

Applying to conduct research in schools FAQs

1. *How long will it take to find out if my application has been approved?*

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) processes applications on a rolling basis and accepts applications all year round. If the research project is negligible or low risk, and the application is well prepared requiring minimal modifications, approval usually takes between 2 to 3 weeks. However, it can take up to 6 weeks for more complex applications and if there is missing documentation.

2. *Why haven't I heard anything from MACS about my application?*

Occasionally an application is not processed if the applicant does not SUBMIT the form. Once all required personnel have signed the Declaration, the creator of the application still needs to go to the ACTION tab on the top left of the screen and select SUBMIT APPLICATION. If this is not done the application remains in draft format and we are not notified that there is a new application.

Note: When the application is submitted, you will immediately receive a confirmation email from MACS and the project request status should change from 'draft' to 'pending', see below.



3. *Do I need Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approval before I submit my application?*

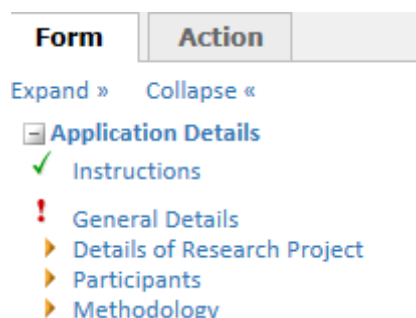
No. You can submit your application before you receive university HREC approval. However, MACS will not finalise our approval until your ethics approval notification is provided.

4. *Why do I need HREC approval as well as MACS approval?*

MACS, as with all other public and Catholic educational jurisdictions across Australia, require that research in schools be centrally reviewed and approved. Each jurisdiction has their own priorities and policies, shaped by factors such as strategic plans, research priorities, and, for Catholic schools, religious ethos. Our review takes into account aspects of the project that a university ethics committee may not. We represent our school communities and advocate on their behalf for research projects that maximise benefit, minimise disruption and actively seek to engage schools.

5. Why can't I submit my application?

A red exclamation mark (!) indicates that there is an error.



If there is an error, you will not be able to submit the form. The first thing to check is that all questions with a red asterix (*) have been answered.

If there is an error alert on the 'General details' page, it is likely to be one of the following issues:

- In question 4, you need to allocate both a Principal Researcher AND a Primary Contact. These can be the same person or they can be two different people. Note: the person filling in the form will automatically be set as the Primary Contact.
- Anyone listed in question 4 must be allocated a 'position' and cannot be left as the default 'not specified' (click on the name in blue text to edit).

6. How do I change my title?

When you first set up a user account in the Research Register, the default title the system uses is 'Associate Professor' as it is first in the list of options (in alphabetical order). You need to manually change this to your preferred title, and if you accidentally miss this step you will need to contact us to change it for you. See contact details below.

7. My project involves multiple educational jurisdictions across Australia. Do I really have to apply to each one?

Many jurisdictions, including MACS, will accept the *National Application Form - to conduct research in schools in more than one state or territory in Australia*.

This means researcher/s only need to prepare one application, but they still need to submit the application separately to participating jurisdictions.

You can download a copy of the guidelines and form via the Australian Association for Research in Education website:

<https://www.aare.edu.au/pages/about-aare-national-application-form-251.html>.

Note: MACS will only review and approve the national application for the Melbourne Archdiocese. Researchers need to apply separately to each Catholic diocese that may have participating schools.

Please submit the form and all attachments to the team at research@macs.vic.edu.au.

8. Does MACS accept applications for research in Catholic schools throughout the whole of Victoria?

MACS only accepts applications for schools in the Melbourne Archdiocese. The map below provides a guide to the areas covered by each Catholic diocese in Victoria, or you can search for a school using the directory on the CECV website <http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/School-Directory-Search>.

The other three Victorian dioceses have their own procedures for approving research in schools.

<i>Diocese</i>	<i>Research-related web pages</i>
Melbourne	https://www.macs.vic.edu.au/About-Us/Policies/Researchers-in-Catholic-Schools-and-Access-to-Data.aspx
Ballarat	https://ceob.edu.au/publications/
Sale	https://www.ceosale.catholic.edu.au/work-with-us/conducting-research
Sandhurst	http://www.ceosand.catholic.edu.au/

Map of Victoria's Catholic dioceses



9. Do I need to reapply if there are changes to my project after it is approved?

If any minor changes are made to the design of your research or instruments (e.g. you decide to include a focus group or you want to include more questions on a survey) you need to provide MACS with the project number; project title; name of the principal researcher; clear details of the amendments; and copies of any changed documentation (see contact details below). We will then review the changes and let you know if MACS approval still stands.

If there are significant changes to your project aims, methodology, participants or recruitment strategies we may ask you to submit a new application.

If your original application was made more than three years ago, you will need to submit a new application.

10. What format do I need to use for my final report to MACS?

It is a condition of MACS approval that researchers submit a summary of their research findings to MACS and participating schools at the conclusion of their study. The final report should include:

- the title of the research
- the name of the principal researcher and their organisation or institution
- a summary/abstract of the research
- the rationale for the research and how it sought to add value to education
- the research questions and hypotheses that were explored
- a brief outline of the research design and methodology
- findings in relation to the research questions
- implications of the findings for schools and the broader education community

Still need help?

For further queries related to your research application, please contact the team via:

research@macs.vic.edu.au

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