**Research application and approval procedure**

for applicants wishing to conduct research in Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools

**Introduction**

The Toowoomba Catholic Schools Strategic Plan describes the key priorities for development, growth and innovation across our schools and office.

We welcome research applications that align with these priorities and support us in achieving our purpose and vision for staff and students across our 31 schools[[1]](#footnote-1).

All applications to conduct research in our schools are to be made to the Executive Director: Catholic Schools through the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office.

Any approval granted, by the Executive Director: Catholic Schools, to conduct research is in principle only. The final decision to allow the proposed research to be conducted in the school resides with the school principal.

*Please note:* Any applications to conduct research made directly to schools will be redirected to the Executive Director: Catholic Schools.

**Finding Toowoomba Catholic schools**

This research procedure only applies to research that is undertaken within Catholic schools governed by the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office.

A list of Catholic schools located within the Diocese of Toowoomba is published at [www.twb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.twb.catholic.edu.au) under ‘Our schools’.

# Other Dioceses

There are a total of five Catholic dioceses within Queensland. A list of Catholic schools in each of these Dioceses can be accessed through the Queensland Catholic Education Commission website at [www.qcec.catholic.edu.au](http://www.qcec.catholic.edu.au).

All applications to conduct research in Catholic schools governed by other Dioceses should be directed to the Executive Director of Catholic Education in the appropriate diocese.

Applications to conduct research in Religious Instituteschools (independent Catholic schools administered by religious orders) must be addressed separately and directed specifically to the principals of these schools.

**Research approval procedure**

1. The Principal Researcher is to complete and send all required documentation (as listed below) to director@twb.catholic.edu.au

***Required documentation***

* 1. [Completed Form A - Research Proposal](#FormA)
	2. [Completed Form B – Confidentiality declaration by Principal Researcher](#FormB)
	3. [Completed Form C – Confidentiality declaration by Assistant Researcher](#FormC)
	4. [Completed Form D - Agreement to provide research findings to Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office](#FormD)
	5. [Completed Form E - Research Approval for undergraduate and postgraduate students OR Copy of Ethical Clearance Approval from the University](#FormE)
	6. Copy of a valid Positive Notice Blue Card as issued by the Public Safety Business Agency or evidence that an exemption applies
1. If all documentation is provided at the time of application, the Principal Researcher can expect to receive a response within two to three weeks.
2. If given in principle approval, the Executive Director: Catholic Schools will send a letter enabling the Principal Researcher to approach the principal/s at the respective school/s. The principals of these schools will also receive a letter from the Executive Director: Catholic Schools to inform them of the in principle approval.
3. If not given in principle approval, the Executive Director: Catholic Schools will send a letter explaining the reasons for this decision.

**Research approval conditions**

1. **General**
2. In submitting the research proposal, researchers agree to comply with the procedures and conditions outlined within this document.
3. Researchers conducting research within Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools must ensure that their research does not negatively impact on the teaching and learning environment of the school/s.
4. All required documentation is to be provided at the point of application by the Principal Researcher.
5. Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools will not provide approval for research which is undertaken primarily for commercial or material gain.
6. Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools will not provide approval for research that includes the use of incentives either monetary or in the form of a gift to engage participants.
7. Upon completion of the research, the researcher will
	1. provide Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools with a copy of the research findings
	2. provide the schools in which the research was conducted with a summary of the research findings.
8. Unpublished reports from research pertaining to individual case studies conducted with students in Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools are to be given directly to the principal of the school.
9. **Specific conditions for undergraduate and postgraduate courses**
10. Ethical approval may not be required for all research assignments that are a part of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. In such cases, **Form E “Research approval for undergraduate and postgraduate students”** is to be used in the application to undertake research.
11. **Specific conditions for employees of Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools**
12. Employees of Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools are required to apply to conduct research following this procedure.
13. Employees of the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools who conduct research in Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic schools, in the course of employment and as part of their usual duties, and publish this research are to note that the first owner of copyright will usually be the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office, as the employer.
14. **Legislative and policy conditions**
15. **Privacy and confidentiality**
16. Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

**Please note:** If a research participant discloses to a researcher, confidential information in relation to sexual or physical abuse/harm or circumstances where a student’s health, safety or wellbeing is in danger, the researcher is required to disclose this information to the school principal immediately.

1. **Student protection**
2. Researchers making application to conduct research in Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic schools whose research involves working with children under 18 years of age are required to contact Blue Card Services to ensure they can comply with legislative requirements under the relevant Acts [www.bluecard.qld.gov.au](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au) and complete Form B or C with the correct information in relation to the Act under which they are governed.
3. Filming and any other process by which a child could be identified will not be approved in any research application unless the following conditions are met.
* That research participants and parents/legal guardians are fully informed regarding the intent, nature and scope of the research and that written consent is specifically given by the parents/legal guardians in relation to any filming/photography/videoing etc of participants.
* That the above condition also applies to research projects that involve longitudinal studies.
* That the researchers must provide details of the procedures they will use to ensure participant confidentiality – for example, strategies for information storage, access and disposal of data.
* That additional, written consent from the primary parent/legal guardian and research participants will be required, prior to utilising filming or any other participant identifying information, in any forum such as conference, teacher in-service, professional development, teaching instruction etc.
1. Researchers are required to view the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools *Volunteer Code of Conduct* and *Student Protection Information for Volunteers* documents, and complete a *Volunteer declaration form* prior to commencing any research in a school/schools. The *Volunteer declaration form* is to be submitted to the school principal.
2. **Anti-discrimination**
3. Researchers making application to conduct research in Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic schools are to ensure they can comply with legislative requirements under the [Anti-discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1991-085) [and Commonwealth Anti-discrimination law.](https://www.ag.gov.au/rights-and-protections/human-rights-and-anti-discrimination/australias-anti-discrimination-law)
4. **Health Safety and Environment**
5. Researchers making application to conduct research in Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic schools are to ensure they can comply with legislative requirements under the [Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld).](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/W/WorkHSA11.pdf)

**Authority**

This procedure is the responsibility of the Executive Director: Catholic Schools. Any changes to this procedure can only be made with the approval of the Executive Director: Catholic Schools.

**Version control and history**

**Effective date**

07/03/2023

**Review date**

07/03/2026

**First published**

2015

**Reviewed**

2017

February 2020

**Form A**

**Research proposal**

**(Please note: If applying for research as a part of an undergraduate or postgraduate course and the research does not require ethical clearance Form E must also be completed.)**

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| **Principal researcher contact details** |
| Name  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Address  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Telephone | Work  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Mobile | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Supervisor/s’ details** |
| Name  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Address  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Telephone | Work  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Mobile | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Name  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Address  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Telephone | Work  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Mobile | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Overview of research** |
| Research project title | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Brief overview of research project – including procedures and extent of student, teacher and parental involvement (approximately 250 words) |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Brief description of benefits of the research to the participants eg how teachers and students will benefit from your research; long term and more general benefits to the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools community. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Brief description of the research design and methodology and any strategies to be employed to ensure validity and reliability. Please attach copies of data collection instruments and surveys. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Approval to participate processes to be implemented including attached examples of permission letters/consent form |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Details of procedures for establishing confidentiality and protecting privacy including information management practices |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| List school name/s and addresses and the groups that will be requested to participate in the research at each of these locations. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Research commencement date | Click or tap here to enter text. | Research conclusion date | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Documentation checklist** |
| [ ]  | Ethical clearance from University Ethics Committee OR Form E if ethics clearance is not required |
| [ ]  | Form B including updating of information related to Child Protection legislation under which the researcher is governed |
| [ ]  | Form C including updating of information related to Child Protection legislation under which the researcher is governed |
| [ ]  | Form D |
| [ ]  | Copies of data collection and survey instruments |
| [ ]  | Copies of participation consent letters and forms |
| [ ]  | Copy of the letter to Principal/s of school/s who will be approached |
| [ ]  | A copy of your Working with Children Suitability Card (Blue Card) or evidence that a Working with Children Suitability Card is not required |
| **Signatures** |
| Principal researcher name | Click or tap here to enter text. | Signature | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Supervisor name | Click or tap here to enter text. | Signature | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Date | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Form B**

**Confidentiality declaration by Principal Researcher**

1. 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 *Please insert the name of the Child Protection Legislation advised by Blue Card Services when you made contact with them* and the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).*
2. I declare that there are no other circumstances or reasons that might preclude my undertaking research with children and young people.
3. In relation to assistants conducting research with children and young people either with me and /or on my behalf, I will ensure that:
	1. They are made aware of the special responsibilities associated with undertaking research with children and young people, specifically, their responsibilities and obligations under the *Please insert the name of the Child Protection Legislation advised by Blue Card Services when you made contact with them* and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). (See **Form C** for assistant researchers)
4. I have provided as part of my submission a copy of my suitability card or evidence that a working with children suitability card is not required.

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| --- | --- |
| Principal researcher’s name | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Signature | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Date | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Form C**

**Confidentiality declaration by Assistant Researcher**

1. 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 *Please insert the name of the Child Protection Legislation advised by Blue Card Services when you made contact with them* and the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).*
2. I declare that there are no other circumstances or reasons that might preclude my undertaking research with children and young people.
3. I have provided as part of my submission a copy of my suitability card or evidence that a working with children suitability card is not required.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assistant researcher’s name | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Signature | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Date | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Form D**

**Agreement to provide research findings to Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office**

As Principal Researcher

1. I agree to provide Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office with a copy of the research findings published or unpublished of the proposed study upon completion.
2. I grant Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office the right to disseminate this report to employees of the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office.
3. I agree to provide the participating school/s with a summary of the research findings published or unpublished.
4. I understand that, if Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office wishes to disseminate the report more widely, this will be done in consultation with me.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Principal researcher’s name | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Signature | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Date | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Form E**

**Research approval**

***for undergraduate and postgraduate students***

*This approval is to be completed by the researcher and the supervisor in cases where the research does not require ethical approval from the Universities’ Ethics committee.*

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| Principal researcher contact details |
| Name  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Address  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Telephone | Work  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Mobile | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Supervisor/s’ details |
| Name  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Address  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Telephone | Work  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Mobile | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Name  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Address  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Telephone | Work  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Mobile | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Email  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Overview of research – please comment on the following aspects of your student’s research proposal |
| Title of research/assessment task | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Significance, purpose and value of the research (include a copy of the assessment criteria for the unit of study) |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Appropriateness of their research design (include a copy of data collection instruments and surveys to be used) |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Adequacy and viability of their proposed methodology  |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Ethical considerations and how these are being addressed including examples of permission letters/consent forms |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Capability of Principal Researcher |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Is ethical approval required for this research?  | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| Supervisor name | Click or tap here to enter text. | Role | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Signature | Click or tap here to enter text. | Date | Click or tap here to enter text. |

1. Please note: Downlands College and St Ursula’s College are Religious Institute schools and are not governed by the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools. Research in these schools will need to be approved through direct contact with the school Principal. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)