

REGULATIONS OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE OF THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LISBON

1. Nature

The Ethics Committee of the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon (hereinafter “Ethics Committee” or “Ethics Committee of the ICS”) was set up by decision of that institution’s Academic Research Board on 11 February 2015 its guiding principles being laid down in the ICS Ethics Charter and the professional ethics codes specific to each discipline. It is governed by the present regulations, approved at the meeting of the Academic Research Board held on 14 November 2018.

2. Objectives

2.1. By delegation of the ICS Academic Research Board, the Ethics Committee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the procedures set out in the ICS Ethics Charter. In this connection, it pursues two main objectives:

2.1.1. It falls to the Ethics Committee to issue preliminary approvals for research projects in the Social Sciences, in accordance with the requirements of the competitive tenders to which those projects are subject.

2.1.2. The Ethics Committee of the ICS shall issue opinions to researchers and other members of the ICS community whenever they are faced with dilemmas or doubts in performing their professional duties and request advice accordingly.

2.2. The Ethics Committee further reserves the right to express its opinion on other situations which may affect the proper ethical performance of researchers and other members of the ICS community, as well as to organize or sponsor awareness initiatives related to ethical issues in research.

3. Membership

3.1. The Ethics Committee of the ICS is made up of one Chairperson (hereinafter Chair) and three voting members.

3.2. Members of the Ethics Committee will be appointed at a meeting of the Academic Research Board. The Chair of the Ethics Committee is required to be a member of the ICS Academic Research Board. The body of voting members shall be made up of two researchers and one member of the technical staff.

3.3. The Chair of the Ethics Committee is required to convene its meetings, define the agenda for those meetings, supervise the issuing of certificates and opinions, communicate with the Academic Research and Management Boards of the ICS, draft the annual report and represent the Ethics Committee to outside bodies.

3.4. The voting members of the committee are required to express their opinion on cases brought before the Ethics Committee and, in rotation amongst themselves, organize those cases, draw up the minutes of meetings, and assist in the preparation of the annual report.

4. *Operation*

4.1. The Ethics Committee meets when its Chair so decides, bearing in mind the need for consideration and preparation of opinions, or at the request of one of the other members, whenever it is felt that the nature of the cases involved so justifies.

4.2. The mandate of the Ethics Committee is for two years, coinciding with the mandate of the ICS Academic Research Board, and may be renewed.

4.3. It is to be preferred that members of the Ethics Committee be physically present at meetings, but they may meet online if necessary, with the reason for said meeting and the decisions taken being recorded in the minutes.

4.4. For each case being examined, a dossier will be compiled, consisting of the form filled in by the person instigating the request, documents attached, and the opinion of the Ethics Committee. Once the committee has issued its final opinion, the dossier may be publicly consulted, upon express application to the Ethics Committee, provided that the instigator of the request has not placed any restriction on such access and that there are no risks for the pursuit of their normal research or other activity.

5. *Procedure for Issuing an Opinion*

5.1. Once the Ethics Committee has received a request for an opinion, it is required to issue that opinion and communicate it to the person who instigated the request within a period of 30 days from completion of the form.

5.2. Requests for an opinion are to be submitted to the Ethics Committee by completing an online form which is available on the committee's page on the ICS website, in accordance with the instructions set out on that page.

5.3. Requests shall be considered in turn, taking into account the date on which the completed forms are submitted, in addition to externally determined time limits when project approval is involved.

5.4. The Ethics Committee may hold hearings and consult specialists if it considers such consultations to be appropriate or opportune.

5.5. Issues arising outside the scope of the online form may be addressed to the Ethics Committee by email at etica@ics.ulisboa.pt.

6. *Decision-making procedure*

6.1 Opinions of the Ethics Committee of the ICS assume that the information provided for assessment is true and that those who submit requests for opinions take on full responsibility for the veracity of that information.

6.2. Decisions of the Ethics Committee of the ICS relating to prior approvals and issuance of ad hoc opinions, in accordance with paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of section 2 (*Objectives*), are binding, provided that the majority of its members, including the Chair, are present at the relevant meeting, whether physically or online.

6.3. Voting in the Ethics Committee may be carried out in secret if one of its members so requests.

6.4. In case of deadlock, the Chair may cast the deciding vote.

6.5. Final opinions of the Ethics Committee must be signed by at least two of its members.

6.6. Decisions in the context of the issuing of opinions of the Ethics Committee may be of three types: positive, conditionally positive, or negative.

6.7. If a positive opinion is subject to certain conditions, compliance with such conditions must be demonstrated in order that the Ethics Committee may issue its final opinion.

6.8. If the Ethics Committee issues a negative opinion, the researcher or member of the ICS community who instigated the request has the right to be heard, so as to start a new application.

6.8. Within the scope of its objectives, in particular that which arises from a reading of paragraph 2.2, the Ethics Committee may make recommendations to other ICS bodies with a view, for example, to changing practices and/or devising regulations which safeguard the principles outlined in the ICS Ethics Charter.

7. *Refusal and incompatibility:*

7.1. The Ethics Committee shall perform its duties in the public interest, acting in an independent, impartial and objective manner. It may refuse to intervene in a situation which, in its opinion, goes against these principles.

7.2. The Ethics Committee of the ICS may intervene in all issues involving ethical problems in academic research practice, but it may also refuse to give an opinion on matters which it judges to be outside the scope of its responsibilities, giving the reasons for such refusal.

7.3. Members of the Ethics Committee who have a personal interest in cases being examined shall recuse themselves from the assessment of such cases.

8. Confidentiality

Members of the Ethics Committee are forbidden from disseminating information relating to requests for opinions or from making any communication in relation to such requests, nor may they use such information to their own advantage. This obligation shall persist even after the completion of their mandates.

9. Archive

Cases examined by the Ethics Committee will be filed for a legal period of ten years.

10. Entry into force.

The present Regulations of the Ethics Committee of the ICS enter into force on the day they are approved by the Academic Research Board.