

Ethical Conduct of Research Procedure



Policy procedures

The following procedures, presented in two sections, are provided to assist teachers in supporting their students in their research.

Section 1: Conducting Research

1. Ethical conduct of research activities
2. Ethical conduct of a human research activity
3. Ethical conduct of a research activity involving animals

Section 2: Conducting research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

1. Protocols and guidelines for conducting research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Section 1: conducting research

1. Ethical conduct of research activities

All research activities, individual or group, in the classroom or outside the classroom, must be conducted in an ethical manner. In general, this means that all involved – researchers, participants and teachers – should be safeguarded from any physical, emotional or psychological harm. To achieve this, there should be due account of the duty of care on the part of all involved in the research project.

Responsibility for ensuring this care rests with the researcher, the teacher in charge, and the principal of the school. An initial step is for students undertaking research to take note of the SACE document: Ethical Research – Guidelines for Students.

2. Ethical conduct of a human research activity

Particular care has to be taken when research involves human participants. A definition of 'human research' can be found in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007, updated 2014). This definition includes the following ways in which humans can participate in research, through:

- surveys, interviews or focus groups
- psychological, physiological or medical testing or treatment
- observations of humans by the researcher
- having access to personal documents or other materials
- access to human information as part of an existing published or unpublished source or database.

In general, human research requires that certain ethical principles be maintained (for example, integrity, respect for human persons, beneficence, and justice), that the requirements of informed consent and confidentiality be met, and that the merit of a particular research activity be ensured.

The school will need to determine that there are no undesirable consequences for the researcher, the participants in the research, and the community in a particular research activity involving humans.

3. Ethical conduct of a research activity involving animals

Students conducting research based on live animals (including birds and insects) must have their research proposal and methodology approved by the school prior to commencement of the research.

Research based on live animals requires permission from a relevant Animal Ethics Committee. Permission to dissect animals must be obtained in writing from these committees.

Teachers are advised to contact their school sector for advice about the keeping and use of animals for educational research purposes.

Section 2: Conducting research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: protocols and guidelines for students and teachers

Australian governments, in collaboration with all school sectors, commit to promoting equity and excellence in Australian schooling.

This means that all Australian governments and all school sectors must:

... ensure that schools build on local cultural knowledge and experience of Indigenous students as a foundation for learning, and work in partnership with local communities on all aspects of the schooling process, including to promote high expectations for the learning outcomes of Indigenous students.

Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, December 2008

The purpose of the following protocols and guidelines is to:

- support students and teachers in the ethical conduct of research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- respect and protect the ownership of Indigenous knowledge and cultures of past, present, and future generations
- protect the wellbeing of students in the research process.
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) has published a set of 14 principles for the conduct of research with and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

These principles provide a useful basis to guide the research contexts in which SACE students may find themselves.

The 14 principles are grouped into the following categories:

- Rights, respect, and recognition
- Negotiation, consultation, agreement, and mutual understanding
- Participation, collaboration, and partnership
- Benefits, outcomes, and giving back
- Managing research: use, storage, and access
- Reporting and compliance.

Details of these principles are available in the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (2012) Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies, <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethics/resources.html>

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<https://www.sace.sa.edu.au/documents/652891/705824/Ethical+Conduct+of+Research.docx/b2012746-9bb3-4147-8316-5a76d6a4f2c9>