

PROVIDER NAME:	CCT College Dublin (CCT)		
POLICY AREA:	Standard 5: Student Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment		
Policy and Procedure Title:	<i>CCTP511: Ethical Practice in Research</i>	Policy Number: CCTP511	Version: 1.2

Policy Statement

CCT is committed to promoting ethical practice in research proposed or undertaken by the College, its staff or students on behalf of the College or as a programme requirement. Consideration must be given to ethical implications and adherence to any relevant ethical practice guidelines should be satisfied.

Students must be notified of minimum standards and expectations in relation to ethical practice in research activity. Programme Leaders are responsible for ensuring programme teams and students are aware of the policy and the implications for their research activity.

Within CCT, the sole body with authority to approve a research proposal is the ethics committee. Ethics Committees can be established at programme or institution level.

The Dean of Faculty is responsible for monitoring implementation of the ethical practice in research policy. Should the College, or its representatives, engage in collaborative research, the college expects an agreed equivalent procedure for the consideration and approval of research. Should the College engage in collaborative provision which include research by staff or students, mutually agreed ethical approval guidelines must be documented and complied with. CCT anticipates an appropriate equivalent minimum standard as that which it applies within the College. In the absence of an alternative procedure, the College will seek agreement on the implementation of this policy and associated procedure.

Monitoring of approved research projects will be undertaken by designated supervisors who will monitor adherence to the approved proposal's parameters and ethical considerations.

Any non-compliance with research approval may result in a range of sanctions including disciplinary action, termination of the research, allocation of a mark of zero and/or removal from the programme of study in the case of students. For faculty and staff, the matter may be dealt with under disciplinary procedures.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and students engaged in research activity within or on behalf of CCT College or as part of a CCT programme of study.

Staff involved: Dean of Faculty, Faculty, Departmental Heads, academic faculty, supervisors

Procedure Outline / Method(s) used to carry out this procedure	Responsibility of	Evidence generated by this procedure to ensure its effectiveness
<p>Procedure</p> <p>Membership and Conduct</p> <p>In CCT College those programmes that require students to undertake primary research must establish an ethics committee for the consideration of all research proposals.</p> <p>The committee must comprise a minimum of three members, all of whom have experience in undertaking and/or assessing research and research proposals.</p> <p>The Committee comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dean of Faculty or nominee (Chair) ● Module leader for the research project in question ● A faculty member or ● Additional subject-specific expertise may also be sought as deemed appropriate. ● Faculty Office or nominee (secretary) <p>A committee can be established to consider proposals from more than one programme and the membership of the committee can be expanded as required.</p> <p>A minimum of three members must be present to be deemed quorate.</p> <p>Each academic member of the committee has equal voting rights, and a majority decision is required with any dissent being recorded.</p> <p>The secretary to the Committee is required to record the proposals received, the decision reached and any conditions or dissenting opinion as appropriate.</p> <p>The Committee is required to meet in a timely manner to facilitate students meeting deadlines, including allowance for resubmission of the proposal if required.</p> <p>Where ethical approval is not granted, the reasons for this must be provided to the researcher and an indication of whether a revised proposal would be welcomed by the committee.</p> <p>Matters to be Considered</p> <p>In considering a proposal for approval the impact on research participants is a core factor. Participants includes representatives or legal guardians of participants who are not able to provide informed consent for themselves, for reasons including but not restricted to age or vulnerability.</p> <p>The student must consider the interest of the participants and in particular:</p>	<p>Programme leader Module leader Dean of Faculty Supervisors</p>	<p>Records of committee meetings and decisions Copy of research proposals Confirmation of adherence to approval</p>

- Ensure they are not negatively impacted as a result of participating and that specific consideration has been given to vulnerable groups.
- Ensure that explicit informed consent in accordance with GDPR has been obtained.
- Include appropriate arrangements for withdrawal from the project.
- Ensure anonymity of participants and organisations and confidentiality of the information they may provide.
- Detail appropriate intended research methodologies and rationale for the same.
- Consider the health and safety of the student researcher and participants and how this will be ensured.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

All information provided and published as part of the research project must ensure the anonymity of the participants and organisations and the confidentiality of information provided by them. The student researcher must take care to ensure that publishing information will not result in the identification of participants or organisations. All potential identifiers must be removed.

Criteria for Approval

To determine whether a research proposal meets the requirements for ethical approval the Committee will consider:

1. Is the proposed project ethical?
2. Is the proposed method of investigation appropriate and ethical?

Ethical approval will only be granted where the answer to both questions is positive. The Committee reserves the right to specify a more ethical methodology and approval of the proposal subject to the specified methodology being implemented. Other considerations include the relevancy of the research to the investigation being carried out, and the timeframe of the proposed research.

Post Approval

Students are advised that they cannot make substantial or significant changes to an approved research proposal. In particular they must not change the topic, focus, purpose and proposed participant groups for the research. More minor changes may be permitted but only subject to supervisor approval.

<p>Students must at all times ensure the integrity of their research and not seek to influence research outcomes, falsify, sensationalise or distort their findings. Students are advised to familiarise themselves with the BERA Guidelines (2011)</p> <p>Students must share final research findings with the Ethics Committee, and this must be made known to the research participants.</p> <p>Submitting a Proposal</p> <p>Unless directed otherwise as specific requirements of the module in question, when compiling a research proposal, students should address the following matters, as applicable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A statement of risk based on a completed risk assessment A risk assessment should consider risk to participants and the researcher. Potential assessment of risk might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health-related issues such as physical or psychological harm and any discomfort or stress ○ Consideration of societal factors such as potential for harm to their reputation or professional standing ○ Personal matters such as risks to their privacy, personal values and beliefs, relations with family, friends and community. ○ Employment related risks ○ Legal risks – is there potential for breaching legislation? ○ Data protection risks 2. Confirmation of whether consent is required and, if so, who from, how this will be sought and a copy of the consent request. 3. Selection of Participants How will participants be identified and selected? How can the college be assured that this is voluntary? 4. Information to the Participant What information will be provided in advance to inform the participant and in what format will this be provided? A draft information sheet must be included in the application. 5. Consent How will informed consent be obtained? How will withdrawal of consent be managed? How has GDPR compliance been ensured? 6. Vulnerable Groups What specific considerations have been applied to research with children or vulnerable groups. 	<p>Students Supervisors</p>	
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<p>7. Confidentiality and Anonymity What mechanisms are proposed to ensure that participants and organisations are anonymised, and information provided or obtained will remain confidential? Are there potential identifiers that need to be considered?</p> <p>8. Design How has the project been designed, and the methodologies selected to ensure that the outcomes are not predetermined?</p> <p>9. Pre-existing relationships and conflict of interest Are there any pre-existing relationships between the student as researcher and any of the participants, organisations or potential beneficiaries of the research project? How will these be made known? Are there appropriate mechanisms in place to prevent issues of conflict of interest or undue influence?</p> <p>10. Data Protection Compliance How will compliance with data protection legislation be ensured? What arrangements are in place for storing and processing personal data, if applicable? Where relevant, what arrangements are in place to ensure compliance with copyright including intellectual copyright? Have relevant permissions been sought or will they be?</p> <p>11. Health and Safety Have health and safety factors been considered and appropriate advice been sought?</p>		
Monitoring		
Monitor (Job Title)	Frequency	Monitoring Method(s)
Dean of Faculty Programme Leader	As required, per programme	Ethics Committee minutes Supervisor reports and feedback External Examiner reports

POLICY CONTROL SHEET

Policy Title	Ethical Practice in Research Policy
Responsible Officer(s)	Dean of Faculty
Issuance Date	June 2025
Effective Date	June 2025
Last Review Date	September 2019
Supersedes	Version 1.1
Next Review Date	August 2027
Designated Reviewer	Dean of Faculty
Scope	All faculty and students engaged in research

Revision History

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved By
New Policy	March 2018	Introduction of a policy and procedure for formalising the approval of research proposals.	Dean of Faculty	Academic Council
Version 1.0	May 2018	Renumbered, was CCTP518, now CCTP514	QA Committee	Academic Council
Version 1.1	September 2019	Edits to reflect changes in organisational structure and roles	SMT	Academic Council
Version 1.2	June 2025	Renumbered, was CCTP514, now CCTP511	QA Office	Academic Council

References upon which the Policy section is based

CCT Policy area	Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff and Human Resources
Statutory & System Wide Basis	The Irish Qualifications and Quality Act (Education and Training), 2012; QQI Core Statutory Guidelines for Quality Assurance
Related Policies / Forms	CCT CCTP906 – General Misconduct and Learner Code of Conduct