

GUIDELINES FOR OBTAINING A PERMIT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

You have to obtain a permit from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth (MoECSY) to carry out research in public schools of all levels. For the Ministry of Education, and Culture, Sports and Youth to grant a permit, an opinion from the Centre of Educational Research and Evaluation (CERE) is required. To that end, interested researchers (individuals or organisations) must fill in a relevant application, available on the website of CERE (www.keea.pi.ac.cy).

The application must be properly filled out, to ensure that the proposed research adheres to basic principles of conduct and research ethics. The CERE must examine every application and submit a written opinion to the corresponding department of the MoECSY (primary, secondary general, secondary technical and vocational education and training), which is then sent to the researchers.

The role of the CERE

The CERE is responsible for checking and assessing proposals for the conduct of research in Primary, Secondary General, Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Training public schools, with a view to ensuring that the research is conducted in accordance with internationally accepted principles of conduct and research ethics. The CERE is also responsible for ensuring that the researcher respects the rights and protects the interests of the participants.

The CERE is **not** responsible for the originality of a research project, or for its significance and necessity, or for any flaws or omissions in the design of the research methodology. Therefore, the CERE does not assume any liability for the validity and reliability of a research project. However, if there are any flaws, problems or omissions in the methodological approach, the officers of the CERE may make relevant remarks/recommendations to the researchers.

How to apply

Anyone interested must fill in the relevant online application, available on the CERE website (www.keea.pi.ac.cy). Detailed instructions on how to fill in the application are provided below. You are kindly requested to read the instructions carefully before filling in and submitting your application. **The application must be submitted together with the relevant tools or letters to be used in the research.** The application will **not** be assessed unless it is complete. The system will automatically give a reference number

to each application and that number will be the identity of each research. In any communication with the CERE, researchers must state their reference number.

Upon submission of an application, the CERE must examine and assess it within 10 working days. During that period, the CERE may send the researcher an email requesting clarifications, in order to provide its opinion.

It will then draw up an opinion and send it to the department of the MoECSY (primary, secondary general, secondary technical and vocational education and training).

Finally, the corresponding department will inform those concerned by post as to whether their request was approved. The CERE cannot provide direct feedback or any approval of research conduct to the interested persons¹.

Final approval to conduct a research project will be *ipso jure* considered as a commitment of the researcher to: a) strictly implement the Detailed Research Plan (DRP) approved, which has been submitted to the CERE; and b) send the results of the research to the MoECSY. As regards the first, the MoECSY will supervise and ensure that the research process is implemented according to the approved DRP, through the administrations of the schools involved in the research. Therefore, the school principals will supervise the implementation of the research, as described in the DRP. The researchers must send the decision of the relevant MoECSY department to the school principals, together with the opinion of the CERE. With regard to the second, within a reasonable time period after the research is completed and according to the timetable submitted by the researcher, the researcher must submit the Summary Research Sheet (SRS) in electronic form (see the SRS on the CERE website).

Instructions on how to fill in an application for conducting research in public schools

The application for a permit to conduct research in public schools consists of two parts:

- I. Researcher's personal details*
- II. Detailed Research Plan (DRP)*

¹You will be informed by email and via the CERE website about the current assessment state of your application.

Part I: Researcher's personal details

In the first part, the researcher must fill in the following details:

1. *Researcher's name*
2. *Researcher's role (e.g. academic, teacher, PhD candidate, post-graduate student, etc.)*
3. *Members of the research team and their role.* Here it is necessary to give the name of the individuals who have been involved in the design of the research project and/or the individuals who are to be involved in the implementation of the research.
4. *The scientific body or financing entity under which the research is to be conducted.* The researcher must fill in here the name of the scientific body under which the research is to be conducted (e.g. Department of Education, University X, as part of a master's thesis / doctoral thesis) and/or the name of the financing entity (e.g. Research and Innovation Centre).
5. *Departments of the MoECSY which supervise the schools where the research will be carried out.* The researcher must state here the level of education of the schools where data will be collected (e.g. secondary education department for junior or senior high schools etc.).
6. Researcher's address
7. Researcher's email address
8. Researcher's telephone numbers
9. Researcher's fax number

Part II: Detailed Research Plan

In the second part, researchers must provide short, clear and concise descriptions of the content of the research (section A), the proposed methodology (section B), the timetables (section C), and the procedures for addressing moral and ethical issues associated with the research (section D). Finally, they must also attach all accompanying material for their application, e.g. the research tools and the letters to the participants (section E).

A. Content of the research

Researchers must:

- A1. Clearly state the title of the research* The title must be clear, complete and short and consistent with the content of the purpose of the research.
- A2. Indicate the purpose and the research questions.* The purpose and the research questions / assumptions of the research must include the variables to be examined and the research sample in a clear and concise manner.
- A3. Document the importance and necessity of the research.* The researcher must briefly refer to the importance of the research (in the context of education in Cyprus and in pedagogical science in general), and to the possibility of disseminating and utilising its outcomes.

B. Research methodology

The researchers must:

B1. Briefly describe the proposed data collection process. The process must be consistent with the research ethics (personal data protection, non-exposure of participants to inappropriate stimuli considering their age, etc.), and employ all necessary practices (e.g. parents' written consent to the completion of the questionnaire by pupils, audio recording, video recording of pupils).

B2. Describe the sampling strategy. In this field, the researcher must state the criteria and selection method for the sample of the research, and the name of the specific school units or departments to be involved in the research process. The researcher must also specify the number of students and classes.

B3. Briefly describe all research tools (e.g. questionnaires, interviewing protocols, observation forms, etc.). If the research tools have resulted from the translation or adaptation of existing tools, the original tool(s) and the relevant references/sources must also be submitted. If the tools are weighted or are protected by copyright (e.g. Wisc - III), a complete reference and a description must be submitted. In addition to the ethical issues referred to in B1, the researchers must ensure that the language used in the tools and their length are age-appropriate. If the research tools are electronic and are not freely accessible, the researcher must provide them in a certain form (e.g. print screens) to the CERE to enable examination. Moreover, the tools should also have been carefully reviewed by the researchers to identify and resolve spelling or other linguistic errors. All research tools must be attached to the application in E2.

B4. Specify the expected length of time for which participants will be engaged with the research. The researcher must describe in detail the number of teaching periods for which the participants (e.g. teachers, pupils, others) will be engaged with the research process.

C. Timetables

Researchers must:

C1. Indicate the period during which the researcher plans to conduct the data collection from schools, and the expected time of submitting the results to the CERE.

C2. Indicate the date of submission of the results to the Ministry of Education, and Culture, Sports and Youth (via the summary research sheet (SRS) available on the CERE website).

D. Moral and ethical issues

Researchers must:

D1. Fill in the table concerning moral and ethical issues associated with the research. ALL items must be filled in, by selecting the appropriate answer ('YES', 'NO', 'NOT APPLICABLE').

D2. Justify any negative answers ('NO') given in reply to the statements referred to above (D1).

D3. Indicate the procedures or measures implemented to address other moral and ethical issues relating to the conduct of the research which were not stated in D1.

E. Accompanying material

The researchers must attach all materials accompanying their application. Specifically, they must attach ALL research tools and the accompanying letters (information to the participants and consent forms). In the case of applications for research that is part of a thesis for a bachelor, master or doctoral degree researchers must also submit (in a PDF file) a signed statement by the academic supervisor stating that he/she approves the research tools and the content of the application submitted to the MoECSY. The information note for the parents/guardians or adult participants should be given in a separate sheet intended for their own perusal, not to be returned to the researcher.

I. The information form for parents/guardians or adult participants must state the following:

- 1) The name of the researcher and the name of the entity (name of the university, etc.) that will supervise the research.
- 2) The purpose, potential benefits and data collection method.
- 3) A statement that:
 - (a) participation in the research is voluntary and the participants may withdraw at any time without any consequences;
 - (b) research is conditional on the child's consent irrespective of whether the parent/guardian has consented to their participation;
 - (c) data to be collected will be used solely for the purposes of the specific research and all necessary measures will be taken for the safe storage of the research data;
 - (d) participants' anonymity will be safeguarded;
 - (e) where a pupil is privately interviewed, a school teacher will also be present during the interview;
 - (f) in the case of audio/video recording, the data will be used solely for the purposes of the specific research.
- 4) The time needed for collecting the data.
- 5) The researchers' contact details to be used in case of questions/queries.
- 6) The contact details of a person at the respective entity (university, etc.), not involved in the research, to whom they are to submit complaints (applicable for researchers carrying out research under the supervision of an entity).

II. The tools to be used (questionnaires, interviews) must:

- (a) briefly state the purpose of the research and the potential benefits;
- (b) contain the following statements:
 - 1) The participants' anonymity will be safeguarded.
 - 2) Participation in the research is voluntary and the participants may withdraw from the research at any time without any consequences.
 - 3) The data to be collected will be used solely for the purposes of the specific research.

III. The academic project manager's signed statement must include a statement that they approve the research tools and the content of the application submitted to the must

Contact

Researchers may send any questions or queries relating to the process of submitting their application by email at keea@cyearn.pi.ac.cy.