



Department of  
**Education**

# **Research Conducted by External Parties procedures**

Effective date: 19 August 2025

Version: 1.2

Last update date: 19 August 2025

These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Research Conducted by External Parties policy.

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**These procedures must be read in conjunction with the Research Conducted by External Parties policy.**

## 1. Policy supported

Research Conducted by External Parties policy

## 2. Scope

These procedures apply to all Department employees.

### Guidance

Research Conducted by External Parties includes research commissioned by Department schools or business areas and research initiated by external parties which involves:

- participants (staff, students, parents) recruited on or through Department sites/schools; or
- staff recruited in their capacity as Department employees, other than through Department sites/schools.

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 Assess research

#### 3.1.1 Research assessment criteria

Principals, site managers and the Director, System and School Performance must assess external research proposals in accordance with Appendix A: Research assessment criteria, taking into account:

- value
- quality
- impost
- ethical, legislative and policy requirements
- duty of care

- privacy and confidentiality
- data security
- sensitivity.

### Guidance

The Central Research Assessment Team supports the Director, System and School Performance in reviewing research applications submitted using the [External Research Application Form](#). Principals and site managers can also seek advice from the Central Research Assessment Team at [researchandpolicy@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:researchandpolicy@education.wa.edu.au).

Principals and site managers can request external research proposals to be submitted using the [External Research Application Form](#) to assist with their assessment of the proposed research.

### 3.1.2 Internal subject matter review

Directors and managers of central and regional services must provide advice based on specialist knowledge of their business area when requested to review a research application.

### 3.1.3 Research priorities

The Director, System and School Performance will assist in the assessment of research value by maintaining and publishing Department research priorities.

## 3.2 Approve research

### 3.2.1 Approving authorities

Principals and site managers must only approve research conducted on or through their site, including research by Department staff as part of tertiary qualifications, when the research is:

- low sensitivity; and
- restricted to their school/site or, for multiple sites, only when all principals and site managers have agreed to participate.

The Director of a business area commissioning research must assess and approve the proposed research.

The Director, System and School Performance is the only role authorised to approve:

- all other research proposals; and

- sensitive research or research proposing opt-out consent.

### Guidance

Low sensitivity research does not investigate sensitive research topics, adopt research methodologies that are sensitive in context; or target participants who may be vulnerable. A comprehensive explanation of sensitive research is available in [Appendix B: Sensitive Research](#).

Principals and site managers can seek advice from the Central Research Assessment Team at [researchandpolicy@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:researchandpolicy@education.wa.edu.au) to confirm the level of sensitivity of the research proposal.

Approval of a research proposal gives permission for the researcher to commence the recruitment of schools/sites, subject to principals/site managers agreeing to participate.

Research proposed in or through a Department site, requires consent from the principal or site manager for participation of the school or site, consent from all direct participants and consent from parents/carers for student participants under the age of 18 years.

### 3.2.2 Research that can and cannot be approved

Principals, site managers and the Director, System and School Performance who are responsible for approving research by external researchers must:

- only approve research that complies with the research assessment criteria detailed in [Appendix A: Research assessment criteria](#)
- not approve research that:
  - uses deception, concealment or withholding of information at any stage of the research
  - involves market research or is research for commercial gain, that has no direct school education value
  - encourages illegal or antisocial behaviours or could lead participants to legally incriminate themselves.

### Guidance

Research involving medical interventions or clinical trials of a medical nature requires Minister and Director General approval beyond the scope of this policy.

### 3.2.3 Evidence of central research approval

The Director, System and School Performance, in approving research proposals, must provide research applicants with a letter authorising the researcher(s) to approach principals or site managers to invite their school or site to participate in the research.

### 3.3 Register research

Principals, site managers and the Director, System and School Performance must register research they approve.

#### Guidance

A register of all research conducted on or through Department sites is maintained. To understand how to register commissioned or locally approved research, refer to [Manage requests to conduct research at your school or site \(staff only\)](#).

School/site approved research conducted on or through multiple sites, should be registered by one principal/site manager on behalf of all sites, ensuring that all participating sites are listed.

### 3.4 Participate in research

Principals and site managers must obtain from the researcher a copy of the Department letter authorising the researcher to approach the schools/sites for centrally approved research, prior to the research commencing.

Department staff approached to be a research participant, in their capacity as Department employees, must confirm that the researcher has Department authorisation and/or the approval of their principal/site manager to recruit participants.

#### Guidance

Even with approval to approach schools/sites, the final decision about participation in proposed research lies with the principal(s), site manager(s) and participant(s) who are not required to provide reasons should they decline to participate.

### 3.5 Monitor research

Principals and site managers must:

- monitor the conduct of research on their site to confirm that it is undertaken in accordance with the approved proposal, including any specified conditions
- confirm that staff who may be involved directly or indirectly in a research project are

aware of the Research Conducted by External Parties policy and procedures

- sight evidence of compliance with the *Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)* for all researchers who will have contact with children
- not allow inducements or incentives to be offered for participation in proposed research
- notify the researchers and the appropriate authority of any breaches of the approved research protocols, misconduct by researchers or complaints made about the research or the researchers.

### Guidance

Reimbursement of expenses, such as teacher relief payment for schools or travel expenses for individuals, or acknowledgement of effort or time involved in participating are not considered to be incentives.

## 3.6 Research conflicts of interest

Department staff must disclose actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest when conducting research in their own school/site as an external party and mitigate risk in compliance with the [Conflict of Interest policy](#).

## 3.7 Research amendments

Principals, site managers and the Director, System and School Performance must assess any proposed amendments to previously approved research in relation to [Appendix A: Research assessment criteria](#).

# 4. Definitions

### Central Research Assessment Team

The Central Research Assessment Team is established by the Director, System and School Performance with the purpose of undertaking assessment of external research applications, including seeking advice from relevant business areas, making recommendations for approval of research applications and maintaining a register of research being conducted on or through Department sites.

### External Parties

Individuals not directly employed by the Department, organisations, agencies, corporations, incorporated bodies and government departments that are sponsoring or undertaking research on or through Department of Education sites.

For the purposes of this policy, external parties include employees of the Department who undertake research for a tertiary qualification or for an external party.

### **Opt-in Consent**

A participant recruitment method where information is provided to the potential participant regarding the research and their explicit consent is required to take part in the research.

### **Opt-out Consent**

A participant recruitment method where information is provided to the potential participant regarding the research and their participation is presumed unless they take action to decline to take part in the research.

### **Research**

A process of systematic inquiry that collects, documents, analyses and interprets data and other information. Research can include evaluations, reviews or trials that assess the effectiveness of specific programs or can be more general in nature.

For the purposes of this policy, the following are excluded:

- undergraduate student assignments confined to one site when the research activities are undertaken as part of normal teaching practice
- member-related research, for consultation purposes, commissioned or conducted by education-related professional associations, unions and parent bodies.

### **Schools/sites**



For the purposes of this policy schools/sites is taken to include, in addition to public schools, all Department facilities, including central services, regional offices, Intensive English Centres, Instrumental Music School Services, Schools of Special Education Needs, Swimming and Water Safety programs, Language Development Centres, Camp Schools, Community Kindergartens, Child and Parent Centres and all off-site facilities.

### **Sensitive Research**

Research is sensitive when it directly or indirectly investigates sensitive topics, adopts research methodologies that are sensitive to the context or targets participants who may be vulnerable.

A comprehensive explanation of sensitive research is available in [Appendix B: Sensitive Research](#).

### **Site Manager**

School principals and officers who have executive responsibility for overall management of any Department site.

## **5. Related documents**

### **Relevant legislation or authority**

*Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)*

*Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024 (WA)*

*Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA)*

*School Education Act 1999 (WA)*

*Vocational Education and Training Act 1996 (WA)*

*Volunteers and Food and Other Donors (Protection from Liability) Act 2002 (WA)*

2024 WA Government Cyber Security policy

Public Sector Code of Ethics (WA)

*Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)*

*Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)*

## **Related department policies**

[Child Protection in Department of Education Sites policy](#)

[Criminal History Screening for Department of Education Sites policy](#)

[Conflict of Interest policy](#)

[Cyber Security policy](#)

[Duty of Care for Public School Students policy](#)

[Information Breach policy](#)

[Intellectual Property policy](#)

[Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing policy](#)

[Risk and Business Continuity Management policy](#)

[Students Online in Public Schools policy](#)

[Visitors and Dignitaries at Public Schools and Residential Facilities policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety policy](#)

[Working with Children Checks in Department of Education Sites policy](#)

## **6. Contact information**

### **Policy manager:**

Manager, System Performance

### **Policy contact officer:**

System Performance

Department of Education

151 Royal Street

EAST PERTH WA 6004

T: (08) 9264 5512

E: [researchandpolicy@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:researchandpolicy@education.wa.edu.au)

## 7. History of changes

Effective date	19 August 2025
Last update date Procedure version no.	1.0
Notes	Approved by the Director General on 1 November 2024
Effective date	19 August 2025
Last update date	19 August 2025
Procedure version no.	1.1
Notes	Minor change to Appendix A – update to National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research – approved by Director, System and School Performance D25/0499939
Effective date	19 August 2025
Last update date	19 August 2025
Procedure version no.	1.2
Notes	Minor changes to guidance in section 3.3 link to Ikon, update ‘Related documents’ section and Appendix A section 6 to include the Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024 (WA). Approved by Director, System and School Performance D25/0682237

## 8. Appendices

Appendix A: [Research assessment criteria](#) (PDF file - 837.9kB)

Appendix B: [Sensitive research](#) (PDF file - 711.9kB)

## 9. More information

### Supporting content

#### Policy

[Research Conducted by External Parties policy](#)

#### Guideline

[Support material for research conducted by external parties - information letter and consent form templates - effective 19 August 2025](#)

[Guidelines for external researchers - effective 19 August 2025](#)

### Procedure review date

19 August 2028

### Procedure last updated

19 August 2025