

GUIDELINES and FORMS FOR APPLICANTS WISHING TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE DIOCESE OF CAIRNS

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are intended for researchers wishing to conduct research within Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns. Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns welcomes research projects in its schools and education centres where it can be demonstrated that it will assist to maintain and improve the provision of quality Catholic education. Any approvals granted are in principle only and are subject to the provision of satisfactory evidence of the nature and standard of the research as well as the approval of the participating school principal.

IDENTIFYING SCHOOLS

Lists of schools located within the Diocese of Cairns are located on the Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns website <http://www.cns.catholic.edu.au> under *schools*.

All schools within the Diocese operate under the auspices of the Executive Director of Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns.

APPROVAL BY CATHOLIC EDUCATION SERVICES

Please note that any submissions to conduct research in schools in the Diocese of Cairns requires approval from Catholic Education Services.

REPORTING TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION SERVICES

It is a condition of approval that, upon completion of a project, the researcher will provide Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns with a copy of the research findings and provide the schools in which the research was carried out with a summary of the research findings, along with permission for Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns to disseminate reports to its personnel.

Please refer to **Form C** “*Agreement to provide research findings to Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns*”.

RESEARCH NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO EDUCATION

Catholic Education Services will only give approval for non-educational research projects to have access to schools where there is a demonstration of significant public benefit outweighing the inconvenience to school communities.

COPYRIGHT

Staff employed in Catholic schools and Catholic Education Services in the Diocese of Cairns who wish to conduct research need to be aware that where a publication is made by an employee in the course of employment and as part of the employee's usual duties, the first owner of copyright will usually be Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns as the employer.

Any enquires in this regard should be forwarded to the Resource and Information Services Manager for consideration.

COMMERCIAL GAIN

It is not the intention of Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns to provide approval for research that is undertaken primarily for commercial or material gain.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Researchers must ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of any personal details/information collected from research participants is maintained at all times. This includes the maintenance of privacy and confidentiality in the publication of research data collected for the duration of the research project.

The Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 regulates the way in which organisations collect, use, keep secure and disclose personal information. Cairns Education Services has adopted and is bound by the thirteen Australian Privacy Principles established by the Federal Privacy Commission.

Please note that if a research participant discloses to a researcher, during a research project, confidential information in relation to sexual or physical abuse/harm or circumstances where a student's health, safety or well-being is in danger, the researcher is required to disclose this information to the school Principal or the Executive Manager - Professional Standards and Safeguarding, by calling (07) 40509700 immediately.

APPROVAL PROCEDURES

For applications to conduct research in Catholic systemic schools in the Diocese of Cairns

Details to be included in the application.

The following criteria are used by the Research Committee to approve applications to conduct research in Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns. [Link to Map of Schools](#)

The activities undertaken in the research activities are consistent with the values and teachings of the Catholic Church.

1. The research will assist to contribute to and improve the provision of quality Catholic education or has broader social contribution to the wellbeing and learning of school aged students.
2. The application has University Ethics approval. (application will not be progressed until this approval is given)
3. The research does not require the sampling of human tissue, hair or saliva.
4. The application requires informed consent and “opt in” from research participants or their caregivers.
5. For all research involving students, care giver consent is sought.
6. Participants are deidentified.
7. Data is stored in Australia and fulfills the requirements of Australian and Queensland Privacy Legislation.
8. All researchers working in schools have a current Queensland “Working with Children” Blue or Registration with the Queensland College of Teachers
9. The use of social media and/or online platforms conform to age restrictions.
10. The research is primarily for educational purposes.
11. The research is not used for commercial gain.
12. The researcher provides an annual update of their research, a list of schools in CEDC who are involved in the research and provides a copy of the final research report.

Please Note

- Applications that do not meet all criterion apart from 1 and 2 will not be presented to the committee.
- Incomplete applications will not be submitted to the committee.
- The decision of the research committee will not be subject to review. Researchers are welcome to resubmit a revised application form.
- **Final approval of all research conducted in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns is at the discretion of the Principal of the Catholic School.**

Timing of the Applications

The Catholic Education Research Committee will meet approximately ten times a year and the application needs to be submitted 14 days prior to the committee meeting.

CEDC Research Committee Dates for 2026:

Applications need to be submitted 14 days prior to the meeting.

20 February 2026

27 March 2026

1 May 2026

12 June 2026

31 July 2026

4 September 2026

9 October 2026

20 November 2026

Section 1:

All applications should be addressed to:

Mr Wayne Wood

Deputy Executive Director

Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns

PO Box 5296

CAIRNS Q 4870

Email: research@cns.catholic.edu.au

Principal Researcher Contact Details

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

The supervisor(s) of your research programme (where relevant)

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail address:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Are you currently employed in the Diocese of Cairns?

Yes

☐

No

☐

The title of your research proposal

Section 2:

A brief overview of the research project, describing the research procedures and the extent of student, teacher and parental involvement in the project.

A brief description outlining the benefits of the research to the participants.

For example, how will teachers and students benefit from your research?

Please specify any long term and more general benefits to the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns.

A brief description of the research design and methodology and any strategies to be employed to ensure validity and reliability.

Copies of data collection instruments, where available, should be attached.

A letter outlining the nature of the research must accompany approaches to school principals seeking approval to conduct research in respective schools for which they are responsible, and the commitment required of the school staff. *A copy of this letter must be included with the proposal.*

If appropriate to your research project, specify how you intend to obtain **parental approval** for contact with students in our schools and include examples of permission letters/consent forms.

Provide details of procedures for establishing confidentiality and procedures for protecting privacy of the participants including information management practices.

Information should only be collected for the purpose of this research application. Any subsequent use of information must be clearly outlined in your application and must have ethical approval from a university ethics committee.

List the schools or groups that will be requested to participate in the research. Include the name of the school and the suburb.

Indicate the period of the year during which the research activity will commence and be concluded.

Also, indicate the **estimated amount of time required** of the school and any individual participants in the research.

All applications must be signed and dated by the principal researcher.

Please attach a copy of the Ethical Clearance approval from your university/institution.



Confidential Declaration by Principal Researcher

(Where a research project involves any contact with a school in the Diocese of Cairns)

- a) I am aware of and will comply with the special responsibilities associated with undertaking research with children and young people, specifically, my responsibilities and obligations under the *Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998*
- b) I declare that there are no other circumstances or reasons that might preclude my undertaking research with children and young people.
- c) In relation to assistants conducting research with children and young people with me and /or on my behalf, I will ensure that they will be made aware of the special responsibilities associated with undertaking research with children and young people, specifically, their responsibilities and obligations under the *Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998* (See **Form B** for assistant researchers)

Signature of Principal Researcher

Date

Confidential Declaration by Assistant Researcher(s)

(Where a research project involves any contact with a school in the Diocese of Cairns)

- a) I am aware of and will comply with the special responsibilities associated with undertaking research with children and young people, specifically, my responsibilities and obligations under the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*.
- b) I declare that there are no other circumstances or reasons that might preclude my undertaking research with children and young people.

Signature of Assistant Researcher

Date

Agreement to provide Research findings to Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns

As Principal Researcher:

- I agree to provide Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns with a copy of the research findings of the proposed study upon completion.
- I agree to provide participating schools with a summary of the research findings.
- I understand that, if Catholic Education Services, Diocese of Cairns wishes to disseminate the report more widely, this will be done in consultation with me.

Signature of Principal Researcher

Date

Name of Principal Researcher

Title of research proposal

Name of Referee

Referee's position

Institution

Referee's address

Telephone

Fax

E-Mail address

Relationship to researcher

**Please comment on the following aspects of the proposal,
in relation to the submitted applications**

- Significance, purpose, and value of the research

- Appropriateness of the research design

- Methodological adequacy and viability

- Ethical considerations

To what extent do you consider the principal researcher to be capable of undertaking the research described in the attached proposal?

Is this proposal exempt from ethical approval?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If exempt, for what reasons?

Supervisor's Signature

Date

