



MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC & ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (ISERC)

Directorate email: iserc-secretariat@mmarau.ac.ke

1.0 Introduction and Background

The Maasai Mara University Science and Ethics Research Committee (MMU-SERC) is a standing committee of the University Senate, established in accordance with the Science, Technology, and Innovation Act, 2013 and the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) guidelines. Our mandate is to ensure that all research conducted by staff and students of Maasai Mara University, as well as external researchers collaborating with the University, meets the highest international standards of scientific rigor and ethical conduct.

This Service Charter outlines our commitment to our clients, detailing the services we provide, our service standards, and the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders. It serves as a guide for our operations and a benchmark for our performance.

2.0 Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Our Vision:

To be a centre of excellence for ethical review, fostering innovative and impactful research that respects the dignity and rights of all participants.

Our Mission:

To facilitate and promote high-quality, ethical research by providing timely, rigorous, and transparent ethical review and oversight, thereby safeguarding the welfare of research participants, the integrity of researchers, and the reputation of Maasai Mara University.

Our Core Values:

Integrity: We conduct our reviews with honesty, impartiality, and the highest ethical standards.

Excellence: We are committed to a thorough, rigorous, and scientifically sound review process.

Respect: We treat all researchers, research participants, and committee members with dignity, fairness, and cultural sensitivity.

Transparency: Our processes, fees, and decisions are clear and communicated openly.

Efficiency: We strive to provide timely and responsive services without compromising on quality.

Confidentiality: We protect the confidentiality of all research proposals and related information.

3.0 Our Clients

Our services are tailored to:

- * Maasai Mara University Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students.
- * Maasai Mara University Academic Staff and Researchers.
- * Non-Teaching Staff engaged in research.
- * External Researchers collaborating with Maasai Mara University or collecting data within the University.
- * Research Partners and Sponsors.

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5.0 Our Services

The MMaraU-SERC provides the following core services:

1. ***Ethical Review:*** Conducting initial scientific and ethical review of research proposals and protocols.
2. ***Expedited Review:*** Providing timely review for proposals that meet the criteria for minimal risk.
3. ***Continuing Review:*** Monitoring approved research through annual progress reports and final reports.
4. ***Amendment Review:*** Reviewing and approving proposed changes to previously approved protocols.

5. ***Adverse Event Monitoring:*** Reviewing and providing guidance on reporting of any serious adverse events related to approved research.
6. ***Guidance and Consultation:*** Offering pre-submission consultations and guidance on ethical issues and application procedures.
7. ***Certification:*** Issuing ethical approval certificates for research that meets the required standards.

6.0 Service Standards and Turnaround Times

We are committed to the following service delivery standards:

| Service | Our Commitment (Turnaround Time) |

| ***Acknowledgment of Application*** | Within 3 working days of submission. |

| ***Administrative Check (Completeness)*** | Completed within 5 working days. Applicants will be notified of any deficiencies. |

| ***Expedited Review*** | A decision will be communicated within ***14 working days*** from the date of a complete submission. |

| ***Full Committee Review*** | A decision will be communicated within ***30 working days*** from the deadline of a scheduled committee meeting. |

| ***Response to Post-Review Queries*** | Feedback on re-submissions or responses to queries provided within ***10 working days***. |

| ***Issuance of Approval Certificate*** | Within 5 working days after final approval and payment of any requisite fees. |

| ***Amendment Review*** | A decision communicated within ***15 working days*** of receiving a complete request. |

| ***Pre-submission Consultation*** | An appointment will be scheduled within 5 working days of the request. |

Note: These timelines may be extended for complex protocols or if the Committee requires additional information from the researcher.

6.0 Client Rights and Responsibilities*

As our client, you have the right to:

- * Be treated with courtesy, fairness, and respect.
- * Receive clear, accurate, and timely information.

- * A confidential and objective review of your proposal.
- * Receive a written communication detailing the Committee's decision.
- * Request clarification on the Committee's decision or feedback.
- * Appeal a Committee decision through a defined process.

As our client, you are responsible for:

- * Submitting a complete, truthful, and accurate application form.
- * Designing a scientifically sound and ethically robust research proposal.
- * Submitting your proposal well in advance of your intended start date.
- * Responding promptly and comprehensively to the Committee's queries.
- * Conducting the research strictly in accordance with the approved protocol.
- * Reporting any proposed amendments, serious adverse events, or protocol deviations promptly.
- * Submitting annual progress reports and a final report upon study completion.
- * Paying the prescribed review fees (where applicable) in a timely manner.

7.0 Fees and Charges

The MMaraU-SERC charges modest fees to support its administrative operations. The fee structure is reviewed annually and is available on the University website or from the SERC Secretariat. Fee waivers or reductions may be considered for student projects with no external funding, subject to approval by the Committee Chairperson.

8.0 Feedback, Complaints, and Appeals

We value your feedback to help us improve our services.

- * ***Feedback & Suggestions:*** Can be submitted via email to [serc@mmarau.ac.ke] or through a feedback form available at the Secretariat.
- * ***Complaints:*** Regarding service delivery should be submitted in writing to the SERC Secretary within 14 days of the incident.
- * ***Appeals:*** If you disagree with the Committee's decision, you may appeal in writing to the SERC Chairperson within 21 days of receiving the decision, stating the grounds for your appeal.

All feedback and complaints will be handled confidentially and a response provided within 14 working days.

9.0 ISERC Committee Members & Their Roles

1. Dr. Kamundia Waweru - Chair
2. Dr. Aloys Osano - Secretary
3. Dr. Samson Mabwoga – Committee Member
4. Dr. Sr. Alice Sambu – Committee Member
5. Dr. Karani Onyiko – Committee Member
6. Dr. George Rukaria – Committee Member
7. Dr. Consolata Shinali – Committee Member
8. Ms. Jacqueline Naulikha – Committee Member
9. Ms. Esther Imbamba – Committee Member
10. Mr. Alfred Nyabochwa – Legal Person
11. Mr. Daniel Kipilosh – Community Lay Person
12. Dr. Ing Jared Ombiro – Committee Member
13. Dr. Paul Wanjala – Committee Member
14. Dr. Charity Konana – Committee Member
15. Dr. Geoffrey Mwendwa – Committee Member
16. Ms. Cecily Murage – Committee Member
17. Mr. Aden Esokomi – Committee Member
18. Ms. Nila Akinyi – Committee Member
19. Ms. Celestine Ogutu – External Technical Person
20. Dr. Bakari Chaka – Secretariat
21. Ms. Janet Kaelo - Secretariat

10.0 Contact Information

The Secretary,

Maasai Mara University Science and Ethics Research Committee (MMU-SERC)

Maasai Mara University

P.O. Box 861 - 20500,

Narok, KENYA.

Physical Location: [Insert Building Name and Room Number, e.g., School of Science and Informatics Building, Room 101]

Email: [iserc@mmarau.ac.ke]

Telephone: [e.g., +254 (0)20 234 5678]

Website: [<https://www.mmarau.ac.ke/serc>](<https://www.mmarau.ac.ke/iserc>) (This would be a link to the ISERC page)