Ethics Studio

Characteristics of low risk projects. Guidance on determining whether your project falls under a minimal or standard risk category.

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NH&MRC National Statement

Assessment of risks involves:
• identifying any risks;
• gauging their probability and severity;
• assessing the extent to which they can be minimised;
• determining whether they are justified by the potential benefits of the research; and
• determining how they can be managed.

Assessment of risks engages:
• researchers, who need to identify, gauge, minimise and manage any risks involved in their project;
• institutions, in deciding the appropriate level of ethical review for research projects;
• Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs) and other ethical review bodies (see paragraph 5.1.7), in reviewing research proposals and making judgements on whether risks are justified by potential benefits;
• participants’ perceptions of risks and benefits. These perceptions are a factor to be considered by review bodies in deciding whether the risks are justified by the benefits.
First hurdle

• External Requirements:
• Is the research being funded by an agency outside the University, which requires Human Research Ethics Committee approval or involving community representation? [If “YES” then researchers must fill out the standard risk ethics application form] YES NO
• Does the research involve travelling overseas by any named researchers to collect data? [If “YES” then researchers must fill out the standard risk ethics application form] YES NO
Three main factors to consider:

- Topic
- Procedure
- Participants
• Are there any risks to the researcher, (e.g. research undertaken in unsafe environments or trouble spots)?
YES NO
SPECIAL CASE ASSESSMENT

• Reviewers are invited to make a special case if they have answered “YES” to an item in the checklist but still believe that because of the particular nature of the project and/or the participants the project may still be eligible for minimal risk review. The Human Ethics Advisory Group Executive then assesses whether the project can be reviewed as minimal risk. It is the HEAG Executive that decides if a project is minimal risk. YES NO

• Type here . . .
Case example

- Students under 18 at secondary school
- Co-designing an optimal performance/well-being program
- Measuring self-rated anxiety
- Using physiological measures of stress and resilience
- Taking videos/photos (with permission)
Thank you

Next Ethics Studio dates:
• 12 Sept
• 16 Oct
• 21 Nov
• 10 Dec