

## EXEMPLAR 1

### 5 Project summary

<b>Purpose of research explained</b>	<p>Veterinary stakeholders' perspectives on desirable professional attributes and skills of veterinarians are vital when designing curricula for veterinary professional programs. This study will form part of an ongoing study which seeks to determine which veterinary professional attributes and skills are essential to include in a veterinary undergraduate training programme to ensure veterinary career success.</p> <p>The magnitude, trends and causes of complaints lodged with the VCNZ against veterinarians by clients and professional colleagues in relation to veterinary professional skills over the past 20-30 years in New Zealand will be identified. This study may serve to validate the importance of the professional skills identified by veterinary stakeholders.</p>
<b>Data and method of analysis</b>	<p>Complaints data will be categorised into complaints due to perceived transgressions concerning technical competency or concerning nontechnical competency. The non-technical competency complaints will be further stratified into complaints due to communication issues, financial disagreements or governance/legislative issues.</p>
<b>Justification for collecting demographic data</b>	<p>Sociodemographic information of respondents may be collected to provide information on whether complaints against veterinarians have a gender or age bias. The findings of this research may justify the importance of including certain veterinary professional skills into the veterinary undergraduate veterinary professional skills curriculum at Massey.</p> <p>[1430 characters including spaces]</p>

### 6 Peer review process

<b>Peer review by team members</b>	<p>The ethical issues involved in this project have been discussed in detail with [three names] from IVABS and [name] from the Massey School of Psychology. All are involved as co-researchers in this project on veterinary professional skills in the undergraduate veterinary curriculum.</p>
<b>Consultation with stakeholders. Focus on privacy. Consulting with MU Human Ethics</b>	<p>In addition, the Registrar and Chief Executive of the VCNZ, [name] ; the Deputy Registrar (Standards) at VCNZ, [name]and [name], the Chairperson of the VCNZ Professional Standards Committee were consulted. Issues with privacy were discussed and advice sought from the Privacy Commission. [Name], Chair of the MU Ethics Committee (Southern B) was also consulted and helped the applicant discuss and analyse the ethical issues present in this project and helped to formulate the human ethics application.</p> <p>All discussions have been in accordance with adherence to the Veterinary Code of Ethical Conduct.</p>
<b>Rationale for using low risk process</b>	<p>Due to future publication requirements, it was deemed important to undertake some engagement with the human ethics committee and obtain a low risk notification, despite there being no human contact involved in the research.</p> <p>[1249 characters including spaces]</p>

## 7 Ethical issues considered and how they have been addressed

	<i>Confidentiality</i>
<b>Identification of issue in terms of personal information</b>	The NZ Privacy Commission advised that this research was permissible under Principle 11 (h)(ii) of the Privacy Act. This allows for personal information to be disclosed if it is to be used for research purposes and will not be published in a form where individuals can be identified. They recommended that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A confidentiality agreement must be signed by the researchers which protects against the disclosure of confidential information.</li><li>• The VCNZ will carefully prescribe the requirements about information storage and disposal. Data will be stored on password protected computers and not be identifiable back to the original respondents. Data will be disposed of in accordance with the regulations of the MUHEC in effect at the time of the disposal. Electronic information will be securely erased 5 years after completion of the study.</li><li>• The complaint information will need to be accessed onsite at the VCNZ offices and cannot be photographed or removed. No names of the complainants/respondents will be recorded, so that all retrieved information remains anonymous with identities protected.</li><li>• The published research must be appropriately anonymised</li></ul>
<b>Detail of how data will be accessed, disseminated, stored and disposed of to manage this issue</b>	[Note: the Human Ethics website has a brief guide the Privacy Act as it applies to research.]

	<i>Conflict of interest</i>
<b>Explaining the separation</b>	The applicants are academic researchers with no direct involvement with the participants in this study (clients/private veterinary practitioners), so no conflict of interest has been identified.

	<i>Discomfort to participants</i>
<b>Explaining how complaints are known to the profession; the research will not cause any additional discomfort</b>	The information to be retrieved represents secondary data as no persons will be interviewed. Indeed most of this information (anonymised) is routinely published in the VCNZ newsletters available to practicing veterinarians. Any form of discomfort is, therefore, not anticipated. The applicants are strictly bound by the Privacy Act and the confidentiality agreement to guarantee the anonymity of the complainants/respondents. The anonymity of any published research will guarantee that this research will have no negative impact upon any individual's reputation. [1971 characters including spaces]