

Flinders University

Human Research Ethics Committee

1 Preamble

Flinders University has established the Human Research Ethics Committee (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 above low 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 (2007) (Updated 2018)* is adhered to where applicable.
- 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 (2007) (Updated 2018)*, where applicable, 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 (2007) (Updated 2018).

- 3.2. The Committee reports to the Academic Senate on its activities no less than once a year.
- 3.3. In line with clause 5.1.9 of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) (Updated 2018)*, 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 (2007) (Updated 2018)*, the Committee will have a minimum of eight members, comprising:
 - A chairperson with suitable experience.
 - At least two lay people, one man and one woman, who have no affiliation with the University and do not currently engage in medical, scientific legal or academic work.
 - At least one person who performs a pastoral care role in a community, for example, an Aboriginal elder, a minister of religion.
 - At least one lawyer.
 - At least one person with knowledge of, and current experience in the professional care, counselling or treatment of people; for example, a nurse 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.
 - The Southern Adelaide Local Health Network will be invited to nominate at least one additional person to the Committee.
- 4.2 The Chair and/or Manager, Research Ethics & 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 & Compliance in writing with a minimum notification period of one month.
- 4.4 On the recommendation of the Chair and the Manager, Research Ethics & 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.

5 Appointment and Term of Office

- 5.1 The Chair will be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor, on recommendation of 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. The Deputy Chair shall also act as the Chair of the Low Risk Panel.
- 5.3 Members shall be appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the recommendation of the Chair and/or Manager, Research Ethics & 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 (2007) (Updated 2018)*, 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 & 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 *National Statement* does not set a quorum for the committee, but requires that where there is less than full attendance of the minimum membership (eight), the Chairperson should be satisfied, before a decision is reached, that the views of those absent who belong to the minimum membership have been considered.

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 (2007) (Updated 2018)*, where applicable.