

## Questions Related to Cultural Sensitivities

### Chapter 4.7 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples

Where the participation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples is the primary intent of the research, or when the research will be differentiating Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' data from other participants, the application should reflect this and reflect the requirements as outlined in [Chapter 4.7](#) of the National Statement (NS).

#### Health research with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples

If the research is health research the researcher should also read *Values and Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research*. If the research is health research, it may be necessary to have the application reviewed by the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council Ethics Committee as well as Western Sydney University.

Researchers should approach the AH&MRC to obtain a decision on this before submitting to the Western Sydney University HREC.

#### The HREA

The HREA has a series of questions at P8 that must be answered.

When stating that community consultation has occurred, researchers should provide evidence of that consultation.

### Chapter 4.8 people in other Countries

The *National Statement* requires that research conducted in other countries by Australian based researchers should be conducted, as closely as possible, under the conditions set out in the *National Statement*. The NS recognises that cultural sensitivities, legal, regulatory and non-Australian ethical review processes may produce tension with the NS however, research must afford the participants no less respect and protection than the NS requires. In these instances, researchers must address this tension and provide management mechanisms in the application.

The researcher should inform the HREC of:

- whether the country that the research will be conducted in has ethics review processes and how they function
- the legal, professional and ethical standards of conducting research in that country. This can include issues such as requiring a special permit or visa to conduct research.

In some cases, a research project may have ethical approval from an overseas ethics review body. Whether ethical review will also be required by Western Sydney depends on a number of issues. Researchers should contact the human ethics officers for advice prior to submission of an application [humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au).

If the research project requires human research ethics clearance in Australia and overseas, the Western Sydney University HREC will require the researcher to provide evidence that such clearance has been obtained before the research project can commence.

## **HREA Questions that relate to Research conducted overseas**

### **HREA Q1.13 Will your research involve participation of any of the following?**

People in other countries

- Researchers should consult National Statement 4.8
- Investigators should use the research review system in place in the relevant country as well as ensuring that any overseas standards are substantively equivalent to those of the National Statement
- If your research is an Australia arm of an international study and you are not seeking ethics approval to enrol participants in other countries, you do not need to complete this section.
- Consider the guidance provided in the International Compilation of Human Research Standards

### **HREA P7.1 How will local cultural values be acknowledged and reflected in both the design of the research and the conduct of the researchers?**

The response here should include the principle of respect and address whether the research will be conducted in English. If the answer is not 'English', you will need to specify the languages and confirm whether or not a translator will be involved in the project and whether you will provide written material in the language(s) noted. If you will be using a translator, be mindful of the implications when answering questions about confidentiality and access to the data. You should also consider the translator's role in relation to the Project Team details in the HREA.

If providing written material in another language, you must provide translated versions of those documents with the ethics application.

### **HREA P7.2**

How will the design of the research take into account local power relations, inequalities and divisions? The HREA uses the examples of gender, social classes, ethnic groups and consideration of issues related to denial of access to research. Researchers should note that the HREC requires the researcher to show evidence of their understanding of the culture in which the research will be conducted and that there may be tensions that need to be managed. If the researcher is from that same culture, it is not sufficient to put the view that there are, therefore, no sensitivities.

### **HREA P7.4**

The National Statement acknowledges that there may be cultural reasons why deviations from the principles in the National Statement are necessary and the HREA provides the opportunity for researchers to outline those issues in this section. There needs to be a consideration of local customs and their relationship to ethical norms in Australia. The example provided in this section is about expectations surrounding gifts and differences in the value of monetary and non-monetary gifts.

### **HREA P7.6**

To whom will participants direct any questions, concerns or complaints about the research?

The National Statement 4.8.16 states, "A local, readily accessible contact should be available to participants to receive responses, questions and complaints about the research. Responses and questions should be handled by the researcher. Researchers should ensure that there is a process independent of the research for dealing with complaints".

The researcher should list his/her contact or the contact details of his/her Supervisor for more information (only Western Sydney University email addresses or project specific email addresses). The HREC accepts that the standard complaint statement on the Participant Information Sheet which lists the [humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au) email for complaints is sufficient for overseas participants.

## Human Research Ethics Guidance Documents available from Research Services

- Guidance for Researchers New to Human Ethics Review
- Guidance Human Research Ethics Protocols for Coursework Masters
- Guidance on Choosing the most appropriate PIS and Consent
- Guidance on Completing the Project Description
- Guidance on Creating Research Project Flyers
- Guidance on Data Storage and Retention Questions
- Guidance on Ethics Review Exemption
- Guidance on Issues with Informed Consent in Research
- Guidance on Levels of Risk and the Ethical Review Process
- Guidance on Making an Amendment to an Approved Project
- Guidance on Organisations in Research
- Guidance on Questions Related to Cultural Sensitivities
- Guidance on Questions Related to Restrictions on Publication of Results
- Guidance on Receiving and Responding to Ethics Committee Assessor Comments
- Guidance on Research Projects Seeking to use Western Sydney Staff as Participants
- Guidance on Reimbursements
- Guidance on The use of 'Opt Out' or Passive Consent in Human Research
- Guidance on Writing Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms
- Guidance on Research Involving Young People
- Guidance on Research Projects and DFAT Advice
- Guidance on Using Focus Groups in Research

Human Research Ethics Team Contact: [humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au)