

# Consent forms and information sheets

Consent forms and information sheets should provide research participants with sufficient and clear information that allows them to make informed consent to participate in the study. You may follow the suggested consent and information sheet format available on the HREC website. Brief information on the following should be included:



## Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

## Ethical Review Brief Guidelines

- name and contact information of the researcher
- title and aims of the project
- description of how many participants will be included and how they will be contacted/ recruited
- reason(s) for choosing that particular person/ group of participants (if applicable)
- description of what participants will be asked to do and the time commitment required from the participants
- potential risks (if any) to the participants (e.g. discomforts, inconveniences expected) and how the risks will be minimized
- potential benefits coming from the research (may be specific to the individual or to the knowledge base of the field of study)
- statement that participation is voluntary
- statement that participants have a right to refuse to participate or may withdraw at any time without negative consequences
- statement of how confidentiality/ anonymity/ privacy will be ensured
- description of how results will be disseminated

### Contact Information

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Secretariat  
c/o Research and Development Office  
D4-1/F-21, The Education University of Hong Kong

Email: [hrec@eduhk.hk](mailto:hrec@eduhk.hk)

Tel: 2948-8614 / 2948-8120

Fax: 2948-7697

Homepage: [https://www.eduhk.hk/human\\_hrec/index.php](https://www.eduhk.hk/human_hrec/index.php)

Updated forms/Online System:

[https://www.eduhk.hk/human\\_hrec/view.php?secid=2552](https://www.eduhk.hk/human_hrec/view.php?secid=2552)



## Who should apply for ethical review?

Staff and students of the University who are carrying out research involving human participants and/or human data (such as secondary data, archival data, data collected for one project and being used for another project) must submit an ethical review application, irrespective of whether the research is funded or unfunded.



## Application procedures

- All applicants are required to submit applications according to the procedure applicable to their position, as shown on the HREC website and in the following table.
- From 1 September 2018 onwards, **staff, RPg and EdD students** should submit online application for ethical review through <https://workflow.eduhk.hk/HREC/> while TPg and UG students should submit hardcopy forms as per previous practice.
- Applicants will be notified the result of their application by the relevant approval authority **in writing**.
- All applicants have a right to appeal and request that the appropriate committee review their applications. Please refer to the HREC Operational Guidelines.

## Respective endorsing and approval authority

Types of Research		Endorsement Authority for Ethical Review	Approval Authority for Ethical Review
Staff Research		---	Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)
Student Research	Research Postgraduate (RPg) (i.e. MPhil/ PhD) and Doctor of Education (EdD) student research	Principal Supervisor	Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)
	Taught Postgraduate (TPg) (i.e. MA/ MEd/ PGDE) student research	Principal Supervisor	Head of Department / HoD's designated delegate(s)
	Taught Postgraduate (TPg) cross-discipline student research	Principal Supervisor, Head of Department / HoD's designated delegate(s)	Faculty-level research committees
	Undergraduate (UG) student research	Principal Supervisor	Head of Department of the Principal Supervisor / HoD's designated delegate(s)

## Deadline for application

- Ethical approval must be obtained before the commencement of data collection.
- The deadline for applications for ethical review is in accordance with the respective regulations for different applications or proposals, where such ethical approval is required.
- The processing time will normally take 4 weeks, provided that the submitted application form is complete with all required documents attached. Incomplete forms will be returned without review.

## Documents required

(see <http://www.eduhk.hk/rdo/human.html>)

- Completed application form
- Research proposal
- Consent forms and information sheets for potential research participants (templates can be downloaded at the above website)
- Consent form/ invitation letter/ approval letter for data collection site (e.g. school, hospital, NGO) (if applicable)
- Interview script (if applicable)
- Data collection form, including questionnaire (if applicable)

## Common problems

### Missing document(s)

- For studies involving interviews and/or surveys, a sample (draft) **interview script / protocols / data collection form and/or questionnaire** should be submitted for consideration. If the full/final version is not available, please provide examples of questions that will be asked.
- For studies involving data collection/ research sites, an **informed consent form (with information sheet)/ invitation letter for the research site** (e.g. school) should be used and submitted for consideration unless justification is provided



### Consent form and information sheet

- Avoid inconsistent information between ethical review documentation and the research proposal, or between the bilingual forms.
- Simple language should be used. Jargon or research/terms, which the person signing the form may not understand, should be avoided.