

Human Ethics Minimal Risk Checklist PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The checklist items below appear in Themis on screens 5, 6, 7, 8 of the Minimal Risk application. Screen 10 allows for a special case to be made for minimal risk review by the HEAG. Screen 2 in Themis has a research checklist to determine the application form suitable for the particular research and whether additional modules need to be completed. Some projects are ineligible for minimal risk, e.g. drug trials.

Researchers should respond to the checklist items below to ascertain whether their project would be eligible for review as minimal risk by the Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG). A HEAG can approve a minimal risk project. Student researchers are to discuss the checklist items with their supervisors. If researchers answer "YES" to **ANY** of the items in the checklist the project would normally **not be eligible** for minimal risk review.

If in doubt, please have the responsible researcher (i.e. the faculty member) discuss the issue with Dr. Piers Howe (Head of Psychological Sciences Human Ethics Advisory Group) before the application is submitted.

If there is a risk that your research will uncover something that will require an intervention (e.g. depression, eating disorder, a previously undiagnosed health issue, criminal conduct etc.) then normally a minimal risk application would not be appropriate since central ethics will want to review the intervention procedures.

Additionally, if the risk to the participant is more than the level of "inconvenience" then it normally would not be a minimal risk application. Thus, if there is a possibility that the participant might feel "used" or unhappy with their conduct or participation in your experiment may exacerbate a pre-existing mental condition (e.g. depression or PTSD) then it is unlikely that a minimal risk application would be appropriate.

1. EXTERNAL REQUIREMENTS

Is the research being funded by an agency outside the University which requires Human Research Ethics Committee approval involving community representation? *[If "YES" then researchers must fill out the standard ethics application form]* YES NO

2. RISK ASSESSMENT

A. Are any of the following topics to be covered in part or in whole?

- research about parenting YES NO
- research investigating sensitive personal issues YES NO
- research investigating sensitive cultural issues YES NO
- explorations of grief, death or serious/traumatic loss YES NO
- depression, mood states, anxiety YES NO
- gambling YES NO
- eating disorders YES NO
- illicit drug taking YES NO
- substance abuse YES NO
- self report of criminal behaviour YES NO
- any psychological disorder YES NO
- suicide YES NO
- gender identity YES NO
- sexuality YES NO
- race or ethnic identity YES NO
- any disease or health problem YES NO
- fertility YES NO
- termination of pregnancy YES NO
- deprivation of food, water, sleep etc YES NO

B. Are any of the following procedures to be employed?

- use of personal data obtained from Commonwealth Gov't Department/agency YES NO
- use of personal data obtained from State Gov't Department/agency YES NO
- Involves use of personal information from a non-government organisation YES NO
- deception of participants YES NO
- concealing the purposes of the research YES NO
- covert observation YES NO
- audio or visual recording without consent YES NO
- recruitment via a third party or agency YES NO
- withholding from one group specific treatments or methods of learning, from which they may "benefit" (e.g., in medicine or teaching) YES NO
- any psychological interventions or treatments YES NO

- administration of physical stimulation YES NO
- invasive physical procedures YES NO
- infliction of pain YES NO
- administration of drugs YES NO
- administration of other substances YES NO
- administration of ionising radiation YES NO
- tissue sampling or blood taking YES NO
- collecting body fluid YES NO
- genetic testing/DNA extraction YES NO
- use of medical records where participants can be identified or linked YES NO
- drug trials and other clinical trials YES NO
- administration of drugs or placebos YES NO

C. Other Risks

Are there any risks to the researcher, (e.g. research undertaken in unsafe environments or trouble spots)? YES NO

3. PARTICIPANT VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Does the research specifically target participants from any of the following groups?

- those suffering a psychological disorder YES NO
- those suffering a physical vulnerability YES NO
- people highly dependent on medical care YES NO
- minors without parental or guardian consent YES NO
- people whose ability to give consent is impaired YES NO
- residents of a custodial institution YES NO
- people unable to give free informed consent because of difficulties in understanding information statement (eg language difficulties) YES NO
- members of a socially identifiable group with special cultural or religious needs or political vulnerabilities YES NO
- those in dependent relationship with the researchers (eg lecturer/student, doctor/patient, teacher/pupil, professional/client) YES NO
- participants able to be identified in any final report when specific consent for this has not been given YES NO
- indigenous Australians YES NO

4. RESEARCH IN OVERSEAS SETTINGS ASSESSMENT

Does the research involve any of the following:

- research being undertaken in a politically unstable area YES NO
- research involving sensitive cultural issues YES NO
- research in countries where criticism of government and institutions might put participants and/or researchers at risk YES NO

5. SPECIAL CASE ASSESSMENT

Researchers are asked to make a special case if they have answered "YES" to an item in the checklist but still believe that because of the particular nature of the project and/or the participants the project may still be eligible for minimal risk review. The Human Ethics Advisory Group then assesses whether the project can be reviewed as minimal risk. It is the HEAG that decides if a project is minimal risk.

If in doubt, please have the responsible researcher (i.e. the faculty member) discuss the issue with Dr. Piers Howe (Head of Psychological Sciences Human Ethics Advisory Group) before the application is submitted.