

Checklist for Preparing a Research Application



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

This is a checklist for researchers preparing an application to conduct research in Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS). It may also be used by the Strategy Implementation team in the application review process to highlight an issue that needs to be addressed.

Please note: this checklist does **not** need to be submitted with the research application.

Documentation	Requirements	Yes/No
1. Principal letter	a. I understand that principal permission must be sought first.	
	b. The introductory principal letter outlines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the purpose of the research • the overall timeline • who the participants will be • what the participants will do • the time demand for each activity • the school resources required • the process for principal to provide consent. 	
	c. Copies of research instruments, plain language statements, consent forms and other participant information will also be provided to the principal.	
2. Plain language statement (PLS)	a. I have a PLS for each participant type.	
	b. Each PLS outlines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the purpose of the research • what the participants will be asked to do • the time demand of each activity • how data and identity will be protected • the process for withdrawing participation and/or data • how to access follow-up support (if applicable). 	
	c. The PLS for students is in age-appropriate language.	
3. Consent forms	a. I have consent forms for each participant type.	
	b. The consent forms clearly list each component of the research.	
	c. Participants have a yes/no option for sensitive or non-essential components of the research (e.g. height/weight measurement, being photographed or video recorded, using participant data in future research).	
4. Instruments	a. I have provided all instruments to MACS for review.	
	b. I understand that final versions are strongly preferred to prevent any delay in approval.	
	c. If final versions are not possible at the time of submission, I will provide indicative drafts with my application.	
5. Copy of ethics approval	a. I have provided a copy of my institution's ethics committee approval.	
	b. If ethics committee approval is not yet granted, I will indicate the expected date and provide a copy once received, as well as any amendments.	



Documentation	Requirements	Yes/No
6. Proofread	a. I have proofread and edited all documentation before submission.	
	b. If I am a student researcher, I understand my supervisor must have approved the documentation before submitting to MACS.	
7. Translated (if applicable)	a. If participating schools have research participants that are not proficient in English, I understand relevant documentation should be translated	
8. Benefit	a. I have clearly outlined the potential value of the research to participants, schools, MACS and/or the broader education community.	
	b. I have considered what benefits I can offer to participating schools to make their involvement in the research more worthwhile (e.g. professional learning for staff, an individualised school report, student workshops).	
	c. I understand I must provide a summary of the research findings to MACS and participating schools at the conclusion of the study.	

Considerations	Requirements	Yes/No
9. Burden/demand	a. I have considered and minimised (where possible) the demand on schools' and participants' time and resources.	
	b. I have clearly communicated to schools and participants what they are required to do and given a realistic time demand for each activity.	
10. Incentives	a. I understand incentives should not be used as a recruitment strategy but as compensation if a school or participant contributes significant effort.	
	b. If I am offering an incentive/compensation, I understand it must be proportional to the effort and appropriate to school practices and customs.	
11. Randomised controlled trial (RCT)	a. If I am proposing an RCT in the research design, I have considered the demand and costs to the control group/s and have offered appropriate compensation.	
12. Sensitivities	a. If I am conducting research that is deemed sensitive, I have identified and minimised any potential risks and have a process for managing unexpected situations.	
	b. I have built a process into my research for follow-up support and referrals, should a participant need further advice and support.	
13. Duty of care	a. I understand I must present a valid Australian Working with Children Check to the school principal before conducting research within school grounds.	
	b. I understand I must report the identity of a student who may be at risk of harm to the school principal.	
14. School and sector comparisons	a. I will not report on research findings that compare schools or sectors, and may be interpreted as some schools or sectors being 'better' or 'worse'.	
15. Consent	a. Informed and active consent will be sought from each participant type.	
	b. If under exceptional circumstances passive parental consent is approved, I understand I must seek principal permission for this process and ensure communications clearly state that it is opt-out consent. I must also work with the school to ensure multiple communications are used and adequate time given for parents to respond.	

Considerations	Requirements	Yes/No
16. Confidentiality and privacy	a. I understand I must comply with the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth).	
	b. I will protect the privacy, confidentiality and where possible anonymity of participants in the collection, analysis and storage of data.	
	c. If anonymity cannot be guaranteed, I will inform participants of this and assure them of confidentiality.	
17. Human research ethics committee (HREC) approval	a. I understand that MACS' approval is conditional upon my institution's HREC approval. While I can submit an application to MACS before HREC approval, I must provide ethics committee approval and feedback once it is available.	
	b. If I believe formal HREC approval is not required, I must explain why and how the research will still be conducted ethically.	

