

La Trobe University  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Faculty Human Ethics Committee**

25 February 2003

Dear Honours Coordinator,

You will probably know that, since late 2000, Honours and MA-by-coursework students submitting theses have been required to include a declaration of ethics compliance in the introductory pages of their thesis; this is an extension of the long-standing practice in respect of PhD and MA theses. What the declaration does is state, *either* that the research for the thesis in question did not require research ethics approval, *or* that it was approved, with file number so-and-so. Please find enclosed some copies of this declaration, which I would ask you to make known to students embarking on Honours this year.

If you or your Honours students have any questions about the sort of research that requires research ethics approval, or about the procedure for applying for this to the Faculty Human Ethics Committee (FHEC), committee members will be very ready to answer them, and also to talk to groups of Honours students if you think that is appropriate. Committee members are: David Bradley (Linguistics); Felicity Collins (Cinema Studies); Baoqing Gao (Asian Studies); Rowan Ireland (Acting Chair, Sociology); Kerreen Reiger (Women's Studies and Sociology); Judith Richards (History); and Katie Wright (Sociology and postgraduate representative); Lorraine Chai in the Faculty Office (extension 3505) is the committee secretary. Kerreen Reiger, currently on OSP will take over as Chair of the FHEC in July 2003.

The FHEC plans provisionally to hold a briefing meeting about research ethics approval and recent changes to it – probably in an evening in April; you will be given further details when they are finalised. A likely topic for that meeting is the introduction of new application forms, standard for the whole University, which is expected to take place this semester. You may download current forms from the web page 'Common Forms and Guidelines' <<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/humanities/resources/forms.html>>; go to the Faculty website, and follow the links to 'Staff and Research Student Resources' and 'Faculty Forms'. Also available there is a set of guidelines, *Research and Teaching Requiring Ethics Approval: Advice for Humanities and Social Sciences Applicants*.

Honours students work to a tight schedule, and, for those applying for research ethics approval, it is important that they do this in good time. The FHEC has a turn-around time of two-to-three weeks on average – ideally two weeks with straightforward applications – but it may take longer with difficult, complex or poorly thought-out ones. It is not allowed to issue retrospective approvals. Could I suggest the following timeframes for submission of applications from Honours students; these should allow, I hope, time for careful FHEC scrutiny of applications, for the planning and conduct of the research *and* for the meeting of Honours deadlines. Applications concerning research in **first-semester coursework** (due, say, in July) should **normally be submitted by early May** at the latest; those in respect of **Honours thesis work**, where the thesis is due for submission at the end of October, should reach the committee **by early July at the latest**. Please could you bring this to the attention of your Honours students.

This is my last letter as chair of the FHEC, and Dr Ireland will be taking over from me as Acting Chair very shortly; he may be contacted on extension 2681, <[R.Ireland@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:R.Ireland@latrobe.edu.au)> or in room 467, Martin Building.

yours sincerely,

John Miller (Politics)  
Acting Chair, Faculty Human Ethics Committee

## RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL

For this thesis entitled

submitted for the degree of

*either [please tick one]*

None of the research undertaken required the approval of a University Ethics Committee,

*or*

The research undertaken was approved by a University Ethics Committee,  
approval no(s)

*Signed Date .....*