

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

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| Principal Investigator / Student | NAME:  EMAIL:  PHONE:  ADDRESS: |
| Primary Supervisor (if relevant) | NAME:  EMAIL:  PHONE: |
| Secondary Supervisor (if relevant) | NAME:  EMAIL:  PHONE: |
| Name(s) of Other Researchers involved in the project (if relevant) |  |
| Brief Title of the Proposed Project |  |
| If this is a Student Project, Name of Course in which the Student is Enrolled (MA, MTh, etc.) |  |
| Period of study (please write the semesters over which the research will be conducted) |  |

**Instructions**

All projects involving data collection from human participants must be approved *prior* to the commencement of data collection, as specified by the [Research Ethics Policy](http://ac.edu.au/ppm/research-ethics-guidelines-and-policy/). In general, this Ethics Application Form should only be completed after the relevant Research Committee has cleared your Research Proposal and approved your research question and methodology.

Please complete this form in full, filling out all relevant information. The form can only be completed once you have a clear research question and methodology. Incomplete forms will not be processed. When drafting a Consent Form (using the template provided), ensure that the language is simple, clear, and without grammatical or spelling errors. If you need to provide additional information in response to any of the questions, please attach it to this form.

Please submit your completed form electronically to: [secretary\_HREC@ac.edu.au](mailto:secretary_HREC@ac.edu.au) or to your degree co-ordinator if the degree is at Masters level. Any questions relating to the ethics process may also be directed to the above email address. If your research involves human tissue, health records, clinical trials, human biospecimens or genetics, please use the Human Research Ethics Application (HREA) form instead of this form. For further information regarding ethics for research with human participants, please see the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (available from: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018> ).

1. Will you be collecting data from human participants (for example, through interviews, surveys, focus groups or observation data) in your research?

 Yes

 No

*If you are not going to collect any data from human participants for your research, but are only using existing data or literature, then you do not need ethics approval for your research, and it is not necessary to complete this form.*

SECTION 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

2. Please provide a brief description of your project (maximum 500 words) including details of rationale, methodology, and objectives. (You may copy here part or all of your Research Proposal. It should include your primary research questions and a statement of your methodology.)

3. What is the expected duration of the project?

4. Is this a funded project?

 Yes

 No

If so, please provide the name of the funding agency.

SECTION 2. PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH

*The following are overarching principles in the conduct of research.*

*No risk of significant harm to an individual is permissible unless either that harm is remedied or the person is of age and has given informed consent to the risk. Public benefit, however great, is insufficient justification. Where possible, benefits of the research should be shared with those who participate in the research.*

*Respect for the dignity and worth of persons and the welfare of students, research participants, and the public generally shall take precedence over the self-interest of researchers, or the interests of employers, clients, colleagues or groups (AARE)[[1]](#footnote-1).*

*Respect for the dignity, worth and welfare of people means:*

* *having regard for the welfare, beliefs, perceptions, customs and cultural heritage;*
* *respecting people’s privacy, confidentiality and cultural sensitivities; and*
* *allowing people to make their own decisions where possible[[2]](#footnote-2). (National Statement, p.11)*

*There are a number of situations in which special care must be taken in research to ensure appropriate respect and to ensure that research is done in a way which respects the law. The following questions cover such situations.*

5. Please describe the groups of people whom you plan to recruit to participate in your research. *(Include in your response answers to the following questions.)*

1. Are they part of specific organisations, and, if so, what consent and/or assistance will be needed from those organisations? (*Please attach to this application letters of request to organisations for their permission and/or assistance, as appropriate.)*
2. How are you selecting people in those groups and what is your expected sample size?
3. How are you inviting people to participate in your research? *(Please attach to this application any flyers or advertisements you will use to invite participation in your research.)*
4. How are you providing information to them about your research? *(Please attach to this application any information sheets you will use to provide information about the research. See the template at the end of this form.)*
5. How are you obtaining their consent to participation in the research? *(Please attach to this application any consent forms you will use for participants in your research.)*

In your research project, do you anticipate that you will be gathering data from any of the following groups of people? Please respond “Yes” or “No” in relation to each group. If your answer is “Yes”, please note the ethical issues as outlined in the National Guidelines and describe how you will respond to them.

*Please note that research with minors is covered in Section 4.*

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| 5.1 | Collection of data from participants who are mentally or physically impaired  Note: If Yes, please provide information on how you will decide about the person’s capacity to participate in the research, how the research will benefit these participants, how you will explain the research to them, how you will obtain consent from guardians of such people as well as seeking the consent of the people themselves, what measures you will undertake to ensure the rights of the participant are not violated, and how the person’s capacity to consent and to participate will be reviewed. (See *National Statement*, chapter 4.5) | Yes / No |
| 5.2 | Collection of information that may incriminate the participant or expose criminal activity  Note: If there is a possibility of illegal activity being discovered, explain how you will indicate to participants the legal obligations of the researcher to disclose any illegal activity and the extent to which the research is able to maintain the confidentiality of the participant. Please specify the procedure you intend to follow if such information is uncovered. (*National Statement*, chapter 4.6) | Yes / No |
| 5.3 | Collection of data from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people  Note: If Yes, please explain:   * How you have obtained support for your research from relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or groups; * How you have worked with such communities or groups towards mutually agreed mechanisms for recruitment, providing information about the research, obtaining consent, and reporting the research. * What benefits there will be to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. (*National Statement*, chapter 4.7) | Yes / No |
| 5.4 | Collection of data from any participants who may not be able to provide informed consent (e.g. elderly or sick persons, persons who may have language challenges, socially disenfranchised persons)  Note: If Yes, please provide information on how you will decide about the person’s capacity to participate in the research, how the research will benefit these participants, how you will explain the research to them, how you will obtain consent from guardians of such people as well as seeking the consent of the people themselves, what measures you will undertake to ensure the rights of the participant are not violated, and how the person’s capacity to consent and to participate will be reviewed. (See *National Statement*, chapter 4.5) | Yes / No |
| 5.5 | Collection of data from people living in other countries  Note: If Yes, please explain:   * What laws and ethical guidelines and approval processes there are in the countries where you wish to collect data and how you will obtain the relevant ethical approvals in those countries. * How due respect and protection will be given to people in those countries including the provision of information regarding the research, the obtaining of consent to participation, and the sharing of the results of the research. (See *National Statement*, chapter 4.8) | Yes / No |
| 5.6 | Collection of data from people who have an unequal and/or dual or conflicted relationship with the researcher, such as members of a pastor’s congregation or students of a teacher  Note: If Yes, please explain:   * How you will ensure that their consent to participation in the research is truly voluntary; * How confidentiality of their responses will be maintained; and * How potential negative consequences of their involvement will be avoided. (See *National Statement*, chapter 4.3) | Yes / No |
| **SECTION 3. RESEARCH METHODS**  Question 6.a. Describe what will be required of participants, including, for example, the length of interviews and where you will hold them, or how long it will take to complete a survey.  6.b. Describe how you protect participants’ confidentiality, or, where necessary, inform them that confidentiality cannot be protected?  6.c. Describe the justice in the project and how it may benefit the participants and their interests. Describe how you plan to use the results of the research, and how you will be able to share the results with the participants if they are interested.  6.d. How will the data be stored in the short-term and the longer-term. Note all data must be stored carefully to protect confidentiality. After the project has been completed, data must be given to the College to be stored for the next 7 years, for legal reasons.  There are some particular methods of research which involve particular ethical issues. Please respond Yes or No to the following questions about your methods below. | | |
| 6.1 | Collection of information which may be sensitive for participants, such as that regarding personal issues of trauma, loss, death, suicide, grief, bereavement, gambling, substance abuse, fertility, abortion, and issues of sexuality and gender; or cultural, issues such as race, ethnicity, or sexuality, or potentially criminal or socially undesirable behaviours.  Note: If Yes, please indicate how you are ensuring risks and harm caused by dealing with such subjects will be minimized, and how you will provide possibilities for referral or assistance if people feel they need to talk further with independent persons about such issues. | Yes / No |
| 6.2 | Collection of confidential personal information without the consent of the participant  Note: If Yes, please provide your rationale for collection of such information. | Yes / No |
| 6.3 | Collection of data involving deception (i.e. the participant isn’t fully informed of the true purpose of the research)  Note: If Yes, please provide your rationale for this. | Yes / No |
| 6.4 | Audio/video recordings or photographing of the participants  Note: If Yes, please include a section in your information sheet and in your consent form that allows the participant to consent to such documentation of data and explain how the confidentiality of the participant will be protected | Yes / No |
| 6.5 | Collection of material/information that could compromise the anonymity of the participant  Note: If Yes, please provide information on what measures you will undertake to inform the participants of this possibility and ensure that the participant consents to the gathering of this information. | Yes / No |
| 6.6 | Disclosure of confidential data to persons who are not part of the research team specified in this form  Note: If Yes, please provide the rationale for such action and what measures you will undertake to ensure the rights of the participant are not violated. | Yes / No |
| 6.7 | Monetary or other form of compensation to the participants for participating in this research  Note: If Yes, please provide details of what this compensation entails and why it is considered appropriate in this research. | Yes / No |
| 6.8 | Are there any other aspects of your research, in terms of the people who may be involved, the methods of research you anticipate using, or the issues in your research, that might raise ethical issues? Please explain. | Yes / No |

**SECTION 4. RESEARCH WITH MINORS**

7. Do you propose collection of data from minors (in general this means children and young people aged under 18 years of age, although the age may vary from one state to another) through interviews, surveys, observational data, or other means)?

 Yes

 No

*Note: If your response is “No” proceed to the end of this section. Otherwise, please respond to the following questions. If “Yes”, please respond to the following questions.*

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| 7.1 | Have you obtained written approval from the institution authorities for your proposed research e.g. director, principal, management team or governing body? *(Attach copy, if you have received it, or request letter if seeking it.)* | Yes / No |
| 7.2 | Are you seeking informed consent from the child participants in addition to their parent? *(Attach copy of appropriate consent form.)*  Note: Specialist advice must be sought when framing the consent forms for children. | Yes / No |
| 7.3 | Do you explained the concept of anonymity to your potential participants and the limits to confidentiality under Child Protection legislation in your Information Sheet? *(Attach copy.)*  Note: Specialist advice must be sought when framing such explanations. | Yes / No |
| 7.4 | Have you completed Working with Children Checks (WWCC)?  What is the card number of your WWCC? ……………………..  When does your WWCC expire? Date: ………………………... | Yes / No |
| 7.5 | Have you completed the relevant Child Protection training for Workers with Children? | Yes / No |
| 7.6 | In your proposed research will children be assessed, interviewed or measured alone as individual children?  If ‘Yes’, have you planned for a suitable ‘public’ location and time to conduct your research so as to ensure the child’s protection and the researcher’s safety? | Yes / No |
| 7.7 | Have you ensured that your child participants understand that they can withdraw their participation at any time without the need for explanation?  Note: Specialist advice must be sought to ensure that child participants understand this. | Yes / No |
| 7.8 | If a parent and child wish, have you ensured that the parent can be present at any child participant interviews or data gathering exercise? | Yes / No |

**Additional Documents**

Documents appended to be this form: *(Tick all that are included)*

 **Permission letter(s)**, such as letters to those who have responsibility if you are undertaking research within an organisations or deriving contacts from an organisation. For example, if you are doing research in a church, you would need to obtain permission from the pastor / priest / minister of the church and perhaps the church council.

 **Information sheet(s)** in plain language describing the research and what is involved for organisations giving permission and/or for participants in the research. An information sheet is required for all interviews and focus groups.

 **Documents used for recuiting people** such as flyers, posters, or emails.

 **Tools used for screening people** to identify appropriate participants.

 **Consent form(s)** for the participants in the research and in the case of young people under 18 years or age, of their parents or guardians. Note that consent forms are needed wherever interviews or focus groups are being used. They are not needed if surveys are being completed.

 **Survey(s)** that will be used - including full detail of questions. Note that a statement describing the research and how it will be used, how confidentiality will be protected, and how complaints may be made should be provided at the introduction to a survey and should be included in the copy of the survey that is submitted.

 **Interview schedule(s)** that will be used in interviews and/or focus groups.

*(When you have appended all the relevant documents, please create one .pdf file to submit.)*

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| **Declaration**  *To be signed by all researchers.*  This application has been prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(cannot be an undergraduate student)*  I, the undersigned, declare that:   * The information supplied in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. * I have read the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and accept responsibility for the conduct of the project detailed in this application in accordance with the principles contained therein and any other conditions laid down by Alphacrucis HREC. * I have no other conflicts of interest other than those stated in the above application.   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signed (Chief Investigator / Supervisor) Dated  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signed (Researcher #1) Dated  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signed (Researcher #2) Dated  *All researchers are to sign this declaration so add additional space as required.* |
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**GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

**1. Permission Letters**

*If you are doing surveys, interviews or focus groups with people who are associated with a particular organisation such as a company, school or church, you will need to get permission from the organisation as such. For example, if you are examining an aspect of a church's ministry, you will probably need permission from the senior pastor.*

*The letter seeking permission should include the following elements:*

1. *The nature of your project and its aims, the degree for which you are studying, the institution, and who is supervising you.*
2. *What you will request of those who participate in the research, both in terms of what information you will be seeking from them and how long interviews or the completion of surveys will take. Also note how you will protect participants' confidentiality.*
3. *What you require of the organisation – for example, in inviting people to do interviews or to hand out surveys for you. (Note that it is illegal for a church to give you a list of contacts without first asking the people on the list if their details can be shared with you.)*
4. *How you will be using the information gathered and whether you will be providing the church with a report. (It is usually desirable to indicate that a report will be available and provide information about how a report can be obtained.)*
5. *How further information about the research can be obtained.*

*It is often appropriate to include a form with the letter that can be completed indicating whether or not permission is granted which can be returned to you.*

***2.* Information Sheet**

*If you are conducting interviews or focus groups, you need to provide people with written information about the project prior to obtaining their consent for the interview or focus group.*

*If you are conducting a survey, you will need this sort of information on the covering letter or introduction to the survey. With an anonymous survey you will not need to obtain prior consent before the survey: the completion of the survey will indicate people's consent.*

*The information sheet or introduction to a survey needs to be in plain, non-technical language. It should contain the following elements:*

1. *The nature of your project and its aims, the degree for which you are studying, the institution, and who is supervising you.*
2. *How the person was chosen for the research and contact details obtained.*
3. *What you will request of those who participate in the research, both in terms of what information you will be seeking from them and how long interviews or the completion of surveys will take. Also note how you will protect participants’ confidentiality.*
4. *How you planning to record the interview or group and how you will protect the confidentiality of what you record.*
5. *How you will use the information gathered and whether you will be providing the church or other organisation with a report, or whether individuals can obtain a report.*
6. *How further information about the research can be obtained and how a complaint about the ethics of the project can be made.*

**3. Consent Form**

*If you are conducting interviews or focus groups, you will need the written consent of people prior to the interview or focus group which is obtained through the signing of a consent form which you provide to people along with the information sheet. (Prior consent is not needed for an anonymous survey that is completed in people's own time.)*

*The consent form needs to contain the following elements:*

*1. A statement indicating that the participant has read the information about the study and what is required of the participant.*

*2. A statement agreeing to the recording of the interview or focus group (if it is planned to record it).*

*3. A statement indicating that the researcher may use the information in writing a thesis or other published material. It should state that the identity of the participant will not be revealed. If you cannot protect their identity, that must be stated on the consent form.*

*4. If a person under the age of 18 is being interviewed, then there should be a separate space for the consent of the parent or guardian by providing their signatures.*

**4. Research Instruments**

*Research instruments such as surveys and interview schedules that are to be used in the research should attached to the Ethics Application form. It is recognized that the exact wording of questions may change, and in interviews it is often appropriate for the researcher to vary the questions according to information already given by the participant, and when a particular response needs to be explored at greater depth. However, an indication of the sorts of questions that will be asked of participants is required by the ethics committee.*



**Template: Information Sheet for a Research Study**

## [Title of Proposed Research Project and Name of the Researcher]

# WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?

You are invited to take part in a research study about (*describe the study briefly here*). You may participate in this study if you are 18 years or older\*. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and your responses will be kept anonymous. You are free to decline to respond to certain questions or withdraw your participation at any time during the data collection process.

# WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?

The person in charge of this study is (*name of researcher here*) who is a (*program of study here*) student at Alphacrucis and is being supervised by (*name of supervisor, if applicable, here*).

# WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

The purpose of this study is to (*describe the purpose of the study here)*

# WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

(*Specify the location at which data collection will take place and the time commitment involved for the participant*)

# WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?

(*Describe what the participant will be asked to do*)

WILL IT COST ME TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY?

*(Specify any foreseeable costs to the participant)*

WILL WHAT I SAY BE RECORDED OR VIDEOTAPED?

*(If using any recording devices, specify what these will be and specify that the participant has the right to refuse the use of these devices)*

ARE THERE ANY RISKS INVOLVED IN ME PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

*(Specify any foreseeable risks to the participant)*

WILL I RECEIVE ANY PAYMENT OR REWARDS/BENEFITS FOR TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?

(*Specify whether the participant will receive any compensation or where the participant can receive a report of the project*)

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?\*\*

(*Provide contact details of the researcher and supervisor/lecturer)*

*WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I WISH TO MAKE AN ETHICAL COMPLAINT ABOUT THE PROJECT?*

*(Complaints can be sent to secretary\_HREC@ac.edu.au*)

**CONSENT OF PARTICIPANTS**

**Project: <name of project>**

**Researcher:** <name of researcher>.

I (*the participant*) understand what this research project is designed to explore. What I will be asked to do has been explained to me. I agree to take part in the project, realising that I can withdraw at any time without having to give a reason for my decision. I agree that research data collected in the study may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.

I am happy for the researcher to contact me to arrange a suitable time and place for a conversation.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT …......................................................................................................

*(block letters)*

SIGNATURE ................................................................. DATE .................................……....

CONTACT DETAILS: Email contact: ..............................................................

Telephone (if needed to arrange the conversation): ............................................

*[Include the following section if appropriate.]*

***If you are under the age of 18, please also ask you parent to sign their consent to the conversation.***

**Parent's confirmation**

I confirm that I……………….....……...... (the child's parent/guardian) have provided written consent for………………….…...……(child's name) to take part in the conversation and that I have explained the information provided above to my child and that he/she has indicated that he/she understands the activity and wants to participate.

SIGNATURE ….........…………………………………….(parent/guardian)

DATE …………………........

***Please hand this form to <name of person> or post it to <address of researcher>.***

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study (or guardian) Date:

\*If recruiting participants who are under the age of 18, informed consent from a parent or guardian must be received before beginning data collection, and all regulations related to collecting data from minors must be adhered to.

\*\* The researcher must retain a copy of the signed consent form and provide the participant with a copy as well.

JT051113

1. Association of Active Educational Researchers (AARE) Code of Ethics

   <http://www.aare.edu.au/ethics/ethcfull.htm>

   Williamson, E., Goodenough, T., Kent, J., Ashcroft, R. (2005) Conducting Research with Children: The Limits of Confidentiality and Child Protection Protocols, *Children & Society*, Vol 19, pp. 397–409, John Wiley & Sons Ltd. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council, *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated May 2015),* Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council, p.11. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)