

Flinders University

Human Research Ethics Committee A

1 Preamble

Flinders University has established the Human Research Ethics Committee A (the Committee) to review and approve research proposals, including those which involve or impact upon Indigenous people, and which do not involve patients, clients or facilities of Southern Adelaide Local Health Network (SALHN).

2 Terms of Reference

The Committee shall:

- 2.1. Receive, examine and either approve or reject higher risk protocols that detail proposed investigation on human subjects by researchers of Flinders University and related institutions including non-clinical investigations by researchers from the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network (SALHN) without charge. Any such research protocols which involve human subjects as a third party, which involve human remains or other sacred or significant sites, or which involve or impact upon Indigenous people in any way, must also be considered by the Committee.
- 2.2. Ratify low risk protocols approved by the Flinders University Low Risk Panel.
- 2.3. Ensure that the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* is adhered to.
- 2.4. Provide guidance to researchers about the ethical aspects of their proposed research.
- 2.5. Establish and promulgate detailed guidelines for research practice within Flinders University, with approval from the Academic Senate, that are consistent with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, and take into account local cultural and social attitudes and established policies of the institution.
- 2.6. Refer research dealings which may involve patients, clients or sites of the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network to the SALHN Southern Adelaide Clinical Human Research Ethics Committee.
- 2.7. As appropriate, consult and seek advice on the appropriateness of any research proposal which involves or impacts upon Indigenous people.
- 2.8. Consider any other general ethical issues referred to it by the University.

3 Accountability

- 3.1. The Committee, including any sub-committees and low risk panels, is responsible to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) may conduct an annual review of the operation of the Committee to ensure that it is effective and consistent with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*.

- 3.2. The Committee reports to the Academic Senate and other relevant University bodies on its activities no less than once a year.
- 3.3. In line with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, Flinders University provides legal protection to Committee members for liabilities that may arise in the course of bona fide conduct of their duties as Committee members.

4 Membership

- 4.1 In accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, the Committee will have a minimum of eight members, comprising:
 - A chairperson with suitable experience, including previous membership of an HREC, whose other responsibilities will not impair the HREC's capacity to carry out its obligations under the National Statement.
 - Two people who bring a broader community or consumer perspective and who have no paid affiliation with the institution.
 - A person who performs a pastoral care role in a community including, but not limited to, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander elder or community leader, a chaplain or a minister of religion or other religious leader.
 - A qualified lawyer, who may or may not be currently practicing and, where possible, is not engaged to advise the institution on research-related or any other matters.
 - A person with knowledge of, and current experience in the professional care, counselling or treatment of people; for example, a nurse, counsellor or allied health professional.
 - At least two members with current research experience that is relevant to research proposals to be considered at the meetings they attend.
- 4.2 The Chair and/or Manager, Research Ethics, Integrity & Compliance may recommend to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) the appointment of additional persons with expertise deemed to be important for the Committee's operation.
- 4.3 Members may resign from the Committee at any time by advising the Chair and/or the Manager, Research Ethics, Integrity & Compliance in writing with a minimum notification period of one month.
- 4.4 On the recommendation of the Chair and the Manager, Research Ethics, Integrity & Compliance, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) may request a member to resign from the Committee.
- 4.5 Members are required to respect confidentiality of documents circulated and business discussed at meetings, declaring any conflicts of interest, and to sign a confidentiality agreement to this effect.
- 4.6 Members will not be paid a sitting fee. However, incidental expenses such as car parking and refreshments during meetings may be covered by the University.

- 4.7 The Chair may receive a responsibility loading in accordance with Flinders University's Enterprise Agreement.

5 Appointment and Term of Office

- 5.1 The Chair will be appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). The term of office is three years and the Chair may be reappointed for additional terms.
- 5.2 A Deputy Chair will be appointed from the Committee membership appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the recommendation of the Chair.
- 5.3 Members shall be appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the recommendation of the Chair and/or Manager, Research Ethics, Integrity & Compliance. Members shall be appointed for two years and may be reappointed when their term expires.
- 5.4 In line with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, members are not appointed in a representational capacity.

6 Meetings

- 6.1 The Committee shall meet 11 times per year or as otherwise required.
- 6.2 Committee members shall attend the majority of meetings unless special leave is granted.
- 6.3 The Research Ethics, Integrity & Compliance Office shall provide secretariat support to the Committee. Duties will include preparing agendas, taking minutes of meetings, preparation of advice to and liaising with researchers as well as management of application and meeting records.

7 Quorum

- 7.1 The quorum for meetings is a majority of the members with at least one third of those participating external to the University. Where there is less than full attendance of members from the minimum membership categories at a meeting, the Chair must be satisfied that the views of the members who are not present have been received and considered by all members of the Committee participating in the meeting before a decision is made.
- 7.2 As far as practicable, membership at each meeting will have diversity, including gender diversity.

8 Operational Guidelines

- 8.1. The Committee shall be responsible for determining its own Operational Guidelines while ensuring that they are consistent with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*.