



NZK Research Ethics Committee



NZK research ethics approval application GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

This paper is intended to provide guidance to ethics approval applicants as they complete the ethics approval application form. This paper should be used alongside the actual application form. It contains each of the application questions along with notes of explanation where there could be confusion, or where the committee felt there was a need for an explanation of the requirements. The notes are in italics and boxes and follow the application questions. Please feel free to contact NZK for additional guidance or support for your ethics approval application.

General notes for applicants to consider when completing the application form:

- 1. It is a requirement that applicants provide answers to all questions on the application form. Any applications without all of the questions answered will be returned, and applicants will be asked to resubmit.*
- 2. Some of the guidance provided in this document relates to research design. There is often tension between design and ethics as the two are interrelated. While the NZK ethics committee process focuses on ethics, if there are design flaws, there are usually ethical implications.*

Research Information

1. Title of the project:
2. Name of researcher or research team members and organisational affiliation:
3. Name of research advisor(s) or supervisor and affiliation (eg senior teacher, professional services manager, critical friend)
4. Name of all institution(s) or organisation(s) affiliated with the research:
5. The name of the primary contact person for the research:
 - a. Contact details of the primary contact person:

Signed by: Applicant..... Date:

Research advisor/supervisor..... Date:

Ethics and funding

6. Which professional code(s) of ethics or ethical guidelines will be followed? (eg. The New Zealand Association for Research in Education (NZARE) Ethical Guidelines. For useful links, please refer to the information sheet and/or the NZK research ethics committee webpage).

This question is asked because the ethics committee believes it would be helpful for applicants to consider their project against a set of accepted ethical guidelines. Reviewing ethical guidelines as part of this process will support applicants to recognise if there are any significant ethical concerns prior to completing and submitting the application.

7. Are you seeking ethics approval from any other bodies? Yes / No

- a. If yes, please list other bodies:

You may be seeking ethics approval from a university or another umbrella organisation. If you are already seeking ethics approval from another ethics committee, it is not necessary for you to seek NZK ethics approval. However, you are welcome to submit your proposal to NZK as well if you believe it would be beneficial.

8. Please list the sources of funding for this research and please state if there are likely to be any potential conflicts of interest from this funding and your proposed response if they arise.

If the research is being carried out as part of your teaching practice and is not being funded separately, please state that here. If the kindergarten association is providing additional resources or support to enable the research, please describe.

9. How will the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi be acknowledged? As a guide for this question, please refer to the NZARE ethical guidelines which state¹:

“These guidelines acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, including active protection of tikanga Māori, te reo Māori me ōna tikanga, and tino rangatiratanga or Māori self-determination. It is the duty of educational researchers to consult meaningfully with tangata whenua on all research that concerns Māori. And to ensure that research maintains the integrity of Māori.”

It may be that the applicants consider how the Treaty principles are reflected in everyday teaching practice at their association and how this approach is incorporated into the research, however, with additional consideration around informed consent and research risks.

Duration of research

10. Duration of the research:

- a. When will the research commence?
- b. What is the proposed date of completion of the research?

Project Details

11. Explain, in simple language, the research purpose and objectives.

This should be only one or two sentences and written in plain English.

12. What are the anticipated benefits of the research?

The benefit of the research is an important ethical concern. There must be merit in answering the research questions so the people involved in the research, and their contributions – their views and experiences – are honoured and treated with respect. Additionally, where people may be inconvenienced or asked to commit time and provide additional information to researchers, there must be a valid reason for these inconveniences.

¹ New Zealand Association for Research in Education (2010) *Ethical Guidelines*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nzare.org.nz/pdfs/NZAREEthicalGuidelines2010.pdf>.

13. Describe all method(s) of data collection across all stages of the research (please include any questionnaires or interview schedules):

In this section, please list each type of data collection in detail. Consider your research design here. Will the data obtained provide you with the answers to your research question(s)? What are the potential flaws in the research design? Are there inherent biases in how data is being collected? Have you considered all of the factors that will impact the data collected?

Please refer to references provided on the NZK website regarding research design. You can link to those references here:

<http://www.nzkindergarten.org.nz/NZK%20Ethics%20Committee/ethics-committee-useful-links>

Participants

14. Describe the research participants in detail (eg. ethnicity, age) and the anticipated number of participants. Provide an estimate of the time required of participants.

Consider why you are choosing these participants and this number. What impact will the number and type of participants have on what information is gathered?

For example – if you are including parents at one kindergarten in the research, consider how this kindergarten differs from other kindergartens. Could your research findings be extrapolated to other parents at other different kindergartens? Is that significant to the research?

15. Explain the process of how participants will be recruited.

Determining how participants are recruited is a key aspect of research design, and includes many ethical considerations. Are there power dynamics to consider? (eg between a senior teacher and teacher? Parents and teachers? Children?) If participants self-select to be involved in the research, what impact will that have on the information gathered? How are people who self-select different from those who do not? How will these factors be considered in the research?

How will informed consent be ensured?

Personal approaches to “shoulder tap” people to be part of a research project can be seen to run the risk of coercion – particularly when approached by someone who is in a position to influence, employment positions or professional assessments. Researchers are encouraged to use other means to recruit participants.

What will happen if some people in a group want to participate and others don’t? Can the research still happen? (eg. if some teachers at a kindergarten want to participate and others don’t)? It is important that each person participate individually. For example, each teacher in a kindergarten must agree to participate individually. They cannot agree as a group.

16. What provisions will be made to ensure all participants understand the research, and what is required [at the stage of obtaining informed consent (see question 22) and throughout the research process]? Include comment on the following in your response:

- Are the participants Māori?
- Are the participants Pasifika?
- Will interpreters be available if needed?
- Will a cultural advisor or advisory group be used to support the research?

The researchers should make sure that adequate provisions are in place to ensure participants fully understand all issues related to participating in the research and all issues related to informed consent (refer to question 22).

Researchers should consider:

- *the impact of language and culture, particularly for Māori and Pasifika participants*
- *can participants who speak a different language or are from a different culture participate?*
- *Have all participants been informed adequately?*
- *do participants fully understand what is expected and what will happen to information gathered?*

17. Will participants receive any compensation for participating in the research (eg. money, gifts)? If yes, how is this justified?

Consider all forms of compensation, including access to information and special rights or privileges.

Risks

18. Is there anticipated risk, harm and/or inconvenience for participants involved in the research? (eg. the need to seek medical or legal advice; issues around disclosure). If yes, how will these be addressed and what action could be taken to minimise the risk? What support can be offered to participants? Please address the following specifically:

- deception
- direct contact with children
- potential coercion or influence from people in positions of power
- cultural offense

Coercion may be a likely risk in the kindergarten context if parents and teachers are being recruited to participate in research by head teachers or senior teachers. Consider the implications of this and how these risks will be mitigated.

It is important to note on information sheets and consent forms, that there will be no penalty or disadvantage from not participating in the research or withdrawing from the research at any time.

19. Is there any potential harm to the kindergarten brand or reputation?

Consider any potential risks, what information will be gathered and discovered, how the information will be shared, and what impact the research findings could have for kindergarten beyond the group involved.

20. Is there any potential harm to the researcher(s)?

Consider the reputation of all of the researchers and relationships among colleagues and parents.

21. Is the research being conducted in the researcher(s) workplace? If yes, how will any conflict of roles and any other risks associated with conducting research in one's own workplace be addressed and/or mitigated (including employment relationships)?

This is an important issue to consider in the kindergarten context as the research will often be conducted in the researchers place of work.

Informed consent

22. Please explain how informed consent/assent will be obtained from children and/or from parents or caregivers of young children involved in research? (Please include all relevant documents including information sheets and informed consent/assent forms). For examples, please refer to the NZK ethics committee webpage and applicant information sheet.

The following are requirements for information sheets and consent forms:

- *In your proposal, please ensure that information sheets and consent forms are included in appendices.*
- *Each participant needs to be provided with individual consent forms. A collective consent cannot be given.*
- *Participants need to know what will be included as data from their participation. This needs to be detailed in information sheets and consent forms for a participant to make informed consent.*
- *A participant must be able to withdraw their data right up to the end of the project. The wording in information sheets and consent forms must acknowledge this. The wording must be the same between all the documents.*
- *Participants need to be made aware that there will be no disadvantage to them (or their child) of withdrawing or not participating.*
- *Participants have the right to see ALL data that relates to them. This should be articulated in the information sheet and consent forms.*
- *Members of the research team should be identified and their role explained in the information sheet and consent forms for every participant. This includes the 'research mentor' if any.*
- *Participant should be offered access to the final research report and/or summaries in whichever medium they choose (online, email, or hard copy).*
- *Terms and definitions throughout the proposal and information sheets and consent forms should be consistent. Please check for consistency.*
- *It must be noted in the proposal, consent form and information sheet that all data must be kept securely for 7 years and then destroyed. This is usually considered the standard.*

23. Please describe participants' right to withdraw from the research and participants' right to review and withdraw any data they have contributed to the research.

As stated above, participants must be able to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. Participants must be able to review all the data they have contributed to the research and withdraw that data at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality

24. Is the research anonymous (you do not know the identity of participants and will not have any personal details of participants) or confidential (you know the identity of participants, however the identity of participants will not be made public)? Please explain.
25. If the confidentiality of research participants is intended to be protected, how will this be ensured? Who will have access to information collected from participants?

Consider all access – hard copies of data, recordings, photographs or videos, and computer access and access to networks.

Data management and storage

26. What is the process for managing information and materials associated with the research including: secure storage of information, how long information will be stored, and the disposal of information during and upon the completion of the research.

In the proposal, the person responsible for ensuring the data is kept securely for seven years and then destroyed must be identified). b) The location of the secure storage must be identified (locked file cabinet where and with who?). How will the electronic data be stored (with who, where, how etc?).

As stated previously, it must be noted in the information sheet and consent form that the data will be kept securely for seven years and then destroyed.

Use of information

27. How will the research findings be disseminated to: 1) research participants; 2) professionals; and 3) the broader community of stakeholders?

As stated previously, participant should be offered access to the final research report and/or summaries in whichever medium they choose (online, email, or hard copy). Explain how participants will be invited to obtain the final research report or summary.

END