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The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

以人為對象的研究之操守指引

前言

指導研究的廣泛性原則存在已久。這些原則的重點在於：

- 尊重研究參與者的權益
- 堅守高道德標準，維持公眾對研究的信任與信心
- 確保收集與報告數據的有效性及準確度

香港資優教育學苑（下稱「學苑」）支持並遵從該等原則。本指引旨在確保學苑所進行的所有研究，符合高道德標準與專業操守。

適用範圍

在本文件中，「研究」指涉及人的所有形式的數據收集過程。這些數據收集活動可在學苑以內或以外地方進行，涵蓋：

- 問卷調查，包括網上、傳統、電話調查
- 小組或個別訪談，包括面對面訪談、電話及網上訪談
- 心理教育評鑑研究
- 目標對象個案研究
- 在自然環境和受控制環境下進行人類行為觀察
- 準實驗研究

此外，「研究者」指那些為學苑進行上述研究活動的任何學本苑職員或研究團隊。個別研究團隊可能包括學苑外人士。

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保障研究參與者的福祉

- 研究必須妥善設計，以避免造成研究參與者身心傷害、不適和憂慮。一般來說，研究參與者不應承受多於在日常生活遇到的風險。

- 如研究存在無可避免的潛在風險，研究者應評估出現風險的可能性與嚴重性，並知會研究參與者有何措施減低風險。

知情同意

研究者須根據以下指引，確保所有研究參與者在掌握充份資料下自由地同意參與研究過程：

- 研究者必須取得研究參與者適當的知情同意，而表示同意的方式可以是書面、口頭或網上／電郵記錄。
- 研究者尋求研究參與者的同意時，應向對方詳細解釋研究目的、預期所需時間及隨後步驟。
- 研究者應通知研究參與者所有會影響其參與意願的因素，例如研究的潛在風險、對個人或他人的利益、參與誘因以及履行保密承諾的限制。
- 研究者應保證研究參與者有權拒絕參與研究，以及隨時退出研究而不會構成不良後果；從退出研究的參與者所收集得的任何數據會被刪除。

家長同意與學生贊同

(a) 涉及中學以下學生參與的研究：

- 凡涉及未入讀中學的兒童參與的研究，必須先獲得其家長或合法監護人的主動同意[1]。

(b) 涉及中學生參與的研究：

- 以中學生（中一及以上）為對象的在校研究，得學校同意已可
- 在校外進行的研究：

  (i) 涉及 16 歲或以上青少年參與的研究，通常不需家長同意，因他們屬心智成熟的未成年人；

  (ii) 涉及 16 歲以下中學生參與的研究，通常獲家長的被動同意[2]即可。

任何情況下，已獲家長允許參與研究的學生，亦可拒絕參與研究。研究進行前，所有學生將獲充份資料以助他們自行決定是否參與研究。

[1] 徵求主動同意的程序中，家長或監護人將獲告知有關研究的資料，以及獲提供方法將已簽名的同意書交回研究者(不論是否同意讓其子女參與研究)。

[2] 徵求被動同意的程序中，家長或監護人將獲告知有關研究的資料，以及獲提供方法向研究者表達拒絕讓其子女參與研究的意願。

重新徵求家長同意

- 若研究需要學生投放頗長時間或反覆參與數據收集活動，例如縱貫研究，研究者或須重新徵求家長同意。若研究參與者已到 16 歲，研究者會尋求家長／監護人的被動同意，不論其家長／監護人過往曾同意或拒絕其子女參與研究。在該程序中，家長或監護人將會給予一段合理時間就子女的參與提出反對。

數據的保密性

- 研究部進行的研究分為以下兩類：
  - (i) 匿名性 – 即不記錄姓名的研究，研究者不知亦無從披露參與者身份；或
  - (ii) 保密性 – 只有研究者知道參與者身份。未經參與者的同意，研究者不得向任何不涉及研究的人士披露該參與者的身份。
- 研究者應確保研究參與者所提供的數據得到保密處理，以符合《個人資料（私隱）條例》，參與者的身份不會因刊登有關數據而被識別。
- 除非是匿名性調查或自然觀察，研究者應向研究參與者說明用以確保收集數據保密的方法。

現存數據的使用

- 若研究者希望使用有個人識別符的現存研究數據作新目的，或使用原本為非研究用途而收集的現存數據（例如學生的課業或作品）作研究分析，應再次徵求研究者的知情同意。
- 在下列情況，如需使用現存研究數據作進一步分析，通常無需再取得相關研究參與者的同意：
  - (i) 數據沒有包含個人識別符；及
  - (ii) 數據的用途與原本收集時指明的目的與用途直接相關，並在最初收集時已獲得適當的知情同意。

數據儲存與保護

- 所有研究數據將以安全持久的方式儲存。在大部分情況下，已完成研究項目的數據會保存最少七年。
- 具有個人識別符的數據，將存放在上鎖櫃子內，只有研究者可以取用。透過錄影、錄音、照片及其他形式收集的可擷取身份數據，亦會在同樣安全條件下的環境存放。

- 如適用，間接識別符將會用於處理敏感或私人數據，並將之儲存於一個與直接識別符分開的位置。
- 研究者應確保經網上調查收集的電子數據，會以加密格式傳送。

查詢

- 如有查詢，請電郵至 research@hkage.org.hk 或致電 852-3940 0105 聯絡歐陽麗紅博士或杭小麗女士。

註：上述指引會不時修訂，以及不應被視為一個詳盡無遺的指南，以解決所有以人為對象的研究涉及的操守問題。

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Ethical Guidelines for Research involving Human Participants

Preamble

The broad principles guiding research have long been established. Central to these principles are:

- respect of the rights and interests of research participants
- adherence to high ethical standards which is critical to maintaining public trust and confidence in research
- validity and accuracy in the collection and reporting of data

The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education (HKAGE) supports and follows these principles. Guidelines that have been laid down to ensure that all research undertaken by the HKAGE conforms to high ethical standards and professional conduct are provided in this document.

Scope

In this document, research refers to all forms of data collection processes involving human participants. These data collection activities may take place both within and outside the Academy, covering:

- surveys, including online, pen-and-paper and telephone surveys
- group or individual interviews, including face-to-face, telephone and online interviews
- psycho-educational evaluations
- case study of the target participant(s)
- observations of human behaviour in natural and controlled settings
- quasi-experimental studies

Further, “researcher” means any staff members of the HKAGE or research teams carrying out any of the above research activities for the HKAGE. A research team may involve people outside the Academy.

Ethical guidelines governing research involving human participants

Protecting participants' welfare

- All research must be designed to minimise potential physical or psychological harm, discomfort or stress to participants. Normally, participants should not be exposed to risks that are greater than those encountered in ordinary life.
- If unavoidable additional risks are present, researchers should assess these risks for their probability and severity, and inform the participants what measures will be taken to minimise such risks.

Informed consent

Researchers should ensure that every participant consents freely to the process on the basis of adequate information according to the following guidelines:

- Appropriate informed consent must be obtained from any research participant who is able to give such consent. This can be done in the form of written, verbal or online/email recorded consent.
- In seeking informed consent, researchers should explain to participants the purpose of the research, expected duration and the procedures to be followed in a comprehensible manner.
- Researchers should inform the participants about all those aspects of the research that may influence their willingness to participate, such as potential risks, benefits to the individual or to others, incentive for participation, and limitations in ensuring confidentiality.
- Researchers should assure participants of their right to decline to participate in and withdraw from the research at any time with no adverse consequences. Any data collected from those participants withdrawing from the research will be removed.

Parental consent and student assent

(c) For research involving children below Secondary School

- active consent of parents or legal guardians[3] is required for all research involving children below Secondary.

[3] In the active consent procedure, parents or guardians will be informed about the research undertaken and provided with a method to return signed permission to the researchers.

(d) For research involving children in Secondary School

- for school-based studies of students in Secondary (S1 and above), school consent is deemed sufficient.
- for research conducted outside school:

  (iii) parental consent is not normally required for research involving adolescents aged 16 or above on the basis that they are mature minors;

  (iv) passive parental consent[4] is normally sufficient for studies involving secondary students aged below 16.

In any case, students who have been given permission from their parents to participate in the research are able to decline participation. They will be provided with sufficient information in a manner that is comprehensible to them to facilitate their decision making.

Renewal of parental consent

- If the research requires a substantial commitment of time or repeated data collection sessions from students, such as in longitudinal studies, researchers may need to seek renewed consent from parents. In case the participant have reached the age of 16, passive parental consent will be sought irrespective of whether the parents/guardians have previously agreed or refused to allow their children to participate in research. In such procedure, parents or guardians will be given reasonable time to object to their children's participation.

Confidentiality of data

- Research studies undertaken by the Research Division will be either

  (iii) anonymous - names are not recorded and thus the identity of the participant is not known to the researcher and cannot be disclosed; or

  (iv) confidential - the identity of the participant is known only to the researchers and will not be disclosed to anyone not involving in the research without the participant's consent.

- Researchers should ensure that information provided by the participants is treated confidentially in compliance with the *Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance,* and will not be personally identifiable if published.

[4] In the passive consent procedure, parents or guardians will be informed about the research undertaken and provided with a method to retract permission.

- Except in anonymous surveys or naturalistic observations, researchers should indicate to the research participants the method used to ensure confidentiality of the collected data.

Use of pre-existing data

- Researchers must seek informed consent from participants again if they wish to use pre-existing research data with personal identifiers for a new purpose, or use pre-existing data that were originally collected for non-research purposes for research analysis, e.g., student assignments or artifacts.
- Under the following conditions, the use of existing research datasets for further analysis will normally require no further consent from the participants concerned:

  (iii) the dataset contains no personal identifiers; and

  (iv) use of the data is directly related to the purpose and use specified when the data were originally collected, with an appropriate consent having been gained in the initial collection.

Storage and security of data

- All research data will be stored in a durable and secure format. In most cases, the data of completed research studies will be retained for a minimum of 7 years.
- Data containing personal identifiers will be kept in locked cabinets and only the researchers can have access to them. Identity capturing data which are collected using video or audio recording, photographs or other methods will be stored under the same secure conditions.
- For private sensitive data, efforts will be made to use indirect identifiers and store in a separate location from direct identifiers, if applicable.
- Researchers should ensure that electronic data collected via online surveys will be transmitted in an encrypted format.

Further information

- For enquiries, please contact Dr Lettice Au Yeung or Ms Celina Hong at E-mail: research@hkage.org.hk, or Tel: 852-3940 0105.

Note: These guidelines may be amended from time to time and should not be considered an exhaustive guide to address all ethical issues in research involving human participants.