

Appendix T

**University of Waikato
Human Research Ethics Committee Procedures, 1994**

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

PROCEDURES

(Revised September 1994)

1. Identification of human research activities.

- 1.1. In the context of this document, "human research" covers:
 - 1.1.1. Any activity in which any individual person or groups of people become the subject of academic inquiry, whether by observation, questioning, participation in an experiment or by other means, for example, the obtaining of personal information about a person through third parties.
 - 1.1.2. Any teaching which involves the participation of humans for the demonstration of procedures or phenomena as outlined in section 1.1.1.
- 1.2. Human research includes any investigation as defined in 1.1 undertaken by a member of staff or by a student as part of a programme of study.
- 1.3. The University requires staff and students to pay particular attention to the following primary ethical principles, which are further explained in Appendix 1:
 - 1.3.1. The value of the research should outweigh any human costs involved.
 - 1.3.2. All participants should give their free, informed consent .
 - 1.3.3. Privacy and confidentiality should be respected.
 - 1.3.4. Risk should be minimised.
 - 1.3.5. Deception should be minimised.
 - 1.3.6. Research goals and methods should be socially and culturally sensitive.
 - 1.3.7. Exploitation of researcher-participation relationships should be prevented.
 - 1.3.8. Property rights should be respected.
 - 1.3.9. Any conflict of interest should be declared.
- 1.4. It is the responsibility of the person in overall charge of a proposal ("the researcher") to identify an activity as a human research project ("the project") and to identify any ethical issues that may arise during the course of the research (see 4.1.1. below).
- 1.5. It is the responsibility of the researcher to make an application for approval of the project to the Department/School Human Research Ethics Committee (a suggested format is attached as Appendix 3).
- 1.6. A supervisor of a student research project has the same responsibilities as if he or she were the researcher.

2. Human Research Ethics Committees

2.1 At University level.

2.1.1 The University Human Research Ethics Committee ("the Committee") has overall responsibility for the promotion, review and monitoring of ethical practice in all human research carried out by staff or students of the University, including visitors who are using university facilities.

2.2. At school level.

2.2.1. Each school shall set up a human research ethics committee, which may be that school's research committee.

2.2.2. School committees shall include the Dean or his/her nominee and sufficient other members with experience of human research.

2.2.3. School committees shall have responsibility for the approval of human research activities within the school.

2.2.4. School committees shall keep written records in a standard format (attached).

2.2.5. School committees *may* choose to delegate responsibility to departmental committees.

2.3 At department (this term includes research centres) level.

2.3.1. Departmental committees shall include the chairperson or his/her nominee and at least two other people with experience of human research and who are members of the relevant professional society, if any.

2.3.2. Departmental committees shall keep written records in a standard format (see Appendix 2).

2.3.3. Departments in which very little human research is conducted may wish to refer all proposals to school committees for approval, but proposals shall still have the chairperson's approval.

3. Approval procedures.

3.1 No project requiring approval by a human research ethics committee shall commence until it has received ethical approval.

3.1.1. Should ethical issues relating to human research arise during the course of a project that were not envisaged earlier, the researcher shall apply for approval to the appropriate committee and work on the project shall not recommence until approval has been granted.

3.2 School or departmental committees shall be responsible for the approval of human research ethics activities and for ensuring that activities comply with the University's ethical principles (attached as appendix 1) and the established codes of ethics of the discipline.

- 3.3 The University Human Research Ethics Committee will have a consultative and advisory role on ethical issues, and it will be available to review any proposal which involves sensitive issues, which schools are recommended to bring forward to it, particularly if the research is to be undertaken off-campus.
- 3.4 The Committee will from time to time monitor the procedures within the schools.
- 3.5 Ethical approval awarded to University researchers by an external organisation may be for circumstances that are different from those operating at the University and the School Ethics Committees must have the opportunity to approve the arrangements for the University. These applications could be made in summary form and the basis of the ethical approval already obtained would be taken into account in the University's process.

4. Appeal procedures.

A researcher whose proposal has been turned down by a human research ethics committee, or which has been approved subject to conditions which the researcher considers to be unreasonable, may appeal from departmental to school committee and from school committee to University Committee.

5. Complaints and disputes procedures.

- 5.1. Disputes and complaints by individuals about the conduct of a project, including changes in the goal, methodology or personnel that have ethical implications, shall be directed to the University Committee.
 - 5.1.1. Complaints received by departments or schools shall be passed on to the Committee.
- 5.2 The University Committee in appropriate cases may co-opt temporary members such as the University Mediator or a representative of a professional society to assist it in dealing with a complaint or dispute.
- 5.3 The University Committee may require that work on a project cease until the complaint or dispute has been resolved.
- 5.4. The University Committee shall report its decisions on complaints and disputes to the Vice Chancellor, the department concerned, and the complainant.

Alastair S Gunn, Convenor

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

The University requires staff to pay particular attention to the following nine primary principles when conducting or supervising research projects involving human participants. These principles are in addition to the normal requirements placed on researchers, such as requirements to acknowledge sources of ideas and information, and not to knowingly falsify or distort research findings.

1. The value of the research should outweigh any human costs involved.
2. The informed consent of participants should be obtained, without coercion.
3. Privacy and confidentiality should be respected.
4. Risk should be minimised.
5. Deception should be minimised.
6. Research goals and methods should be socially and culturally sensitive.
7. Exploitation of researcher-participant relationships should be prevented.
8. Property rights should be respected.
9. Any conflict of interest should be declared.

1. Value of Research

Every project should have clear research or teaching goals stated in a form appropriate to the discipline concerned. The researcher should be able to justify to his or her peers the goals and methodology of the research in terms of a weighing of its reasonably anticipated benefits against any foreseeable costs to the participants.

Research involving human participants must be conducted or supervised by appropriately qualified personnel, and, as a minimum, must comply with the moral and scientific standards of any relevant professional body.

2. Informed Consent

The principle of informed consent requires that, where practicable, people should not be involved in research without understanding and freely agreeing to such involvement. Nevertheless, it is not always possible to obtain consent in the forms considered standard in psychological or biomedical research. "Standard form" criteria of informed consent may even be inappropriate where research participants have a different philosophical world view and/or legal tradition. Where the nature of the research is constantly changing and developing, specific prior consent may also be difficult or even impossible to obtain. The researcher, however, should always be able to justify the research on the basis of an explicitly formulated principle of trust. Ideally, this principle should be capable of peer review and scrutiny by an appropriate professional body.

The rule of thumb should be that where research participants are being requested to fill out questionnaires that might identify them, answer questions in a structured interview, undergo formal tests, or be subjected to formal observation and recording procedures, the process of obtaining informed consent should be equally formal. Where less formal research methods are involved, informed consent may either be deemed part of a more global consent or arrived at by some alternative means.

Where prior formal informed consent is considered mandatory, prospective participants should be made aware of the nature of the research, provided with all information relevant to their decision to participate, and be invited to take part. This information should be given in plain language appropriate to the participants. The researcher must recognise and respect the individual's right to decline to participate in, or to withdraw at any time from, the study. This includes withdrawal of information they have provided, at any time before completion of data collection.

Where prior formal informed consent is unworkable or inappropriate, alternatives should be considered. Particularly in social science research, it may be desirable instead to submit texts or transcripts of dialogue, interpretations of events or analyses of data, to participants for final approval. In other words, 'informed consent' can sometimes only be obtained after the event.

Participants should be informed of their rights to complain if they feel that their trust has been abused. This information should identify the body to whom any such complaints should be addressed.

Participants should also be informed of their right of access to any data that has been collected from/about them.

Research is not ethical if coercion of any sort, or inducement beyond reasonable compensation for participating, is used to gain participation.

Since much social science research involves collectivities, it is important that researchers recognise the complexities of relationships between individuals and collectivities. In some cases, cultural mores may make it appropriate for leaders of a collectivity to agree to participation on behalf of others. If any individuals wish to decline to participate in the research (in spite of consent given on behalf of the collectivity), their wishes must be respected, and the greatest care must be taken to prevent consequent retribution by the collectivity or others. On the other hand, in some situations the rights of the individual to participate may outweigh a collectivity's decision not to do so.

Where prospective participants are, by reason of age or infirmity, judged incapable of giving informed consent to their own participation this must be obtained from other appropriate persons who are their parents or who have legal responsibility for their welfare. Particular care must be taken in such cases to protect the interests of the participants. Researchers must take into account possible conflicts of interests between participants and those who consent to their involvement.

It is necessary that information and consent must be written in any case of manipulation of, or intervention in, physical or psychological states of participants.

3. Privacy and Confidentiality

Rights to privacy and confidentiality must be respected. Researchers must recognise the rights of participants, both individuals and collectivities, to require that information which they provide is kept confidential. The researcher has a duty to invite all participants to exercise this right. Identification of participants or informants in any research should not occur without their informed consent. The researcher must take any steps to ensure that identities or information acquired in the process of research are kept secure from interception or appropriation by unauthorised persons, or use for non-research purposes. This will often require coding of data and removal of names from questionnaires and other documents. Researchers are responsible also for the safekeeping and confidentiality of consent forms.

The information sheet provided to participants should state that individuals will not be identified in any publication/dissemination of the research findings without their explicit consent.

4. **Minimisation of Risk**

The researcher should endeavour to minimise any risks - physical, psychological, social or cultural - to individuals or collectivities arising from the research project. The researcher should make every attempt to identify and inform participants of potential risk prior to obtaining informed consent.

Risks include pain, stress, emotional distress, fatigue, embarrassment, cultural dissonance, and exploitation. Participants should be consulted to ascertain any risks which they may identify or concerns which they may have.

Where, during the course of the research, it become apparent to the researchers that the risk of harm is greater than had originally been envisaged, participants should be so informed, and the research should be re-evaluated in terms of the first of these principles.

5. **Limitation of Deception**

Deception of participants conflicts with the principle of informed consent, but in some areas of research it may be necessary to withhold information with regard to the purposes and/or procedures of the research. If this is the case, the researcher must (a) demonstrate to an Ethics Committee that such deception is necessary, and (b) ensure that participants are provided with a sufficient explanation of the true purposes of the research and reasons for the deception as soon as possible following participation.

Emphasis on the need for informed consent does not mean that covert research can never be approved. However, any research proposal involving covert procedures requires particularly careful consideration and strong justification.

6. **Social and Cultural Sensitivity**

Research procedures should be appropriate to the participants involved in the study. Adequate steps should be taken to respect the social and cultural sensitivities, and language preferences, of all participants. Where possible, researchers should consult qualified persons beforehand and establish contact with (sub)culturally different groups through culturally appropriate or recognised channels of access. They should also arrange appropriate procedures for disseminating findings back to the people or communities concerned.

7. **Exploitation of Relationships**

Researchers and participants must not exploit the relationship between researcher and participants. Exploitation includes seeking or obtaining goods, services, information or personal relationships that have no direct bearing on the stated research aims or data gathering. A researcher is responsible for preventing or terminating such exploitation.

Where students are the subject of a research project or experimental teaching, they may choose whether or not to participate, and that choice must not have any adverse consequences on their academic progress. Researchers should ensure that the students are not disadvantaged, academically or otherwise, in any way if the model is unsuccessful, and be certain that the research/experiment is in the best interests of the student(s).

Payments or other rewards to research subjects are not generally acceptable.

8. Respect for Property Rights

Processes of research and publication must not violate or infringe legal or culturally determined property rights. These may cover such things as land and goods, works of art and craft, spiritual treasures, information, and works of the intellect. Researchers should make every effort to ensure that their use of information does not exploit the people whom it concerns, and that participants experience a degree of reciprocity both during and after the research.

The researcher's actions with regard to respect for property rights should flow on from the recommendations suggested earlier for informed consent. In the process of obtaining such consent, by whatever means deemed appropriate, the researcher should endeavour to explain what published form the information may take. In the case of survey-based, observational or experimental data, and especially where individual behaviour or responses will be aggregated, this clarification should be possible at the time of first obtaining "standard form" informed consent. In the case of more "qualitative" research, especially where analyses and interpretations are emergent and individuals more easily identified, it may be necessary to show drafts of manuscripts and rough cuts of films or videos to the participants involved in order to gain their further permission and to sort out any difficulties in acknowledging ownership of knowledge.

9. Declaration of Conflict of Interests

Any sponsorship of a project must not compromise its research merit or ethical acceptability. Where the research is commissioned or sponsored, the nature of the commission or sponsorship should be declared both to participants and in any published findings. In general, University staff should not undertake research, the findings of which are excluded from the public domain.

THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HREC)

Recommended Format for Applications for Approval

Applications should be typewritten using the headings indicated below. Please ensure that you have read the University's Human Research Ethics Committee Procedures and Principles.

NAME OF APPLICANT(S)

DEPARTMENT

PROJECT STATUS (eg DPhil project, application to HRC, UWRC etc)

FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE PROJECT

NAME OF SUPERVISOR (if appropriate)

TITLE OF PROJECT

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Describe the project in non-technical language using the following headings:

- a. Justification (in terms of the relevance or importance of the knowledge gained)
- b. Objectives
- c. Procedure for recruiting participants and obtaining informed consent. Attach a copy of information and consent forms. (NB: Information and consent forms should be on separate sheets. Samples are attached).
- d. Procedures in which research participants will be involved.
- e. Procedures for handling information and materials produced in the course of the research.

Attach one copy of any detailed account of the project where available.

ETHICAL CONCERNS

Outline ethical concerns and proposed solutions under the following headings:

- a. Access to participants
- b. Informed consent
- c. Confidentiality
- d. Potential harm to participants
- e. Participants right to decline
- f. Arrangements for participants to receive information
- g. Use of the information
- h. Conflicts of interest
- i. Other ethical concerns relevant to the research

ETHICAL STATEMENT

The applicant(s) should attach a statement on the basic ethical principles which will guide them in their research and to which they formally commit themselves. These may include codes of conduct or generally recognised statements from within a discipline or professional association. This statement should specify which principles of the codes of ethics apply to the research, and detail how the applicant(s) intend to follow, abide by, or apply them in the application of the research.

LEGAL ISSUES

Outline legal issues which may arise in the course of this research under the following headings:

- a. Copyright
- b. Ownership of data or materials produced
- c. Any other legal issue relevant to the research