

## **When do I need Ethics Approval?**

### **Question 1:** When is ethics approval required at Monash University?

Ethics is required for research activities. The decision to classify an activity as research is made by you as researchers, your departments, or faculties. Once an activity is classified as research, it becomes subject to ethics approval. Traditional research activities, such as thesis work, honours, masters, and PhDs, require ethics approval. Publications in journals and conference presentations outside Monash University also require ethics approval.

### **Question 2:** What non-traditional research outputs require ethics approval?

For those in creative fields, it can be challenging to identify where the research element lies. You need to determine this to decide if ethics approval is needed. If your activity is research involving humans, you need to consider the role of the people involved—whether they are participants, collaborators, or academics providing advice. This will influence whether ethics approval is required.

### **Question 3:** How do you determine the role of people involved in your research?

Consider if they are co-researchers, participants, or have another role. The closer the relationship between you and the participants, the less comfortable they may feel declining participation. This needs to be clearly explained in your ethics application to ensure voluntary participation.

Before we continue, how many of you have dealt with ethics or gone through the ethics process at Monash? How was your experience? Easy or challenging? We've received good feedback overall, but I'm happy to discuss any issues to improve the process for future applications.

Next, let's delve into the scenarios. Here are some issues to consider for practice-based research. It can be challenging to provide a full picture required for an ethics submission. You need to explain the role of everyone involved and the constantly changing environment.

### **Question 4:** How do you handle coercion in recruiting participants?

You need to avoid coercion, ensuring participants feel comfortable declining participation. This must be clearly explained in your ethics application.

### **Question 5:** How do you address anonymity and identification in research?

While anonymity is important, it may not always be feasible, especially when dealing with well-known individuals. The ethics application form is a template meant for the entire university. Respond to it as clearly as possible, knowing the ethics committee includes members from various backgrounds.

### **Question 6:** How do you manage privacy and data use in research?

Decide how to handle privacy and data use, giving participants options regarding their anonymity. Consider the long-term implications of the research on participants.

The ethics committee reviews research proposals to ensure they comply with the national statement, which includes principles of research merit and integrity, beneficence, justice, and respect. This is also covered in the human research ethics online module, which is mandatory for all

researchers conducting human research. Completion of this module is required for ethics application approval.