

# Human Ethics in Research Procedures and Guidelines

## Procedures

Staff and Students should complete a Human Ethics application form when:

- (i) Research involves human participants, personal information, human material and/or has human related focus. If you are observing, surveying, interviewing, or in any way recording people, then you will need to apply for ethics approval.
- (ii) requested to do so by their Supervisor, Research Leader or Head of School.
- (iii) completing research that requires special consideration under the ethical principles

All research brings researchers into contact with other people: people will show you how equipment works, provide information about matters connected with your research, and give their views on your research. These people do not count as human participants in the technical sense. They are not giving you information about themselves and the opinions which they offer are not themselves the subject of the research. You need not get ethical approval of your research if your contact with people is confined to this sort of interaction.

**Ethics approval must be obtained before any research project may commence.**

### Process for Submission of proposal for research ethics review

At a reasonable period before data collection begins the applicant must complete a **Student application form for Human ethics in research approval** or a **Staff application form for Human ethics in Research approval**, which should be submitted to the **Research Office** for review.

Before submitting your application you need to have read the **Policy and Procedures for Conducting Research in a Maori Context**. You may be asked to meet with the Kaumatua's representative on the ethics committee before the committee considers your application. The Research Office will organise this meeting for you.

If your research involves Wintec staff and/or Students you will need to complete the application for **Institutional consent to conduct Research involving Staff and/or Students**.

The review of applications will be undertaken within a reasonable time and not more than 1 month after submission of the form. The ethics committee meets once a month. Dates for these meetings are on the Wintec website **Research Meeting Dates and Seminars, Research Office, Wintec**.

All applications for ethical approval and supporting information will be held on file by the Research Office.

Students shall submit their project for consideration to their supervisor. The supervisor must advise them of the need to obtain appropriate ethical approval and should give initial advice regarding the research ethics issues which may arise as a result of the project.

**If you are unsure if ethical consent is required please contact the Research Office, who will be able to advise you.**

**[Research@wintec.ac.nz](mailto:Research@wintec.ac.nz)**

# Guidelines

All Institute researchers, (staff and students) are expected to conform to the highest ethical standards in all their research relationships.

The Chief Executive Officer is accountable for research conducted at the Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec) and/or, has been supported or sponsored by Wintec.

All staff at Wintec are accountable to the Chief Executive Officer for their actions.

The Policy cannot protect staff or students from criticism or litigation.

The Institute's insurance does, however, provide cover for approved projects when the Institute's policy and regulations have been followed.

It is for this reason that the Institute or its delegated agents must approve formal research requests, which involve human participants and/or artefacts.

When conducting research, staff and students should be aware that:

- a. Intellectual Property considerations include ownership issues for data and research products and lawful access to data sets. Procedures and guidelines for intellectual property issues are dealt with in the Commercialisation of Intellectual Property Policy
- b. Any research developed must adhere to the procedures and policies embedded in the Principles and Procedures: Conducting Research in a Maori Context
- c. All research requests involving staff and students at the Institute will be governed by the 'Research' policy entitled "Institutional Consent to Conduct Research Involving the Institute's staff and/or students

## Ethical Principles

**2.1 Self-determination.** This principle upholds the freedom of each person to make autonomous decisions. Refusal to participate or continue in research must not result in adverse consequences for current or potential research participants.

**2.2 Informed Consent.** Consent is voluntary and informed if the intended participant understands the benefits of the research and agrees without coercion to participate, has been provided with an explanation in terms the participant understands, including:

- a. the nature and purpose of the activities
- b. potential harmful consequences of taking part in the research
- c. participants' rights, including the right to:
  - decline participation,
  - withdraw from the research at any time without penalty of any sort,
  - privacy and confidentiality,
  - negotiate the amendment and review of contributions and their ownership,
  - be offered an opportunity to debrief if necessary during or on conclusion of participation,
  - receive feedback about the outcome of the activity in an appropriate form

## Confidentiality

Research information should be handled in a way, which protects the confidentiality of the participants and ensures the safe custody of the data. Care must be taken to protect the legitimate privacy of individuals, communities and institutions.

## Anonymity

The findings should be conveyed in such a way that the participants cannot be identified as individuals, unless agreement to the contrary has been obtained from the participants.

Participants must be informed of the potential harmful effects to others of disclosure of the participants' identity.

## Beneficence and Nonmaleficence

In planning specific research procedures and conducting both pilot and mainstream research, the researcher must ensure that the risk of cultural, social, physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual harm to participants is kept to an absolute minimum by:

- a detailed explanation of the specific risks for any given research procedure
- due consideration of alternative procedures to ensure optimal benefit
- determining whether monitoring and support procedures may be necessary both during and after the activities

## Fair Treatment

Subject to the maintenance of confidentiality in respect of individuals, all participants should be fully informed about projects in which they are involved. Also, in conducting the research, the researcher must at all times respect the rights, wishes, beliefs, consent and freedom of the

individual participant.

The principle of fair treatment also allows for volunteers to be compensated for the inconvenience and time spent, although such compensation should not in any way be construed as inducement to participate.

### **Truthfulness and Integrity**

This refers to honesty in all dealings and includes issues such as conflict of interest, bias, plagiarism, and hidden agendas, making and keeping commitments and generally being completely scrupulous and accountable in all research activities

### **Justice**

This refers to the ethical obligation to treat each person in accordance with what is equitable, moral and proper, and to give each person what is due to him or her. It also refers to the equitable distribution of both the burdens and the benefits of participation in the research.

### **Debriefing and Disclosure**

Any data collection tool which uses less than full disclosure of the intention of the study prior to its use, places an obligation on the researcher to clarify fully the nature of the study and remove any misconceptions that may have arisen. The researcher has a responsibility to ensure that there are no lasting negative consequences for the participant.

When communicating research findings, material should be presented in ways that are easily understood by participants.

### **Addressing Negative Consequences**

Where procedures might result in undesirable consequences, the researcher has the responsibility to anticipate where possible and endeavour to rectify any negative consequences that occur.

### **Retention of Data**

This principle refers both to the protection of confidentiality of participants and to ensure that credibility of the research data can be verified. Data may include transcripts of interviews, artefacts, documents and/or electronically stored data/information/records.

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