



FENERBAHÇE UNIVERSITY
DIRECTIVE FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH
ETHICS COMMITTEE

PART ONE

Purpose, Scope, Basis, and Definitions

Purpose

ARTICLE 1 - The purpose of this directive is to outline the procedures and principles for the Fenerbahçe University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee.

Scope

ARTICLE 2 - (1) This directive covers the purpose, scope, establishment, and application conditions, as well as the operating procedures and principles of the Fenerbahçe University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee.

Basis

ARTICLE 3 - (1) This directive is based on Articles 14 and 42 of Higher Education Law No. 2547 and the provisions of the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive of Higher Education Institutions.

Definitions

ARTICLE 4- (1) Definitions of the terms in this Directive are as follows;

- a) Rector: Fenerbahçe University Rector,
- b) Rectorate: Fenerbahçe University Rectorate,
- c) Chairman: Chairman of the Fenerbahçe University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee,
- d) Unit: Institute, faculty, college, vocational school, as well as application and research centers,
- e) Committee: Fenerbahçe University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee,
- f) Rapporteur: The committee member and/or expert to whom the Chairman has referred the issue for preliminary examination,
- g) Member: Fenerbahçe University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee member,
- h) Responsible Investigator: The individual who applies for ethical approval to the Fenerbahçe University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee,

Doc. code: YÖN.SBAEK.01	RELEASE DATE: 28.09.2021	REV. DATE: 17.10.2024	REV. No: 01	RESTRICTED
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- i) Associate Researcher: A researcher who shares in the scientific responsibility for the study and actively participates in its conduct,
- i) Advisor (Expert): A faculty member whose expertise is consulted during the evaluation of research permission and approval applications, providing informed written consent, either personally or through their legal representative, in accordance with this directive and relevant legislation,
- (j) Volunteer: A patient or healthy individual who participates in the research after providing informed written consent, either personally or through their legal representative, in accordance with this directive and relevant legislation,
- (k) Informed Consent Form: A written document confirming that the volunteer has independently decided to participate in the research after receiving comprehensive information about the study, both in writing and verbally. If the volunteer is illiterate, the form records their verbal consent in the presence of an independent witness, whose signature is also obtained.

PART TWO

The Purpose, Scope, Establishment, and Operating Procedures and Principles of the Ethics Committee

Purpose of the Ethics Committee

ARTICLE 5 - (1) The core purpose of the committee is to conduct an ethical review to ensure that research in social sciences and humanities is carried out in a manner that protects personal rights, environmental values, and cultural and natural assets. In this context, the following are included among the objectives of the ethics committee in conducting an ethical evaluation and providing decisions and opinions on the ethical appropriateness of the research:

- a) *If conducted with child participants*, focusing on matters related to the child's personality, abilities, physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development, as well as fostering respect for the child's parents, cultural identity, language, values, the values of the country in which the child resides or originates, and those of civilizations different from their own;
- b) *If conducted with adult participants*, focusing on issues related to the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals, and the protection of human dignity, as well as physical and mental health;
- c) *If conducted with cultural and natural assets*, focusing on matters related to the protection of the environment and cultural heritage.

Scope of the Ethics Committee's Activities

ARTICLE 6- The committee reviews all human-based research within its jurisdiction that falls outside the scope of interventional and/or non-interventional clinical trials under this directive. In this context, the committee examines observational and descriptive human

Doc. code: YÖN.SBAEK.01	RELEASE DATE: 28.09.2021	REV. DATE: 17.10.2024	REV. No: 01	RESTRICTED
-------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------	-------------	------------

studies (such as measure/scale studies, web or face-to-face surveys, literature reviews, system-model development studies, data source screening, qualitative research, interviews, observations, etc.) that do not interfere with human body integrity, as well as human studies that do not involve the use of biological materials (e.g., biological fluids and samples such as blood, urine, etc.).

Establishment of an ethics committee

ARTICLE 7 – (1) The committee is composed of seven members who have completed their doctorates, with consideration given to the representation of various fields.

(2) Committee members are appointed by the rector for a term of two years.

(3) Appointed members must not have any final judicial or administrative decision or ruling indicating a violation of ethical standards.

(4) A member whose term has expired may be reappointed in the same manner. If a membership becomes vacant for any reason, a new member is elected in the same manner.

Duties of the Committee

ARTICLE 8 - (1) The duties of the committee are as follows:

a) Developing standard forms for ethical evaluation,

b) Approving suitable applications to the Ethics Committee,

c) Evaluating all written, verbal, audio, or video measurement tools and content used in scientific research from an ethical standpoint, including the study's purpose, methodology, questionnaires, tests, scales, interviews, observations, images, drawings, video films, audio recordings, and similar data,

d) Determining the ethical appropriateness of the research application,

e) Documenting the decisions made as a result of the examination and informing the researchers of the outcome.

The operating procedures and principles of the ethics committee

ARTICLE 9 - (1) The term of office for committee members is two years. Members whose term expires may be reappointed.

(2) At the first meeting of the committee, members elect one of their own as chairman. The chairman appoints one of the members as the rapporteur. In the absence of the chairman, the most senior faculty member acts as deputy chairman. In the case that the chairman vacates the position for any reason, the members of the Ethics Committee will elect a new chairman from among themselves at their first meeting.

(3) A member who misses three consecutive meetings without an excuse within a calendar year will have their membership automatically terminated, and a new member will be appointed for a two-year term in accordance with the first subclause of this article.

(4) The committee meets at least once a month with the presence of the absolute majority of its members and makes decisions by the absolute majority of those present. Abstentions are not permitted in voting. In case of a tie vote, the decision is considered to be in favor of the chairman's vote.

Doc. code: YÖN.SBAEK.01	RELEASE DATE: 28.09.2021	REV. DATE: 17.10.2024	REV. No: 01	RESTRICTED
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- (5) The file submitted to the committee secretariat at least 7 working days before the meeting date, as outlined in the meeting calendar, will be added to the agenda.
- (6) The committee does not consider studies that began or were completed before the application date. If this situation is discovered after the board has issued its opinion, the board's decision is canceled, and both the applicant and the relevant manager of the institution to which the applicant is affiliated are notified in an official letter.
- (7) The chairman reviews the applications submitted to the board and appoints a rapporteur for each application based on its subject. The rapporteur prepares a review report prior to the meeting. The report is communicated to the committee members electronically no later than one working day before the meeting.
- (8) The rapporteur presents the applications to the committee at the meetings. The committee's opinion on the examined file is reflected in the final report with its justification.
- (9) The ethics committee's opinion is sent to the applicant electronically in writing within one week after the meeting. A reason must be provided for applications deemed ethically inappropriate.
- (10) The committee may identify shortcomings and/or request corrections for the applications it reviews. The response letter sent by the applicant to address corrections and/or shortcomings is discussed at the committee's first meeting.
- (11) If the explanatory response letter is not submitted to the committee within 30 days to address corrections and/or shortcomings, the application is considered withdrawn.
- (12) The evaluation report regarding the research ethics application is signed by all members present at the meeting.
- (13) The committee may consult external authorities or experts outside the board if necessary. These individuals may be invited to committee meetings without voting rights and may share their opinions verbally or present them in writing.
- (14) The following individuals are not to be appointed as authorities or experts in examinations conducted during committee meetings:
 - a) Postgraduate thesis advisors and faculty members who have served on the associate professorship juries of the individual in question,
 - b) Faculty members employed at the university the individual is affiliated with,
 - c) The spouse of the individual in question, their blood relatives or relatives by marriage up to and including the third degree, and the spouses of these relatives,
 - d) Those who have animosity toward the individual, and vice versa,
 - e) The superiors at the institution where the individual's staff is based,
 - f) Any commercial business partners, if applicable.
- (15) If no faculty member specializes in the field of science where the individual works, an expert may be appointed from the closest related field. Additionally, a legal expert may be appointed to clarify the legal meaning and scope of an alleged ethical violation. If multiple experts are appointed, each shall submit a separate report.

Doc. code: YÖN.SBAEK.01	RELEASE DATE: 28.09.2021	REV. DATE: 17.10.2024	REV. No: 01	RESTRICTED
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(16) Experts must prepare and send the report on the subject within one month at the latest from the date of delivery of the file, in accordance with the sample provided to them. This period may be extended once for a maximum of one month.

(17) Committee members are not to attend meetings where research applications and allegations of ethical violations involving themselves or their colleagues are discussed.

(18) If the research applications of committee members are discussed, the relevant member(s) are not to participate in these discussions or vote. However, if the Ethics Committee deems it necessary, it may seek the opinions of the member(s) in writing or invite them to the meeting to present their views.

(19) The research files submitted to the committee and the committee's decisions are confidential, and no information will be disclosed to anyone except the competent authorities and applicants.

(20) If a research project approved by the Ethics Committee is found to be conducted in violation of ethical principles, the relevant manager at the researcher's affiliated institution will be notified. If the research is still ongoing, efforts will be made to halt it.

(21) The committee includes the research on its agenda at its first meeting and overturns the decision.

ARTICLE 10 - (1) The secretariat services of the committee are managed under the coordination of the committee's chairman.

(2) Committee correspondence outside the university is conducted in accordance with the university's official correspondence rules.

(3) The internal correspondence of the committee is coordinated by the committee's chairman or the Directorate of Editorial Affairs and Decisions, depending on their area of responsibility and expertise.

PART THREE

Application to the Committee,

Evaluation, and Objection Procedures

ARTICLE 11- (1) Applications submitted within the institution must be made by the responsible researcher directly to the board's secretariat at least 7 working days before the Ethics Committee meeting.

(2) The Application Form on the university's website is completed by the responsible researcher and submitted to the committee electronically. The application file is submitted to the committee's secretariat with a wet signature.

(3) The committee evaluates the research projects based on ethical considerations, including the purpose, methodology, benefits, potential risks, and budget of the study. As a result of the evaluation, the committee determines whether the research is 'Compliant,' 'Requires Revision,' or 'Not Compliant'. The responsible researcher, whose application has been marked as 'Requires Revision,' may reapply after making the necessary corrections or addressing the deficiencies.

Doc. code: YÖN.SBAEK.01	RELEASE DATE: 28.09.2021	REV. DATE: 17.10.2024	REV. No: 01	RESTRICTED
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(4) All decisions made at the committee meeting, along with their justifications, are recorded in the decision book. If it is decided that the research may be resubmitted after corrections or adjustments, the required changes are clearly specified. The decision that the research proposal requires revision is also communicated to the responsible researcher electronically.

(5) If the board's decision is 'Compliant,' the scanned version of the wet-signed ethical approval certificate is sent to the applicant by the committee chair.

(6) When necessary, the committee monitors the research it approves and may request a progress report. The responsible researcher is obligated to deliver these reports to the committee. The Chairman of the Committee reviews the progress reports and assesses whether the research has been conducted according to the original application. When deemed necessary, the Chairman may recommend that the Committee decide to monitor the implementation of the research. The monitoring process is conducted in accordance with the principles established by the Committee. After reviewing the development report, the Chairman places the issue on the Committee's agenda to terminate research that is not compliant with ethical rules and to notify the relevant units.

(7) If changes are needed in the measurement tools (e.g., survey, test, scale, interview, observation, picture, drawing, video, audio recording, method, research title, etc.) of studies approved by the committee, approval must be obtained from the committee for these changes. All legal responsibility for changes made without the committee's approval lies with the researchers.

(8) The research cannot begin until the committee's approval decision is communicated to the applicant.

(9) The research team is responsible for the scientific validity, reliability, confidentiality, and security of all data collected during the conduct of the research approved by the committee.

(10) Objections to committee decisions must be submitted by the applicant to the committee's secretariat either with a wet-signed petition or via email from a personal or corporate email address. The committee makes a definitive decision on the objections.

Doc. code: YÖN.SBAEK.01	RELEASE DATE: 28.09.2021	REV. DATE: 17.10.2024	REV. No: 01	RESTRICTED
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PART FOUR
Miscellaneous and Final Provisions

Situations for which no applicable provision exists

ARTICLE 12 – (1) In cases where no applicable provision is found in this directive, the provisions of the relevant legislation are applied.

Prohibitions and Sanctions

ARTICLE 13 – (1) The legal and administrative responsibility for research that receives a negative opinion or is conducted without the approval of the Committee, or the relevant institution, lies with the responsible researcher.

Effective Date

ARTICLE 14 - (1) This directive takes effect on the date of its approval by the Senate.

Implementation

ARTICLE 15 (1) The provisions of this directive are implemented by the Rector.

Doc. code: YÖN.SBAEK.01	RELEASE DATE: 28.09.2021	REV. DATE: 17.10.2024	REV. No: 01	RESTRICTED
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