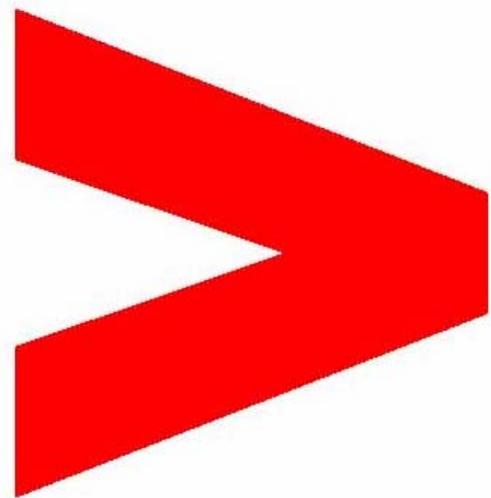


Guide to Research Ethics for Students at CIT



February 2005

Checklist for Ethics in Research

Use this checklist to help you to ensure your research is ethical.

| Planning | Issue | Action |
|----------|---|--------|
| | Have you clarified your expectations of your research with your supervising teacher? Have you thought about who you have to get consent from e.g. the CIT Research Ethics Committee, students, teachers, employers or agencies? Have you identified any conflicts of interest in your research? | |

| Preparation | Issue | Action |
|-------------|---|--------|
| | Have you sought permissions from all those involved in your research and checked whether participants wish to remain anonymous or not? Have you given all those participating in the research adequate information about the project aims and purpose? Have you developed strategies to ensure confidentiality & privacy? Have you developed a timeline and made all the necessary contacts to ensure least disruption possible? | |

| Collection | Issue | Action |
|------------|---|--------|
| | Have you ensured privacy by gathering only the information you need? Have you ensured least disruption possible to all concerned? Have you stored your data safely to ensure confidentiality & privacy? | |

| Analysis and reporting | Issue | Action |
|------------------------|---|--------|
| | Have you written your findings accurately using non-discriminatory language? Have you avoided bias and assumptions? Have you avoided plagiarism by attributing all information? Have you acknowledged all participants (within the constraints of privacy)? Have you obtained copyright clearances, if you have used other people's material? | |

| Dissemination | Issue | Action |
|---------------|---|--------|
| | Have you given all stakeholders feedback? Have you disseminated the report to all sponsors/stakeholders? Have you stored a hardcopy and digital copy of all disseminated reports/papers securely? | |

Modified and adapted from: Watt, J., *Ethical Issues for Teacher Researchers*, The Scottish Council for Research in Education, <http://www.scrc.ac.uk/spotlight/spotlight49> Downloaded 13/12/02

Research Ethics for Students at CIT

Who needs to read this guide?

- Staff who develop research tasks for students as part of CIT programs
- Students who do research as part of their studies at CIT
- Students who do research for another educational institution or external organisation while they are studying at CIT

Why do you need a guide to research ethics?

Guidance on research ethics can help to protect you as a researcher and those involved in your research.

Ensuring that research is ethical means that all those involved in the research will be protected from being harmed by the research. This could be physical harm, caused if you do not follow OH&S practices. It could be psychological or emotional harm caused if you violate someone's privacy. It could be economic harm caused if you do not respect someone's confidentiality. Or it could be spiritual harm from research in which you intrude on someone's cultural or religious beliefs. Guidelines can help you to avoid these pitfalls when researching.

Ensuring that research is ethical also means that you will be able to undertake research within the laws concerning copyright, intellectual property and privacy. It will therefore enable you to protect the Institute's interests as well as individuals' interests – and your own.

Where do you seek approval for research?

If the research you undertake is part of your normal learning at CIT, it is usually approved by your supervising teacher. Your teacher may seek advice from the CIT Research Ethics Committee if your research has any features that could endanger people's privacy and well-being.

If you are a CIT student doing research in CIT for another educational institution or external organization, you need to seek approval from the CIT Research Ethics Committee through the Director of CURVE (Centre Undertaking Research in Vocational Education) at CURVE@cit.act.edu.au

If you are in doubt, check with your teacher or the Director of CURVE (Centre Undertaking Research in Vocational Education) at CURVE@cit.act.edu.au

What types of research will need to be approved?

You will need to seek approval from the CIT Research Ethics Committee for:

- Research involving interviews, questionnaires and focus groups where the topic is potentially controversial or highly personal
- Research identifying individuals and disclosing personal information
- Research involving Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people because they are indigenous
- Research relating to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artifacts of a cultural or religious nature
- Research which has potential risk to the participants' well-being beyond the normal everyday risks
- Research into anything illegal
- Research with people under 18 years of age as participants

What types of research are NOT subject to guidelines outlined in this handbook?

Approval is not needed for routine and non-provocative research activities at CIT such as:

- Routine CIT survey research such as employer satisfaction or student satisfaction
- Work which compiles publicly available data or archived data
- Activities covered by other codes of practice, for example the NHMRC code of practice for care and use of animals for scientific purposes
- Projects that are a normal component of CIT courses and are generally approved by the supervising teacher

Who oversees research ethics at CIT?

The CIT Research Ethics Committee is responsible for approving research activity in CIT.

Where can you find out more about research ethics at CIT?

If you are not sure about conducting research in CIT, please contact your teacher OR the Director of CURVE (Centre Undertaking Research in Vocational Education) by email at CURVE@cit.act.edu.au

The *CIT Research Code of Ethics* covers research by CIT staff or students. It is available in the *CIT Research Handbook* – your teacher should have a copy.

What do you need to do to ensure your research is ethical?

The following are typical cases of people involved in research at CIT. They show what action you can take to ensure your participation in research is ethical.

Scenario 1:

Simone is a CIT student doing minor research as part of normal teaching and learning at CIT. What must she do to ensure her research is within CIT's ethical guidelines?

- *She first seeks approval for her research from her supervising teacher*
- *She carefully follows the Checklist for Ethical Research (see the inside front cover of this brochure)*

Scenario 2:

Lee is a CIT student who is enrolled at CIT, but who is also doing a university research project that involves CIT students and teachers. What must he do to ensure his research is within CIT's ethical guidelines?

- *He prepares a statement about how he is involving CIT in his university research*
- *He submits the proposal for sign-off, by emailing it to the Director of CURVE (Centre Undertaking Research in Vocational Education) at CURVE@cit.act.edu.au*

Scenario 3:

Susan is a CIT student who has been asked to take part in some research that a friend is undertaking outside CIT that involves CIT or CIT staff and students. What must she do to ensure that both she and CIT are protected during this research?

- *She checks with her friend that he has obtained permission from the Chief Executive to undertake the research within CIT*
- *She asks her friend for a consent form to sign, that spells out her rights*