CYPRUS PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE
CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING APPLICATIONS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

General

1. **Why is it necessary to follow the procedure of requesting a permit to conduct research?**

   The reason why you are asked to follow the established procedure for obtaining a permit for the research you would like to conduct is to ensure that the conduct of the research proposed does not violate basic ethical rules, the compliance with which is a very important obligation of each researcher. If you intend to conduct research in public schools, you must respect the rights and protect the interests of students and teachers participating in the research. For example, the research to be carried out must not expose the students to stimuli inappropriate for their age, concern highly sensitive matters or take up too much of the participants' time, to the detriment of their school work and the attainment of the objectives of the curricula.

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2. **Why do I have to fill in all parts of the detailed research plan (DRP)?**

   The application must be properly filled in to ensure that the research will be conducted with respect for key principles of morality and research ethics. Moreover, the researcher must demonstrate that the research has been designed so as to serve a specific and clear purpose, that it will be carried out on the basis of a clear plan and that the results will benefit education and society in general.

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3. **I am a teacher, and the research will be carried out in my class/school. Do I have to submit a DRP and obtain a permit?**

   In cases where the research will be conducted by teachers at the schools where they work and falls within the scope of the objectives set in the curricula and/or for the evaluation of the students and/or the personal professional development of the teachers and/or the improvement or development of the school, it is not necessary to submit a Detailed Research Plan to the CERE. However, if the research intends to address sensitive issues, the researcher must contact the CERE and seek clarification as to whether the established procedure for obtaining a permit must be followed. Moreover, the researcher-teacher must protect the participating students from any negative consequences that may arise from their refusal to participate in the research, as well as from their decision to terminate their participation during the research process. Furthermore, if participation in the research is linked to the provision of additional benefits (e.g. grades), there must be alternative ways by which the students can obtain the same benefits, if they choose not to participate in the research.

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4. **I would like to obtain an extension of the period of validity of the permit for data collection. Do I have to submit a new DRP?**

   No. However, in cases where it is necessary to extend the approved period during which the research data are expected to be collected, you must contact the CERE by email, briefly indicating and documenting your request. In this email, you must also state the reference number given to the Detailed Research Plan that had already been submitted and approved. The CERE will forward your application to the relevant department.

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5. **I would like to continue/repeat my research by slightly changing some parts of it. Do I have to submit a new DRP?**

   No. However, in cases where it is necessary to continue or repeat a DRP that has already been approved, you must contact the CERE by email to briefly make and document your request. In this email, you must also state the reference number given to the Detailed Research Plan that had already been submitted and approved. The CERE will forward your application to the relevant department.

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6. **I would like to expand my research to another level of education. Do I have to submit a new DRP?**

   No. In cases where you would like to expand a DRP that has already been approved to an additional level of education, you must contact the CERE by email to briefly make and document your request. In this email, you must also state the reference number given to the Detailed Research Plan that had already been submitted and approved. The CERE will forward your application to the relevant department.

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7. **What are my obligations, as a researcher, in relation to the research that I will conduct?**

   Starting with the submission of the application, you must ensure that the information provided in the DRP is complete and accurate. Data collection is not allowed until a relevant permit has been granted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth. After obtaining a permit to conduct the research, you must provide all the necessary documents to the administrations of the schools involved, in order to obtain authorisation to access the school. Finally, you must ensure that the research will be conducted in accordance with the protocol described in the DRP submitted and that you will supervise the research activities, in order to ensure the rights, health, safety and wellbeing of the participants.

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Research tools

8. **Where do I have to pay attention to in relation to the research tools that I use?**

   All research tools to be used (questionnaires, interviewing protocols, observation forms, etc.) should be briefly described and attached to the application. If the research tools have resulted from 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. Wise - 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, so that it is not necessary to spend a huge amount of time in filling them out. Moreover, the tools should also have been carefully reviewed and edited, to avoid problems relating to spelling or other linguistic errors.

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9. What should I do if the research tools that I use cannot be attached (e.g. are in an electronic form)?

If the research tools to be used cannot be attached to the application, you should contact the CERE (keea@cyearn.pi.ac.cy) to arrange for the tools to be presented to the centre, where they will be examined. If the tools are available online, all necessary information must be provided (URL, passwords, etc.), so that they can be accessed by the CERE.

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Morality and research ethics issues

Informed consent to participate in the research

10. What is the informed consent of the participants and why should it be secured?

In accordance with international codes of conduct and ethics, the voluntary and informed consent of the participants is a prerequisite to the implementation of any research. Informed consent is the participants' consent to take part in the research, after they have been adequately informed about the research, their rights and obligations, as well as any risks (physical, psychological, emotional, legal, social and financial) they may be exposed to. In the case of pupils, in addition to the pupils' own consent, you must also obtain the written consent of their parents or guardians.

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11. What issues should potential participants be informed about before they are asked to give their consent?

In order to ensure informed consent, it is necessary to inform potential participants about the purpose of the research, the expected duration and the procedures, the right to withdraw from the research at any time, without any consequences, the possible risks they may be exposed to because of their participation, the expected benefits of the research, and how they can get a response to questions they may have in relation to the research and their rights.

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12. Whose informed consent do I have to obtain for participation in the research of persons under the age of 18?

In the case of persons under the age of 18, signed informed consent must be provided by their parents or those having parental authority or custody. It's worth noting that opt-out consent (on a parental consent form) cannot be understood as participation consent, except for special cases where this practice (opt-out) is duly justified with evidence.

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Anonymity and data protection

13. Why and how must the protection of participants' anonymity be safeguarded?

In all cases of research, the researcher must ensure that the participants will not suffer any negative consequences due to their participation in the process. Therefore, for example, it should not be possible to identify the teachers through their answers to a questionnaire that assesses the effectiveness or capabilities of a supervisory authority (e.g. the administration team of the schools, inspectors, etc.). This is achieved by protecting the anonymity of the participants in the research. Even in cases where, for methodological purposes, it is necessary to temporarily correlate the data with the

individuals from whom they were collected (e.g. in cases where pre-post data collection tools are provided), access to the relevant files must be exclusively limited to the members of the research team. Moreover, any form of identification must be deleted upon completion of the data collection process, to prevent any further connection of the data to specific individuals. Moreover, it is important to note that, under international law, any personal information that may be collected during a research project must not be used for purposes other than those for which the participants in the research gave their informed consent.

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In brief

14. Where can I get more information?

Various codes of conduct and other relevant documents relating to research issues are available on the following websites:

In Greek:

Code of Research Ethics of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki http://www.rc.auth.gr/dnnee/Portals/0/kodikas deontol/kwdikasdeontologias.pdf

Code of Research Ethics of the University of Ioannina http://www.rc.uoi.gr/Files/kodikas.htm

Code of Conduct of the University of Thessaly http://www.uth.gr/ereuna/ethics

Ethics Committee of the Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas http://www.forth.gr/index main.php?c=46&l=g

Form of instructions on how to fill in an application to the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Crete

http://www.psychology.uoc.gr/files/items/8/849/aitisi deontologia odigies.pdf

Article in the newspaper To BHMA entitled 'The dark side of science: tests on man', which presents the most flagrant cases of violation of ethical principles: http://www.tovima.gr/culture/article/?aid=114267

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In English

Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (American Psychological Association) http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx?item=1

Guidelines for Research with Children and Young People (National Children's Bureau Research Centre). http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/434791/guidelines for research with cyp.pdf

Ethical guidelines (Social Research Association) http://the-sra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/ethics03.pdf

History of ethics (Claremont Graduate University) http://www.cgu.edu/pages/1722.asp

Guidance Note for Researchers and Evaluators of Social Sciences and Humanities Research http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/fp7/89867/social-sciences-humanities en.pdf

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