

**The University of Hong Kong  
Department of Psychology  
Departmental Research Ethics Application Overview  
Undergraduate Theses and Independent Studies**

All undergraduate theses and IS projects are required to undergo ethics review by the Departmental Research Ethics Reviewer. Applications should be submitted to the **General Office, Department of Psychology (Rm 627, Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus)**. Each research ethics application should include the following:

- A) Application Form [[click here](#)]
  - A.i) Amendment Form  
For subsequent amendment of an approved project OR application for extension of ethical approval, please fill in an amendment form [[click here](#)]
- B) One-page Summary of the Proposed Research  
In the summary briefly describe the purpose(s) or objective(s) of the proposed project and include any hypothesis(es) or research questions to be investigated. Also, provide a brief, sequential description of the procedures to be used in this study. You may include a few references if you wish, but try to limit the proposal to one page.
- C) Informed Consent Form  
Please refer to Point 16, 17 & 18 of the Operational Guidelines and Procedures of HREC/NCF [<http://www.rss.hku.hk/HREC/guidelines.pdf>]
- D) Debriefing Form  
Debriefing notes should be written in a very general way in clear prose without jargon. The debriefing is meant to inform your participants of why you undertook the study and what you hope to find. It is a good practice to include debriefing note explaining your study in more details to your participants as a token of appreciation at the end of their participation, even if your study does not involve deception.
- E) Checklist for Research Ethics Application [[click here](#)]
- F) A Full Set of Questionnaires (if any)

### **Sample of Consent and Related Forms**

Please refer to the linkage below for sample of consent and related forms.

<http://www.rss.hku.hk/integrity/ethics-compliance/hrecncf-forms>

### **Research Ethics**

You may see the submission of your ethics approval as a challenge in effective communication. It gives you an opportunity to express yourself clearly and precisely to readers (reviewer plus participants) less informed than you about the work you are undertaking. You will not be marked

for this, only approved or asked to resubmit if there is a problem about confidentiality or deception. Nonetheless, it is also an exercise in writing, in which we can all find grounds for improvement.

### **Application Deadline**

- Application deadline is **15th November**.
- For students who are approved to start their thesis / IS project in 2nd semester, they have to submit their application before **1st March**.

**Remark: If the submission day is a holiday, it will be postponed to the following working day.**

Late submissions will be penalized. Failure to submit an ethics application will lead to a failure in the course.

Please note that researchers may be asked by the reviewer to revise and re-submit their ethics application. After revision, students should submit their finalized package to the reviewer. Normally the reviewing process should be completed within 2 - 3 weeks (from the date of first submission). This duration also applies to application for amendment.

### **Exemption**

Students, applying for exemption from ethical approval, have to submit an application form [[form](#)] together with a one-page summary of the proposed research before the deadline of ethics application. The application will be submitted to the Chair of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee for consideration.

### **Approval**

For each approved ethics application, the Chair (or delegate) of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee will sign the consent form to indicate that the study has been approved and should be collected by the student. An approved ethics is valid for one year, unless an extension has been granted.

### **Flow Charts**

1. Student  $\longleftrightarrow$  Supervisor
2. Student  $\rightarrow$  Departmental Research Ethics Committee (via General Office)
3. Departmental Research Ethics Committee  $\rightarrow$  Reviewer
4. Reviewer  $\longleftrightarrow$  Student (c.c. Supervisor).
5. Student (revised / additional materials)  $\rightarrow$  Reviewer
6. Reviewer (sign for approval)  $\rightarrow$  Departmental Research Ethics Committee
7. Departmental Research Ethics Committee (approved Consent Form)  $\rightarrow$  Student