

## Common Mistakes By Students On Ethics Application Forms

*This document contains common mistakes that appear in applications for ethics clearance, as well as related recommendations by reviewers.*

*These points may serve as guidelines to inform applicants regarding content and focus in their applications.*

<u>Location of mistake</u>	<u>Specific problem</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>
On Application form	1. Not signed by HOD/ Departmental Representative/ Supervisor/ Applicant	1. Please ensure to thoroughly check <b>all</b> pages in your application from for necessary signatures from the appropriate people.
Informed consent	2. UP letterhead	2. Please include the title as well as short abstract of the research on all correspondence to participants and print on <u>University of Pretoria letterheads</u> (Old centenary logo should no longer be used).
	3. Language appropriate to population	3. Review language level used in consent/assent letters to align with language level (or appropriate developmental level) of participants (e.g. second language speaking learners)
	4. Benefits and Risks to participants	4. The letter of consent should specify to the possible benefits and risks to the participant
	5. Permission for photographs, video-recordings	5. Letter of informed consent should specifically ask for permission to use photographs of participants in research or to videotape participants or any other people involved
	6. Contact details of researcher should be included	6. All contact details of researcher and supervisor should be included on application forms
	7. Details of Participants	There may be <u>NO</u> signed consent forms from applicants – only a copy of the informed consent document is needed to approve the validity of the letter.
Captive Audience	1. Power relation /	1. Participants in the research are captive when the researcher (as a teacher in the

	<p>(dual) roles of researchers (read and answer together with 2. under captive audience)</p> <p>2. Conflict of interest</p>	<p>same school/ education setting) functions in the dual roles of both teacher (power) as well as researcher. Explain (i) the implications of participants' (children or peer-teachers) varied expectations of the researcher in these two roles; (ii) explain how the researcher will clarify the different roles and the different sets of agendas and responsibilities aligned with the two roles.</p> <p>2. Participants (learners) are known to researcher (educator) and conflict of interest should be addressed (read and answer together with 1. under captive audience)</p>
Adverse effects	<p>1. Timely identification</p> <p>2. Referral strategies</p>	<p>1. Researcher should discuss how adverse effects on participants will be identified in a timely manner</p> <p>2. Strategies should be devised and discussed on how vulnerable participants will be referred for additional assistance</p>
Rights of minors	<p>1. Safeguarding of minor's rights</p>	<p>1. Explain how minors will be assisted in making decisions whether or not to participate</p>
Anonymity/ Confidentiality	<p>1. Ensuring confidentiality</p>	<p>1. Provide information on how confidentiality will be maintained in group discussions / visual data collected</p>
Documents not accompanying application	<p>1. Informed consent (on UP letterhead)</p> <p>2. Data collection schedules (observations schedules, focus groups, structured and unstructured interviews)</p> <p>3. Questionnaires</p> <p>4. Permission application thereof at relevant institutions (e.g. Department of Basic Education)</p> <p>5. Invitation letter to schools/ institutions</p>	
Methodological considerations	<p>Applicants must describe in detail <b>how</b> they want to do the research, <b>what</b> they plan to do, <b>when</b> they plan to do their interviews, observation and other activities related to the research, <b>where</b> they plan to do their interviews, observations, etc. Reviewers must have enough information to make an informed decision</p>	
Terminology and acronyms	<p>Even though applicants might find some terminology obvious, reviewers are not necessarily familiar with the terminology within all disciplines. It would be helpful if the following could please be included as part of the introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of short definitions/explanations of terminology</li> <li>• A list of all acronyms</li> </ul>	