

UNASHAMEDLY RESEARCH ETHICS

PROF S VAN
ANTWERPEN
2020



Define tomorrow.

UNISA



WHAT IS RESEARCH ETHICS?

- Research that involves **human subjects** or **participants** raises **unique** and **complex ethical, legal, social and political issues**.
- There are **three objectives** in research ethics.
 1. To **protect** human participants.
 2. To **ensure** that research is conducted in a way that serves interests of individuals, groups and/or society as a whole.
 3. To **examine** specific research activities and projects for their ethical soundness, looking at issues such as the management of risk, protection of confidentiality and the process of informed consent.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH ETHICS

- Increased importance over time – Nuremberg, Belmont Report
- Issue of consent
- Reactive approach
- UNISA endorses the [Singapore Statement on Research Integrity](#)
- principles and professional responsibilities across disciplines
- UNISA Policy on Academic Integrity (2017)
- UNISA Policy on Research Ethics (2016)

Academic integrity can be defined as the meaningful and concerted effort to ensure concern for human dignity, honesty, trust, fairness, truthfulness, accuracy, respect and responsibility in teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

Unisa Policy on Academic Integrity (2017)

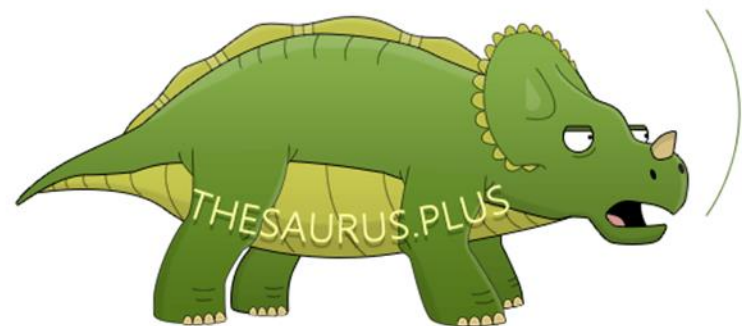
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



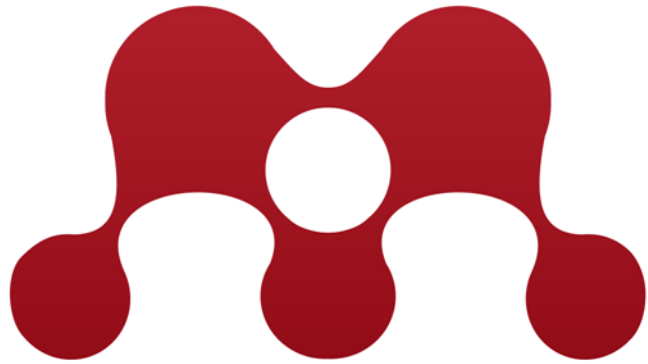
“Zombie” qualifications



synonyms for falsification:
misrepresentation, falsehood, forgery, fabrication,
distortion, lie, untruth, fib, deception, invention



YOU ARE NOT ALONE ...



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Unisa Policy on Research Ethics (2016)

Unisa Policy on Academic Integrity (2017)

APPLYING FOR ETHICS CLEARANCE



WHY IS ETHICS CLEARANCE IMPORTANT?

- Legal protection – staff, students and UNISA
- Scholarship
- Risk mitigation
- Ethical conduct
- Unintended negative consequences
- Rigorous scientific research
- Funding
- Applications – Conferences/Bursaries/Scholarships
- Journal submissions

WHEN DO I APPLY FOR ETHICS CLEARANCE?

Proposal accepted



Chapter 1



Supervisor's
discretion



Before
data
collection



2020



The role of the supervisor

My thesis is written in



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Your first point of contact is always the **supervisor/s**
Discuss your ethics application with her/him once
you have completed the proposal module

WHAT TYPE OF RESEARCH AM I DOING?

Important FORMS

- 1. Primary research:** Involves human participants (qualitative or quantitative) – FORM 1
- 2. Secondary research:** No human participants – FORM 2
- 3. Conceptual research:** Literature review, conceptual studies, theories, trends – FORM 3

APPLYING FOR ETHICS CLEARANCE

- Refer to pamphlet:

How to apply for ethics clearance?



```
graph TD; A[APPLICATION] --> B[REVIEW]; B --> C[ACCEPTED]; B --> D[REJECTED]; B --> E[REFERRED BACK];
```

APPLICATION

REVIEW

ACCEPTED

REJECTED

**REFERRED
BACK**

TAKE NOTE:

Ethics clearance can't be granted retrospectively

SOME ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

- Informed consent
- The role of gatekeepers
- Unequal relationships
- Conflict of interest
- Discomfort to participants
- Sensitive topics
- Legal requirements - POPI Act

SOME (MORE) ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

- Identification of participants
- Data collection methods
- Confidentiality
- Data storage and protection of information

CONSIDERING RISKS

There are always risks!

Category 1 Negligible

No or indirect human participant involvement.

Examples:

Research that involves non-invasive procedures. No or indirect involvement of participants e.g. statistical analysis and information in the public domain.

Category 2 Low risk

Direct human participant involvement. Potential for minor discomfort or inconvenience.

Examples:

Use of questionnaires/surveys/qualitative research methods

Category 3 Medium risk

Direct human participant involvement. Research that poses a risk above the everyday norm, including physical, psychological and social risks.

Category 4 High risk

Direct human participant involvement. A real or foreseeable risk of harm including physical, psychological and social risk which may lead to a serious adverse event if not managed responsibly.

YOU ARE THE BEGINNING OF YOUR JOURNEY...

While always keeping research ethics and academic integrity issues in mind in all scholarly activities –
you will only apply for ethics clearance for your study at a later stage

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Information sheet – survey and qualitative research
- Template for gatekeeper's letter
- Template for letters of confidentiality
- Consent template

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS



Information sheet:
survey and
qualitative research

Non-Unisa researchers – please do not use the Unisa logo

TEMPLATE DOCUMENT

*(CHANGE AS REQUIRED & ADHERE TO UNISA BRAND GUIDELINES
FOR COVER PAGE TO ONLINE SURVEY)*

Ethical clearance #:

Research permission #:

COVER LETTER TO AN ONLINE ANONOMOUS WEB-BASED SURVEY

Dear Prospective participant,

You are invited to participate in a survey conducted by <insert principal researcher name> under the supervision of <insert supervisor's name>, a <insert supervisor's position, e.g. lecturer/senior lecturer/professor, etc.> in the Department of <insert department name> towards a <insert degree title, e.g. Grad Dip, BSc (Honours), MA, etc.> at the University of South Africa.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Template for
gatekeeper's
letter

TEMPLATE 1

Request for permission from organisations and stakeholders

General requirements

- Formal letter (not only email - attach letter to the email)
- Email and letter addressed to a specific person and/or position (eg. Director)
- Letter signed by researcher/applicant

Dear

My name is and I am currently enrolled for a in the
Department (Student number:) at the University of South Africa.

The topic for my research study is and entails The purpose of

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS



Template for
letters of
confidentiality

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (STATISTICIAN)

I, _____ the
undersigned

of _____ of UNISA department/institute/bureau agree to assist the

College of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee
(CREC) in the assessment of research proposals and projects as part of the ethical
clearance process.

I will, in the course of my duties as aforementioned, come into possession of
certain confidential information.

This will certify that, in the review of all applications/proposals submitted to the CREC:

1. In so far as there is a moral case for doing so, I will treat all information
contained in the applications/proposals, research projects, electronic
communication and committee discussions in the strictest of confidence and
will not reveal that information to any third party (with the exception of members

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Consent template

The below template should be used as a consent form for participant....change wording and insert your own details as appropriate (hi-lighted sections)

COVER LETTER | QUESTIONNAIRE – **Insert your topic**

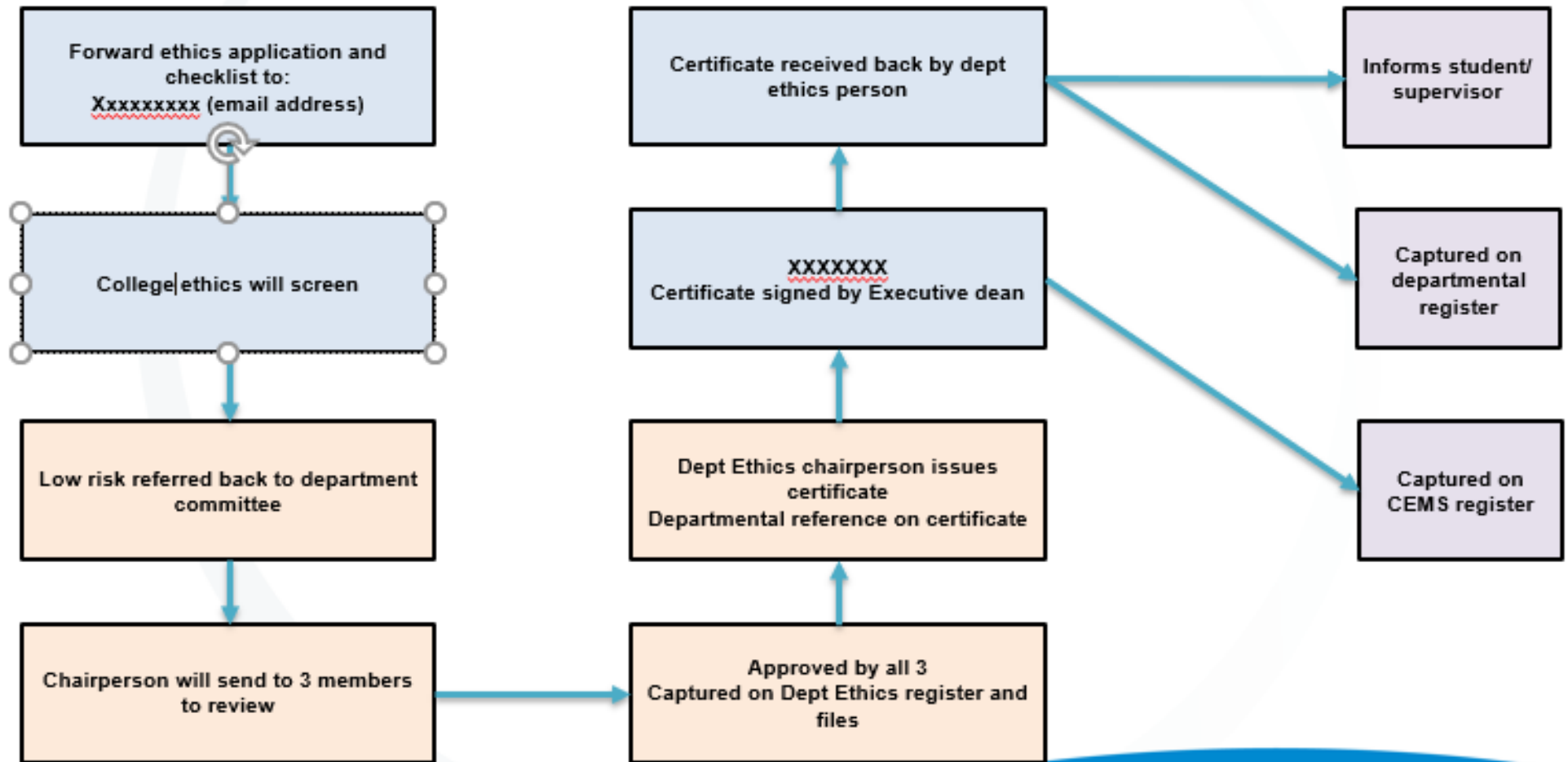
Dear Prospective participant,

You are invited to participate in a survey conducted by **Johan Steyn** under the supervision of **Nisha Sewdass**, a professor in the Department of Business Management towards a Masters' Degree at the University of South Africa.

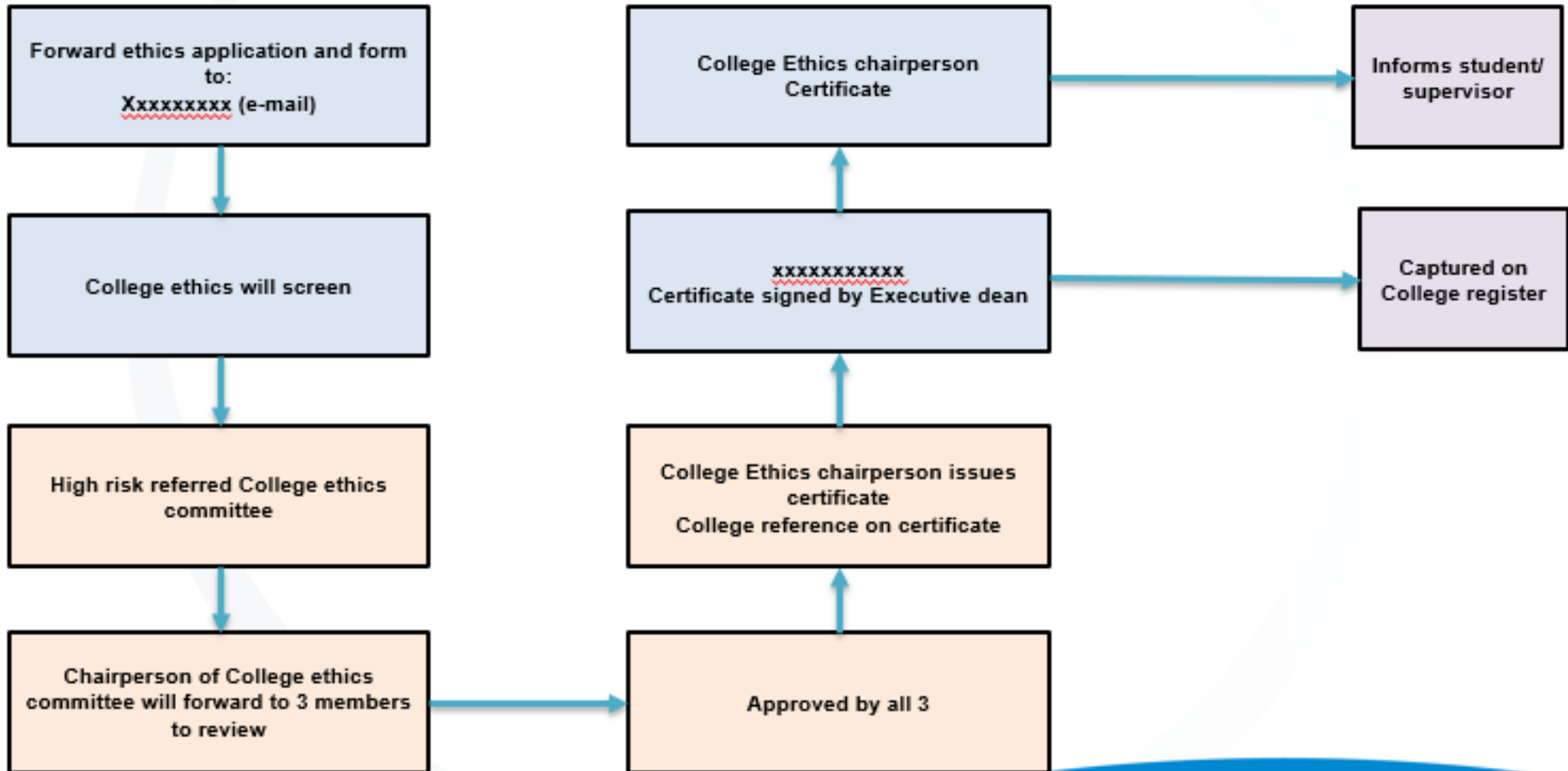
The questionnaire you have received has been designed to **study the role that strategy workshops play in strategy formulation for financial institutions**. You were selected to participate in this survey because **you form part of the senior leadership team at the Waltloo branch of ABSA / Barclays Waltloo Campus**.

By completing this questionnaire, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes, including dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and conference

DEPARTMENTAL ETHICS COMMITTEE (LOW RISK)



DEPARTMENTAL ETHICS COMMITTEE (HIGH RISK)





THANK YOU

Define tomorrow.

UNISA



college of
graduate studies