



POLICY ON RESEARCH

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1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is primarily to institute a framework to provide clear directions to any researcher intending to conduct research affecting Fijian education or schools and to provide information to any overseas researcher wishing to acquire a research permit to conduct research in Fiji.

This policy forms a guiding document for the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts (MoEHA) in the following areas:-

- a. To promote a culture of research and advance production of high quality research to bring about changes in evidence based policy and planning;
- b. To maintain a proper research database and records of educational research and research conducted in Fiji;
- c. To process research applications for education related research;
- d. To add to the existing pool of knowledge and information within the education sector by conducting major research in education, findings of which are widely disseminated to support teaching and learning across the different stakeholders in education;
- e. To foster consideration of ethical issues relating to research and development;
- f. To facilitate and provide support to the research community to encourage and strengthen co-operation among researchers both domestically and internationally.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1 It is the policy of MoEHA to support and promote the culture of research using accurate data to bring about improvement in the education sector.
- 2.2 No research concerning education can take place in schools located within Fiji without it being considered and recommended for approval by the Research and Ethics Committee based at MoEHA. The approval must have endorsement of the Permanent Secretary for Education, Heritage and Arts (PSEHA) and approval must be communicated in writing to the researcher.
- 2.3 The PSEHA reserves the right to terminate any research or revoke any research approval for willful failure to adhere to the provisions stated in this Policy.

- 2.4 All researchers must adhere to basic research principles as outlined in this Policy in accordance with the highest ethical, human welfare, animal welfare and environmental protection standards;
- 2.5 All research reports received by the Research Unit shall be stored electronically in the research database maintained by the Research Unit based at Corporate Services of the MoEHA.
- 2.6 A Research & Ethics Committee shall be formed within MoEHA to advise the PSEHA on all matters concerning educational research.

3.0 RATIONALE

Research systematically improves existing knowledge that will strategically form the basis for the formulation of appropriate policies and plans which promote better educational development. Research is particularly necessary to drive potential improvements and decision making in teaching, learning and curriculum changes for better educational performance.

Investment in research creates a range of benefits from improving the quality of education for all, producing new knowledge to address national and global issues, providing possible solutions to complex education related problems and changes to enhancing international competitiveness of the Fijian education systems by informing best practices.

This policy sets in place research approval process and ethical standards. The approval process ensures that all research conducted at school sites or using MoEHA data adhere to MoEHA standards. The approval process is designed to ensure that:

- a. students are protected from physical, psychological and other forms of harm or abuse;
- b. participants' privacy and confidentiality is maintained during and after research;
- c. research activity does not negatively impact on the teaching and learning environment;
- d. research conducted at the school level provides maximum educational benefits to the schools and stakeholders involved;
- e. research methodologies are appropriate and capable of producing valid and reliable results;

- f. research results are accessible to MoEHA policy makers and educationalists in a form they can use.

Research approvals are safeguards to ensure that research at the national level is conducted according to professional ethics, to eliminate the unauthorized collection and transfer of research information and materials, and to ensure that relevant National Institutions are informed of the intended and on-going research in their mandated areas and that they are given an opportunity to influence the course of the research being undertaken in their areas of interest. The research generally aims to protect national interests and, as far as, possible, discourage clandestine activities which may be undertaken under the cover of research.

To maximize the benefits of research, researchers are required to provide the Research Unit at Corporate Services with a report of the findings of the study and grant MoEHA the right to disseminate summary finding of the report within the policymakers.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 MoEHA Research & Ethics Committee

A committee made up of a minimum of three Directors set up within the MoEHA to vet all applications to conduct research as well as to ensure all applicants abide by research ethics and values.

4.2 Research

A systematic investigation and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions, that is undertaken by a researcher who has approval from the Research and Ethics Committee.

4.3 Researcher

A person who undertakes research at post graduate diploma level and above. This includes any overseas based research undertaking PgD, Masters, PhD or any institution/organization wishing to undertake research. Any institution/organization must have the request letter signed by their CEO/PS.

4.4 Research Proposal

The submission put forward by research applicants outlining the topic of research, aim, objective, background, rationale, methodology, significance of research and the study timeline.

4.5 Vanua Protocol

The cultural and traditional system that exist in an *i -taukei* community which cautions visitors to comply with whilst visiting the community.

5.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND AUTHORITIES

- 5.1 Constitution of the Republic of Fiji -2013
- 5.2 Education Act 1978
- 5.3 Fiji National University Research Act.
- 5.4 University of Fiji Research Permit Act
- 5.5 Intellectual Property Right Decree
- 5.6 Immigration Act for Research Visa Permit 2003
- 5.7 National Research Council Act 2017
- 5.8 University of the South Pacific Research Permit 2001

6.0 GUIDELINE

6.1 MoEHA Research & Ethics Committee

The MoEHA Research & Ethics Committee comprises of the following members:

1. Director in charge of Policy and Planning (Chairperson);
2. Director in charge of Technical and Vocational Training;
3. Director in charge of ECE, Special Education and Primary education;
4. Director in charge of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning;
5. Director in charge of the relevant section affected by the research area.

The Secretariat of the MoEHA Research & Ethics Committee shall be the Senior Education Officer Research.

- 6.2 All research applications concerning education must be considered by the MoEHA Research & Ethics Committee with a minimum quorum of three Directors. The Committee may either seek further information, reject or recommend a research application for approval by the PSEHA based on reasonable grounds.

- 6.3 Any MoEHA information and data requests shall only be released by the responsible MoEHA Section after PSEHA's approval.
- 6.4 Research applications shall be processed no later than ten (10) working days from the date of receipt of the application by the Research Unit, if all requirements are met by the applicant.
- 6.5 All Applications for research that is required to be conducted in schools or in the MoEHA shall fulfill the criteria as set out in **Appendix II** together with the completed MoEHA Research Agreement Form **Appendix I**.
- 6.6 Applicants whose research work requires them to interact with the students shall register with the Fiji Teachers Registration Board after approval is given and prior to conducting research.
- 6.7 The MoEHA research approval granted by MoEHA shall provide necessary support to the researcher for obtaining a research visa permit from the Fiji's Department of Immigration. However nothing in this clause shall affect the rights of Fiji Department of Immigration to refuse a visa.
- 6.8 The PSEHA reserves the sole right to revoke, extend or approve all research applications based on the advice of the MoEHA Research & Ethics Committee.

7.0 RESEARCH FEES

- 7.1 All researchers shall pay a prescribed nominal research fee as follows:-

	Local Applicant	Overseas Applicant
Undergraduate	No Fees	No Fees
Post Graduate Units	FJD \$20	FJD \$50
Masters	FJD \$50	FJD \$100
Ph.D.	FJD \$100	FJD \$500
Organizations/Tertiary Institutions	FJD \$200	FJD \$500
Ministries/Government Departments	No Fees	FJD \$500
Extension Fees above 3 months	FJD \$50	FJD \$200

- 7.2 Research requests from other Government Agency or Statutory Body must be made through formal correspondence and shall not be charged any research fees.
- 7.3 Foreign researchers shall be given a maximum research duration of 3 years on the condition that a progress report is submitted annually to the Research Unit. In a case where the researcher has been unable to complete his/her research, the researcher will need to apply for extension.

8.0 EXTENSION OF RESEARCH

- 8.1 For an extension of research duration, the researcher shall submit a written request addressed to the PSEHA for consideration.
- 8.2 A support letter from the institution and/or the research supervisor shall also be provided specifying the reason(s) for the research extension request together with the progress report.
- 8.3 Researchers who are unable to complete the research within the period / duration of research as stated in the research application are entitled to seek an extension upon payment of extension fees.

9.0 PROMOTION OF RESEARCH

- 9.1 Research must be made a priority and culture within the MoEHA by promoting it through its execution from simple basic research in kindergarten and primary school level, to a thought-provoking and in depth study in secondary with greater depth and profound thinking in tertiary and institutional level.
- 9.2 The Research Unit of MoEHA shall put forward the Research plan for MoEHA which shall be documented in the Annual Corporate Plan at the beginning of each year after consultation with all section heads.
- 9.3 Scheduled training or Professional Development (PD) for MoEHA employee empowerment on important research skills shall be facilitated by the Research Unit of MOEHA in consultation with Professional Development Unit (PDU).

10.0 STORAGE AND MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH REPORTS

- 10.1 All Research Reports submitted to the MoEHA shall be recorded at the Research Unit by the Research Unit in its digital archive.
- 10.2 All research reports stored at the MoEHA digital archive are subjected to preservation of confidentiality upholding the non-exploitation of IP and Copyright.
- 10.3 The MoEHA shall receive free of charge a non-exclusive royalty fee license from authors who have proprietary rights for the release and exploitation of their work for the benefit of the end users and the public at large.
- 10.4 The MoEHA shall have the authority to publicize the abstracts of any research findings stored and to release summary research findings to any third party and also make copies that shall be rendered for the use of other institutions.

11.0 EFFECTIVE DATE..... 04/07/17

12.0 REVIEW DATE..... 04/07/20

13.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

Vanua Protocol, Research Permit, Requirement, Theses, Intellectual Property.

14.0 APPROVED BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, HERITAGE & ARTS, HONOURABLE JOSIA VOREQE BAINIMARAMA.

.....
Bainimarama
Signature

.....
29/9/17
Date

APPENDIX I



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HERITAGE & ARTS
MoEHA RESEARCH AGREEMENT FORM



REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN FIJI

Please read the instructions carefully before completing this form

- a) It is mandatory that proper authorization is sought from the Permanent Secretary for Education before any research is conducted in Fiji.
- b) It is also mandatory that a copy of the final research report is submitted to the Permanent Secretary for Education, upon successful completion of the research. This will be properly archived at the Ministry of Education.
- c) The Ministry of Education reserves a right to publish the findings of the report, of which the author will be duly acknowledged.
- d) The following documents are also required when submitting this form:

- *A request letter to the Permanent Secretary for Education*
- *Applicant's Curriculum Vitae*
- *Birth Certificate / copy of the bio-data page of the valid passport*
- *A Support letter from the Institution/Organisation approving the Research*
- *A letter from relevant Ministry supporting the research.*
- *Ethics approval from the University(where applicable)*
- *A copy of the Research Proposal*

A. APPLICANT'S PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Name of Applicants(s):

.....

2. Email:

.....

3. Telephone: 4. Mobile:.....

4. Research field to be undertaken for the purpose of: (tick/check where applicable)

Undergraduate studies

Post graduate studies

Master's Degree

PhD studies

Others (please specify) _____

5. The intent of this research is for:

Individual qualification

Organizational needs

6. Mailing address

.....

B. RESEARCH TOPIC:

.....

.....

Name of University/Organization/Affiliation	
Supervisors' Name and contact details [Address and phone contacts]	
Study Tenure/Length of study [please provide the exact dates]	
Duration of Data Collection [please provide the exact dates]	

Indicate Y (Yes) or N (No) or NA for Not Applicable:

Detail applicant's prior approved research in Fiji.

Indicate if this research is part of a larger study or extends a previous study.

.....

Has this or any part of this research been previously rejected?

I/We declare that the information in this form is true and correct.

Signatures (i)..... Date:

(ii)..... Date

Binding Agreement between the Ministry of Education and the Researcher(s)

I/We agree to provide the Ministry of Education with a copy of the Research Report/Thesis. **I/We** grant the Ministry of Education the right to publish the research or an edited summary.

Signatures (i)..... Date:

(ii)..... Date

APPENDIX II

Criteria / Requirements for Research application

1.0 Requirements for Research approval:

1. Request letter (addressed to PS Education) seeking approval to conduct Research.
2. Applicant's Curriculum Vitae
3. Birth Certificate / copy of the bio-data page of the valid passport
4. A Support letter from the Institution/Organisation approving the Research
5. A letter from relevant Ministry supporting the research.
6. Ethics approval from the University(where applicable)
7. A copy of the Research Proposal outlining the topic, aim, objective, background, rationale, methodology, significance and the research questionnaire/interview questions
8. Completed MoEHA Research Agreement Form.
9. Completed Ethics Questionnaire (Appendix III)

2.0 Process Involved: Major Research (≈10 Working Days)

1. Application vetted by SEO Research.
2. Presented by SEO Research to the Research & Ethics Committee.
3. Provisional approval given by the Committee.
4. Recommendation made to the PS for his approval.

3.0 Research Fees

1. Upon approval from PS, the Researcher will be asked to pay the required fees.
2. The receipt is submitted to the Research Unit before an approval letter is done.

	Local Applicant	Overseas Applicant
Undergraduate	No Fees	No Fees
Post Graduate Units	FJD \$20	FJD \$50
Masters	FJD \$50	FJD \$100
Ph.D.	FJD \$100	FJD \$500
Organizations/Tertiary Institutions	FJD \$200	FJD \$500
Ministries/Government Departments	No Fees	FJD \$500
Extension Fees above 3 months	FJD \$50	FJD \$200

4.0 Extension of Research Approval

For an extension of research duration, the researcher shall submit progress report and a written request addressed to the PSE for consideration. A support letter from the institution and/or the research supervisor shall also be provided specifying the reason(s) for the research extension. A nominal fee applies for research extension above 3 months.

5.0 Submission

The researcher needs to email the above requirements (1.0) to SEO Research

APPENDIX III

Ethics Questionnaire

1. Are there human subjects used in this study? Yes/No
2. Specify the age range and the total number used?
3. Why are the above human subjects used in this research?
4. What are the expected outcomes of this study?
5. What will be the benefits of this research to the subjects used?
6. Explain how the human subjects will be used throughout this study?
7. Explain how the Intellectual Property (IP) of the subjects used will be preserved ensuring intact of confidentiality?
8. Are animals involved in this study? Yes/No
9. If yes, please clarify the type of animals used and their purpose in this study?
10. How will you capture these animals?
11. Will there be any risk of harm or discomfort experienced by the animals during the exercise?
12. Describe the strategies that will be used to minimize the risk or discomfort to the lives of the animals?

APPENDIX IV

Given below is a report format which may help you to compile your research report.

Broad Divisions	Individual Sections
1. Preliminary material	Title of Report
	Abstract/Synopsis
	Table of Contents(not always required)
2. Body of Report	Introduction
	Literature Review(may also be included in the introduction)
	Methodology
	Results
	Discussion
	Recommendations(may also be included in the Conclusion)
3. Supplementary material	References or Bibliography
	Appendices

For the research that you have conducted please submit a copy of the research report (soft copy) to the Research Unit.