

Document Name and Version	7.1 Ethics in Research: The Research Ethics Committee
Policy Number	7.1
Policies that Interact with Policy 7.1	7.2 Supervision of Masters and Undergraduate Research
Approval Body	Academic Council
Date of Approval	11 th September 2021
Date of Implementation	14 th September 2021
Date Policy Comes into Force	14 th September 2021
Review History	This policy replaces previous versions. It extends the scope of the Research Ethics Committee to Undergraduate research

1. Preamble.

- 1.1. IICP College is committed to promoting high ethical standards in research undertaken by its learners and staff.
- 1.2. IICP College has in place an Ethics Research Committee which plays an important role in ensuring the ethical standards and merit of research in IICP College.

2. Scope.

- 2.1. Learners and Staff in IICP College engaged in research with human subjects are required to obtain ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee prior to commencing data collection.
- 2.2. Requirements in IICP College's Masters and Undergraduate programmes require learners to carry out a research project that may involve human subjects and for which Ethical Approval is required.
- 2.3. Research activities that do not include research activities involving human participants do not require ethical approval.
- 2.4. Consequently, this policy applies to:
 - 2.4.1. Research at undergraduate and postgraduate level involving human participants.
 - 2.4.2. Research carried out by staff during the course of their employment involving human participants.
- 2.5. All undergraduate learners undertaking research activities are expected to include in their research supervision groups consideration of the ethics of their proposed research.

3. Purpose.

- 3.1. This policy sets out the process by which learners and staff must seek ethical approval for research projects involving human participants.

4. Roles and responsibilities.

- 4.1. The Academic Council is responsible for formally approving this policy and for overseeing its implementation.
- 4.2. The Academic Council is responsible for establishing a Research Ethics Committee.
- 4.3. The Research Ethics Committee is responsible for oversight of the ethics of Research Proposals submitted to it.
- 4.4. The Research Ethics Committee is responsible for communicating the outcome of ethics review to the Registrar and to the learner-researcher in writing.
- 4.5. The Registrar is responsible for the dissemination of information to the appropriate teaching staff.

5. Policy.

- 5.1. Learners and Staff in IICP College engaged in research with human subjects are required to obtain ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee prior to commencing data collection.
- 5.2. Programme requirements in some IICP College's programmes require learners to carry out a research project that may involve human subjects. IICP College research process includes a Research Ethics Committee in order to help to ensure that research meets the high ethical and scientific standards expected by the College the profession and society.
- 5.3. The Ethics Research Committee is established by the Academic Council for this purpose.
- 5.4. The main responsibility of a Research Ethics Committee is to protect potential participants in the research.

5.5. The Research Ethics Committee protects the rights of research participants in research carried out in IICP College postgraduate training programmes. In particular, the Committee takes into account:

5.5.1. Whether individuals receive sufficient, clear and readily understandable information about the research, in order to give informed consent to participate.

5.5.2. Whether appropriate strategies are in place to protect participants from potential adverse consequences of the research.

5.6. The Research Ethics Committee also take into account potential risks and benefits for the community in which the research will be carried out. This includes IICP College, the professional community of counselling and psychotherapy, and the communities in which participants live.

5.7. Terms of reference of the Ethics Committee

5.7.1.*Frequency of Meetings:* The IICP College Research Ethics Committee meeting at least once annually. Where possible, the Committee will schedule additional meetings as required to enable learners to resubmit their documentation, in order to facilitate their progression to the next stage of their programme.

5.7.2.*Membership:* The IICP College Research Ethics Committee consists of senior members of faculty plus at least one external member.

5.7.3.*Quorum:* There must be a minimum of five members of the Research Ethics Committee present, including at least one external member, in order to hold a meeting of the Ethics Committee.

5.7.4.*Chair:* The Chair rotates between senior members of the Faculty Team.

5.7.5.*Function:* The Research Ethics Committee is responsible for overseeing the ethics of research at IICP College and for granting approval to research projects at IICP College. The Research Ethics Committee is concerned with issues of risk and ensuring ethical practice in learner research.

5.8. *Reporting Arrangements:* In the case of learners, the committee communicates the outcome of ethics review to the Registrar and to the learner-researcher in writing. Relevant faculty members, including the research supervisor and the programme

leader have access to the written outcome. In the case of staff, the Committee communicates the outcome of ethics review to the researcher in writing. Where the outcome is deferred approval or non-approval, clear written guidelines are given to regard to the revisions that are required.

6. Procedure (Learners).

- 6.1. Learners work with faculty members to identify a research area of interest. Throughout this process, and as part of the module, ethical considerations are explored.
- 6.2. Each programme will have a specific Research Ethics Form made available in its handbook.
- 6.3. Learners submit their Ethics Application through Moodle. The Application consists of:
 - 6.3.1. A Research Proposal (Postgraduate learners only);
 - 6.3.2. The completed IICP College Ethics Form;
 - 6.3.3. Supporting documentation, including Participant Information Sheet and Research Consent Form.
- 6.4. These documents are downloaded and disseminated to the members of the Ethics Committee by a designated Faculty member.
- 6.5. The Ethics Committee review each project application in advance of the meeting.
- 6.6. Outcome: The Ethics Committee may:
 - Approve the research in its current format.
 - Approve the research in principle (where the application is ethically sound; however minor adjustments are required before commencement).
 - Defer approval (this occurs in instances where the committee could not make a decision and needs to consult or seek further advice).

- Not approve the study (this occurs in instances where there are clear flaws in the application and a major revision is required).

6.7. The committee will then communicate the outcome of the review to the Registrar and to the learner in writing. In the case of deferred approval or non-approval, clear written guidelines are given to learners with regard to the revisions that are required.

7. Supporting Documentation.

7.1. Example of a Participant's Agreement Form (Masters Programme)

It has been explained to me that my therapist _____ wishes to use a recording of our work, and some information from our therapy sessions, in order to complete a case study based on clinical work in a programme of study at IICP College: Master of Arts in Pluralistic Counselling and Psychotherapy. I am aware that my participation in this case study is voluntary. I understand that:

- If, for any reason, I wish to withdraw my consent to participate in this case study I may do so without having to give an explanation on or before _____.
- The data will be used for a written paper assignment.
- A pseudonym will be used in the written assignment.
- All copies of the recording will be deleted, and the recording erased, when the programme is complete.
- While every effort will be made to ensure that the data gathered in this interview are confidential and anonymous, it has been explained to me that if there is a danger to the safety or welfare of any person, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Based on the above information, I grant permission for the use of this information for a written paper assignment: Yes ☐ No ☐

I have read the above form, and, with the understanding that I can withdraw as stated above, and for whatever reason, I consent to participate in today's recording.

Participant's signature

Date:

Therapists' signature

Date:

Based on the above information, I grant permission for the use of this information for academic publication purposes: Yes ☐ No ☐

Copy of Consent Form to be given to Client