KIMEP UNIVERSITY

# Institutional Review Board Manual

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## I. Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its purpose

The purpose of the KIMEP University Institutional Review Board (IRB) is to ensure that any research involving human participants or whose topic is especially sensitive and which is undertaken either by students or faculty at KIMEP is conducted in an appropriate manner and risk-free for those participating, including individuals from whom data will be collected, researchers, supervisors and KIMEP itself, as a research institution.

The IRB is responsible for enacting policy and guidelines that control research projects and research methods involving the participation of human individuals and/or where the topic of research is especially sensitive. The IRB is also responsible for reviewing and approving research proposals in accordance with that policy and guidelines, without which approval the research project cannot be undertaken or must be discontinued. The work of the IRB ends with the approval of the research project. The IRB is not responsible for monitoring the research project after its approval, as far as compliance of the research with this manual is concerned.

The IRB will be composed of one full-time faculty member of each college or department of KIMEP, in case of departments which are not part of a specific college. One of the members shall be appointed chair during each academic year by a majority of votes. The minimum amount of faculty present at meetings where the IRB has to review and grant or refuse approval of a research project is three members. All decisions to be made by the IRB shall be taken by simple majority. No proxy votes are allowed.

The main purpose of this manual is to explain (1) when students, faculty and researchers must apply for IRB review and approval; (2) the process and conditions for IRB approval.

This manual has been drafted following similar manuals and policies of US universities and IRBs but trying to simplify their procedures and requisites for approval as much as possible. It has also been taken into account that the kind of research typically undertaken at KIMEP has more to do with social science research than with life science research and that the existing conditions for social science research in Kazakhstan and Central Asia pose challenges that may not exist elsewhere.

The drafters of this manual are thankful for any feedback and input from all members of the KIMEP community, which will serve to improve and approve the final version of the manual, as well as for its future revisions, which will also be done by the IRB when it is deemed necessary.

This manual is meant to be read together with the forms and flowcharts in its Annex.

## II. Definitions

- IRB is KIMEP's Institutional Review Board (see above).

- Research or research project is a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge. Research can be conducted by students or faculty, regardless of whether it is part of course-work and regardless of whether it is intended for publication.

- Researcher is anyone employed by KIMEP and/or who intends to conduct research at KIMEP or using KIMEP's facilities or resources.

- Main researcher is the researcher who leads a research project.

- Student is anyone registered in any of the programs offered at KIMEP or at any other institution and who intends to do research at KIMEP or using KIMEP's facilities or resources.

- Supervisor is any faculty member in charge of supervising student research but who does not conduct the research himself/herself.

- Contact person is a researcher who participates in the research project and who is designated to be available for any participant in the research who wishes to contact him/her in order to request information, make complaints, etc. The contact person and the main researcher may be the same person, at the choice of the members of the research team. In case of research conducted by students, the contact person shall always be the supervisor.

- Faculty is any faculty or researcher employed by KIMEP or by any other institution.

- Sensitive research is research which is politically or culturally sensitive in nature – e.g. corruption, terrorism, religion – or research which poses reputational, economic, or legal risks for KIMEP University – e.g. if the research methods or the results of the research were widely known, KIMEP might suffer some sort of serious retaliation as an institution.

- Participant is any human participating in the research and with whom the researcher has personal contact in order to collect data from that participant; e.g. individuals being interviewed by the researcher or answering the questions of a survey prepared by the researcher.

- Minor is anybody under 18.

- Adult is anybody above 18.

- Especially vulnerable individuals are those who are reasonably considered to be in especial need of protection; e.g. mentally challenged individuals, immigrants or individuals at risk of exclusion, regardless of their age.

- Danger or risk to the human participant is any significant and reasonably probable risk of harm of a physical, psychological, social, economic, reputational or legal nature caused to the participant by the research process or by the process of disseminating the results of the research.

- Informed Consent Form is the form in Annex I and which every human participant or their guardian must fill out and sign in the cases indicated and in accordance with this manual.

- Implicit Consent Notice is the text in Annex II which must appear – in the relevant language – on every document used to collect data from human participants in the cases indicated and in accordance with this manual.

**III. Types of research for which IRB review and approval must be sought**

A researcher must apply for IRB's review and obtain IRB's approval for a research project in the following cases:

- Research involving human participants, i.e. where there is personal interaction between the researcher(s) and the human participants, provided that the human participants:

    (a) are minors or especially vulnerable individuals, as defined above;

    (b) are adults and there is danger or risk for them, as defined above.

- Research whose topic is sensitive.

The cases where IRB review and approval must be sought and obtained are also explained using the flowchart in Annex IV.

## IV. Types of research for which IRB review and approval must NOT be sought

A researcher must NOT apply for IRB's review and obtain IRB's approval for a research project in the following cases:

- Research using existing data, documents, or records which are publicly available.

- Research using existing data, documents, or records which are not publicly available but where the researcher(s) have obtained permission to use those data, documents or records from the individual or institution who has rights over them or otherwise keeps them.

- Research where adults participate but where there is no danger or risk to the human participant and the topic is not sensitive. An Implicit Consent Notice will still be necessary in these cases, in accordance with this manual.

- Research which uses simple observation of public behavior, without further contact between the researcher and the human individual.

- Research in education settings on instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom-management methods.

## V. Responsibilities of the supervisor or main researcher

The supervisor or main researcher will be responsible for:

- Assessing whether IRB's review and approval is required in accordance with this manual.

- Applying for IRB's review and approval where it is required in accordance with this manual.

- Obtaining signed Informed Consent Forms from every participant in the research or from their guardians, making sure that the participants are aware of the rights that they have as participants in the research project, in accordance with this manual.

- Making sure that an Implicit Consent Notice is included in the documents or digital platforms used to collect data from human participants so that they can easily find it. Alternatively, as in the case of oral interviews with human participants, making sure that every participant has a copy of the Implicit Consent Notice or is otherwise aware of its contents and of the rights that they have as participants in the research project, in accordance with this manual.

- Making sure that the privacy of the human participants as well as the confidentiality of the data collected from them will be safeguarded throughout all stages of the research project.

- Making sure that all researchers who participate in the research project are aware of the contents, requirements and procedures of this manual.

- Filing the following documents with the Head of the Department at KIMEP where the supervisor or researcher works, after obtaining IRB's approval:

    - Signed Informed Consent Forms.

    - Evidence of the Implicit Consent Notice used.

- Minutes of the IRB meeting where approval of the research project was granted (and any minutes of past rejections of approval), including any IRB's indications as to how the research must be conducted.

- Evidence of permission obtained to use research data which is not publicly accessible.

- All other documents which are part of the process of obtaining IRB's approval, in accordance with this manual.

- Ensuring that the research project, including the dissemination of results, is conducted in a generally ethical manner at all times.

**VI. Responsibilities of the Dean or Head of Department**

The Dean or Head of Department where the supervisor or researcher works will be responsible for opening a file where the documents referred to in the previous section will be archived and kept. The Dean or the Head of Department is not responsible for monitoring the research project as far as compliance of the research with this manual is concerned.

**VII. Informed consent**

Informed consent is required whenever there are human participants in the research with whom the researcher has personal contact, in order to collect data from those participants.

As a condition for IRB's approval, every participant who is a minor or an especially vulnerable person must sign the Informed Consent Form of Annex I. In case the supervisor or main researcher reasonably understands that by reason of their age or for other reason, those participants cannot understand the contents of the Informed Consent Form or give their own consent to have their data collected, the supervisor or main researcher is responsible for obtaining a signed Informed Consent Form from the parents or guardians of those participants.

As a condition for IRB's approval, in cases where the participants are adults but where there is danger or risk for those participants, as well as in cases where there is no such danger, an Implicit Consent Notice must be included in all the data collection materials and the supervisor or main researcher is responsible for making sure that all participants can easily find it and read it.

**VIII. Application for IRB's review and approval of research projects**

Where IRB's review and approval is required, in accordance with this manual, the supervisor or main researcher shall submit to the chair of the IRB the following:

- A description of the research project, including (a) its purpose and goals, (b) the intended data collection methods, (c) the sensitivity of the topic and (d) future dissemination of results.

- Name and signature of the supervisor or researcher(s) and of the contact person.

- Types of human participants, as defined in this manual, e.g. minors, adults or especially vulnerable persons.

- Dangers or risks for human participants, as defined in this manual.

- A description of the type of informed consent that is required and how it is going to be obtained from participants; i.e. signed Informed Consent Forms or Implicit Consent Notices included in the

documents or digital platforms used to collect data from the participants.

- A description of how the privacy of the human participants as well as the confidentiality of the data collected is going to be safeguarded.

The above information shall be submitted by the main researcher to the chair of the IRB using the Model Application Form in Annex III. The main researcher may submit any other information or document he considers relevant for the purpose of IRB's review and approval. The process for requesting IRB review and approval is explained using the flowchart in Annex IV.

**IX. Process of IRB's review and approval projects**

Once the chair of the IRB is satisfied that the application for IRB's review is complete, in accordance with this manual, he/she shall communicate to the applicant that no more information is needed or, alternatively, he shall request more information. The chair of the IRB shall then convene the IRB to discuss the application.

The IRB's approval of the research project shall be granted if a majority of the members of the IRB present at the meeting are satisfied of the following:

- The applicant submitted all the information required, in accordance with this manual.

- Participation in the research project is voluntary through all its stages.

- The intended procedures for obtaining the consent of the human participants are in accordance with this manual.

- The methods to collect and store data from the human participants, as well as the intended process of disseminating the results of the research respect the privacy and confidentiality of the human participants and do not pose any significant and probable harm of physical, psychological, social, economic, reputational or legal harm for them.

- The data collected will be used only for the purposes for which consent was obtained and then appropriately destroyed or stored in accordance with this manual.

- There is no significant and probable danger or risk for KIMEP University's reputation either as a result of the research itself or of the dissemination of its results.

The IRB's decision to approve the research project shall be communicated to the applicant and will also be recorded in the minutes. In case that the approval is rejected by a majority of members of the IRB, this will also be communicated to the applicant, explaining the decision in detail, as well as informing the applicant of the right to re-apply to IRB and what is needed for a new and successful application.

***Annex Follows***

*Annex I*

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

- Full name of supervisor / main researcher:

- Full name of other researchers (if any):

- Full name and email of contact person:

- Brief description of research project and its purpose:

- Full name and signature of human participant:

- Full name and signature of participant's parents or guardians (in case their signature is needed):

- Date:

I give my full consent to the collection of my personal data. The researcher has also explained to me (a) the purpose of the research, (b) its expected duration, (c) the data collection methods to be used, (d) any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts I may experience, (e) that the information I provide will remain confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this research project, (f) that I can contact the contact person indicated above in case I have any questions or complaints related to this research project and (g) that I am aware that my participation is fully voluntary and I may discontinue my participation at any time.

*[translation into Russian]*

*[translation into Kazakh]*

*Annex II*

## IMPLICIT CONSENT NOTICE

*[to be shown to the human participants and to be included in the document or platform with which research data is to be collected]*

It is understood that by participating in this research project I give my full consent to the collection of my personal data. The researcher has also explained to me (a) the purpose of the research, (b) its expected duration, (c) the data collection methods to be used, (d) any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts I may experience, (e) that the information I provide will remain confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this research project, (f) that I can contact the contact person indicated above in case I have any questions or complaints related to this research project and (g) that I am aware that my participation is fully voluntary and I may discontinue my participation at any time.

*[translation into Russian]*

*[translation into Kazakh]*

*Annex III*

## MODEL APPLICATION FORM FOR IRB's REVIEW AND APPROVAL

- Name, signature and contact details of the supervisor, main researcher, other researcher(s) and contact person.

- Date of the application:

- Brief description of the research project, including (a) its purpose and goals, (b) the intended data collection methods, (c) the sensitivity of the topic and (d) future dissemination of results.

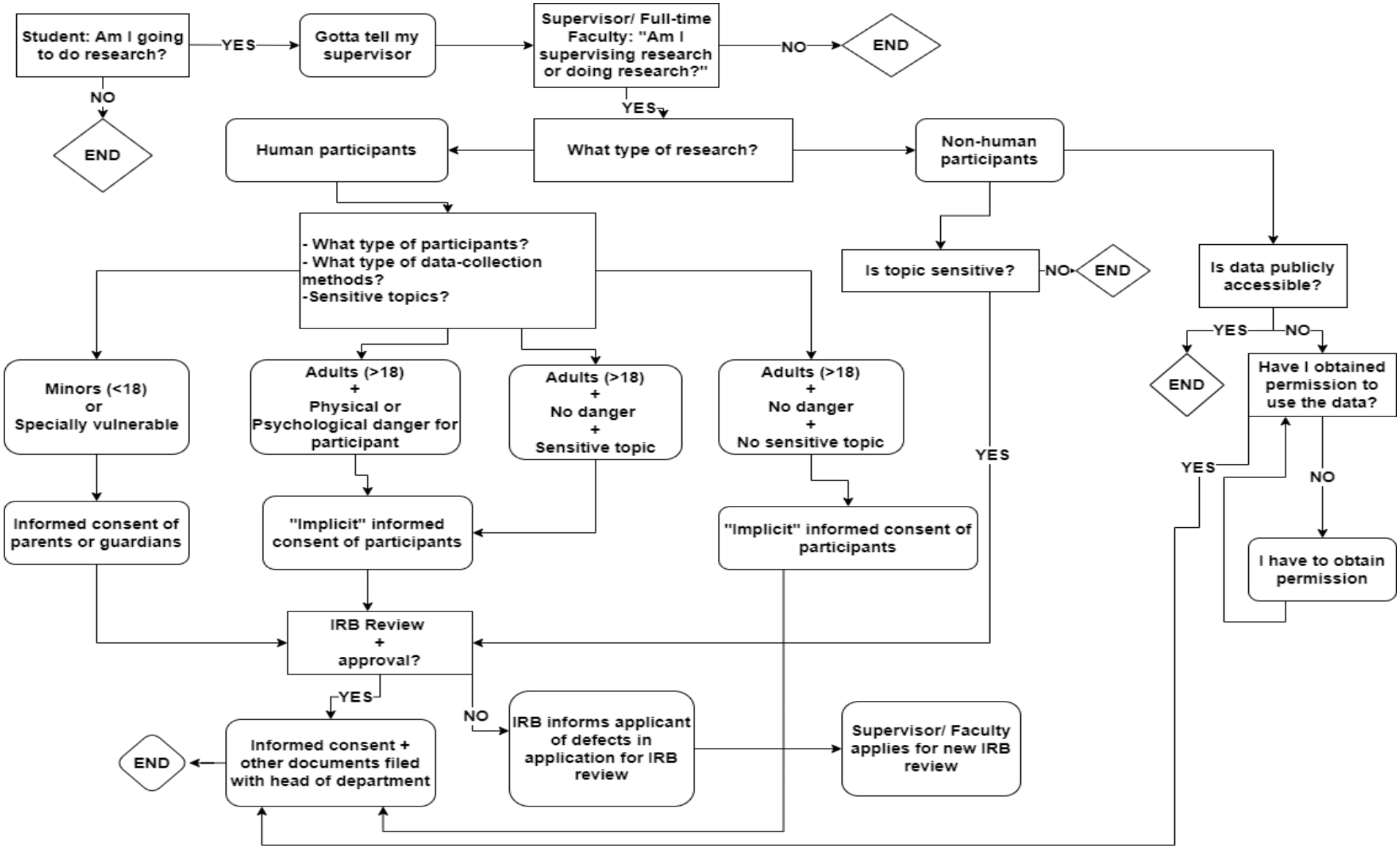
- Types of human participants:

- Dangers or risks for human participants:

- Type of informed consent needed:

- Brief description of how the privacy of the human participants as well as the confidentiality of the data collected is going to be safeguarded:

**Annex IV: Process for requesting IRB review and approval *(flowchart)***



**Annex V: Process for making decisions on requested IRB review and approval *(flowchart)***