

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (REC)- AITS, TIRUPATI

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1. Introduction:

*To philosophers and thinkers, research may mean the outlet for new ideas and insights
Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do*

-Potter Stewart

Ethics is more of an innate quality for humans to develop further for a better life. It is the same for researches also. But there are ethical codes by certain government agencies, who publish specific ethical codes to conduct research and report them.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist REC-AITS members and their partners to understand and apply principles of ethical research conduct.

Ethical guidelines are required to develop:

- Research potentially that impinges on the privacy and confidentiality of those involved in the research
- Research that involves the secondary use of data collected from an evaluation activity for purposes other than those described to partners and participants and the intended use of the data goes beyond program improvement
- Research that involves a comparison of cohort, randomization, use of various control groups
- Targeted or additional analysis of data collected from an evaluation activity that involves minority or vulnerable groups and the intended use of the data goes beyond program improvement.

“Increased amounts of research make progress possible. Research inculcates scientific and inductive thinking and it promotes the development of logical habits of thinking and organisation.”

2. Objectives

The objective of this committee is to put in place an effective and consistent ethical review mechanism for Scientific and Technology research including business administration involving proposals submitted by the faculty and students of AITS, Tirupati.

The objectives of research committee can also be understood keeping in view the following points:

- According to UGC and AICTE guidelines, non doctoral faculty are encouraged to register in to Ph.D. programme of their disciplines.
- Half yearly review of the Ph.D. registrations and completion list should be updated.
- To those faculty who are to write a Ph.D. thesis, research may mean a careerism or a way to attain a high position in the social structure;
- Submission of Research articles and project proposals by the faculty enriches the current knowledge which is the principle motto of the committee.
- To those students who are to write a UG/PG thesis, research may be a foundation for their career grounds.
- To enrich the researchers about the Government and Non government funding agencies.
- Encouraging the succeeding researchers and students to file patents.

3. Composition of the committee:

- The composition of the REC - AITS should be multidisciplinary and multi-sectorial with Independence and competence as the two emblems of an REC-AITS.
- The number of persons in an ethical committee will be around 8-14 members.
- The Chairperson of the Committee should be The Principal of the Institute
- The Member Secretary will be a faculty member from the Institute to conduct the business of the Committee.
- Other members will be a mix of scientific, technical and business administration faculty.

The composition will be as follows:-

- Chairperson
- Convener
- Co Convener
- Member Secretary
- Members of the Institute
- One legal expert or retired judge

REC-AITS Composition:

S.NO.	Name of the Person	Designation and Address	Role in REC-AITS
1.	Dr. C. Nadhamuni Reddy	Principal, AITS, Tirupati	Chair Person
2.	K. Balaji Nanda Kumar Reddy	Associate Professor & OAS, Dept. of EEE, AITS	Member

3.	Dr. K. Ramya	Assistant Professor, Dept. of HBS, AITS	Co Convener
4.	Dr. B. Aruna Kumari	Assistant Professor, Dept. of HBS, AITS	Member Secretary
5.	Dr. J. Guru Jawahar	Professor, Dept. of CE, AITS	Member
6.	Dr. R. Murugesan	Professor and Head of EEE, AITS	Member
7.	Dr. K. Kumar	Professor, Dept. of ME, AITS	Member
8.	Dr. N. Pushpalatha	Professor and Head of ECE, AITS	Member
9.	Dr. N Badrinath	Professor, Dept. of CSE, AITS	Member
10.	Dr. P. Lavanya	Associate Professor, Dept. of HBS, AITS	Member
11.	Dr. K. Bhagyalakshmi	Assistant Professor, Dept. of HBS, AITS	Member
12.	Dr. S. Kishore	Assistant Professor & IQAC Coordinator, Dept. of MBA, AITS	Member
13.	Mr. Gajendra	Senior Lawyer, Tirupati	Legal Expert

- The members will be appointed by the Chairperson of the Institute based on their competencies and integrity.

4. Role and responsibilities of the committee:

- Thesis submitted by the students of the institute for M.Tech and MBA programmes, publication works of the faculty for conferences held in our institute and published in any journal/magazine produced by the college should be reviewed via REC-AITS.
- The REC-AITS will take care that all the cardinal principles of research ethics viz Autonomy, Beneficence, Plagarism, Reliability of the work, Procedures adopted by the researchers, Non - malfeasance and Justice are taken care of in planning, conduct and reporting of the proposed research.
- REC-AITS will review and approve all types of research proposals involving innovative and socially applicative ideas with a view to safeguard the dignity, privacy, rights, safety and well-being of all actual and potential research participants.
- The goals of research, however important, should never be permitted to override the well-being of the research subjects/participants.
- It will review the proposals before start of the study as well as monitor the research throughout the study until and after completion of the study through appropriate well documented procedures, such as annual reports, final reports and site visits etc.
- The committee will also examine compliance with all regulatory requirements, applicable guidelines and laws.

5. Quorum:

- The minimum of 5 members + Chairperson are required to compose a quorum.
- All decisions should be taken in meetings with minutes of the meeting recorded accordingly.
- This quorum must include at least one non-scientific member that may either be a lawyer, philosopher or a lay person from the community.

6. Resignation, Removal and Reconstitution:

- The members who have resigned may be replaced at the discretion of the appointing authority for the same i.e., Chairperson REC-AITS
- REC-AITS members who decide to resign must provide the Chairperson REC-AITS the written notification of their proposed resignation date at least 15 calendar days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- In case of resignation Chairperson REC-AITS would appoint a new member, falling in the same category.
- The recommendations may be sought from the resigning member.

A member may be relieved or terminated of his/her membership in case of

- Conduct unbecoming for a member of the Ethics Committee
- Inability to participate in the meetings on any grounds
- If a regular member fails to attend more than 3 meetings of REC.
- Relocate to another city or any such matter

The membership shall be reviewed by the REC-AITS if the member is a regular defaulter. If deemed necessary, the REC –AITS may decide to terminate the membership and recommend to the Chairperson REC-AITS for necessary action

7. Office and conduct procedures:

- Member secretary will be responsible to schedule the meeting once in couple of months in consultation with the Chair person of REC-AITS.
- Office of member secretary will receive all the application and maintain record of the activities of REC. He/she will prepare the minutes of the meetings and get it approved by the Chairperson before communicating to the researchers with the approval of the appropriate authority

8. Review procedures:

- The meeting of the REC should be held on scheduled intervals of about 12 months
- The proposals will be send to members at least 2 weeks in advance.
- Decisions will be taken by consensus after discussions, and whenever needed voting will be done.
- Researchers will be invited to offer clarifications if need be.
- The decisions will be minuted and Chairperson's approval taken in writing.

9. Resolution-Making:

1. Members will discuss the various issues before arriving at a consensus decision.
2. Decisions will be made only in meetings where quorum is of majority.
3. Only the REC-AITS members can take the decision. The expert consultants will only offer their opinions.
4. Decision may be to approve, reject or revise the proposals. Specific suggestions for modifications and reasons for rejection should be given.
5. In cases of conditional decisions, clear suggestions for revision and the procedure for having the application re-reviewed should be specified.
6. Modified proposals may be reviewed by an expedited reviewers through identified members.

10. Follow up procedures:

- Reports should be submitted at annually for review and final report should be submitted at the end of study.
- Protocol deviation, if any, should be informed with adequate justifications.
- Any amendment to the protocol should be resubmitted for renewed approval.
- Premature termination of study should be notified with reasons along with summary of the data obtained so far.

- Change of investigators / sites should be informed.

11. Record keeping and Archiving

- ✓ Curriculum Vitae (CV) of all members of REC-AITS.
- ✓ Copy of all study protocols with enclosed documents and progress reports.
- ✓ Minutes of all meetings duly signed by the Chairperson.
- ✓ Copy of all existing relevant national and international guidelines on research ethics and laws along with amendments.
- ✓ Copy of all correspondence with members, researchers and other regulatory bodies.
- ✓ Final report of the approved projects.
- ✓ All documents should be archived for prescribed period.