CPIT
CHRISTCHURCH POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY Te Wānanga o Ōtautahi

Research Ethics

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Major changes/additions since the previous version are indicated by a vertical line in the left hand margin.

Section 1 : Policy Overview

1.1 Policy Statement

Ethical considerations related to any research, (as defined in the policy 'Research & Scholarly Activities') conducted at or under the auspices of CPIT are taken into account during the planning, implementation, analysis and dissemination phases of the project. Researchers and nominated supervisors are responsible for ensuring ethical standards are met. Approval to carry out the proposed research is not finalised until all ethical implications are identified and resolved, particularly if human or animal subjects/participants are involved. Any misconduct associated with research is handled swiftly and thoroughly.

1.2 Application of Policy

a This policy applies to all research (as defined in the policy, 'Research & Scholarly Activities') conducted at or under the auspices of CPIT, particularly if human or animal subjects/participants are involved.

b Although the principles of ethical conduct apply to all research and researchers, formal ethics clearance via the relevant Ethics Sub-committee is required only for research that involves human or animal subjects/participants.

c This policy relates primarily to ITPNZ Academic Quality Standard 11 (Research).

1.3 Formal Delegations & Variation to Policy

Delegations related to research are approved by the Academic Board and attached to the policy, 'Research & Scholarly Activities'. Current delegations particularly relevant to this policy include:

- Approval of research projects: To the Board's central Research Committee (ARC) or formally established Faculty/School Research Committees as endorsed by ARC.
- Consideration of ethical issues re academic research and recommendation of approval to ARC: To the ARC Human Ethics or Animal Ethics Subcommittee.

All policies on CPIT's InfoWeb are the current version. Please check date of this hard copy before proceeding.

- Ethics clearance for new student generic research assignments: To ARC Human Ethics or Animal Ethics Subcommittee.
- Ethics clearance for subsequent delivery of approved research assignments: To Faculty Ethics Advisers.
- Ethics clearance for oral history research: To Broadcasting School Research Committee.

1.4 Definitions

a ARC: The Academic Board's central Research Committee operating at CPIT.

b Ethical principles: Principles of respect, justice, honesty and competence that guide the researcher's interactions with all persons, organisations/bodies and animals involved in any stage of a research project.

c Anonymity: Management of private data collected during any phase of a research project in such a way that no subject's/participants' identity (including individuals, organisations, other bodies) can be linked with his/her responses, even by the researcher.

d Confidentiality: Management of private data collected during any phase of a research project in such a way that no subject's/participant's identity (including individuals, organisations, other bodies) can be linked to the disseminated research report.

e Deception: Non-disclosure or misinformation provided to subjects/participants/others regarding the purpose of all or any stage of the research project, including the way data will be used or published (note that in some cases 'limited deception' is acceptable as part of the research methodology—refer Section 2).

f Privacy: Freedom of each individual subject/participant to determine the time, extent and general circumstances under which private information will be shared with or withheld from others.

g Misconduct: Serious departure from accepted ethical principles, eg privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and deception; fabrication of data and/or claiming unsubstantiated results, plagiarism, misleading authorship or other deviations from the code of practice associated with the researcher's relevant discipline.

Further Documentation	**Related Policies**
Attachments: • Model forms: Information Sheet Consent Form Consent Form for Questionnaires or Interviews Consent Form for Transcriptions **Further Documents:** • Ethical Conduct Checklist and Additional Guidelines [included as part of Research Approval Application Form in the Appendices to Section 8, Academic Policies & Procedures Manual] • *Research Matters at CPIT: an information resource for staff* [InfoWeb or hard copy from Academic Division]	• Research & Scholarly Activities • All ARC approval forms/information [Appendices to Section 8, Academic Policies & Procedures Manual] • Resolving Staff Performance or Conduct Issues • Intellectual Property • Code of Professional Practice • Disclosing Personal Information about Students and Staff
Notes: Nil	

2.1 Ethical Standards and Requirements

a All researchers (staff, students, contract/external researchers, supervisors) at CPIT are expected to adhere to the standards of ethical behaviour outlined below during the planning, implementation, analysis and dissemination phases of research[1]. The Academic Board delegates to the central Research Committee (ARC) responsibility for ensuring these standards are reflected in the research approval criteria and that they are addressed before approval to proceed is given.

i Researchers are committed to the highest standards of professional conduct in undertaking and supervising research. Misconduct is taken seriously and handled swiftly (refer Section 2.7).

ii Researchers participate only in projects conforming to accepted ethical standards, including standards for the protection and safety of human/animal subjects and participants. This includes obtaining informed and voluntary consent from all subjects/participants or their agents and protecting privacy and confidentiality (refer Sections 2.3 and 2.4).

iii Researchers participate only in projects which they are competent to participate in and/or for which they receive adequate supervision.

iv Ethics clearance is obtained from the relevant CPIT Ethics Sub-committee operating on behalf of the ARC before commencing any research involving human/animal subjects or participants. Each researcher provides sufficient information about the research design and data analysis method so that any ethical implications can be identified and assessed.

v Any research project that requires ethics clearance from ethics committee/s other than what operates at CPIT (eg Canterbury District Health Board, another tertiary institution) must be declared at the time the project is submitted to the CPIT Human or Animal Ethics Subcommittee. No research project subject to multiple ethics approval can commence without approval of all such committees.

vi Researchers are aware of and disclose any real or potential conflict of interest, including situations in which a staff member's own students are involved as subjects/participants (refer Section 2.5).

vii No data is falsified or materials plagiarised. Original data are maintained for at least five years from publication.

viii All researchers who make a significant contribution (and none who have not) are acknowledged as doing so.

b The Human Ethics Sub-committee of ARC publishes an ethics checklist and further guidelines to assist researchers when preparing an application for approval (refer attached). Assistance is also available from any member of the Subcommittee, the Dean of Research or the Human Ethics Advisers in Schools/Faculties. Assistance related to the Animal Ethics Subcommittee is available through the School of Applied Science.

[1] These guidelines are based on initial work done by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee in 1989, 1990 and 1997) and subsequently adopted by several New Zealand universities.

2.2 Cultural and Social Responsibility

a Research projects are designed so that the methodology is appropriate to the subjects and participants involved and is carried out in an informed manner that respects the social and cultural sensitivity of the particular population as a whole. The three principles of Participation, Protection and Partnership are incorporated into how the research is conducted and shared.

b Where any Maori population is the focus of or is involved in a research project, the principles are interpreted according to those implicit in the Treaty of Waitangi.

c The following, based on the Health Research Council's Guidelines for Researchers (1998), is provided as a starting point for researchers to identify relevant cultural and social issues that may arise. Further information is accessible at http://www.hrc.govt.nz/.

i In any research, consideration is given to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi when planning appropriate consultation and research procedures.

ii The purpose of consultation is to ensure that the research procedures are appropriate and acceptable to the particular population. It should therefore begin as early as possible and continue throughout the research.

iii Where a research project involves persons from a culture or language group other than the researcher/s', consideration is given to the preferences of the potential participants as to consultation, the language used, documentation (including any necessary translations), analysis and reporting.

iv Research procedures are designed so they are appropriate to the participants. Researchers are responsible for informing themselves of and taking the necessary steps to respect the social/cultural/language sensitivities of all participants.

v Researchers also are responsible for identifying the potential implications or interests of other cultures or groups in relation to the research process or outcomes.

2.3 Informed Consent

a Potential research subjects/participants are made fully aware of the nature and purpose of the research before their formal consent is sought.

b Subjects'/participants' consent is sought without undue pressure or persuasion (eg the use of inducements beyond reasonable compensation or threats/implied threats of the consequences of not participating).

c Subjects/participants are made aware of their right to decline to participate in the research project and to withdraw from it at any time (including withdrawal of information they have provided, if the timing makes this possible), without providing a reason for their withdrawal.

d In most situations, information about the research is given in writing and consent is obtained in writing (see attached sample consent form). When either of these is not practical or appropriate (eg telephone interviews, anonymous questionnaires and in cultural contexts where oral consent may be more appropriate), other forms of providing information and recording consent are acceptable, eg recording via some form of audio media or the researcher noting in writing that all steps have been completed. Note also that consent given on-line, as for an electronic survey, is acceptable.

e When an institution, organisation or other group is used to access potential subjects or participants, written support for the project is obtained from the authorised person/s.

f When potential participants are unable to or would find it difficult to give formal consent, proxy consent is obtained from the person/s authorised to do so (eg parent, teacher, caregiver). In such cases, reasonable attempts to obtain the subjects'/participants'

consent are made before accepting proxy consent. In no situation is anyone required to be involved against their will. Examples where proxy consent is acceptable include:

i children under 16 years of age
ii mentally incapacitated persons
iii unconscious patients.

2.4 Privacy and Confidentiality

a The 12 Privacy Principles as set out in Privacy Act 1993 apply to all research conducted at CPIT (refer 'Disclosing Personal Information about Students and Staff' policy).

b Subjects or participants (including individuals, organisations or other bodies) in any research project are not identified and data/information related to them cannot be linked to them unless they have given specific consent (refer Definitions in Section 1.4).

c Each researcher is responsible for the safe keeping and subsequent confidential destruction of consent forms and data (within the standard five year period).

2.5 Risk or Conflict of Interest

a For the protection of the researcher and subjects/participants, each researcher is responsible for identifying real or potential risks associated with the research project and including this in the information submitted to ARC and/or the Faculty/School Research Committee for approval, eg

i risks to the subjects/participant such as pain, stress, moral or cultural offence, conflict of interest
ii risks to CPIT, other institution/group and/or wider community through the findings of the research

b When a research project is submitted for approval, the proposed methodology (including the data analysis method) is evaluated to identify any flaws or limitations that may expose research participants, research consumers, the researcher or CPIT to potential risk or unnecessary inconvenience.

c Staff do not usually involve students as subjects/participants in their research projects if they are currently (or likely to be) teaching or assessing those students as well. An exception is when the standard methodologies associated with 'action research' are used, and all students are aware of the purpose of the research, are full participants and have input into the conclusions drawn. In other situations where student participation is unavoidable, the following safeguards are taken:

i The informed consent is obtained by another person on behalf of the staff member/s, making it clear that students are able to decline without any consequences.
ii Anonymous questionnaires are used, distributed and collected by someone other than the teaching team, eg staff member from another Faculty or Division.
iii Approval for student involvement is obtained from the CPIT Human Ethics Sub-committee at the initial planning stage of the research project.
iv The above steps are required even if ethics clearance has been obtained from another body (such as when the staff member is completing the project as part of enrolment in a higher qualification at another institution). The implications of involving one's own students are often overlooked.

2.6 Deception

a Temporary deception or non-disclosure of the true/full purpose of the research is permitted only when absolutely necessary for the validity of the research outcome (refer Definitions, Section 1.4). Prior approval from the ARC Human Ethics Subcommittee for any deception, however limited, is required. Researchers are therefore advised to contact the Subcommittee at the initial planning stage.

b If deception or non-disclosure unknowingly occurred, the researcher is responsible for contacting all those involved immediately, informing them of the situation and fully disclosing all relevant information about the project. Subjects/participants are given the opportunity to withdraw any data/information they have supplied and/or any further involvement in the project.

c The ARC is informed immediately as well and will ensure that others are informed as required (eg Chief Executive, Council, insurance company).

d Failure to follow the above steps is considered 'misconduct' (refer Section 2.7).

2.7 Misconduct in Research

a Misconduct related to any stage of research is taken seriously and CPIT is committed to handling any such instances as swiftly and thoroughly as possible. Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- i significant departure from ethical standards, especially related to informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, deception or the code of conduct related to the researcher's particular discipline/s (eg treatment of human or animal subjects or participants)
- ii fabricating or falsifying data and/or claiming unsubstantiated results
- iii plagiarism, including direct copying of resource materials, using other people's data without acknowledgement or deliberately using published or unpublished ideas from others without sufficient acknowledgement or consent
- iv misleading authorship, including listing contributors without their permission, not correctly acknowledging others' contributions or attributing work to people who have not made a significant contribution to the research
- v failing to comply with CPIT's stated policies and procedures related to research.

b If an allegation of research misconduct is made against a staff member, student or contracted researcher, CPIT follows the procedures set out in either the 'Resolving Staff Performance or Conduct Issues' or 'Raising Problems or Complaints' policy, although additional provisions apply:

- i An external person with relevant research expertise may be asked to work with the manager and/or investigation committee even at the initial stage.
- ii If human or animal subjects/participants are involved or if for any other reason safety of others could be an issue, some preliminary steps to reduce or contain any real or potential danger may be taken immediately.
- iii CPIT is obligated to ensure the safety of all interested parties, which may include publishers of allegedly fraudulent research, funding bodies contributing to the research, human subjects/other participants in the research or, in some cases, the general public. This may require some disclosure of the allegation before the investigation is completed.
- iv Any investigation or follow up actions may proceed to their conclusion even if the researcher/s resign from or no longer have any connection with CPIT. If the safety of others could be an issue, CPIT is obligated to complete the entire process.