

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

COMISSIÓ DE BIOÈTICA

Statement from the CBUB regarding student participation in research projects

In relation to the participation of students from the University of Barcelona in research projects led by professors and researchers of this university, the CBUB would like to convey to the university community the following considerations.

The participation of students in research projects can be approached in different ways, depending on the purpose of their involvement.

The **first scenario** includes research projects where students are recruited in a similar manner to external individuals, using common methods such as advertisements in media outlets, bulletin boards in various university centers, departments, or similar platforms. In these cases, student participation as experimental subjects is purely **passive**, and the compensation they receive should be the same as any other volunteer who is not part of the university community. In this first scenario, therefore, the student does not achieve any (or only little) added education as a result of his or her participation in a research project and, as a result, will not receive any kind of academic compensation.

The **second scenario** refers to cases in which student participation in research projects adds significant educational value, and their involvement can be considered **active**. This is a way for students to learn about research projects, including their purpose, design, methodology, subject recruitment, analysis, and evaluation of results, all under the effective guidance of the project's principal investigator. The training we refer to here should also include raising students' awareness and educating them on ethical aspects related to research and compliance with the corresponding ethical protocols. In this way, students can familiarize themselves with the research processes in their dual roles as voluntary subjects and future researchers. Naturally, this training should be controllable, evaluable, and quantifiable. The specific activities that students will undertake in each research project they participate in, as well as their obligations regarding time commitment and adherence to ethical principles in research, must be clearly specified. Students should have access to this information before joining the project. It is the responsibility of the departments to develop and establish the specific procedure to effectively monitor, evaluate, and quantify the **active** participation of students in research projects.

Furthermore, departments that offer students the opportunity for **active** participation in research projects must also provide alternative mechanisms for students who do not wish to participate in such projects. These alternative mechanisms can include commenting on completed experiments, conducting literature or documentary research, data processing work, participation as collaborators or observers in experimental studies, and other similar activities. These projects should have direct educational value for students, and they should engage in some form of study or analysis that will be appropriately assessed academically, as determined by each department.

Finally, researchers should take into account the [CBUB statement](#) on possible ethical issues in scientific publications approved by this Committee.