



CEOB REQUIREMENTS FOR ETHICS APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The following two sections outline the types of research proposal which CEOB believes do or do not need to be reviewed by a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

SECTION A. HREC APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

The Catholic Education Office Ballarat will determine that approval from an Ethics Committee is **not** required for research proposals that involve negligible risk, such as:

1. Research that uses data already freely available in the public domain;
2. Observation of students and their actions in an educational setting that does not involve identification of individuals or interactions with individuals for the purpose of obtaining data;
3. Audit, review or surveys that do not involve the collection of personal or sensitive data;
4. Testing as an aspect of normal educational requirements and conducted according to a school's normal policies and practices;
5. Collection of student coursework, assignments and essays.

SECTION B. HREC APPROVAL REQUIRED

The CEOB will determine that HREC approval is required for research proposals that involve more than negligible risk, such as those that would elicit a 'YES' response to any of the following questions. The questions are based on the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007 – updated May 2013)*, which is available at <<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au>>.

1. RESPECT FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS

Research involving humans is subject to the guiding ethical principle of respect for persons with regard to their welfare, rights, beliefs, perceptions, customs and cultural heritage – both individual and collective.

e.g. Does the proposed research involve any of the following topics?	YES	NO
Parenting (parenting strategies or children and young people's attitudes towards parenting strategies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potentially sensitive areas, e.g. body image, sexuality, gender identity, sexual behaviour, eating disorders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sensitive cultural issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grief, death or serious/traumatic loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any psychological disorder, depression, mood states, anxiety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suicide/self harm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Race or ethnic identity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Illicit drug or alcohol use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-report of criminal activity or anti-social behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disease or health problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fertility/pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug trials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruits from a vulnerable population, for example, intellectually disabled individuals, people who have undergone trauma, or have a mental illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. POTENTIAL HARM TO THE WELLBEING OF PARTICIPANTS

In research involving humans, it is the researcher's responsibility to minimise risks of harm or discomfort to participants.

e.g. Does the proposed research involve any of the following potential risks?

	YES	NO
Stress to participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical discomfort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental discomfort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Withholding an advantage from one group from which members could derive 'benefit'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. POTENTIAL FOR INFRINGEMENT OF PRIVACY OR OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Subjects of research should be assured that their participation is confidential and that any data derived from their participation will be treated in a secure and confidential manner.

e.g. Does the proposed research involve any of the following?

	YES	NO
Collection of personal or sensitive data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment of participants by a third party	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concealing the purpose of the research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Covert observation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audio or visual recording without consent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential conflict of interest (e.g. a relationship exists with the researcher such as between teacher and pupil)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. BENEFIT AND BURDEN OF RESEARCH ON SUBJECTS

A researcher is responsible for defining the importance and benefits of the proposed research and balancing these against the burdens placed upon those participating in the research.

e.g. Does the proposed research involve any of the following?	YES	NO
Involvement of particular groups likely to be subject to over-researching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An absence of intended benefits to any of the participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An inducement being offered to participate in the research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In the case of schools conducting their own research, if the principal determines that ethics approval needs to be obtained, and the project is being undertaken in partnership with an external institution, HREC approval should be sought there. Alternatively, the school should contact the Catholic Education Office Ballarat for advice.

For further information regarding these procedures, email the Catholic Education Office Ballarat – director@ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au.