



## **Guidelines for Researchers Regarding Māori and Community Social and Cultural Responsiveness.**

### **1. Te Noho Kotahitanga: The Partnership and Māori Cultural and Ethical Values**

Unitec states its commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi through the Partnership document, Te Noho Kotahitanga. This document includes values that support Unitec in developing a meaningful partnership with Māori. In relation to research ethics, Te Noho Kotahitanga states that 'Unitec accepts responsibility as a critical guardian of knowledge' or 'taonga matauranga', therefore, UREC will act as kaitiaki to ensure that Māori knowledge and processes in research be protected.

In the spirit of the partnership all researchers have a right to include Māori and/or a issues within their research projects. All researchers have a responsibility to consult appropriately and conduct research in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner.

The Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC) has produced these guidelines to assist researchers who intend undertaking research that may involve Māori participants (through random selection), involve Māori, Māori centred research and kaupapa Māori research. For further guidance, refer to the Health Research Council of New Zealand website: [www.hrc.govt.nz](http://www.hrc.govt.nz) and the document [Te Ara Tika: Guidelines for Researchers on Health Research Involving Māori](#).

These guidelines are intended to inform researchers of:

- a) When consultation is necessary; and
- b) The processes involved in initiating consultation with Māori.

### **What is Māori Research?**

- Kaupapa Māori research is research where Māori are significant participants
- Research where the research team is typically Māori
- Research where Māori analysis is undertaken
- Research where Māori knowledge is produced
- Research where Māori tikanga (protocols) and processes are followed throughout the research from the beginning to the dissemination of results to participants

## 2. Consultation

The purpose of consultation is to ensure that the research practices are appropriate and that research will be conducted to ensure safety for the participants, the researcher and Unitec. Appropriate consultation endeavours to establish a foundation for a collaborative relationship between researchers, participants and the community.

### 2.1 Non-Māori staff/students undertaking Māori research

Non-Māori are able, and encouraged, to include Māori participants into their research so that all New Zealanders can benefit from the research.

The purposeful exclusion of Māori in research on the general population is not acceptable.

### 2.2 Research not involving or impacting on Māori

Q: 58 in the UREC Application Form A asks if it is apparent that Māori will be directly involved in or impacted by the research.

If the answer is 'No', there is an expectation that the applicant will justify this conclusion in Qu58 i.

An example follows:

- i) *What Māori involvement there may be*  
*There will be no Māori involved in this research project as it involves participants from Laos, and will be conducted off-shore. The methodologies and models employed have been chosen for their applicability in that context, and are not linked with Māori.*

(In this case, the answers to Qu58 ii and Qu 58 iii are 'N/A')

### 2.3 Research that may or may not involve or impact on Māori

If it is not known whether a project will involve Māori participation, and/or if it is not immediately apparent that a given project will impact on Māori, then the research may be deemed potentially 'low effect' or potentially 'high effect'.

*Note: any research project taking place in New Zealand, or utilizing Māori methodologies or models, can be considered to impact Māori, either directly or indirectly. In these cases the question about impact (Qu 58iii) must be answered. Although Māori may not be directly involved in the research, applicants need to consider whether the findings of the research may be of particular interest to, or applicable to, Māori communities. This issue needs to be thought about in the context of the sector and/or research topic.*

*After such consideration has taken place, applicants may for instance indicate how their project's potential impact on Māori might be represented in the write-up of their research, e.g. as a fruitful topic for future research.*

*It may be that there are significant relationships between Māori communities and a non-Māori cultural group that is the focus of a given study; or, there may be a significant Māori history associated with a given research topic, regardless of the cultural identities of the participants. In these cases, for instance, the applicant could indicate that an appropriate acknowledgement of the project's potential impact on Māori might appear in the introduction to a piece of research (or, a justification can be given in an ethics application for not doing so).*

Examples of research studies in the potentially 'low effect' category are:

- A random study of the different types of fern planted in gardens across Auckland.
- Asian immigrants' experiences when visiting the Auckland zoo.

In the case of the **Low Effect** category, the applicant needs to:

- For Qu 58 i, Describe what Māori involvement there may be, and if applicable demonstrate in Qu 58 ii an awareness of how this will be managed.
- For Qu 58 iii, adequately articulate why the research is low effect/low impact. A persuasive representation on the part of the applicant (e.g. adequate argument with appropriate mention of existing research/practice) is required. If such representation is not possible or adequate then consultation will be required.

Examples of research in the potentially 'high effect' category are:

- A study of a randomly sampled population for a diabetes project
- A study of Samoan NZers smoking habits
- Research into career aspirations across all secondary school students in NZ.

The research outcomes could be of benefit to Māori, or could impact significantly on Māori (e.g. the research involves a topic area that is clearly pertinent to Māori; findings may be transferrable); and/or conclusions drawn from the research may include commentary on Māori as a population.

For **High Effect** research that may or may not involve Māori, evidence of *thought about the potential effect* on Māori populations at ALL stages of the research is required. Evidence may take the form of persuasive representation on the part of the applicant (e.g. adequate argument with appropriate mention of existing research/practice). If such representation is not possible or adequate then consultation will be required.

*In the category of research that may or may not involve/impact on Māori, whether high or low effect, consultation may not be necessary, but an in-depth, thoughtful response is required.*

In this category, consultation that is sought with skilled Māori staff within the practice pathway in which the student is based, and adheres to the guidelines above, may be adequate. Consultation must always occur with (a) person(s) who are not members of a given research team. Advice on appropriate advisers for external consultation is available on request to UREC.

## **2.4 Research involving/impacting Māori**

Research involving or clearly impacting Māori needs to have some documented evidence of consultation (Questions 59 and 60 must be answered).

In this category, the applicant needs to show evidence of consultation:

- This can be ‘in process’ e.g. correspondence with appropriate advisers that shows commitment to consultation in the near future; or
- Completed consultation with appropriate advisers.

Consultation should be sought from learned advisers versed in Māori protocol and Tikanga, and if possible also versed in the project’s subject matter. Advice on appropriate advisers is available on request to UREC. Advisers in this case should not be staff members within the practice pathway in which the student is based. Consultation must always occur with (a) person(s) who are not members of a given research team.

These parameters have been thought out in relation to the differing levels of Māori Research:

<b>Māori Research – Levels</b>	<b>UREC Ethical Committee alignment</b>
Kaupapa Māori Research	Research involving Māori
Māori Centered Research	Research involving Māori
Research on Māori	Research involving Māori
Research that may or may not involve Māori	Either ‘High Effect’ or ‘Low Effect’ as above
Research not involving Māori	Research not involving Māori

For more information about the rationale for delineating a range of requirements in relation to consultation with Māori, see:

Tolich, M & Smith, B (2015). *The politicisation of ethics review in New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: Dunmore Publishing Ltd.

### **3. Supervision**

It is advised that research projects that include Māori kaupapa methods, or where Māori are significant participants in the research project, that Māori advisors/supervisors (or others with significant expertise) assist with the project.

### **4. The Research Proposal**

Linda Smith (1996) provides a list of questions that can assist researchers when designing the research proposal:

1. What research do we want to carry out?
2. Who is that research for?
3. What difference will it make?
4. Who will carry out the research?
5. How do we want the research to be done?
6. How will we know it is a worthwhile piece of research?
7. Who will own the research?
8. Who will benefit?

### **5. Informed Consent**

Informed consent is generally required in written form. It may be more appropriate to acquire verbal consent from individuals, whanau members, members' of a hapu or iwi. This is acceptable as evidence for informed consent provided this is clearly detailed within the researcher's ethics application.

### **6. Unitec Cultural Consultation Experts**

For direction toward expert advice on Māori and Pacifica research ethics, please email Unitec Research Office and Postgraduate Centre [research@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:research@unitec.ac.nz)