From: Jabatan Komunikasi Korporat
To: UUM - All Staff; UUM - All Students
Subject: OYAGSB POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS NOW REQUIRED TO OBTAIN ETHICS CLEARANCE BEFORE DATA COLLECTION
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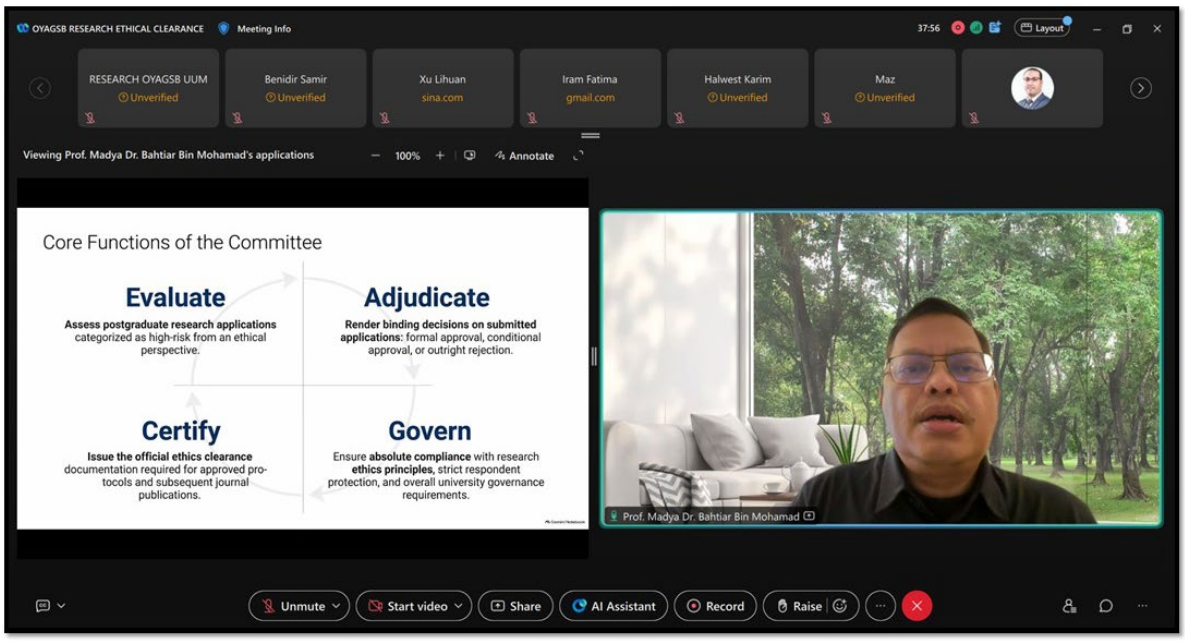
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News and photos by: Saharah Saad

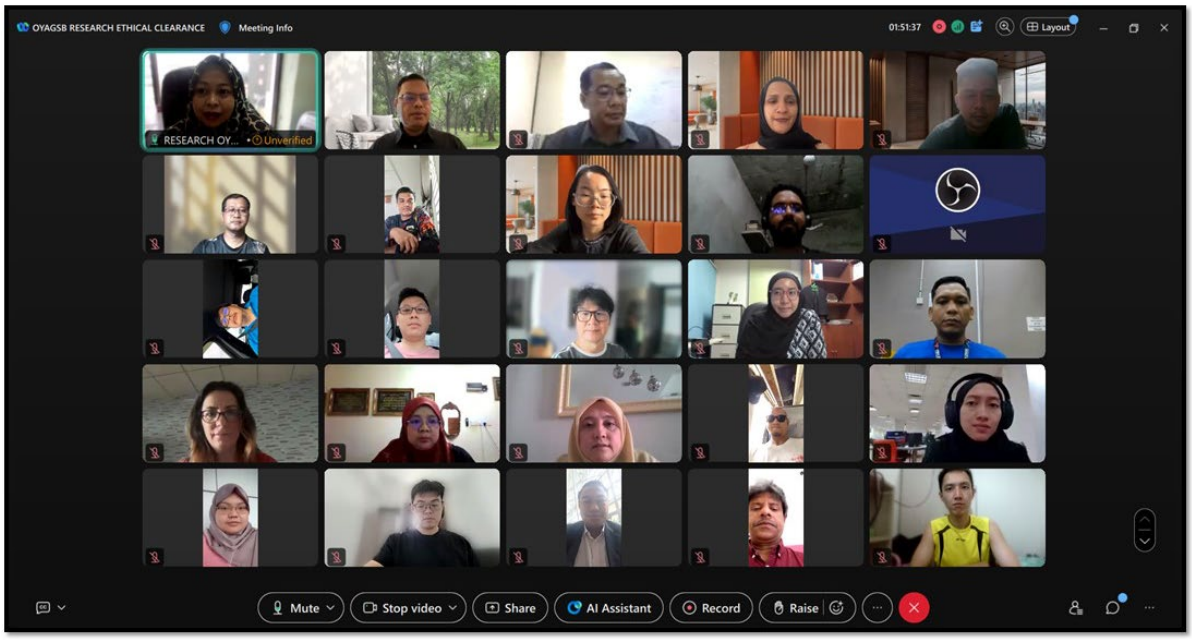
OYAGSB POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS NOW REQUIRED TO OBTAIN ETHICS CLEARANCE BEFORE DATA COLLECTION



UUM ONLINE: Postgraduate students at Universiti Utara Malaysia's Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business (OYAGSB) are now required to obtain ethics committee clearance before commencing data collection, following the introduction of a new requirement from Semester 261.

The requirement was outlined during an online briefing attended by 102 participants, reflecting strong interest among OYAGSB postgraduate students in understanding the ethics clearance process and its implications for their research activities.

The requirement applies to students enrolled in the PhD, DBA, Doctor of Management and Master by Research programmes. The briefing was conducted by OYAGSB Deputy Dean (Research, Innovation and Corporate Relations), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bahtiar bin Mohamad, who explained the ethics clearance process, documentation requirements and ethical responsibilities involved in postgraduate research.

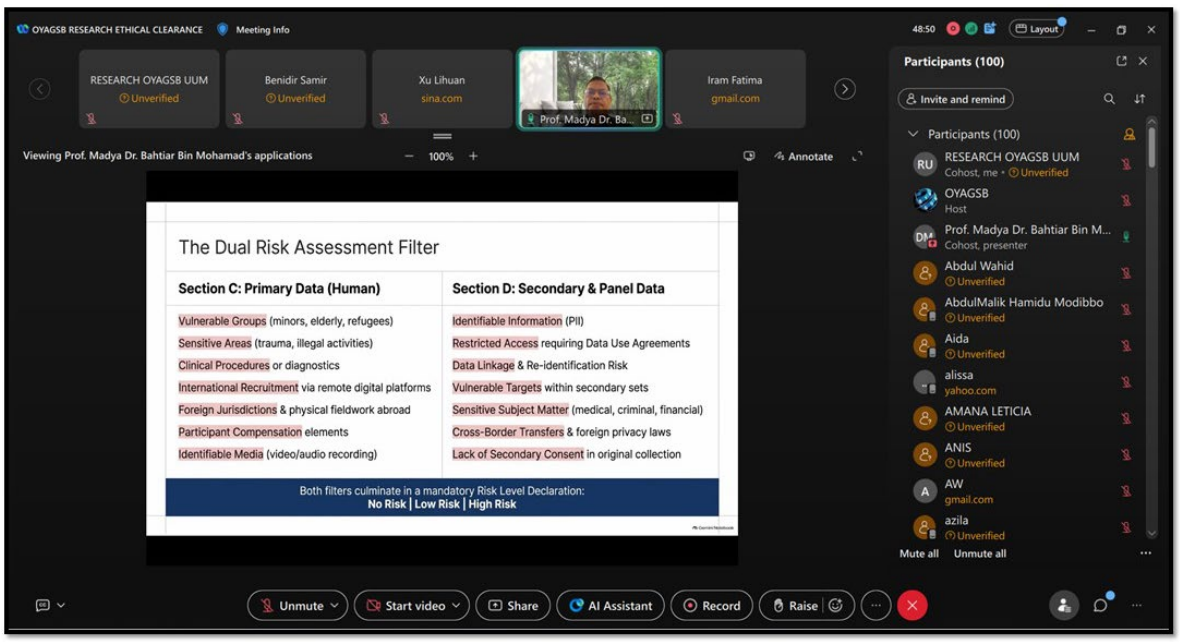


Students who had already commenced or completed data collection before the requirement took effect are exempt from the new requirement. Meanwhile, students who defended their research proposals before Semester 261 but have not yet commenced data collection are encouraged, but not required, to obtain ethics clearance.

The ethics review process is overseen by the Postgraduate Research Ethics Committee (JKEP), which assesses research protocols based on their potential ethical risks. Particular attention is given to studies involving vulnerable populations, sensitive research topics or methodologies, identifiable information and other circumstances that may require additional safeguards.

Depending on the level and nature of the ethical risks identified, applications may be approved, approved with conditions, or returned to the researcher for revision.

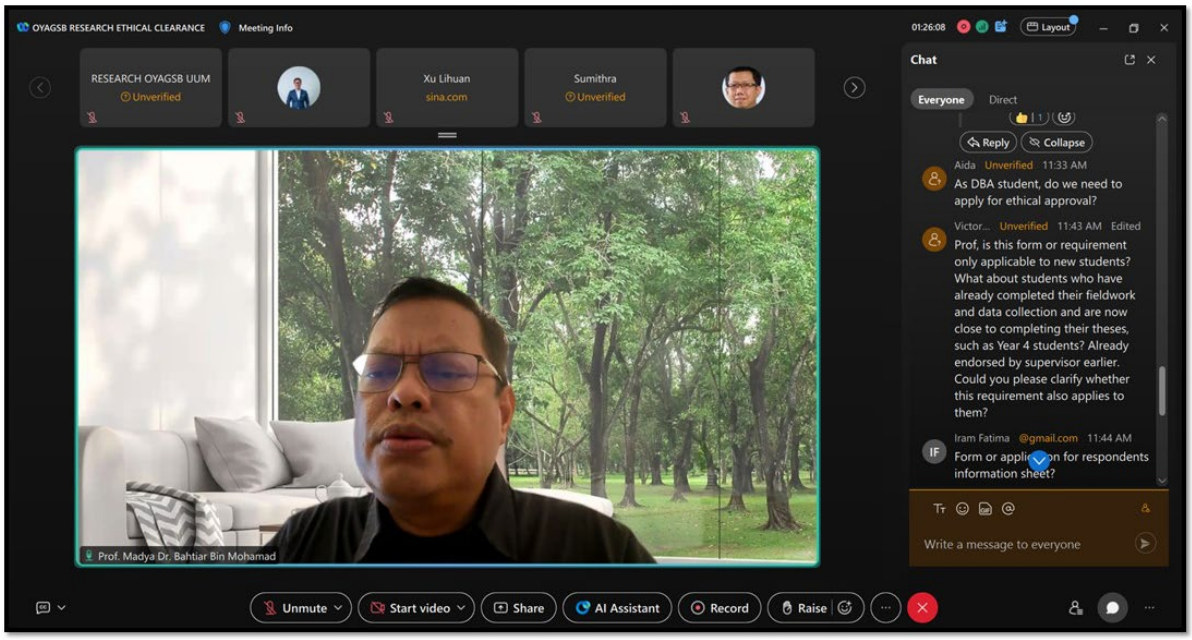
The briefing emphasised that students are responsible for identifying and declaring potential risks as part of their ethics applications. These may include research involving vulnerable groups, sensitive topics, identifiable or restricted datasets, audio or video recordings, as well as international or cross-border fieldwork.



Students using secondary or panel data must also declare all relevant data sources, including information obtained from publicly available sources. Where datasets contain identifiable or restricted information, or where there is a risk of re-identifying individuals, additional permissions or data-use agreements may be required.

Cross-border research also requires careful consideration. Students conducting research involving participants or data outside Malaysia must declare such activities, including the remote recruitment of foreign participants, overseas fieldwork and the transfer of research data across national borders. Such research may entail additional requirements relating to informed consent, foreign laws and regulations, privacy protection and research authorisation.

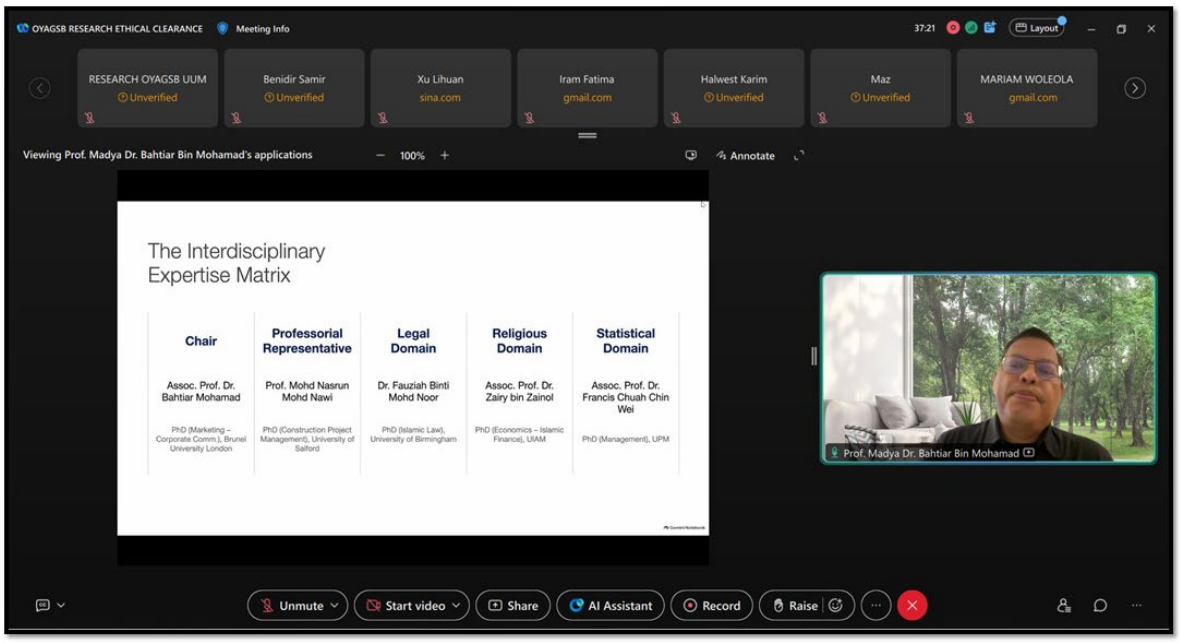
For research involving human participants, students are required to uphold key ethical principles, including informed consent, voluntary participation and confidentiality. Participants must be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.



Researchers must avoid unnecessary disclosure of participants' names or other identifying information in research reports. Appropriate data-management safeguards, including encrypted storage, secure institutional systems and anonymisation, should be implemented, particularly when handling sensitive information.

A complete ethics application must include the Participant Information Sheet, informed consent form, questionnaire or interview protocol, relevant authorisation letters and other supporting documents, where applicable. The research objectives stated in the ethics application must also be consistent with those set out in the approved research proposal.

Before submitting an ethics application, students are required to prepare their questionnaire, research protocol and risk assessment and obtain their supervisor's review and endorsement. The completed application is then submitted to the ethics secretariat for multidisciplinary review, while research involving higher levels of ethical risk may be referred to the committee for further consideration.



The OYAGSB Postgraduate Research Ethics Review Form is available for download from the OYAGSB website. Completed applications and supporting documents should be submitted to oyagsb_viva@uum.edu.my.

Supervisors are encouraged to discuss potential ethical risks with their supervisees at an early stage and ensure that all required documents are complete before submission.

Importantly, ethics clearance is not limited to the initial application stage but continues throughout the research process. Significant changes made after approval, including changes to the research methodology, sampling frame, respondent composition or data collection procedures, may require the study to be resubmitted for ethics review.

The briefing concluded with a reminder that students and supervisors share responsibility for ensuring that postgraduate research is conducted with integrity, accountability and respect for research participants.

OYAGSB will continue to provide updates and refine its ethics review procedures, where necessary, to support the effective implementation of the new requirement.





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