



Research Ethics and Data Protection Issues

All students working on dissertations are Principal Investigators. All Principal Investigators are required to familiarise themselves with the University's Research Code of Practice. In addition, all Principal Investigators must complete the Research Ethics and Data Protection (REDP) Form.

The Code of Practice and the REDP Form are available online at <https://www.um.edu.mt/urec>. Upon starting your research, prior to performing any data collection, you are required to complete the online form (<https://www.um.edu.mt/urec/onlineforms>). The online form contains 4 parts:

1. Applicant and project details – need to be provided by everyone;
2. Self-assessment checklist – helps you to determine if you need further research ethics evaluation;
3. Detailed evaluation – shown only if one or more issues have emerged from your self-assessment checklist; and
4. Submission details.

The third part (Detailed Evaluation) will be displayed only in cases where issues have emerged from the self-assessment checklist. Within this part, the principal investigators must elaborate further on the flagged issues and wait for the approval from the Faculty Research Ethics committee (FREC) before starting any data collection. In cases where no issues emerge from the self-assessment part, principal investigators need only to submit the form to FREC (for filing and audit purposes) and may proceed with the data collection.

It should be noted that FREC approvals may take up to 1 month. Therefore, it is recommended that you submit your application as soon as possible. Note that the FREC forms you submit must reviewed and approved by your supervisor.

If, in the course of your research, you are using data/know-how/or material that needs to be protected; that requires permission from a third-party to use; and permission is granted through a contract of employment/promise of employment, a confidentiality agreement, and/or an intellectual property agreement, kindly note that: i) you must make the University aware of this agreement (through your supervisor), and ii) normally the University must also be a signatory to the agreement otherwise you risk being in breach of your agreement with the third-party when you have supervisions and/or submit your dissertation for assessment. If in doubt, ask your supervisor.