1. What are your thoughts about Anna’s rationale for not obtaining informed consent?

Anna seems to have a valid reason as she is concerned that the accuracy of the findings of her research will be affected if the participants are informed about the study. However, research ethics requires that the researcher should provide sufficient information about his/her study to the participants and in a way that they will understand and be able to make an informed decision on whether to participate in the research or not. The decision by a participant should be based on competence, should be voluntary and in writing (Argosy University, 2008). This means that the students should be provided with comprehensive information about the research and should not be coerced or induced in any way to participate in the research.

2. If the value of the research seems to be greater than the risks involved to participants, do you think researchers are justified in not obtaining the informed consent of participants?

The researchers are not always justified in not obtaining the informed consent of the participants just because the research seems to have greater value than the risks. The participants have the right to be informed about the researcher, the purpose of the research, reasons why he/she was chosen as a participant, harms and benefits of the research and future use of the information before they are made to decide on whether or not to participate in the research. A researcher can only receive a waiver from this rule if he/she has very valid reasons or that his/her research is dealing with secondary data such as students’ records and not dealing directly with participants.

3. Would Anna’s approach as described above meet Argosy University’s informed consent criteria?
Anna’s approach would not meet Argosy University consent criteria as the consent criteria clearly state that a researcher should obtain a written consent from participants before engaging them in your study (Argosy University, 2008). It is also a requirement to provide the participant with sufficient opportunity to consider whether to participate or not. Where the participants are below 18 years, besides getting them to agree to participate in the research, Argosy University also requires the research to seek consent from the guardians before proceeding with the research. In cases where the research is practically impossible to carry out after the participants are aware of the study, the researcher is required to get a waiver of informed consent.

4. What advice would you give Anna about informed consent and how she should deal with her study participants?

Anna should first of all seek written informed consent from the guardians of the students. She should then go ahead and explain to the students about the research, its procedures, potential risks and benefits and explain to them of the need to conduct themselves normally during the research. If it will be impractical to get valid results from the research after the students have been informed, Anna should get a waiver from those responsible with research issues in the school.

References