

The regulations for obtaining ethical approval

Ethical approval of research by PhD students of the Doctoral School of Linguistics, University of Szeged, for research leading to the PhD degree, and for research supervised by or carried out by the faculty of the Doctoral School of Linguistics, University of Szeged, Beginning with January 2024

The Council of the Doctoral School of Linguistics (CDSL) at the University of Szeged passed the resolution that the DSL shall offer the possibility of obtaining preliminary ethical approval of research proposals. Hungarian legislation has not made this mandatory yet, however, internationally a growing number of high prestige journals require official documentation of ethical approval, and some Hungarian journals also have the prerequisite of an ethical approval for the publication of studies.

The Doctoral School Council established the Doctoral School of Linguistics Review Board (DSLRB), which is tasked with the ethical evaluation of research in the Doctoral School, and with issuing institutional ethical approval based on this evaluation. The approval is to verify that the submitted research proposal conforms to the ethical principles of human research in Social Sciences. The detailed by-laws of the Board can be read below.*

The Application Form is available at the website of the DSL (on the page containing regulations).

An explanation of how to obtain informed consent is included below.**

Submission of the request:

For preliminary collation, the completed Application Form must be sent electronically, together with all the necessary appendices to:

Dr. Anna Fenyvesi

(Head of the DSLRB, Institute of English and American Studies, University of Szeged)

fenyvesi@lit.u-szeged.hu

After the collation via electronic correspondence and the review, the original, signed copy of the ethical approval can be collected in person at the office of the DSL (6722 Szeged, Egyetem u. 2., Éva Gábor).

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The by-laws of the Linguistics Review Board of the Doctoral School of Linguistics, University of Szeged

I. The mandate of the Doctoral School of Linguistics Review Board

1. The Doctoral School of Linguistics Review Board (DSL RB) is tasked with the ethical evaluation of research in the Doctoral School of Linguistics (DSL) at the request of the person proposing the research (faculty or PhD student of the DSL), and with issuing institutional ethical approval based on this evaluation. The approval is to verify that the submitted research plan conforms to the ethical principles of human research in Social Sciences, i.e.:

- a) It is guaranteed that the **personal rights of the participants are respected**.
- b) Data are treated confidentially, that is, information given by the participants is not publicised and the participants cannot be identified.
- c) The participation of subjects in the study is voluntary and takes place **after the provision of appropriate information** and with their full consent.
- d) The study is not harmful to their health or personality.
- e) The data are used exclusively for research purposes.

2. The number of the members of the Institutional Review Board is five: the Chair; two Members are offered the post by the chair; and ex officio the Secretary of the DSL and the **Head** of the DSL. The Chair of the Doctoral School of Linguistics Review Board offers the post of Member of the Board to two people **from among the supervisors** of the DSL. The composition of the Board is approved by the Council of the DSL.

II. The operation of the Doctoral School of Linguistics Review Board

1. The procedure is initiated by the submission of the Application Form for ethical approval and the Research Proposal, which must be submitted to the Chair of the DSL RB electronically. The Chair of the DSL RB approves or rejects the application after involving the members of the Board in the decision-making process. The **printed document of the final decision** is issued to the Applicants in a written document with an original signature and an identification number.
2. In addition to the ethical analysis of concrete research plans, any **supervisor of the DSL can request ethical counsel and advice regarding research in the DS**. It is possible to apply for the ethical approval of **one given publication**.
3. The Doctoral School of Linguistics Review Board has 15 days for deciding on an application, which it may extend by a further 15 days if it needs to ask the applicant for further documents to make its assessment or request a further opinion from a third party.
4. **Decisions are made with a simple majority**. The approval is signed by the Chair of the DSL RB and sent by the Chair to the office of the DSL. The Applicant is notified by the Secretary of the DSL.

5. If any member of the DSLRB is involved in the research plan, the procedure is carried out temporarily excluding the member concerned. If the Chair of the DSLRB is involved, the procedure is carried out and the approval is signed by the Secretary of the DSL, or the **Head of the DSL, or the Member acting as interim Chair**.
6. If the application is rejected, the Applicant can ask for a review of the decision **within 15 days of collecting** the printed document of rejection.
7. The institutional ethical approval can be used as proof of consent when publishing the data.

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The general rules of informed consent in Social Science research

The way of giving informed consent by a subject is influenced by the age of the subject and the method of data collection:

1. If the subject is a child under the age of 3, the parents must be given a written description of the study, and one of the parents/a guardian can give consent in the name of the child with their signature. Include in the appendices of the Application Form the description of the study and the Consent Form.
2. If the subject is a child between the ages 3 and 14, the parent/guardian gives consent as described above, and the child gives assent orally. Include in the appendices of the Application Form the document prepared for the parents/guardian and the content of the oral or written information communicated to the child.
3. If the subject is an adolescent between the ages of 14 and 18, the written information must be communicated to the adolescent and to the parent/guardian, and the Consent Form must be signed by both of them. If the adolescent's name is not recorded in the study, the passive consent of the parents/guardian is enough. (Their consent can be presumed if, having read the written information, they do not object to the participation of their child.) Include the documents defined above (information on the study). Participation is voluntary in each case, and this must be made clear in the information given.
4. Online data collection: At the beginning of the questionnaire, the purpose and a short description of the data collection must be given, as well as information that participation is voluntary and anonymous. After this, the first question should be about having read, and agreeing to, the information on participation in the study.