



Conducting Research at Anglicare Guideline

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Applies to:

All Anglicare Southern Queensland (Anglicare) employees.

Applies to other persons, including contractors, consultants, students, volunteers and Community Service Commissioners.

Scope

Anglicare Southern Queensland (Anglicare) has a responsibility to ensure that all research¹ projects are conducted in accordance with the principles and standards of ethical and rigorous research. This includes ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, regulations, guidelines and codes of practice. Responsibility for ensuring research governance requirements are met falls principally to the institution that hosts the research and the researchers who conduct the research.

Purpose

The guideline provide direction for Anglicare employees and other stakeholders seeking to lead or support research within Anglicare.

Guideline

Types of research

Anglicare differentiates between four main types of research:

- Internal Research
- Research Partnerships
- External Research
- Commissioned Research.

Internal research

Research projects designed and conducted by Anglicare, with no external stakeholders involved, are referred to as internal research. All research projects are governed by the Research Governance and Ethics Policy Direction, must align to the Anglicare Research Strategy and adhere to the contents of these guidelines. In most cases, internal research conducted by Anglicare will be the responsibility of Research and Advocacy Team.

Research partnerships

Research partnerships involve projects in which we collaborate with researchers to design and conduct research for mutual benefit. These partnerships may include Linkage Grants, other grants and/or other contractual arrangements. Research partnerships projects are managed by the relevant staff (project initiator) and monitored by the Research and Advocacy Team to ensure effective oversight of research activities across Anglicare.

External research

To support the creation of new knowledge, Anglicare supports external research by providing access to research participants and/or data. In most cases, external researchers will be university staff or students.

¹ **Research** in this document also refers to any evaluation activity where one or more triggers for consideration of ethical review apply; thus, is subject to an ethical and/or governance review, either by the RGC alone, or both the RGC and a HREC.

This may include Anglicare staff who are required to complete a research project or course as part of their studies.

Anglicare through the Research and Advocacy Team encourages, supports and provides advice to employees who are interested in conducting research at Anglicare.

Commissioned research

Research may also be contracted or purchased by Anglicare to support the Anglicare Research Strategy and other Anglicare objectives as required. These projects are referred to as commissioned research.

Research process

All research conducted or supported by Anglicare, regardless of the type of research, must be approved, managed, monitored, and reported.

The general procedures for a complete research project lifecycle are set out below:



Figure 1 This is a guide only. The procedures may vary depending on the quality of the application and/or complexity of the topic.

1. Approval of research application

All research supported by Anglicare must undergo review to consider research quality, ethical requirements, legal compliance and appropriateness for Anglicare. External researchers are advised not to approach any Anglicare's services, facilities or offices directly. Any relevant queries can be directed to the Research and Advocacy Team.

There are two discrete review processes for research approval and research involving human participants or their data must not commence without written approval from both review processes.

Research Governance Committee (RGC) review

All requests to conduct research at Anglicare must be considered by the RGC. Approval to support research at Anglicare is at the discretion of RGC.

Researchers wishing to access any Anglicare's services, facilities and/or offices for research purposes are required to complete and submit a [Research Application Form](#) to the Research and Advocacy Team. The [Research Application Form](#) contains all pertinent information related to the conduct of research within Anglicare and outlines the key criteria against which research applications at Anglicare are assessed. These criteria are:

- alignment with the Anglicare Research Strategy
- resource requirements
- identified risks and the appropriateness of proposed risk mitigation strategies
- compliance with applicable legal, regulatory, jurisdiction, and other administrative requirements
- outcome of, and any recommendations from, the HREC ethical review.

The positive outcome of the RGC review is Anglicare's authorisation to conduct or support a research project. An approval from the RGC must be received before a research project can commence.

Human Resource Ethics Committee (HREC) review

The guidelines for conducting research involving humans are set out in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (the National Statement) issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

All research that involves more than a low level of risk requires review by a formally constituted [Human Research Ethics Committee \(HREC\)](#).

Research projects where an affiliated researcher is a member of the research team may seek an ethics review from the HREC at their organisation (e.g., university, government agency). Otherwise, ethical review must be sought from a NHMRC-approved HREC. There are [approximately 200 HRECs](#) across Australia.

The full ethics application, including evidence of ethics approval and any conditions imposed by the HREC, must be provided to the RGC before final approval of the project can be given by Anglicare. Approval by an HREC does not mean automatic approval of the project by Anglicare.

Involving animals in research

Research involving animal-assisted interventions including animal-assisted therapy and animal-assisted activities must adhere to the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#), and all those involved in the care and use of animals for research purposes must be aware of the relevant Commonwealth, state and territory legislation, including the [Animal Care and Protection Act 2001](#).

If the researcher is using animals in Queensland for any of the identified scientific purposes, they will be required to get [Animal Ethics Committee \(AEC\)](#) approval (as well as human ethics approval) to comply with the Queensland and Commonwealth legislation. See [Activities regarded as scientific purposes for the use of animals](#) for more information.

Oversight and review of an evaluation activity

Anglicare acknowledges that oversight of any evaluation activity is required, but ethical review is not always necessary.

Anglicare will be guided by the NHMRC's Ethical Considerations in Quality Assurance and Evaluation Activities for the consideration of ethical issues that may arise from an evaluation or QA activity, and in deciding the appropriate level of oversight for such activity.

Triggers for consideration of ethical review of an evaluation activity

Where one or more of the triggers below apply, the guidance provided in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 (National Statement) will be followed and an ethical review by a HREC will be required from research applicants or proponents.

- Where the activity potentially infringes the privacy or professional reputation of participants, providers, or organisations.
- Secondary use of data – using data or analysis from QA or evaluation activities for another purpose.
- Gathering information about the participant beyond that which is collected routinely. Information may include biospecimens or additional investigations/data gathering.
- Testing of non-standard (innovative) protocols or equipment.
- Comparison of groups and sub-groups.
- Randomisation or the use of control groups or placebos.
- Targeted analysis of data involving minority or vulnerable groups whose data is to be separated out of that data collected or analysed as part of the main QA or evaluation activity.

Where ethical review by a HREC is not required, Anglicare, through the RGC, will provide a statement which affirms that an alternative approach to ethical review was considered to be appropriate for the specific evaluation or QA activity, if this is required for publication purposes.

For external researchers who seek approval to advertise a research project that is not being conducted in any Anglicare services, facilities and/or offices, please contact the Research and Advocacy Team for advice.

2. Managing research projects

All research conducted at, or on behalf of, or in collaboration with Anglicare must be appropriately managed in accordance with legislation and standards listed in the Related Documents table. Approved research projects are managed at project team level by relevant staff (project initiator/researcher), and at organisation level by Research and Advocacy Team.

All research must consider, address and comply with requirements related to the following issues.

Risk management

Research should be managed within the context of the overarching *Risk Management Policy Direction*, which describes risk management as a core component of corporate governance. Risk management is considered in relation to the *Anglicare Risk Appetite Statement*, which defines the level of acceptable risk taking. Researchers and Anglicare must manage the risks associated with research projects. For research that requires access to Anglicare's data, they will be managed in accordance with the Information Management Policy Directions.

Intellectual property

Research has the potential to generate intellectual property that could one day be of benefit to the wider community. All Anglicare employees engaged in research should be aware of the responsibilities and obligations over intellectual property, including ownership, copyright and patents. The Anglicare *Intellectual Property Policy Direction* is designed to ensure intellectual property is protected for the benefit of relevant parties and society. All Anglicare employees must ensure that they comply with the *Intellectual Property Policy Direction*.

Privacy and confidentiality

Anglicare acknowledges the importance of privacy and requires researchers to respect the privacy and confidentiality of clients, employees, and all participants of research projects. All research involving the use of personal information must abide by the *Privacy Act 1998* (Cth).

Researchers given access to confidential information must maintain the privacy, confidentiality and cultural sensitivities of participants. All information must be used responsibly and as participants have consented to it being used. Researchers must ensure that the privacy of participants is always safeguarded. A breach of confidentiality may constitute research misconduct.

Conflicts of interest

Anglicare is committed to ensuring that interests of any kind are dealt with consistently, transparently and with rigour. This is to ensure that where a conflict of interest arises, the individual will not be able to influence, or be perceived to influence, the proper performance of the researcher. The perception of a conflict of interest is as important as any actual conflict. A conflict of interest may affect a researcher's integrity, compromising the research process and governance.

Researchers and committee members must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they become aware of the conflict. Disclosures must be made in accordance with the *Conflicts of Interest Policy Direction*.

Complaints

Where a complaint or allegation of a potential breach of the Code is received, this should be directed to the Manager Research and Advocacy.

Contract management

Where projects involve external parties or collaborators, a contract or agreement must be developed and have appropriate legal review to protect researchers, participants and Anglicare. Research contracts must comply with the Procurement and Contract Management Policy Direction, clearly stating the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in a research project. Researchers who are Anglicare employees cannot sign legal agreements or research contracts. These can only be signed by the relevant Director or Executive Director.

3. Monitoring approved research

Anglicare's RGC is responsible for ensuring that all approved research is monitored. Monitoring of research refers to the process of verifying that the conduct of research follows the approved research proposal, and that it upholds the safety of research participants and best practice research. The process also ensures relevant HREC, governance and regulatory compliance.

The Research and Advocacy Team monitors and conducts follow-up of approved projects every six (6) months. All approved research projects are required to submit research progress reports at a minimum frequency of six (6) months using the Research Progress Report form.

4. Reporting research projects

Publication and dissemination of research is an important part of the research process. It allows for the findings and benefits of research to be circulated to a diverse range of researchers, research sponsors, participants, industry, policymakers and the public. The open, accurate and transparent communication of research methodology and results are fundamental to the Code.

Researchers should communicate their findings to the widest appropriate audience in forms that are accessible to that audience. Audiences may include research end-users, such as governments, industry, not-for-profit organisations, participants and the general public.

All research conducted or supported by Anglicare should be made available to Anglicare employees and participants involved in the research. Research may be reported in referred publications (e.g., journals) or in non-referred publications (e.g., conferences, social media). External publication should be done in accordance with the *Communications Policy Position*, *Corporate Identity Policy Direction* and *Web Publishing Policy Direction*.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research	The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) This guides institutions and researchers in responsible research practices and promotes integrity in research. It shows how to manage breaches of the Code and allegations of research misconduct, how to manage research data and materials, how to publish and disseminate research findings, including proper attribution of authorship, how to conduct effective peer review and how to manage conflicts of interest. It also explains the responsibilities and rights of researchers if they witness research misconduct.
Ethics	The concepts of right and wrong, justice and injustice, virtue and vice, good and bad, and activities to which these concepts apply.

Term	Definition
Evaluation	An evaluation activity generally encompasses the rigorous and systematic collection and analysis of information to assess the efficiency, effectiveness, appropriateness and sustainability of a program or its parts. It is a judgmental process, involving the assessment of findings against the identified standards, or outputs and outcomes, for the purpose of decision-making.
Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)	Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs) review research proposals that involve humans or their tissue or data. HRECs are established by organisations, which register their HREC with the NHMRC. It may also be referred to as the Reviewing HREC in multi-centre research studies. A Certified HREC has had its processes assessed and certified under the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) National Certification Scheme. NHMRC certification lasts for three years.
Low risk research	'Low risk' research is research in which the only foreseeable risk is one of discomfort. Where the risk, even if unlikely, is more serious than discomfort, the research is not low risk. 'Negligible risk research' describes research in which there is no foreseeable risk of harm or discomfort; and any foreseeable risk is no more than inconvenience.
National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)	The NHMRC is Australia's peak body for supporting health and medical research; for developing health advice for the Australian community, health professionals and governments; and for providing advice on ethical behaviour in health care and in the conduct of health and medical research. The NHMRC brings together within a single national organisation the functions of research funding and development of advice. It draws upon the resources of all components of the health system, including governments, medical practitioners, nurses and allied health professionals, researchers, teaching and research institutions, public and private program managers, service administrators, community health organisations, social health researchers and consumers.
National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research	The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) - Updated 2018. A guidance document developed by the NHMRC, the Australian Research Council and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee to provide guidelines for researchers, HRECs and others conducting ethical review of research. It also states institutions' responsibilities for the quality, safety and ethical acceptability of research that they sponsor or permit to be carried out under their auspices.
Research Governance Committee (RGC)	The role of the Research Governance Committee (RGC) is to provide research leadership to Anglicare Southern Queensland (Anglicare) to support our strategic objectives around evidence and innovation, and to support the development and effective management of research investment and initiatives as part of Anglicare's broader research strategy. The focus of the RGC is on research with Anglicare staff and/or clients, as well as research that aligns to mission and supports our advocacy efforts.
Research Strategy	The Anglicare Research Strategy outlines the scope of, and priorities for, research activities at Anglicare. All research activities must align to the priorities and themes outlined in the Research Strategy.
Risk in research	A potential for harm, discomfort or inconvenience. (National Statement, NHMRC, 2007[Updated 2018]). The National Statement defines risk as 'a potential for harm, discomfort or inconvenience' (sec. 2). Potential harms may be physical, psychological, social, economic, legal or involve devaluation of personal worth. Less serious than harm is discomfort, which might include, for example, anxiety induced by an interview. Less serious again is inconvenience. Examples of inconvenience may include filling in a form or giving up time to participate in research.

Related documents

Policy position	Communications Policy Position Governance and Risk Management Policy Position
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Policy direction	<p>Client Feedback and Complaints Management Policy Direction</p> <p>Conflicts of Interest Policy Direction</p> <p>Corporate Identity Policy Direction (TBD)</p> <p>Intellectual Property Policy Direction</p> <p>Research Governance and Ethics Policy Direction</p> <p>Procurement and Contract Management Policy Direction</p> <p>Risk Management Policy Direction</p> <p>Web Publishing Policy Direction (TCD)</p> <p>Information Management Policy Direction</p>
Legislation/standards	<p>Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)</p> <p>National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</p> <p>Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders</p> <p>Keeping research on track II</p> <p>AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research 2020</p> <p>NHMRC Ethical Considerations in quality assurance and evaluation activities</p> <p>Animal Care and Protection Act 2001</p> <p>The Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes</p>
Other	<p>Anglicare Research Strategy</p> <p>Conducting Evaluation at Anglicare Guideline (currently being developed)</p> <p>Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research (2018), National Health and Medical Research Council</p> <p>Research Application Form</p>

Owner:

Director Mission

Primary contact:

Manager Research and Advocacy

Review history

Risk and review categorisation: Low risk – review every 3 years

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	17/08/2021	This is a new guideline developed to support the Research Governance and Ethics Policy Direction.
2.0	21/10/2022	Added in an evaluation section; updated application process; updated definitions and links to external resources; updated the name of the responsible team, owner and primary contact details.