Researchers in Catholic Schools and Access to Data on Catholic Schools

Appendix 1: MACS Requirements for Seeking Approval and Conducting Research

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) values high quality and ethical research that aims to improve the outcomes of students, staff and families in Catholic school communities.

Specifically, MACS welcomes research that:

- supports and improves student learning, wellbeing and engagement
- strengthens school leader, teacher and parent capability to support children and young people's learning and development
- encourages jurisdictions, government and community partners to reflect on an

MACS approval is NOT required from:

1. School staff undertaking research in their own school for the purposes of ongoing learning, reflection and improvement, and with no intention to publish the findings in the public domain.

2. Student researchers wishing to conduct research as part of **undergraduate study or postgraduate study at diploma, honours or masters level** IF the research:

    a. is appropriate for a student researcher to conduct in school/s (i.e. the topic is not sensitive according to *Section 8. Sensitivities*, and the methodology is not intrusive)

    b. is 'negligible' or 'low' risk research according to the NHMRC guidelines, and therefore highly unlikely to raise co.388519 (c)9 A8eO.6 (.388519 (sl f.6 (o)-6. (r).3 (h)2ar7 (it)-8519 (c)ip (.3883 (a)103 (in)2t1 (e)-3 (d)T0 Tc

If the researcher/s choose to submit to MACS and the ethics committee simultaneously, a copy of the institution's ethics approval and all revised documentation need to be submitted to MACS before final approval will be issued.

Language

It is expected that all documentation will have been proofread and edited before submission. MACS will not provide editing feedback, unless the information is confusing or misleading to schools or participants.

If the research is targeting school communities with participants who speak English as a second language, researchers should consider having plain language statements, consent forms and instruments translated into the participants' preferred language.

The review process can take up to 6 weeks once a completed application has been submitted. The timeline can be shorter or longer depending on: the complexity and sensitivity of the research project; how quickly the researcher/s can respond to feedback and amendment requests; and the volume of MACS applications at the time.

Applications are reviewed using the _National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research_, as well as the MACS _Researchers in Catholic Schools and Access to Data on Catholic Schools._ Advice is sought as required from relevant MACS teams, school staff, MACS Research Committee and colleagues from other Australian jurisdictions.

Feedback is provided in the online Research Register, and researchers are notified by email to log-in to the system and respond to MACS queries and requests for change. The review and communication process is all conducted within the Research Register to ensure accurate records are maintained. If all requirements are addressed, the application is recommended for approval.

Approve

The principal researcher and primary contact named in the online application will receive formal notification of the outcome via email. If the application is approved, the email will contain MACS' standard conditions of approval, as well as any additional conditions already communicated and agreed through the review process.

Decline

It is MACS' intention to work with researchers to approve applications that meet MACS requirements and have the potential to add value to participants, schools and/or MACS. Occasionally, an application will be declined if MACS requirements are not met as outlined in _Section 4. Research that MACS is unlikely to support._ The reason/s for declining the application will be clearly communicated to researchers via email and in the Research Register.

Withdraw

Researchers may wish to withdraw their application if they no longer need MACS approval or if they are unable to meet MACS requirements outlined during the review process. This can be actioned by the researcher from within the Research Register, or by sending an email to research@macs.vic.edu.au. MACS can also withdraw an application if researchers do not respond to clarifications or change requests within six months of submission.

Once an application is approved, researchers can approach principals in Melbourne Catholic schools inviting them to participate. Principals then decide whether the research will add value to their school community and give informed consent. Principal consent must be granted before the research can begin or any participant is approached.

Please note, MACS does not play a role in promoting external research, recruiting schools or providing contact details.

If researchers wish to make changes to their application, either before or after it has been approved, they are
require

It is expected that when researchers conduct research in Melbourne Catholic schools, they do so on the basis that