

HREC Approved Research Projects Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Navitas Professional Institute

Document

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15 December 2015	Establishment of Procedure v1.0	December 2020
25 January 2016	Minor template technical amendments	December 2020

HREC Approved Research Projects Complaints and Appeals Procedures

1. Purpose and Scope

The *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human research (2007) Chapter 5.6 Handling Complaints* provides guidelines for the handling of complaints about researchers of the conduct of research or about the conduct of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

The National Statement indicates that an institution or organisation with an HREC will establish mechanisms for receiving and promptly handling complaints or concerns about the conduct of an approved research project (Chapter 5.1, paragraph 5.1.4 (c), Chapter 5.1.37 (p), Chapter 5.6 paragraphs 5.6.1 to 5.6.7).

This document sets out the procedures for receiving, handling and responding to concerns or complaints about the conduct of a project approved by the Navitas Professional Institute's Human Research Ethics Committee (NPI HREC).

These procedures apply to all research projects approved by the NPI HREC.

All NPI HREC research Participant Information Sheet and/or Consent Form for each NPI HREC project must make reference to these procedures.

The procedures are consistent with the *College's Research Introductory Guide and Human Research Approval and Conduct Guide*, the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human research (2007)*, and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

The NPI HREC Secretariat is responsible for ensuring these procedures remain consistent with the *College's Research Introductory Guide and Human Research Approval and Conduct Guide*, the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human research (2007)*, and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

2. Procedure

- 2.1 The NPI HREC Secretariat is the location to which all initial concerns/complaints from research participants, researchers, or other interested persons are to be directed.
- 2.2 The contact details of the person nominated by the NPI HREC to receive concerns/complaints must be included in the Participant Information Sheet and/or Consent Form for each project.
- 2.3 Any concern or complaint received by the NPI HREC Secretariat relating to a research project will be initially referred promptly by the NPI HREC Secretariat to the NPI HREC Chair for consideration, determining of the appropriate mechanism for handling the concern or complaint consistent with College policy and rules, including the College Principles of Procedural Fairness.
Appropriate mechanisms may include (but are not limited to) co-opting one or more members from the NPI HREC and/or the institution to investigate and recommend a resolution of the concern/complaint to the NPI HREC Chair or NPI HREC.
- 2.4 The NPI HREC Chair and/or NPI HREC may resolve any concern or complaint if not designated as potentially serious concern or complaint.
- 2.5 The Chair, NPI HREC will undertake to promptly refer any concern/complaint designated as potentially serious to the Dean Academic for investigation and resolution. Potentially serious complaints include, but are not restricted to, those associated with: significant injury or other personal harm to a research participant, researcher or an associated third party; fraud; and/or significant damage to property.

2.6 The NPI HREC Secretary or nominee is responsible for :

- a. recording the details of all received formalised concerns/complaints in the Research Complaints Log;
- b. obtaining from the complainant, either verbally or in writing, the grounds of the concern/complaint.

If the complainant provides consent, their contact details are to be recorded in the Research Complaints Log so that the outcome of the investigation can be reported to the complainant.

2.7 The NPI HREC Chair may take no longer than 20 working days from the time of notification of the concern/complaint to determine an outcome, unless exceptional circumstances exist.

2.8 The Chair, NPI HREC (or nominee) will undertake to ensure the NPI HREC are informed of the receipt of a concern or complaint and any course of action taken in relation to the concern/complaint.

If the concern/complaint is substantiated, the ensuing actions may include (but are not limited to):

- a) a requirement for amendments to the project, including changes to the Participant Information Statement or increased monitoring by the NPI HREC;
- b) temporary suspension of the project, pending resolution of the concerns/complaints;
- c) termination of the conduct of the project;
- d) implementation of the appropriate College disciplinary policy and procedure;
- e) referral to the Dean Academic for further investigation and resolution in accordance with College policy and rules, and/or
- f) other appropriate action consistent with College policy and rules.

2.9 The complainant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the review of their concern/complaint. This communication will be recorded in the Research Complaints Log.

2.10 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the review, then he/she can lodge an appeal in accordance with the applicable College policy or code, this normally being: for students - the College Academic Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures or Non-Academic Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures or for staff and agents – the relevant human resources policy including (but not limited to) the Navitas Grievance Management Policy - GHR-18-01P.

3. Responsibilities

The **Chair, NPI HREC** and **Dean Academic** are accountable for the ongoing development, approval, implementation, awareness and effectiveness of this Procedure.

The NPI HREC Secretariat is responsible for being aware of and complying with this procedure.

Members of the NPI HREC are responsible for being aware of and complying with this procedure.

Students and Academic Staff and other agents of the College engaged in human research projects are responsible for being aware of and complying with this procedure.

4. Definitions

Academic staff/teaching staff refers to permanent and casual employees engaged in teaching and assessment of courses at the institution.

Institution (the)/College (the) means the Navitas Professional Institute and its colleges (see registration information below).

International student/Overseas student means a student required to hold a student visa for study in Australia.

Unit means a unit of study in a higher education course or a unit of study, subject, module and/or unit of competency in a vocational education and training course.

5. Review

This policy is reviewed at a minimum of every 5 years by the policy owner (or designate) to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and its continued relevance to Navitas' current and planned operations.

The next scheduled review of this document is listed in the Version Control section on Page 1.

6. Records

Records in association with this policy will be kept in accordance with the institution's Records Management Policy and Records Retention and Disposal Schedule. Confidential files related to the implementation of the policy must be maintained according relevant privacy processes.

7. Related documents

External: National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007); Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

College: Research Introductory Guide; Human Research Approval and Conduct Guide; Academic Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure; Non-Academic Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure; Navitas Disciplinary Policy for operations based in Australia GHR-02-08P; Navitas Grievance Management Policy - GHR-18-01P.

Registration information

The Navitas Professional Institute is a group of colleges in the Navitas Professional and English Programs (PEP) Division of Navitas Limited the colleges being the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP), Navitas College of Public Safety (NCPS), Health Skills Australia (HSA), and the Australian TESOL Training Centre (ATTC) with respect to ATTC's 39296QLD Graduate Certificate in TESOL and 39297QLD Graduate Diploma in TESOL courses. Navitas Professional Institute Pty Ltd (NPI Pty Ltd), ABN 94 057 495 299, National CRICOS Provider Code 01328A, TEQSA HE Provider Registration Code 12009, RTO 0500. Health Skills Australia Pty Ltd ABN 53 123 479 201, RTO 21646.