

Human Research Ethics Approval Policy

Purpose The purpose of this document is to set out the College's policy on approval of human research ethics conducted by College staff.

Applicability This policy applies to all College full-time, part-time and casual staff.

Approach The College's adheres to the ethical principles and principles of research integrity as set out in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (National Statement) and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (Code).

Human research for which the College is responsible is designed, reviewed, approved, authorised, conducted and monitored in accordance with the National Statement and Code, and the College takes into account consumer and community perspectives, with reference, where relevant, to the National Health and Medical Research Council's *Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research*.

Timing of approval Where ethics review is required, approval must be obtained prior to the commencement of research. Retrospective ethics approval of research is not supported.

Responsibilities of the Research and Scholarship Committee The Research and Scholarship Committee assess applications for human research ethics approval. Members of the Research and Scholarship Committee must be familiar with the National Statement and have an understanding of:

- a) The ethical issues that can arise in the research under review;
 - b) Issues associated with the collection, use and management of data and information in research (see Chapter 3.1, Element 4 of the National Statement); and
 - c) The privacy guidelines that may apply to the research under review, such as legislation relating to guardianship or use of human biospecimens.
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Application procedure An application for human research ethics approval must be generated using the form available at: [Applications - NHMRC Portal \(hrea.gov.au\)](http://nhmrc.gov.au)

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Questions regarding the completion of the application can be directed to the Academic Secretary.

A completed application is submitted to the Academic Secretary as secretary to the Research and Scholarship Committee.

The Research and Scholarship Committee assesses the application for its level of risk in accordance with the guidance on risk provided in Chapter 2.1 of the National Statement.

If a research project is assessed as having more than low risk, the Research and Scholarship Committee will direct that the application be reviewed by an external Human Research Ethics Committee.

The College will recognise and reward academic contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning through awards, honours and professional development opportunities.

Decisions of the Research and Scholarship Committee must be reported to the Academic Board and recorded in a register by the Academic Secretary and must include clear criteria for referring review to a Human Research Ethics Committee where risk that is greater than low risk is identified during their review.

Grant of exemption

Some research may be eligible for exemption from ethics review which can be granted by the Research and Scholarship Committee.

The Research and Scholarship Committee must consider the National Statement's Guidance provided in Chapter 2.1 on risk and in Chapter 3.1, Element 4 on identifiability of information, data management, secondary use of information and sharing of data and information in making this decision.

Research that involves the use of personal information without consent cannot be granted an exemption from ethics review.

Research that may be eligible for exemption from ethics review is research that carries a lower risk to participants or the community and satisfies one or more of the conditions in a)–d) below:

- a) the research involves the use of collections of information or data from which all personal identifiers have been removed prior to being received by the researchers and where researchers explicitly agree:
 - i) not to attempt to re-identify those with whom the information or data is associated;

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- ii) to take all reasonable steps to prevent re-identification of the information or data for unauthorised purposes or access to the information or data by those who are not authorised; and
 - iii) that any sharing of any research data during or after the project will not create any additional risks of re-identification of the information or data;
- b) the research is restricted to surveys and observation of public behaviour using information that was or will be collected and recorded without personal identifiers and is highly unlikely to cause distress to anyone associated with the information or the outcomes of the research;
 - c) is conducted as part of an educational training program in which the research activity is for training purposes only and where any outcomes or documentation are for program use only; and/or
 - d) the research uses only information that is publicly available through a mechanism set out by legislation or regulation and that is protected by law, such as mandatory reporting information, information obtained from registries of births and deaths, coronial investigations or reports of the Australian Bureau of Statistics
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Use of Generative AI

No personal identifiers may be entered into a Generative AI platform to assist in preparing an application, conducting research or preparing a report or other output.

Related policies

[Privacy Policy](#)

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