Research in Schools Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

EREA recognises that high-quality and ethical Research contributes to the national and international discourse in education. EREA values high quality, ethical Research that aims to improve the outcomes of students, staff and families in Edmund Rice school communities.

1.2 Principles

EREA welcomes Research that:

- supports and improves student learning, wellbeing, and engagement
- strengthens school leader, teacher, and parent capability to support children and young peoples' learning and development
- encourages government and community partners to reflect on and enhance their capability to better serve and lead Schools
- seeks to engage Schools, as key stakeholders as hosts and colleagues
- contributes to the knowledge and capacity of the broader community to enhance the outcomes of children and young people, locally and globally.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to make clear for researchers and those who will oversight their work, the expectations and obligations that govern Research for Schools.

1.4 Scope

This policy applies to all Research as defined in this document.

1.5 Definitions

Approval means the consent granted by a Principal for a Researcher to conducted research in their school or entity.

Endorsement for Research means that the EREA Research Assessment Panel has found that the Researcher who wishes to conduct Research has met the threshold for the conduct of safe and appropriate Research in Schools. The Researcher is then at liberty to approach EREA Principals for Approval to conduct Research in their schools.

EREA Research Assessment Panel means the individuals appointed by the EREA Board on the recommendation of the Executive Director from time to time to endorse or reject requests for Research to be conducted in Schools. These appointees include internal and external members.

Principal means the head of any EREA educational entity, appointed by the EREA Executive Director to that position.

Research means all human research "with or about people, or their data or tissue… understood broadly,"[1] that is proposed to be conducted in EREA schools.

Researcher means the individual or individuals who seek to undertake Research in EREA schools or other entities.

Schools means any, some or all EREA educational entities.

2.   Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
EREA Board	• Approving this policy • Ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated as needed • Reviewing compliance with this policy
EREA Executive Director	• Developing procedures and guidelines supporting adherence with this policy • Ensuring this policy is implemented
Principals	• Implementing this policy and associated procedures and guidelines
School Advisory Councils	• Understanding and complying with this policy in performance of the School Advisory Council's role.

3.   Policy

3.1   Guidelines for research

The *EREA Research Guidelines* identify the standards which must be met in order for Research to be Endorsed by the EREA Research Assessment Panel.

3.2   Research Endorsement and Approval process

The flowchart *Seeking Approval for Research in EREA Schools and Other Entities* outlines the process for the Endorsement and Approval of Research and must be followed for all Research in Schools.

3.3   Endorsement of Research

Researchers wishing to conduct Research in Schools must with seek Endorsement from the EREA Research Assessment Panel.

3.4   Approval for Research

• Principals are the sole arbiters for the Approval of Research in their school.

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[1] National Health and Medical Research Council (2018). *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. Canberra: Author. Retrieved from https://bit.ly/3g8XS7b.

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- Principals must ensure that prior to Approval being granted, they have satisfied themselves that Research requiring Endorsement has received such Endorsement from the EREA Research Assessment Panel.

3.5   Exceptions to the need for Endorsement

The *Seeking Approval for Research in EREA Schools and Other Entities* flowchart identifies the categories of Researchers who may apply directly to Principals for Approval to conduct Research in Schools.

4.   Policy compliance

4.1   Breach of this policy

EREA takes infringements very seriously. Employees/officers who fail to abide by these principles may face disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Individuals that are aware of a suspected breach of this Policy should refer to EREA's procedure for reporting complaints and can make a report to EREA's Complaints Officer. All reports will be treated confidentially.

EREA will not criticise or penalise employees/officers for any loss resulting from adherence to these principles. Similarly, we will not penalise employees/officers who report concerns in good faith even if on closer investigation these turn out to be unfounded.

4.2   Policy review

A review of this policy shall be conducted every three years or earlier if required, such as due to changes in legislation.

The EREA Board is responsible for ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated as needed and endorsing this policy.

5.   Related policies, procedures and legislation

5.1   EREA policy linkage

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

(a)   EREA Code of Conduct

(b)   EREA Child Safeguarding Standards Framework

(c)   EREA Child Safeguarding Policy

(d)   EREA Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

5.2   Related instruments

The following standards apply and this policy aligns with them:

(a)   *National statement on ethical conduct in human research* published by the National Health and Medical Research Council, as updated from time to time.

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(b)   *Seeking Approval for Research in EREA Schools and Other Entities* [Flowchart]

(c)   The *EREA Research Guidelines.*

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