

School of Music Guidelines for Obtaining Ethical Approval for Research

The School of Music Research and RHD Committee can review research protocols from honours, masters and doctoral students, so long as:

- The project involves no more than *low risk* (research is "low risk" where the only foreseeable risk is one of discomfort), and
- The School Committee considers that it does not require institutional review by a University ethics committee.

Students wishing to complete a research project that requires ethics approval must submit [the application form](#) and all required attachments to music.ethics@uq.edu.au for consideration by the Committee.

When preparing for the application process, be mindful that:

- The design of your research question and research methodology must include and address all ethical considerations – the application form is the culmination of a lengthy design process, not the starting-point.
- You must read and apply the [UQ guidelines](#) and the [NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) during the design process and in preparing your application – your application must show how you will follow these guidelines and conduct ethical research.
- Your application form must be complete – you must answer all questions fully, provide all required attachments, and obtain all required signatures.
- The information in your application must be internally consistent and coherent, both between questions in the form and between the form and the attachments.

When you are completing the application form:

- Be specific about the aim and the benefit of the research you are proposing – what is the new knowledge you are creating in your field, what is the benefit to the participants you are collecting data from of taking part in the research?
- Be specific about the inclusion or exclusion of groups of people in your data collection – don't make assumptions or leave information out of your application. For example, if you are excluding a group, how will you ensure there are no people from that group taking part in your project? If you are not excluding a group with specific ethical considerations (such as minors or indigenous Australians), how will you ensure that members of that group are treated appropriately?
- Be specific about how you will recruit participants and conduct the data collection – what will you do when and where for each research activity, how will you do it, and why are you doing it? Address each part of the research process, not just the project's overall aims and timelines.

- Be specific about what data you are collecting and analysing. For example, if you are conducting interviews, how long is each interview? Is it going to be audio recorded? Is it going to be transcribed? How will you confirm that the person interviewed considers the data an accurate record of the interview and is satisfied with how they have been represented?
- Participants must know what they're agreeing to do before data collection begins and must be able to refuse to answer questions (particularly those on sensitive topics that may cause discomfort) and to withdraw from the project after data collection begins. If it isn't possible for an applicant to withdraw (for example, because the data is collected anonymously and you can't identify what to remove from the dataset), it must be made clear at what point in the data collection process the information they submit cannot be removed from the dataset. For example, a statement with the "submit" button on the web form that states, "I acknowledge that by clicking the submit button my data is completely anonymous and cannot be withdrawn".
- Be specific about how you will store the data and ensure it is kept secure and confidential for the required retention period – a minimum of 5 years, but possibly longer depending on your research project.
- Be specific about how you will ensure privacy and anonymity in your research findings. Where you can't provide anonymity in your research findings, such as when you are interviewing a composer of a work or including video footage, you need explicit consent from all affected participants.
- Participants must be able to access feedback on the results of the project and on their specific role in the project – your information sheet must state how the participant contacts you to obtain this information.

If your application is not approved, you may make amendments and resubmit for reconsideration by the School Committee. If your revised application is not approved following resubmission, you cannot undertake the proposed research project.