, and dispose of records and data in accordance with the law and the present Code of Ethics.
13. Research in sports must be guided by Olympic ideals. The use of methods that contradict current regulations to enhance athletic performance is not permitted.
14. Conducting research in schools within the Greek territory requires approval from the Department of Research, Documentation, and Educational Technology of the Pedagogical Institute.
15. Research on a cadaver may be conducted only after written consent from the deceased's relatives. For unclaimed bodies, research cannot begin before at least 10 days have passed since death.
16. In potential research involving prisoners, researchers must comply with applicable legal provisions (Prison Code) and the Criminology Code of Ethics. Under no circumstances are experiments allowed that seek interrogation methods or other means that may pose risks to physical or mental health or that diminish moral standing and human dignity.
17. Research involving children, minors, and other vulnerable groups must be specifically justified, and its results must not be attainable by other means or through the participation of other groups. In such cases, researchers must pay special attention to safeguarding the rights of children, minors, and vulnerable groups when their participation in research is deemed necessary.
18. Particularly for research involving children, it must follow the guidelines summarizing key points of the **Ethical Standards for Research with Children** issued by the **Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)** (<https://www.srkd.org/about-us/ethical-standards-research>). Among others:

- a. Researchers may not employ any procedure that could be physically or psychologically harmful to the child. Regardless of age, children's rights supersede those of the researcher.
  - b. Prior to starting the research, informed consent must be obtained. Children must be informed of all relevant features that may influence their willingness to participate and receive answers in terms appropriate to their level of understanding. Researchers must respect the child's freedom to participate or withdraw at any time. If the child is over 7 years old, voluntary assent is required. For minors under 18, parental or guardian consent is also mandatory.
  - c. For research involving infants, parents must be fully informed, and researchers must be sensitive to signs of infant discomfort to obtain informed consent from the parents.
  - d. Consent must also be obtained from parents or guardians or persons acting in their stead (e.g., institution directors), preferably in writing and in accordance with Article 16.d of this Code.
  - e. Informed consent must also be obtained from any person whose interaction with the child is part of the study (e.g., teachers).
  - f. Personal information provided during the research must remain confidential. Participants' anonymity must be preserved, and no data should be used without approval.
19. Researchers are obliged to fully ensure the protection of participants' personal data during participant selection, informed consent collection, data gathering, and data analysis. Researchers must evaluate at the protocol design stage the extent to which data disclosure could harm participants' social/family status, employment prospects, insurance coverage, or legal standing. Participants must retain control over how and when their personal data are used or disclosed. Personal data collection must comply with relevant legislation. Researchers must design protocols ensuring data confidentiality (e.g., anonymization, secure storage, access control, removal of identifiers). In all cases, researchers must comply with current data protection regulations in accordance with.

## **Article 18**

### **Research Involving Animals**

- 1. Experiments conducted within the framework of research involving animals are divided into two categories: experiments that benefit humans, and those carried out for the benefit of animals. The first category includes studies primarily aimed at investigating, preventing, and treating diseases, drug testing, diagnostic product development, promoting human health, understanding the functioning mechanisms of the human body (basic research), etc. The second category includes experiments aimed at improving the lives of the animals themselves.
- 2. According to the principles of animal protection, research must be guided by the ethical treatment of animals as well as the appropriate selection of the animal species used for experimental purposes.
- 3. A necessary condition for the proper use of animals for experimental purposes is knowledge of their morphological and physiological characteristics, as well as their "zootechnical" requirements. Thus, housing, feeding, and care must be appropriate to the needs and demands of the animals.

4. The use of animals for experimental purposes is governed by the fundamental principle of the "3 Rs" (Replacement, Reduction, Refinement). According to the principle of **Replacement**, animal research is justified only when no alternative methods exist; additionally, there must be efforts to replace animals with other lower organisms with less developed nervous systems and lower pain perception, such as plants, microorganisms, and invertebrates. When animals cannot be replaced, attention must be paid to the **Reduction** of their number. The experiment must be designed to yield reliable results using the smallest possible number of animals. The **Refinement** of methods requires minimizing pain and suffering in animals.
  5. Research involving animals is governed by the rules described in Presidential Decree 56/30-04-2013, which aligns Greek legislation with Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and Council of 22 September 2010 (L 276/33/20.10.2010) "on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes," as well as the provisions of Law 4521/2018, Article 23, paragraph 2a. For projects involving experiments using animal models that require approval by the Experimental Protocol Evaluation Committee (EPEC), established in accordance with current legislation and composed of specialized scientists to assess ethical and deontological issues, the HREC (Research Ethics Committee) will accept the substantiated recommendation of the specialized committee and will only examine issues not covered by that committee. HREC evaluates research proposals that, according to the declaration of the scientific lead, include research on animals (Law 4521/2018, Article 23, paragraph 2a), without replacing the competent EPEC of the IHU (International Hellenic University). It is required to take into account the previous substantiated evaluation of the competent committee for the specific research proposal and to verify whether the submitted proposal is covered by the approval granted by the competent EPEC. The decision of HREC does not substitute the licensing foreseen by Presidential Decree 56/2013.
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## **Article 19**

### **Research on the Natural, Residential, and Cultural Environment**

1. Any research regarding the environment must be conducted with care for its protection and in accordance with good practices for the management of biological resources, based on the principle of sustainability.
2. Access to biological resources must be carried out in accordance with national legislation and international treaties, and after obtaining any necessary permits from the competent authorities.
3. Research that may affect biological diversity must be conducted in accordance with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro Convention) and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, as incorporated into Greek law by Law 2204/1994.
4. Research involving genetically modified organisms and microorganisms must be conducted according to the provisions of EU Directive 2001/18, as incorporated into Greek law by Ministerial Decision 38639/2017, and EU Directive 1998/81 on the contained use of genetically modified

microorganisms, as incorporated into Greek law by Ministerial Decision ΗΠ/11648/1943/2002.

5. The use, transportation, disposal, and transfer of radioactive substances requires a special license from the Greek Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC), in accordance with the applicable regulations (Laws 1733/1987, 2480/1997, Legislative Decree 854/1971, Presidential Decree 22/1997).
6. In the event of using ionizing or non-ionizing radiation, special protective measures must be taken for both researchers and the general population, in accordance with legislation.
7. No research justifies environmental damage in violation of the laws established for its protection and for waste management.
8. No research justifies the violation of cultural heritage laws (Law 3028/2002).
9. During the execution of technical works within the framework of research, the ethical rules of the Professional Code of Greek Engineers must be followed, as issued under Articles 24 and 26 of the 27-11/14-12-1926 Presidential Decree “On the codification of the provisions on the establishment of the Technical Chamber.”