



OPERATING PROCEDURE	Managing Contracted Research Requests from ACT Government
OPERATING PROCEDURE NO.	16.3
SCOPE	ACT Corrective Services

PURPOSE

To outline the process for ACT Corrective Services (ACTCS) to assess research, evaluation and data requests from external researchers contracted by the wider ACT Government, and the process for advising researchers regarding the outcome of their requests.

PROCEDURES**1. Receiving and responding to initial research requests**

- 1.1. The Research and Evaluation Officer (REO) will receive notification from an ACT Government research contact that clearance has been provided for research with ACTCS.
- 1.2. Requests for aggregate data of a routine nature may be cleared by the Senior Director, Strategy, Data and Research, outside of the application process.
- 1.3. The REO will request copies of the following from the ACT Government research contact:
 - a. project proposal
 - b. ethics approval
 - c. participant information and consent sheets
 - d. background information on the focus of the contracted research, including if/why access to correctional centres is required and who the researchers are
 - e. methodology (including sampling method) and research instruments
 - f. duration of data collection and study
 - g. recruitment approach
 - h. care procedures
 - i. clarification from researchers on operational aspects of access.
- 1.4. If ethics approval is not obtained, the REO will recommend that the contracted researcher obtains ethical clearance.
- 1.5. Where the contracted researcher has advised that obtaining Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approval from their institution requires evidence of ACTCS support for their application, the REO will advise that the ACTCS Commissioner (the Commissioner) may consider providing a letter of in-principle support but not approval for the research.
- 1.6. Where an evaluation or data request has been received from a community organisation that does not have access to a HREC to approve their research, the REO will request a brief description of how the contracted researcher plans to ensure that their research is conducted

in an ethical manner and adhere to the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research.

- 1.7. The REO will advise that for requests to be considered where HREC approval is not available, the research must be linked to evaluation or delivery of programs and services, in line with an existing government agreement, and that requests not linked to the evaluation or delivery of programs and services will not be granted without HREC approval, or the intention to apply for HREC approval. In such situations the REO may:
 - a. provide additional guidance as per the Application Guidelines for External Researchers
 - b. advise that to qualify for this exemption, the individuals conducting any field work must be different from the individuals delivering programs and/or services.
- 1.8. The REO will review the application for impact on ACTCS security, operations, resources, staff, clients and programs, including risks associated with the research and operational impacts and support required from ACTCS, such as:
 - a. fieldwork logistics, including access requirements
 - b. relevant safety training
 - c. device exemption forms
 - d. notification process
 - e. important contacts
 - f. publication approval process
 - g. ethical and legal considerations, such as:
 - i. ethical considerations around detainee populations, including accessibility, inclusion and wellbeing where relevant
 - ii. interview and post-interview support
 - iii. dissemination of research to participants/detainees in an appropriate manner
 - iv. capacity of the researcher to handle and store data appropriately
 - v. managing confidential/sensitive information (including potential for statistical disclosure risks), given the small size of the ACT jurisdiction
 - vi. the consideration of i-v for potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, culturally and linguistically diverse participants, and participants with low literacy and disability.
- 1.9. The REO will liaise with key operational areas to negotiate logistics of fieldwork access, if it has not already been done by the Area Contact.

2. Assessment of research application and notification of outcome

- 2.1. The REO will prepare an executive minute for the Commissioner summarising any identified concerns.
- 2.2. The Commissioner may decide to provide:

- a. formal approval, or
 - b. in-principle support (where researcher has not yet received HREC approval).
- 2.3. The REO will make any necessary amendments to the response letter (and if the research is approved, the ACTCS Acknowledgement of Conditions on Approval to Conduct Research with ACT Corrective Services (Acknowledgement of Conditions) for signing by the Commissioner.
- 2.4. The REO will email the researcher to advise on the outcome of their application (approval or in-principle support), as outlined in the Managing External Research and Data Requests Operating Procedure.

3. Commencement of research

- 3.1. The REO will provide the contracted researcher(s):
- a. contact with key operational areas
 - b. Security Access Training Application Form, where access to a correctional centre is required
 - c. Prohibited Things, Excess and Non-Standard Item Application Form, if audio recording is required as part of research
 - d. periodic check-ins at different stages of research/data collection
 - e. Data Collection/Fieldwork Completion Report Template at the end of the fieldwork period
 - f. support with sharing/reporting findings with research participants/clients and relevant operational and policy units
 - g. support with the publication approval process, where required.
- 3.2. Research cannot commence until:
- a. written approval has been granted by the Commissioner
 - b. the REO has acknowledged receipt of an Acknowledgement of Conditions, signed by all members of the research team, and
 - c. the researcher has met any other applicable conditions, such as completing Security Awareness Training.
- 3.3. The REO will email relevant Executives, Senior Directors, and the nominated Area Contact to advise that research can commence. They will forward a copy of the approval letter and signed Acknowledgement of Conditions for reference.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- ACTCS Acknowledgement of Conditions on Approval to Conduct Research with ACT Corrective Services
- ACTCS Application Form for External Researchers
- ACTCS Application Guidelines for External Researchers
- ACTCS Alexander Maconochie Centre Research Participant Distress and Safety Protocol Guide

- ACTCS Data Collection/Fieldwork Completion Report Template for External Researchers
- ACTCS External Researcher Findings Brief Template
- ACTCS External Research and Data Requests Policy
- ACTCS Formal Approval Letter
- ACTCS Managing External Research and Data Requests Operating Procedure
- ACTCS Managing External Research Partnership Requests Operating Procedure
- ACTCS Monitoring the Conduct of Approved External Research Operating Procedure
- ACTCS Security Awareness Training Application Form
- ACTCS Prohibited Things, Restricted, Excess and Non-Standard Items Operating Procedure
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research
- Crimes (Sentence Administration) Act 2005
- National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research



Cherry Wang
Executive Branch Manager, Corporate Services
ACT Corrective Services

3 August 2026

Document details

Criteria	Details		
Document title:	<i>Corrections Management (Managing Contracted Research Requests) Operating Procedure 2026</i>		
Document owner/approver:	Executive Branch Manager, Corporate Services, ACT Corrective Services		
Date effective:	The day after the notification date		
Review date:	Five (5) years after the notification date		
Responsible Officer:	Senior Director, Strategy, Data and Research		
Compliance:	This operating procedure reflects the requirements of the <i>Corrections Management (Policy Framework) Policy 2024</i>		
Version Control			
Version no.	Date	Description	Author
V1	June-26	First Issued	J Rodgers

