

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This is an information package to be used in any application to conduct research work in any Corrective Services NSW facility. Included in this package are:

- General criteria for approval of research application
- Guidelines for submission of research application
- Prescribed format: Declaration from academic supervisor
- Position Paper No. 1: Incentives to research participants
- Summary sheet (*see separate form*)
- Application for approval to conduct research (*see separate form*)
- Guidelines for informed consent form (*see separate form*)

Please return your completed papers (including all supplementary information) to:

Director
Corrections Research, Evaluation & Statistics
Corrective Services NSW
GPO Box 31
Sydney NSW 2001

PLEASE NOTE: ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE TYPED. On this basis, a copy of the application forms in an electronic format may be obtained by downloading the forms from the Corrective Services NSW website:

<http://www.correctiveservices.justice.nsw.gov.au/related-links/publications-and-policies/corrections-research-evaluation-and-statistics/corrective-services-ethics-commitee>

Director
Corrections Research, Evaluation & Statistics

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH APPLICATION

CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW

1. All research projects involving inmates, offenders, Corrective Services staff or other access to Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) records or facilities must first be approved in writing by the Commissioner of CSNSW prior to any project being commenced. Section 267 of the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* stipulates this requirement and provides penalties for those who do not follow the Commissioner's directives in relation to any research work undertaken within CSNSW that may be approved by him.
2. All applications to conduct any form of research must be submitted in a typed format by completing an electronic version of the approved application forms or in a typed application which uses each of the headings contained on these forms.
3. The minimum academic qualification required to be held by the chief investigator or any other investigator directly involved in the proposed research project is a recognised diploma or degree from a tertiary institution.
4. The sex of the researcher will only be relevant on security grounds. Current rules affecting Corrective Services staff will also apply to any prospective researchers.
5. The inmates', offenders and staff members' right to be protected from public identification is paramount and must be preserved at all times both during and after any research is conducted. The information protection principles within the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* are to be strictly adhered to and incorporated within the design of the research project.
6. Exploratory research where no hypotheses have been formulated and the researcher is seeking ideas rather than testing hypotheses will not be considered.
7. An important proviso for inmates, offenders and all staff is that there should be minimal disruption to their normal day-to-day activities. Where it is applicable, the General Manager(s) of the intended correctional centres and District Managers of the intended Community Corrections Offices will be asked to confirm that this requirement can be met through the proposed research methodology.
8. All research applications will be vetted by the Corrective Services Ethics Committee. If approval for a proposed research project has previously been granted by another Ethics Committee, the full approval should be attached and forwarded with your application.
9. The role of the Corrections Research, Evaluation & Statistics (CRES) is to process and assess any applications received and act as a liaison between the researcher(s) and relevant sections of the CSNSW. CRES will not be able to provide any resources for use by external researchers.
10. However, where a research application requires data from the CSNSW Offender Integrated Management System (OIMS) CRES is responsible for the data extraction. Applicants will need to include in the application specific details of the data required eg. Age, gender, custody dates, offences etc.

11. Where approved, researchers will be required to provide a yearly progress report on the status of the research project to the Director of CRES.
12. CSNSW reserves the right to withdraw approval of any research project at any stage.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH APPLICATION

CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines describe practices generally accepted by researchers in the fields of criminology, sociology and psychology and which are already widely used. The primary intent of codifying them is to present a series of guidelines which aim to promote good scientific practice and to encourage integrity in research.

All applications submitted for approval should be as brief as is consistent with providing adequate information for full scientific and ethical assessment as required by such bodies as the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Criminological Research Council.

The application should be self explanatory and self contained and not rely on references to other grant applications or approvals.

Applications for approval to conduct research within Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) must use the approved application form and associated summary sheets and guidelines.

The application and all related documentation must be typed using the approved application form and associated summary sheets. Typed applications may also be submitted using each of the headings provided on the application form. The application will **not** be accepted unless all details are fully provided.

TITLE

All applications must be provided with an appropriate title that reflects the basic aim of the proposed research study. Use the same title as that used in any submission to any funding body you may also have made.

INVESTIGATORS

The Chief Investigator (or contact person if different) must be readily available to answer queries regarding the proposal. All investigators are required to sign the final application presented.

PROJECT

Descriptions should be provided under all the headings contained on the application form. These include:

- ⊗ a brief description of the study

- ⚙ aims
- ⚙ hypotheses
- ⚙ potential significance of the study
- ⚙ background
- ⚙ research plan
 - methods
 - techniques
 - design
 - data analysis
- ⚙ time frame
- ⚙ type of publication

PARTICIPANTS

The number and characteristics of the inmates, offenders or Corrective Services staff to be included must be detailed together with the rationale for the sample to be selected. It should be used as a guide in any decisions regarding the sample to be drawn. Various other considerations may be based on the information offered in the [2014 Inmate Census](#):

All procedures to be used on the participants must be included on the application form. Any questionnaire to be used must be attached as should any interview schedule. These will be considered in the light of previous research which has revealed a substantial lack of numeracy and literacy skills present in the inmate population.

Procedures to be adopted for research work with inmates, offenders or Corrective Services staff of culturally and linguistically diverse background (CALD) must also be developed and clearly detailed.

DATA STORAGE AND HANDLING

Information that is confidential or personal must not be used for purposes other than those specified in the proposal. On completion of those purposes the personal information is to be either destroyed or returned to its original confidential source.

The entire design of the research project must fully cater for the substantial privacy concerns of inmates in particular. The collection of personal information may have direct and serious consequences for the inmate concerned — for example, those convicted of child sexual assault are at particular risk of physical harm whilst in custody if other inmates are informed of this background.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The primary ethical responsibility of CSNSW is to ensure the safety of not only the participants in the proposed study but also of the Correctional Centre and Community Correction Services as a whole. CSNSW must be satisfied that any possible advantage to be gained from the research justifies any discomforts or risks involved. These issues must be addressed by the investigator.

If approval for a proposed research project has been previously granted by another Ethics Committee, the full approval should be attached and forwarded with your application. However, as an independent committee the CSEC is under no obligation to endorse a research project which may already be approved by a separate Ethics Committee.

INFORMED CONSENT

CSNSW requires that a fully developed *Informed Consent Form* must be prepared for the specific research project proposed. The essence of this procedure is the production of a simple yet comprehensive statement of what the participant is expected to do and what consequences will arise out of their cooperation. [See separate guidelines of what should be included in the consent form].

The investigator should ensure that the [*Informed Consent Form*](#) is drafted so that it clearly explains to the participant, in language they will understand, what information is expected of them and what their rights are in regard to the project.

Researchers will be aware that it is all too easy to manipulate a person's "voluntary" consent by exploiting their ignorance, fears and willingness to submit to authority. CSNSW takes its "**duty of care**" role, in respect to individuals in its custody or care, very seriously and will subject any application with due scrutiny.

RESOURCES

In general, CSNSW will not be able to supply any substantial resources to any external request for help in a research proposal.

DECLARATION BY INVESTIGATORS

All investigators are required to sign the declaration as set out in the approved application form. Some extracts of the relevant parliamentary Acts and other papers are included in the application package forwarded so that an informed declaration can be made.

DECLARATION BY ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR(s)

For those research applicants who are undertaking a research study to gain a tertiary qualification, an additional declaration from the supervising academic(s) is required.

The declaration should be typed on the Institutions letterhead and signed by the academic supervising. The signed declaration should contain:

- (a) the name and job title of the academic supervisor(s)
- (b) confirm that the academic supervisor(s) have examined the research application
- (c) specify that the academic supervisor(s) are satisfied that the stated research aims and objectives for the project will be met through the proposed research design
- (d) confirm that the stated sample size and sampling frame are satisfactory.

[See separate template as to the format and content of the declaration].

POSITION PAPERS

Position papers on particular subject areas are prepared by the Corrective Services Ethics Committee in order to assist applicants in the preparation of their research projects. Copies are included in the application package.