

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**  
**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**  
Faculty Research Ethics Committee

**Statement to Supervisors of UG and TPG Dissertations / Final Year Projects:**  
**Importance of Obtaining Ethical Approval**

All members of the University, including staff members, research postgraduate, taught postgraduate and undergraduate students are under an obligation to comply with the highest standards of professional conduct. All research conducted by members of the University involving human participants and the use of vertebrate animal subjects must be referred to the appropriate ethics committee for review. For undergraduate and taught postgraduate students of the Faculty of Education, such review is done by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

If the research study for your student's dissertation or final-year project involves human participants or the use of personal data, the student is required to obtain ethical approval for the study **prior** to data collection. As stated in the Operational Guidelines and Procedures set out by the Human Research Ethics Committee (document 59/715 amended):

*“TPG students are required to submit their ethical application, with endorsement of their supervisor, to the Faculty-based Research Ethics Committee or its delegates for approval. UG students are assumed to be less experienced in judging if ethical clearance should be sought for their assignments, so the supervisor/tutor in charge is given responsibility for determining if each student's project needs ethical clearance and for completing the necessary application for ethical approval on the students' behalf, for submission to the Head of Department/Dean of Faculty (for unitary Faculties).”*

Please discuss with your supervisee as early as possible on how to prepare the ethical application. The student must submit the application to the Office of Research in good time, normally 4 weeks before the planned data collection. Details about application procedures, the application forms and letter templates are downloadable at the Faculty's website: <http://web.edu.hku.hk/research/faculty-research-ethics-committee>.

Any research data collected prior to formal ethical approval granted by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee must **not** be used in any part of the dissertation/project. If the student has collected research data before obtaining ethical approval, s/he may be given a **Fail** grade for the dissertation/project.

August 2, 2016