

PG1 - FULL RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This form is to be completed by both the student and supervisory team within **THREE** months for full-time students and **SIX** months for part time students, after the commencement of the research degree or following progression to Part Two of your course.

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This document is also available in Welsh.

Student Details

Student Family / Surname:	Yin		
Student Given / First name:	Ziliang		
Student Number	2500440		
Start Date	01.10.2025	End Date	01.10.2028

PhD by Research	PhD Practice Based	PhD by Published Works	Professional Doctorate (including DBA, DProf, Ed D)	MPhil by Research	MPhil Practice Based
☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
MA by Research	MSc by Research	MRes			
☐	☐	☐			

Proposed Research

Current Proposed Title (20 / 30 words):
Constructing the Sublime Experience in Virtual Reality: A Framework for Virtual Environment Design
Background & Context (approx. 500 words)
Sublime theory has long been recognised as a central concept in aesthetics and philosophy (Shaw, 2017). Its intellectual development can be traced from Longinus' rhetorical conception of the sublime (Longinus, 1995), through Edmund Burke's emphasis on emotional response (Burke, 2012), to Immanuel Kant's account of the rational sublime (Kant, 1987). Together, these perspectives provide an important foundation for understanding the complex experiences that arise when people encounter vastness, danger, infinity, or forms of transcendence. Rather than representing ordinary aesthetic pleasure, the sublime is commonly understood as an exceptional mode of experience, characterised by feelings of awe, fear, astonishment, or transcendence when individuals confront overwhelming power or the limits of human understanding (Costelloe, 2012). Such experiences involve not only intense emotional reactions but also cognitive and embodied engagement, making the sublime a multidimensional phenomenon rather than a purely visual or sensory response. As digital technologies have become increasingly embedded in everyday life, discussions of the sublime have likewise expanded beyond their traditional contexts to encompass digital environments (Hamer, 2020; Spokes, 2020).

Within digital media, the sublime is no longer confined to encounters with nature or religious settings. Instead, it has increasingly been explored in contexts such as video games, digital art, and virtual reality (Hamer, 2020; Spokes, 2020). By transcending many of the physical constraints of the real world, virtual environments enable designers to create spatial scales, relationships, and surreal worlds that would be impossible to realise physically. These possibilities provide new aesthetic conditions for experiencing the sublime. In particular, the construction of monumental spaces, unfamiliar landscapes, and imaginary worlds in video games and virtual reality allows designers to evoke feelings of awe, wonder, and transcendence that are difficult to achieve through everyday experience (He et al., 2024).

Existing research generally agrees that certain spatial characteristics play a significant role in shaping sublime experiences, whether in physical or virtual environments (Spokes, 2020). Features such as vastness, dramatic contrasts in scale, infinity, inaccessibility, and transcendence have all been identified as important contributors to the sublime (He et al., 2024). However, these characteristics are often discussed individually, with less attention given to how they work together through spatial design. As a result, relatively little research has examined how spatial design decisions are developed and organised to construct sublime experiences within virtual environments. Existing studies have highlighted the importance of immersion, interactivity, and virtuality (Kim, 2023), yet they provide limited explanation of how these qualities are translated into concrete design strategies or how they can inform the creation of sublime virtual spaces. This study argues that sublime experiences in virtual environments are not simply encountered by users but are actively constructed through spatial organisation, visual expression, and the affordances of digital media. Examining this process is therefore important not only for advancing theoretical understandings of the virtual sublime but also for translating these ideas into practical knowledge for virtual environment design.

Recent advances in virtual reality have further strengthened users' sense of immersion, allowing them to enter complex digital environments from a first-person perspective and experience spatial scale, bodily presence, and environmental relationships in ways that differ fundamentally from conventional screen-based media. Compared with traditional video games, virtual reality therefore provides a particularly suitable platform for investigating the relationship between spatial experience and the sublime. Although recent studies have begun to explore sublime experiences in virtual reality (Spokes, 2020), the existing literature has largely focused on describing the phenomenon itself, identifying experiential characteristics, or examining isolated spatial factors (Quesnel & Riecke, 2018; He et al., 2024). There remains a lack of systematic research into how spatial design organises these characteristics to construct sublime experiences in virtual reality. To address this gap, this study adopts virtual reality as its research medium and investigates the formation of virtual sublime experience from a spatial design perspective. Ultimately, it aims to develop a spatial design framework that connects theories of the sublime with design practice.

Aims and Objectives (approx.. 250 – 500 words)

This study argues that virtual space should be understood not only as a representation of the physical world but also as a medium that extends beyond its limitations. Accordingly, sublime experience in virtual environments is grounded in classical theories of the sublime while also being shaped by the development of digital media and immersive technologies, giving rise to a form of aesthetic experience that reflects the characteristics of the digital age (Hamer, 2020; Spokes, 2020). Unlike the sublime encountered in nature, which emerges through direct engagement with natural landscapes or physical phenomena, the sublime in virtual environments does not exist independently of design. Rather, it is intentionally constructed through the combined influence of spatial organisation, visual expression, environmental storytelling, and digital media. In this sense, the virtual sublime remains fundamentally an aesthetic experience created through artistic practice. What distinguishes it is not its nature, but the medium through which it is realised. It depends on the interaction between spatial design and digital technology, rather than occurring spontaneously. The virtual sublime, therefore, should not be regarded as a simple reproduction of the sublime found in the physical world. Instead, it represents a reinterpretation of traditional sublime theory through the possibilities offered by virtual space as a new design medium.

Previous studies have consistently identified spatial qualities such as vastness, contrasts in scale, infinity, inaccessibility, and transcendence as important conditions for eliciting sublime experiences

(Quesnel & Riecke, 2018; He et al., 2024). However, this study argues that these qualities should not be understood as isolated variables, nor does their mere accumulation necessarily produce a sense of the sublime. Instead, they are more likely to operate collectively through the ways they are organised within a spatial environment. Their relationships—expressed through spatial composition, visual hierarchy, environmental atmosphere, and spatial rhythm—may together shape a coherent aesthetic experience from which the sublime emerges. Consequently, rather than asking which individual spatial characteristics evoke sublime experience, this research focuses on how these characteristics are organised, integrated, and expressed through spatial design, and how their interaction contributes to the construction of sublime experience in virtual reality.

Based on this perspective, the study aims to investigate how sublime experience is constructed through spatial design in virtual reality environments. It further seeks to identify the key spatial design characteristics involved in this process and to examine the relationships between them. Ultimately, the research intends to develop a conceptual framework that explains virtual sublime experience from the perspective of spatial design, alongside a practical spatial design framework informed by this theoretical understanding. The conceptual framework is intended to deepen understanding of the mechanisms through which spatial design shapes sublime experience, while the design framework aims to translate these theoretical insights into practical design knowledge that can inform the creation of virtual reality experiences, video games, and immersive digital artworks. In doing so, the study seeks to strengthen the connection between theoretical research and design practice.

Proposed plan of work including timetable

Proposed plan of work

Stage	Timeline	Research Activities	Expected Outputs
Literature Review & Research Positioning	01.10.2026 ~ 01.01.2027	Review classical sublime theory, virtual sublime, spatial design and VR experience literature. Identify research gaps and establish research questions.	Research questions; annotated bibliography; conceptual position
Case Study & Spatial Feature Analysis	01.01.2027 ~ 01.04.2027	Analyse representative VR experiences, digital artworks and video games. Identify recurring spatial design characteristics and explore relationships between them.	Case study analysis; preliminary spatial design model
Conceptual Framework Development	01.04.2027 ~ 01.06.2027	Develop an initial conceptual interpretation of the virtual sublime. Establish relationships between spatial organisation, aesthetic experience and virtual sublime.	Initial conceptual framework
Prototype Design	01.06.2027 ~ 01.09.2027	Design and build initial VR environments in Unreal Engine 5 based on the conceptual framework.	First design prototypes
Pilot Study & Reflective Practice	01.09.2027 ~ 01.10.2027	Conduct pilot testing, reflect on user feedback and redesign environments through iterative practice-based research.	Refined prototypes; reflective design documentation
Main User Study	01.10.2027 ~ 01.12.2027	Conduct questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Analyse quantitative and qualitative data.	Empirical findings
Framework Development	01.12.2027 ~ 01.02.2028	Integrate theory, practice and user evidence. Develop a conceptual framework and spatial design framework.	Final conceptual framework
8. Writing & Submission	01.02.2028 ~ 01.06.2028	Complete thesis writing, revision and final submission.	Completed doctoral thesis.

Proposed methodology (approx. 500 words):

This study adopts practice-based research as its overall research approach, supported by a mixed-methods design combining quantitative and qualitative methods to produce findings that are more comprehensive, systematic and open to interpretation. Creative practice will not only form part of the research outcomes, but will also serve as an important means of generating knowledge, examining theoretical ideas and reflecting on design decisions. The study will bring together theoretical analysis, design practice and user experience evaluation to develop, apply and refine the proposed conceptual framework. At the same time, qualitative and quantitative user experience data will be collected through empirical research to strengthen the credibility and explanatory value of the findings.

In line with the research aims, the project will use four main methods: literature review, case study analysis, creative practice and user experience evaluation. The literature review and case studies will be used to trace the development of theories of the sublime, identify the main characteristics associated with sublime experience in virtual environments, and examine how these ideas have been expressed through design in video games and VR. Creative practice will build on the conceptual framework developed through the earlier stages of the research. It will involve designing and constructing VR environments with different environmental design characteristics, which will also be used as the settings for the user studies. Finally, user experience data will be collected to evaluate the suitability of the proposed conceptual framework.

In the creative practice stage, the design characteristics identified through the literature review and case studies will be applied to the development of the virtual environments. These may include qualities such as vastness, infinity, contrast in scale and transcendence. The work will not remain at the level of broad or abstract concepts. Each quality will be broken down into more specific design principles, such as how spatial organisation, visual hierarchy, the direction of sightlines and the treatment of spatial boundaries can be used to create a sense of vastness, infinity or transcendence. These sublime characteristics and the practical principles used to produce them will form two related dimensions of the conceptual framework. The framework will also show how the characteristics and design principles are connected to one another. Based on this framework, two virtual environments will be produced, each using a different set of sublime-eliciting characteristics. An initial user experience evaluation will then be conducted, and the environments will be revised in response to participant feedback before the main user study takes place. The final study will examine whether participants report experiences associated with the sublime and whether their interview accounts correspond with the design characteristics proposed in the framework. This evidence will be used to assess the effectiveness and practical usefulness of the conceptual framework.

The virtual environments will be produced through a standard development process, including concept design, 3D modelling, material production, terrain and environment development in Unreal Engine 5, interaction design, sound production, testing and final project packaging. The researcher has three years of professional experience in the VR industry, mainly in environment design, and is familiar with PBR workflows and terrain and level design in Unreal Engine 5. The production process and technical realisation of the environments are therefore not expected to present the main difficulty in this research. Similar workflows have already been used in the researcher's professional work and postgraduate projects, resulting in several completed VR works.

The main issue requiring careful control is the design variables used in the two virtual environments, since the project investigates sublime experience in VR specifically through environmental design. Other variables, including sound, narrative, interaction and visual quality, will therefore be kept as consistent as possible across both environments. This is intended to reduce the likelihood that differences in these elements will affect the findings.

User experience evaluation will combine questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and physiological measures. A review of existing studies suggests that these methods are commonly used in research on VR and awe-related experience. Questionnaires will mainly be used to collect participants' subjective responses and data relating to different dimensions of their experience. In this study, the Awe Experience Scale (AWE-S) will be used to measure participants' subjective responses associated with the sublime. Developed by Yaden et al. in 2019, the AWE-S was the first multidimensional state measure designed specifically to assess experiences of awe. Drawing on established theories and empirical studies of awe, the scale was developed and tested through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The final version contains 30 items across six dimensions: Altered Time Perception, Self-Diminishment, Connectedness, Perceived Vastness,

Physical Sensations and Need for Accommodation (Yaden et al., 2019). The findings indicated that the scale has good reliability and validity and can provide a broad account of the subjective psychological states associated with awe. It has since become one of the most widely used standardised measures in current awe research (Pizzolante et al., 2023; Otsubo et al., 2024).

Physiological data will be used to record participants' responses during the VR experience and provide an objective source of evidence alongside their self-reported experiences. Quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative thematic analysis will then be brought together to interpret the findings and assess whether the proposed conceptual framework is suitable for supporting the design of sublime experiences in VR. The physiological measures planned for this study are galvanic skin response and eye tracking. GSR will be used to measure emotional arousal, as experiences associated with the sublime, including awe, fear, tension and feeling overwhelmed, may produce changes in physiological activation. It may therefore help identify changes in the intensity of participants' fear, tension, surprise and sublime-related responses. GSR has been used in a number of VR user experience studies and is regarded as a useful measure of stress and emotional arousal (Toczek, 2016; Ishaque et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2024). Eye tracking will be used to examine where participants look during the virtual experience, how long they attend to particular areas, and whether their attention is drawn towards vast spaces or key visual elements. It can provide evidence of how attention is distributed and which environmental features may have contributed to a particular response. When considered alongside the GSR data, eye-tracking findings may help explain how participants experience the sublime within the designed environments (Clay et al., 2019).

Semi-structured interviews will be used to explore participants' own understanding of the environmental design and of how their sublime-related experiences developed. They will also help explain the questionnaire findings in greater depth. Interviews are commonly used in studies of awe in VR (He et al., 2024; Miller et al., 2023). A set of core questions will be prepared in advance and asked after the quantitative data have been collected. Participants will also be given space to describe their experiences in their own words and to discuss aspects that they consider important. These accounts can reveal thoughts and feelings that may not be fully captured by the quantitative measures. However, interview responses may also be influenced by participants' personality, previous experience and level of understanding. They will therefore be considered alongside behavioural observations and quantitative data as part of an integrated analysis.

Introductory bibliography:

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Facilities and resources available for the investigation: please indicate if you expect to need any special resources

This research will primarily rely on the University's existing digital design and virtual reality facilities. The project is expected to require access to high-performance computers, virtual reality head-mounted displays (VR headsets), and dedicated spaces for VR user experience research to support the design, development, and evaluation of the virtual environments.

As the study will involve the collection and analysis of physiological data, access to appropriate equipment and technical support will be required. This will include devices for monitoring galvanic skin response (GSR) and eye tracking during VR experiments. These physiological measurements will be used alongside questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to provide a more comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences of the virtual sublime.

The successful completion of the research will also require institutional support for participant recruitment and research ethics approval in order to conduct user studies and interviews. Continued access to the University's electronic library resources—including databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis, and SAGE—will be essential for literature review and

ongoing theoretical research throughout the project.

At present, no specialised laboratory or large-scale experimental facilities are anticipated beyond those already available within the University. Existing resources for digital media, virtual reality, and library services are expected to provide the necessary infrastructure for the successful completion of the research.

Special Issues

This research is situated within a practice-based research framework, in which design practice forms an essential part of the overall research outcome alongside the written thesis. The practical component is expected to consist of two virtual reality environments developed in Unreal Engine 5, together with documentation of their design and development process. These design outcomes will be used to explore and evaluate different approaches to creating sublime experiences through spatial design. They will also serve as the experimental environments for the user study, forming an integral part of the research contribution alongside the thesis.

Language in which submitted

The thesis will be written in [please tick as appropriate]:

Welsh ☐

English ☒

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

In line with [UWTSD guidance](#), Generative AI will be used in this thesis for the following purposes:

	Tick ☒	YES	NO
RESEARCH	I intend to use Generative AI to support my research, including searching for bibliography, using tools to summarise, compare and interrogate materials.	☒	☐
STRUCTURE	I intend to use Generative AI to support structuring my thesis submission, including creating a draft argument structure, identifying parts and headings, etc.	☒	☐
PROOFREADING	I intend to use Generative AI to check my own text/creation for grammatical and syntactical mistakes, including translation and rephrasing of my own work within specific standards.	☒	☐
WRITING	I intend to use Generative AI to create text for submission.	☐	☒
CREATIVE	I intend to use Generative AI to create creative materials, such as images.	☐	☒
PROGRAMING	I intend to use Generative AI to create and check code.	☐	☒
NONE	I do not intend to use any type of Generative AI support. This includes research support, structure support, writing/proofreading support and creative support.	☐	☒

Note: any use of Generative Artificial Intelligence will need to be considered and noted in the research ethics application.

Intellectual Property IP

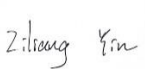
Tick ✓

	YES	NO
It is anticipated that Intellectual Property (IP) will be produced as a result of this research, other than copyright.	☐	☒
If yes, is the IP already subject to a separate agreement with a third party (e.g. employer, sponsor or external funder)? If so please provide details below	☐	☐
Is the research dependent upon background IP owned by: If so, please provide details below	UWTSD ☐	A third party ☐
Text box will expand		

Tick ✓

I understand that:	YES	NO
If any party other than the student is likely to be involved in the development of IP a separate IP agreement will be needed and it may be necessary for the student to assign the IP rights to the University.	☒	☐
If there are no third parties involved in the creation of the IP the student is deemed to own the IP, however should the student wish to commercially exploit their IP and require the assistance of the University to do so, they will be required to assign their IP to the University. https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/iiced/protecting-innovation-and-creativity---intellectual-property/	☒	☐

Student Signature

Signature or Print Name:		Date: 06.08.2026
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Supervisory Team

Has the student proposed a viable research project that is appropriate for this programme that should be supported by the Institute?	
Supported: ☐	Not Supported: ☐

Authorisation

Director of Studies	Print Name and Signature:	Date:
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Institute Manager of Research Degrees	Signature or Print Name:	Date:
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**Once complete, submit this form via the MyTSD Doctoral College Portal at
(<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).**

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL – INTRODUCTORY NOTES

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**:

"[C]reative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications".

As such this covers activities undertaken by:

- Members of staff (academic staff or support staff);
- Individuals holding honorary title from the University;
- Postgraduate research students;

In all of these cases ethical review is required regardless of discipline.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the **lead researcher**.

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

For most projects you will only need to complete sections in the main part of the form. A few projects will need more detailed ethical consideration and will need you to fill in sections in an appendix. At some points in this form you will be asked questions about your research in the following way:

1	Does your research involve <<something specific>>?	YES	Click to continue to appendix <<N>>	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix <<N>>?	YES	☐	NO	☒

Clicking in the appropriate box will take you to the appropriate location in the text. At the end of each appendix is a box. Clicking on this will return you to the question that originally took you to the appendix.

Return to the main form

NB These clickable links will only work if you are editing the document in the desktop version of Word, not the browser version. Please download and save the form before editing it.

Guidance notes are provided as comments or as text **IN GREEN** throughout this form. Please ensure that the comments are removed and that the green text is replaced by your own text or removed as appropriate BEFORE submitting this form.

Please ensure that you have read the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Policy and the UWTSD Research Data Management Policy BEFORE submitting this form.

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

SECTION A: About You (Lead Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Ziliang Yin			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student
3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	Wisa			
4	Campus:	Alex			
5	E-mail address:	972682029@qq.com			
6	Contact Telephone Number:	07942846878			
7	Project Title	Constructing the Sublime Experience in Virtual Reality: A Framework for Virtual Environment Design			
8	Proposed Start Date	09/24/2025	Proposed End Date	09/24/2028	
For students:					
9	Student Number:	2500440			
10	Programme of Study:	Art and Design			
11	Director of Studies/Supervisor:				

SECTION B: Grant or Contract Funding

1	Has your research been awarded, applied for, or intend to apply for external funding?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 1	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix 1?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

Ethical Guidance Documents		
Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.		
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Policy	☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☒
3	UWTSD Open Access Publications Policy	☒
4	UWTSD Export Control Policy	☐
5	UWTSD Trusted Research and Innovation Policy	☐
6	[List any other relevant documents here]	☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

1	Does your research involve collaborating partners at another institution or organisation?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 2	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix 2?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

Aims, Vision and Approach of the Research (maximum 200 words per section)	
Please outline what are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work and how will you deliver it?	
1	Research aims and objectives Virtual environments have already demonstrated considerable potential for creating sublime experiences across games, virtual reality applications, and digital art. However, existing research has not yet provided a systematic understanding of how these experiences are intentionally constructed through virtual environment design, nor how the underlying environmental and design characteristics relate to one another. Building on professional practice in virtual environment design, this research aims to develop a conceptual framework for designing sublime experiences in immersive virtual environments. To achieve this, the research will combine literature review, case studies, practice-based design, and user experience research to identify key environmental characteristics associated with the sublime experience, including vastness, infinity, inaccessibility, transcendence, and ambiguity, and investigate the underlying design characteristics that contribute to them. Through an iterative process of design, reflection, refinement, and user evaluation, the relationships between these characteristics will be analysed and the conceptual framework will be progressively developed and evaluated. The outcome of the research will be a multi-level conceptual framework that explains the relationships between sublime-related environmental characteristics, their underlying design characteristics, and the design strategies used to construct them. The framework is intended to provide transferable design knowledge that supports future virtual environment design by offering both theoretical understanding and practical design guidance. (this box should expand as you type)
2	Vision The rapid development of virtual reality, real-time 3D technologies, and immersive media has created new opportunities for designing profound aesthetic experiences. Although professional practice has demonstrated that virtual environments can evoke sublime experiences, existing research has not yet systematically explained how these experiences are intentionally constructed through virtual environment design. Building on professional practice in virtual environment design, this research aims to develop a conceptual framework that translates existing design practice into transferable design knowledge. The project will identify key environmental characteristics associated with the sublime, including vastness, infinity, inaccessibility, transcendence, and ambiguity, and investigate how these characteristics relate to underlying design characteristics and design strategies. Through an iterative practice-based research process combining literature review, case studies, design practice, reflection, and user experience research, the framework will be developed and refined. The resulting framework is intended to support professional practice by providing practical design guidance for immersive virtual environments. It will contribute to digital aesthetics, virtual environment design, and experience design while offering transferable knowledge that can inform future practice across games, virtual tourism, cultural heritage, and other immersive applications. (this box should expand as you type)

3	Approach This research adopts practice-based research as its overall methodology, supported by a mixed-methods approach. Design practice is regarded not only as the subject of investigation but also as a means of applying and evaluating design knowledge. The study combines literature review, case studies, practice-based design, and user experience research to develop and evaluate a conceptual framework for supporting sublime experiences in virtual environments through environmental design. The research begins with a review of literature on theories of the sublime, digital aesthetics, virtual environment design, and related fields to identify the environmental characteristics associated with the virtual sublime and establish an initial conceptual framework. This is followed by case studies of representative virtual environments to identify existing design approaches to the sublime, refine the framework, and establish the relationships between sublime-related environmental characteristics, their underlying design characteristics, and corresponding design strategies. These findings provide the theoretical basis for the subsequent design practice. Building on this framework, the study will undertake a stage of creative practice in which Unreal Engine 5 will be used to design and develop virtual environments that translate the proposed conceptual framework into tangible design outcomes. Following the principles of practice-based research, the environments will be refined through an iterative design process to ensure that they accurately embody the design characteristics identified within the framework. The study will then conduct a user experience evaluation. Participants' experiences will be assessed through a combination of the Awe Experience Scale (AWE-S), semi-structured interviews, and physiological measurements, such as galvanic skin response (GSR) or eye-tracking. These methods will be used to evaluate the virtual environments developed from the proposed framework and to examine the effectiveness and practical applicability of the framework in supporting the design of sublime experience. The selection of these research methods reflects the objectives of the study. Literature analysis establishes the theoretical foundation, case analysis identifies existing design knowledge and practices, creative practice translates the conceptual framework into design outcomes that can be evaluated, and user experience research provides both subjective and objective evidence for assessing the practical value of the proposed framework. Together, these four methods form an integrated research design that supports the overall aims of the study. The proposed methodology is considered highly feasible. The researcher has practical experience in virtual environment design, VR development, and user experience experimentation, together with proficiency in the relevant design software, experimental procedures, and data analysis methods. These skills provide a strong foundation for the successful completion of the research. The expected outcome of the research is a multi-level conceptual framework and a set of design strategies for supporting sublime experiences in virtual environments. These outcomes are intended to provide practical design knowledge for applications such as digital games, virtual tourism, digital cultural heritage, digital art, and other immersive virtual environments, and will be disseminated through academic publications, practice-based outputs, and design guidelines. (this box should expand as you type)
4	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place. • Researcher's home workspace, Swansea, UK – Literature review, case study, practice-based design, virtual environment development, and part of the data analysis will be conducted here. The workspace is equipped with a high-performance desktop computer (RTX 5090 GPU), VR equipment, a 3D printer, stable internet access, and the software required for virtual environment design and development. • University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Swansea Campus, Swansea, UK – Participant recruitment, user studies, questionnaires, interviews, and, where available, VR experiments will be conducted using the University's facilities. • UWTSD Immersive Room, Swansea, UK (subject to availability) – Planned location for VR user experiments and physiological data collection where appropriate. • Supervisor's laboratory or research facilities – User studies and data analysis may also be undertaken using facilities provided by the supervisory team where appropriate. (this box should expand as you type)

5	Will any of your research be undertaken outside of the UK?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 3	NO	Continue to the next section
6	Have you completed any of appendix 3?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION F: Research Methods

Will the research activity include:		YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☒	☐
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☒	☐
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☒	☐
Details of any other primary data collection method: Physiological measurements may be collected, such as heart rate and electrodermal activity, to provide additional evidence of participants' responses during the virtual experience. (this box should expand as you type)			

SECTION G: Research Participants

Research participants include people who will be taking part in your research as providers of research data (e.g. being interviewed, answering questionnaires, or doing user testing of hardware or software). This includes animal participants.					
1	Does your research involve human or non-human participants?	YES	Continue this section	NO	Click to continue to section N

Participant numbers and source		
How will you ensure an appropriately convened sample group in order to meet the aims of the research? Give details for subgroups separately, if appropriate. How will any potential pitfalls, for example dual roles or potential for coercion, be addressed?		
1	How many participants will be recruited and how was the number decided upon?	Approximately 50–60 participants will be recruited for the user study. This sample size is considered appropriate for exploratory mixed-methods research and is consistent with previous VR user

		experience studies. It is expected to provide sufficient quantitative data for questionnaire analysis while also supporting qualitative insights from interviews. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	Who will the participants be?	Adults aged 18 years or above who have normal or corrected-to-normal vision and are able to use VR equipment. Participants should have sufficient English proficiency to understand the study information and complete questionnaires. Previous VR experience is not required. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	How will you identify the participants?	Participants will be recruited through university mailing lists, posters, social media, and voluntary invitations within UWTSD and the local community. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
4	Will you be excluding any groups of people, and if so what is the rationale for that?	Individuals under the age of 18, those with a history of epilepsy or severe motion sickness, and those who are unable to safely use VR equipment will be excluded. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	Will the research involve any element of deception? If yes, please describe why this is necessary and whether participants will be informed at the end of the study	No deception will be used. Participants will receive full information before taking part and will provide informed consent. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
6	Describe whether participants will be able to withdraw from the study, and up to what point (eg if data is to be anonymised). If withdrawal is not possible, after a certain point, explain why not.	Participants will be informed that participation is entirely voluntary and that they may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. They may also choose not to answer any questionnaire or interview questions. Participants may request the withdrawal of their data up until the point at which the data have been anonymised and incorporated into the analysis. After anonymisation, it will no longer be possible to identify or remove individual data. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
7	How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the research?	Participants will receive the Participant Information Sheet before taking part and will normally be given at least 24 hours to consider whether they wish to participate. If recruitment takes place on the day of testing, participants will still be given sufficient time to read the study information, ask questions, and decide freely whether to participate before providing informed consent. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
8	What arrangements have been made for participants who might have difficulties understanding verbal explanations or written information, or who have particular communication needs that should be taken into account to facilitate their involvement in the research?	The study is designed for adults who are able to understand the Participant Information Sheet and provide informed consent. Information will be written in clear and accessible language, and participants will have the opportunity to ask questions before taking part. Individuals who are unable to understand the study information or provide informed consent will not be recruited. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION H: Research with Vulnerable People

1	Are your participants classed as vulnerable people?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 4	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix 4?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION I: Research Involving Animals

1	Are your participants non-human animals?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 5	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix 5?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION J: Research with the Prison Service or the Probation Service

1	Are your participants staff or offenders within the Prison Service or the Probation service?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 6	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix 6?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION K: Health and Social Care Research

1	Are your participants selected due to their health or social care needs?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 7	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix 7?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION L: Types of Personal Data

Personal Data		YES	NO
Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018)?			
1	Personal data means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants and transcription of such are considered to be personal data. If you ticked YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:	☒	☐
The research will collect limited personal data, including participants' consent forms, demographic information (e.g. age and gender), questionnaire responses, interview recordings and transcripts, and physiological measurements, including galvanic skin response (GSR) and eye-tracking data. Personal data are required to recruit participants, obtain informed consent, conduct the research, and interpret the study			

findings. All identifiable information will be stored securely and kept separate from the research data wherever possible. Data will be anonymised before analysis and publication.

(this box should expand as you type)

Special Category Data		YES	NO
2	Racial or ethnic origin	☐	☒
3	Political opinions	☐	☒
4	Religious or philosophical beliefs	☐	☒
5	Genetic, biometric or health data	☒	☐
6	Sex life or sexual orientation	☐	☒
7	Trade union membership	☐	☒
If you ticked YES to any of questions L2-L7, provide a description of the data and explain why this special category data needs to be collected to support the research and that it is in the public interest to do so:			
8	The research will collect physiological data, including galvanic skin response (GSR) and eye-tracking data, to measure participants' physiological arousal and visual attention during VR experiences. These data are essential for evaluating users' responses to the designed virtual environments and complement subjective measures collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The physiological data will not be used to identify participants and will be anonymised before analysis. Collecting these data is necessary to address the research objectives and contributes to advancing knowledge of user experience and virtual environment design for the wider public benefit. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
9	Please describe how the research has been designed to gather the minimum amount of personal data necessary for the specified research purpose: The study has been designed to collect only the personal data necessary to achieve the research objectives. Only limited demographic information (e.g. age and gender), signed consent forms, questionnaire responses, interview recordings and transcripts, and physiological measurements (GSR and eye-tracking data) will be collected. No unnecessary personal information, such as participants' names within the research dataset, addresses, financial information, political opinions, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or other sensitive personal data unrelated to the study, will be collected. Identifiable information will be kept separate from the research data wherever possible, and all research data will be anonymised before analysis and publication. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
10	Demonstrate that the processing is not likely to cause substantial damage or distress to individuals and that their interests will be safeguarded: The processing of participants' data is not expected to cause substantial damage or distress. The study will collect only the data necessary to achieve the research objectives, and all identifiable information will be kept separate from the research data wherever possible. Participants will be assigned unique participant IDs, and research data will be anonymised before analysis and publication. All data will be stored securely with access restricted to the researcher and supervisory team. Participation is entirely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from the study in accordance with the procedures outlined in the participant information sheet. These measures minimise any potential risks associated with the processing of personal data and ensure that participants' interests are appropriately safeguarded. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
11	Demonstrate that the data will not be used to take any action or make decisions in relation to the individuals concerned: The data collected in this study will be used solely for academic research purposes. No decisions or actions affecting participants will be made on the basis of the data collected. Participation in the study will have no impact on participants' education, employment, healthcare, or any other personal circumstances. The data will be used only to address the research questions and to contribute to academic knowledge in the field of virtual reality user experience and virtual environment design.		

<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>				
12	Data should be anonymised wherever possible, either at point of capture or once collated. If the data cannot be anonymised, and if pseudonymisation is not possible, demonstrate why the that is possible. If special category data cannot be anonymised, explicit consent to share that data must normally be obtained.			
Participants will be assigned unique participant identification codes at the point of data collection. Identifiable information (e.g. signed consent forms and contact details, where required) will be stored separately from the research data in a secure, password-protected location. During the research, the data will be pseudonymised to enable data management where necessary. Before analysis, publication, and long-term storage, all direct identifiers will be removed wherever possible and the research dataset will be anonymised. Once fully anonymised, no individual participant will be identifiable in any publications or presentations.				
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>				
13	If special category data cannot be anonymised, will you obtain explicit consent to share that data?	YES ☐	NO ☒	N/A ☐

SECTION M: Participant Information and Consent

Information for participants It is normally expected that those participating in research should do so having given their informed consent. If this is not appropriate or practical, explicit justification must be provided, in line with prevailing disciplinary conventions. Please note however, that informed consent to participate in the research is separate from consent to process (e.g. collect, analyse, store, reuse or share) personal data, as the University's lawful basis for processing personal data in research activities is part of its 'public task'.		YES	NO	N/A
1	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
2	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
3	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
4	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
5	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
6	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
7	Will participants be made aware of how you will treat any information that may reasonably be considered as confidential?	☒	☐	☐
8	If your research requires your participants to sign up for a service provided by an external company or organisation will you inform them that their data may be stored and processed outside UWTSD?	☐	☐	☒
9	Will you give participants the UWTSD Privacy Notice for Research?	☒	☐	☐
If you have answered NO to any of questions M1-M9, please provide justification detailing why this is necessary for the research.				
10	Before participation, all potential participants will receive a Participant Information Sheet explaining the purpose of the study, the research procedures, the expected duration, the types of data to be collected (including questionnaire responses, interview recordings, GSR and eye-tracking data), any potential risks or discomforts, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality, data storage, and their right to withdraw at any time without giving a reason or penalty. Participants will have sufficient time to read the information, ask questions, and consider their participation before signing a written Consent Form. The study will only begin after written informed consent has been obtained. Participants will also receive the UWTSD Privacy Notice for Research.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>				

Informed consent: Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before the research begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded.				
11	No non-UK/EU-based applications or software will be used for data collection. Research data will be collected using locally installed software and securely stored in accordance with UWTSD data management and GDPR requirements. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
Confidentiality: Confidential information refers to information that can be related to an identifiable individual, whether living or deceased, which is not in the public domain and which is given with the expectation that it will be kept confidential. Under Common Law when an individual entrusts a researcher or research team with confidential information, the team must handle this in line with 'reasonable expectations'. In other words, confidential information should only normally be shared when there would be 'no surprises' for the individuals concerned. Where participants would not expect the researcher to be sharing their confidential information with others, researchers can manage their expectations by informing them of their intentions (e.g. in the participant information sheet or during discussions about participation) and asking them if they are happy with these plans. They should understand what is being proposed and what this might mean for them, before they decide whether the researcher can share their confidential information with others.				
Please detail how you will treat confidential information:				
12	All confidential information will be handled in accordance with UWTSD research ethics and GDPR requirements. Participants will be assigned unique participant identification codes, and identifiable information (such as signed consent forms and contact details, where required) will be stored separately from the research data in a password-protected and secure location. Only the researcher and supervisory team will have access to identifiable data where necessary. Research data, including questionnaire responses, interview recordings and transcripts, GSR data, and eye-tracking data, will be pseudonymised during the research and anonymised before analysis, publication, and long-term storage wherever possible. No identifiable information will be included in any publications or presentations. Research data will not be shared with third parties unless required by law or with the participant's explicit consent. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
Copies of any written consent form, written information and all other explanatory material should accompany this application. If you have included these then please list the documents included here.				
13	The following documents are included with this application: • Participant Information Sheet • Participant Consent Form • Demographic Questionnaire • Awe Experience Scale (AWE-S) Questionnaire • Semi-structured Interview Guide			
14	Consent form attached?	YES ☐	NO ☒	N/A ☐

SECTION N: Research with Potential Military Application

1	Does your research have any potential military application?	YES	Click to continue to appendix 8	NO	Continue to the next section
2	Have you completed appendix 8?	YES	☐	NO	☒

SECTION O: Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools

Use of generative AI and other AI-based tools		YES	NO	N/A
There are a number of ethical issues relating to the use of generative AI				

and other AI-based tools, including data security, output bias, and output errors. In general you should assume that any generative AI or other AI-based tool that you pay to use is more secure and accurate than one which is free to use.				
Will the research use AI tools to do any of the following:				
1	Capture data?	☐	☒	☐
2	Generate and/or edit text?	☒	☐	☐
3	Generate graphics?	☒	☐	☐
4	Generate video?	☐	☒	☐
5	Generate sound/music?	☐	☒	☐
6	Generate code?	☐	☒	☐
7	Generate synthetic data?	☐	☒	☐
8	Analyse data?	☐	☒	☐
9	Analyse personal or sensitive data?	☐	☒	☐
10	Classify data?	☐	☒	☐
11	Do you intend to use the free version of any AI tools?	☐	☒	☐
If you have answered YES to any of questions O1-O11, please provide justification detailing why this is necessary for the research.				
12	AI tools, including ChatGPT (Plus) and image generation tools where appropriate, may be used to support drafting, editing, language refinement, and the creation of conceptual illustrations. AI will not be used to generate research data, analyse participant data, or process personal or sensitive information. No identifiable participant data will be uploaded to any AI platform. The use of AI will comply with UWTSD policies on the ethical use of artificial intelligence, and all research decisions, analysis, and final outputs will remain the responsibility of the researcher. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

Section P: Research Data Management Plan

1	Data Summary - Demographic information (e.g. age and gender) - Questionnaire responses (AWE-S, IPQ) - Semi-structured interview recordings and transcripts - GSR data - Eye-tracking data
2	Responsibilities The researcher will be responsible for data collection, storage, organisation, anonymisation and management. The supervisory team will provide oversight where appropriate.
3	Assessment of existing data The study will primarily generate original research data. Existing literature will inform the research design, but no existing participant datasets will be reused.
4	Management and curation of data Research data will be organised systematically throughout the project. Each participant will be assigned a unique participant identification code (e.g. P001, P002) to ensure consistent data organisation and

confidentiality. Data will be organised into separate folders according to data type, including demographic information, questionnaire responses, interview recordings and transcripts, GSR data, eye-tracking data, and research notes. Standardised file naming conventions and version control will be used to ensure consistency and minimise errors. Metadata and documentation will be maintained throughout the project to describe the content, format, and collection date of each dataset, allowing the data to be understood, managed, and reused where appropriate.	
5	Quality assurance of data A small-scale pilot study will be conducted before the main experiment to evaluate the experimental environment, research procedures, and data collection methods. The pilot study will help identify any practical or technical issues, assess the effectiveness of the experimental design, and ensure that the VR environment, questionnaires, GSR equipment, and eye-tracking system function as intended. Based on the findings of the pilot study, appropriate modifications will be made before the formal experiment begins. During the main study, data will be checked for completeness, consistency, and recording errors to ensure data quality before analysis.
6	Short-term data storage During the research project, all research data will be stored in password-protected folders on secure devices and, where available, on secure UWTSD-approved storage systems. Identifiable information and research data will be stored separately. Access to the data will be restricted to the researcher and supervisory team where necessary. Regular backups will be maintained to minimise the risk of data loss. All electronic data will be protected using appropriate security measures, and metadata will be stored alongside the datasets to support effective data management throughout the project.
7	Long-term data storage and preservation Data of long-term research value, including anonymised questionnaire responses, interview transcripts, GSR data, eye-tracking data, and supporting documentation, will be retained following the completion of the project. Identifiable personal information will not be retained longer than necessary and will be removed or securely destroyed in accordance with UWTSD policies and GDPR requirements. Long-term research data will be stored securely using UWTSD-approved storage systems or repositories where appropriate. Data will only be shared in an anonymised form where this is ethically and legally appropriate. Research data will be retained for the period required by UWTSD research data management policies to support research integrity, future verification, and potential publication.
8	Documentation and metadata Appropriate documentation and metadata will be maintained throughout the project to ensure that research data remain understandable and reusable. Metadata will include information such as participant identification codes, data collection dates, experimental conditions, file formats, variable descriptions, software versions where relevant, and data processing procedures. Supporting documentation, including data dictionaries, questionnaire descriptions, interview guides, and file naming conventions, will be maintained to provide sufficient contextual information for future reference and, where appropriate, secondary use of anonymised datasets.
9	Data sharing Research data will only be shared where this is ethically appropriate and consistent with participant consent, GDPR requirements, and UWTSD policies. Any shared datasets will be fully anonymised to prevent the identification of individual participants. Data containing identifiable or confidential information, including signed consent forms and contact details, will not be shared. Where appropriate, anonymised datasets supporting published research may be made available upon reasonable request or through an approved institutional repository. Access to shared data will be subject to any ethical or legal restrictions.
10	Copyright and intellectual property ownership Copyright and intellectual property rights arising from this research will be managed in accordance with UWTSD policies and any relevant agreements. Research outputs created by the researcher will normally remain the intellectual property of the appropriate rights holder, subject to the University's regulations and applicable legislation.

11	Resources
The resources required to implement this data management plan are expected to be minimal. Research data will be stored on password-protected devices and, where available, secure UWTSD-approved storage systems. Regular backups will be maintained using appropriate storage media. Existing research facilities, software, and storage resources provided by the University will be used wherever possible. No substantial additional costs for data storage or long-term preservation are anticipated.	

SECTION Q: Risk Assessment

Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them. If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.			
1	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	YES ☐	NO ☒
Risks to participants, researchers, and the University			
2	Social risks: <i>disclosures that could affect participants standing in the community, in their family and their job.</i>	YES ☐	NO ☒
<i>Risk:</i> No significant social risks are anticipated. The study does not involve sensitive topics that are expected to affect participants' social standing, employment, family relationships, or reputation. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		<i>How will you address any risks?</i> Although significant social risks are not anticipated, participants' confidentiality will be protected through pseudonymisation and anonymisation. All identifiable information will be stored separately from the research data and securely protected. Participation will be entirely voluntary, participants may withdraw at any time without penalty, and findings will only be reported in an anonymised form.	
3	Legal risks: <i>activities that could result in the participant, researchers and / or University committing an offence; activities that might lead to a participant disclosing criminal activity to a researcher which would necessitate reporting to enforcement authorities; activities that could result in a civil claim for compensation</i>	YES ☐	NO ☒
<i>Risk:</i> No significant legal risks are anticipated. The research does not involve activities that are expected to result in legal or regulatory breaches, and participants will not be asked questions intended to elicit illegal or incriminating information. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		<i>How will you address any risks?</i> Written informed consent will be obtained before participation. All data collection will comply with UWTSD research ethics requirements and UK GDPR. Identifiable information will be stored securely and separately from the research data, with access restricted to the researcher and supervisory team. Participants will be informed about the limits of confidentiality and their rights before taking part in the study.	
4	Economic harm: <i>financial harm to participant, researcher and / or University through disclosure or other event.</i>	YES ☐	NO ☒
<i>Risk:</i> No significant economic risks are anticipated. Participation is voluntary and free of charge. The study is not expected to result in financial loss or additional costs for participants, the researcher, or the University.		<i>How will you address any risks?</i> Participants will be informed of the expected duration of the study before participation and may withdraw or reschedule at any time without penalty. The research will be conducted using existing University facilities and equipment, and all research equipment will be used	

(this box should expand as you type)		and maintained in accordance with University procedures to minimise the risk of damage or unnecessary costs.	
5	Reputational risk: <i>damage to public perception of University or the University / researchers' reputation in the eyes of funders, the research community and / or the general public.</i>	YES ☐	NO ☒
Risk: No significant reputational risks are anticipated. The study is conducted for academic research purposes only and does not involve any known conflicts of interest or activities that are expected to adversely affect the reputation of the researcher or the University. (this box should expand as you type)		How will you address any risks? The research will be conducted in accordance with UWTSD research ethics policies and principles of academic integrity. Participation will be based on informed consent, and all participants will be treated respectfully and fairly. Research findings will be reported accurately, objectively, and transparently without fabrication, falsification, or selective reporting. Any potential conflicts of interest will be declared where applicable.	
6	Safeguarding risks: <i>Risk to young people, vulnerable adults and / or researcher from improper behaviour, abuse or exploitation. Risk to researcher of being in a compromising situation, in which there might be accusations of improper behaviour.</i>	YES ☐	NO ☒
Risk: No significant safeguarding risks are anticipated. The study will recruit adults aged 18 years or above and is not intended to involve children or vulnerable adults. The research will be conducted in a University research environment under appropriate supervision. (this box should expand as you type)		How will you address any risks? Participants will be recruited voluntarily and informed about the study before participation. All interactions will be conducted professionally in appropriate University facilities. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The research will comply with UWTSD safeguarding, research ethics, and health and safety policies. Should any unexpected safeguarding concerns arise, they will be reported through the University's appropriate procedures.	
7	Sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics. <i>If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities.</i>	YES ☐	NO ☒
No significant sensitive, embarrassing, or upsetting topics are anticipated. The interview questions and questionnaires will focus on participants' experiences of the sublime in virtual reality, which is regarded in this study as a complex aesthetic and emotional experience. The study will not intentionally explore personal, traumatic, illegal, or other sensitive issues. Although the study is not expected to involve sensitive topics, participants will be informed of the nature of the study before participation and may decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason or penalty. As the VR experience may evoke temporary emotional responses associated with the intended sublime experience, the researcher will monitor participants throughout the study for any signs of emotional or physical discomfort. If a participant experiences, or the researcher observes, unexpected emotional or physical discomfort during the study, the session will be paused or terminated immediately. Appropriate support information will be provided if required. (this box should expand as you type)			
Health and safety risks			

8	Location hazards: for example: fire; visiting or working in participant's homes; working in remote locations and in high crime areas; overseas travel; hot, cold or extreme weather conditions; working on or by water. Also hazardous work locations, such as construction sites, confined spaces, roofs or laboratories. For overseas travel, researchers will need to check country / city specific information, travel health requirements and consider emergency arrangements as part of their research planning. In all cases the University's International Travel Policy must be followed.	YES	NO
		☐	☒
Risk: No significant location-related health and safety risks are anticipated. The study will be conducted in approved University facilities designed for research activities. No fieldwork, home visits, hazardous environments, or overseas travel are planned as part of this study. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		How will you address any risks? All research activities will be conducted in accordance with UWTSD health and safety policies. The researcher will follow local laboratory procedures and emergency protocols where applicable. Research equipment will be set up and used according to the manufacturer's instructions and University guidance to ensure a safe research environment. The researcher will ensure that the experimental area is free from physical obstacles and will supervise participants throughout the VR session to minimise the risk of trips, falls, or other accidental injuries.	
9	Activity hazards: for example: potentially mentally harmful activities; distressing and stressful work and content; driving; tripping or slipping; falling from height; physically demanding work; lifting, carrying, pushing and pulling loads; night time and weekend working.	YES	NO
		☐	☒
Risk: Participants may experience mild cybersickness, temporary dizziness, eye strain, or slight emotional discomfort during the VR experience. Some participants may also experience temporary emotional arousal or feelings of awe associated with the intended sublime experience. There is also a small risk of losing balance while wearing the VR headset. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		How will you address any risks? Participants will be informed of the potential risks before taking part in the study. The researcher will monitor participants throughout the VR session for signs of cybersickness, dizziness, eye strain, loss of balance, or emotional discomfort. Participants may pause or withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason or penalty. If any significant discomfort is observed or reported, the session will be stopped immediately and appropriate assistance will be provided. Regular breaks will be offered if required.	
10	Machinery and equipment: for example: ergonomic hazards, including computer workstations and equipment; contact with electricity; contact with moving, rotating, ejecting or cutting parts in machinery and instruments; accidental release of energy from machines and instruments.	YES	NO
		☒	☐
Risk: The study will involve the use of VR head-mounted displays, eye-tracking equipment, and GSR sensors. Potential risks include mild discomfort from wearing the equipment, temporary eye strain, dizziness, or loss of balance while using the VR headset. No hazardous machinery or industrial equipment will be used. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		How will you address any risks? All equipment will be inspected and set up in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and the University's health and safety procedures before each session. Participants will receive instructions on the safe use of the equipment before the experiment begins, including how to wear the VR headset correctly, use the controllers, and move safely within the virtual environment. The researcher will remain present throughout the experiment to monitor participants and provide assistance whenever required. The testing area will be kept free of obstacles to minimise the risk of trips or falls, and all equipment will be cleaned and maintained regularly in accordance with University guidance.	
11	Chemicals and other hazardous substances: the use, production, storage, waste, transportation and accidental release of chemicals and hazardous substances; flammable, dangerous and explosive substances; asphyxiating gases; allergens; biological agents, blood and blood products.	YES	NO
		☐	☒

Risk: This study will not involve the use, production, storage, transportation, or disposal of chemicals or other hazardous substances. No biological agents, blood samples, or hazardous materials will be used during the research. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		How will you address any risks? As no hazardous chemicals or substances will be used in this study, no specific control measures are required. All research activities will be conducted in accordance with the University's general health and safety procedures. Participants will be encouraged to report any discomfort immediately, and the researcher will continuously observe participants for signs of physical discomfort or equipment-related issues throughout the experiment.	
12	Physical agents: for example: excessive noise exposure, hand-arm vibration and whole body vibration; ionising radiation; lasers; artificial optical radiation and electromagnetic fields	YES ☐	NO ☒
Risk: This study will not involve exposure to hazardous physical agents such as excessive noise, ionising radiation, high-power lasers, artificial optical radiation, or hazardous electromagnetic fields. Standard consumer VR equipment, eye-tracking devices, and GSR sensors will be used in accordance with manufacturer safety guidelines. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		How will you address any risks? All equipment will be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and the University's health and safety procedures. Participants will be supervised throughout the study, and equipment will be checked before each session to ensure safe operation. Participants will be encouraged to report any discomfort immediately, and the researcher will monitor participants throughout the session for any equipment-related issues.	
13	Environmental risks: for example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	YES ☐	NO ☒
Risk: This study will not involve any activities that could result in environmental pollution, damage to local ecosystems, or impacts on protected environments or heritage sites. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		How will you address any risks? No specific environmental risks are anticipated. The research will be conducted indoors using standard VR equipment in accordance with the University's health and safety procedures.	

SECTION R: Disclosure and Barring Service

Disclosure and Barring Service				
1	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐
2	If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.			

SECTION S: Declaration

The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Policy which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Name of applicant	Ziliang Yin

2	Electronic or written signature of applicant:	Zitang Yin
3	Date	05 August 2026
4	Name of Director of Studies	
5	Electronic or written signature of Director of Studies:	
6	Date	

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

1	☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
2	☒	I have completed all relevant sections of the form in full.
3	☐	I have attached a copy of the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) or Consent Form
4	☐	I have attached a completed copy of the Trusted Research and Innovation Checklist (where applicable)
5	☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate)
6	☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice
7	☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Data Management Policy
8	☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Export Control Policy
9	☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Open Access Research Policy
10	I have completed the following appendices:	1 ☐
		2 ☐
		3 ☐
		4 ☐
		5 ☐
		6 ☐
		7 ☐
		8 ☐

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk, with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

END OF MAIN FORM

APPENDIX 1 – Grant or Contract Funding

A1.1	Has your research been awarded external funding?	YES	☐	NO	☐
A1.2	Have you applied for funding / awaiting decision?	YES	☐	NO	☐
A1.3	Are you intending to apply for funding?	YES	☐	NO	☐
A1.4	Funding Body				
A1.5	Lead institution (grant holder)				
A1.6	If awarded, grant reference				
A1.7	If awarded, grant value				
A1.8	If awarded, start date and duration				

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APPENDIX 2: External Collaborative Research Activity

INSTITUTION 1				
A2.1	Name			
A2.2	Researcher name and position			
A2.3	Role in project (e.g. co-investigator)			
A2.4	Contact e-mail address			
A2.5	External Ethical Approval <i>Please detail the ethical approval required and arrangements for this partner. See Section 14 of the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Policy. If approved, please supply confirmation.</i>	Obtained?	YES	NO
			☐	☐

INSTITUTION 2				
A2.6	Name			
A2.7	Researcher name and position			
A2.8	Role in project (e.g. co-investigator)			
A2.9	Contact e-mail address			
A2.10	External Ethical Approval <i>Please detail the ethical approval required and arrangements for this partner. See Section 14 of the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Policy. If approved, please supply confirmation.</i>	Obtained?	YES	NO
			☐	☐

INSTITUTION 3				
A2.11	Name			
A2.12	Researcher name and position			
A2.13	Role in project (e.g. co-investigator)			
A2.14	Contact e-mail address			
A2.15	External Ethical Approval <i>Please detail the ethical approval required and arrangements for this partner. See Section 14 of the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Policy. If approved, please supply confirmation.</i>	Obtained?	YES	NO
			☐	☐

Add additional collaborators as needed

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APPENDIX 3: Research Undertaken Outside of the UK

A3.1	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. Describe the measures you have taken to comply with these and provide evidence of approvals etc. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this. If you have a local research supervisor or research advisor then please give their contact details here.	
If you are working outside the UK provide details of the location(s) in terms of country and city/town. Where you are working with organisations such as museums, schools, universities, or government departments include them here together with details of the contact person involved. Where there are specific local legal codes covering your research, e.g. for child protection or data protection, list them here and state how you will ensure that you comply with them. If you plan to work outside your home country then check your government's recommendations for the country in which you will be working. For the UK this information is available at https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice. It is also a good idea to make sure that you have the contact details of your nearest embassy or consulate in case of emergency. Travel insurance that covers working outside of your home country is recommended. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
A3.2	Responsible Research and Innovation If research is taking place overseas please refer to the UWTSD Trusted Research and Innovation Policy and complete the Trusted Research and Innovation Checklist and submit it with this form.	
A3.3	Confirm that you have read the Trusted Research and Innovation Policy	☐

If you are a postgraduate research student working with a research supervisor or research advisor at your local university then you do not need to fill in any more sections of this appendix.

If you are working in a research collaboration with an overseas partner please complete the remaining sections of this appendix.

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Organisational Details	
A3.4	Name of Organisation
A3.5	Country where organisation is based:
A3.6	Registration number and name of registration body (examples of relevant registration bodies are government, tax, corporation, charity, educational authority):
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
A3.7	What is the legal status of the organisation? (for example: public university, private university, charity, private company, non-profit making company, government research organisation, independent research organisation) Please include the date of foundation. Note: We may be required to ask for evidence of this at a later stage.
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	

A3.8	Is your organisation affiliated to any other organisation? (i.e. is the organisation legally part of a larger organisation or a group of larger organisations).
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.	
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
A3.9	Name(s) of investigators in the organisation who will be responsible for the collaborative research and innovation
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	

About New Partners			
A3.10	Why does a partner want to work with you?		
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
A3.11	What are they expecting in return for their financial support or involvement?		
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
A3.12	Is the organisation associated with a country which may be viewed as hostile to the UK or one which has different democratic and ethical values from our own? If you have ticked YES, please briefly describe below how you will maintain the UK's democratic and ethical values within the research.	YES	NO
		☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
A3.13	Has due diligence into the partner identified any involvement in research on behalf of the military or police with links to a hostile state? If you have ticked YES, please summarise below how you will prevent information from this research from being released to these organisations.	YES	NO
		☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
A3.14	Set within the context of any information gained from due diligence, could your research be misused or have unintended applications which would be negative? If you have ticked YES, please summarise below how this might occur.	YES	NO
		☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
A3.15	Are there any legal, regulatory or university policy constraints on undertaking your research with this partner? If you have ticked YES, please summarise these below.	YES	NO
		☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
A3.16	Having considered the answers to questions A3.10-A3.15, are there potential reputational or ethical risks to you or the university? If you have ticked YES, please summarise these risks below.	YES	NO
		☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

About Research Relationships		YES	NO
A3.17	Are the terms of any proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in keeping with the expectations of your department and university?	☐	☐
A3.18	Are you providing existing intellectual property (IP), research data, confidential or personally identifiable data to the project? If so, how is this going to be protected?	☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			
A3.19	Who will own any IP that is generated?		
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			
A3.20	What plans do you have in place for protecting the resulting IP?		
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			
A3.21	What contractual requirements are you able to put in place to protect the interests of your academic institutions?		
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			
A3.22	What access will the research partner have to your IT network? If they do have access, what broader visibility might this provide?		
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			
A3.23	Is there any physical separation or protection required between research in similar fields?		
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			

About Existing Partners			
A3.24	Would proceeding with the research raise potential conflicts of interest with existing research partners? If you have ticked YES, please explain these conflicts below.	YES	NO
		☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			
A3.25	Have you spoken with your existing partners about any potential conflict of interest? If you have ticked YES, please briefly summarise their response(s) below.	YES	NO
		☐	☐
Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. (this box should expand as you type)			
A3.26	Does any non-disclosure agreement for this project include an expectation that you will need to provide visibility to existing partners? If you have ticked YES, please explain below how this will be managed.	YES	NO
		☐	☐

Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.

(this box should expand as you type)

A3.27	Will this research breach any existing contractual agreements that you, your department or university already have? If you have ticked YES, please explain below how this will be managed.	YES	NO
		☐	☐

Contact INSPIRE for support on this section.

(this box should expand as you type)

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main form](#)

APPENDIX 4: Research with Vulnerable People

Will the research involve data processing involving the following data subjects:		YES	NO
A4.1	Children under 16	☐	☐
A4.2	Adults with learning disabilities	☐	☐
A4.3	Adults with other forms of mental incapacity or mental illness	☐	☐
A4.4	Adults in emergency situations	☐	☐
A4.5	Prisoners or young offenders	☐	☐
A4.6	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. members of staff, students	☐	☐
A4.7	People who have not given their explicit consent to participate in the project	☐	☐
A4.8	People engaged in illegal activities	☐	☐
A4.9	Any other people who can be considered vulnerable in the context of this project	☐	☐
Please justify the inclusion of the above people (if applicable), explaining why the research cannot be conducted on non-vulnerable people.			
A4.10	Any inclusion of vulnerable people must be fully justified. (this box should expand as you type)		
Please give details of extra steps taken to assure the protection of vulnerable people participating in the research. You should describe any arrangements to be made for obtaining consent from a legal representative.			
A4.11	How will you protect your participants from any negative impacts caused by your research process? This might include physical or emotional harm or discomfort. If vulnerable participants will be giving consent themselves then explain the steps you will take to ensure that they are not coerced into giving consent. If consent is to be obtained from a legal representative then how will you identify the appropriate person? (this box should expand as you type)		
It is the researcher's responsibility to check whether a DBS check (or equivalent) is required and to obtain one if it is needed. Please confirm:			
A4.12	DBS Check required?	YES ☐	NO ☐
A4.13	DBS certificate obtained?	YES ☐	NO ☐
		N/A ☐	

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APPENDIX 5: Research Involving Animals

The use of animals in research is tightly governed and monitored by law and by the Home Office, specifically under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 and its accompanying codes of practice and processes. The Act regulates procedures that are carried out on protected animals for scientific or educational purposes that may cause pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm. Under the Act, a protected animal is 'any living vertebrate, other than man, and any living cephalopod'. The University does not hold a Home Office issued Establishment Licence and therefore researchers must ensure that any proposed work involving animals is either exempt from the Act or falls outside of its scope. Exempted research, for example involving routine veterinary practice or clinical veterinary research, may still require external ethical approval from the Royal Society of Veterinary Surgeons. When undertaking collaborative research involving animals, the UWTSD Research Ethics Committee must be assured that the partner institution(s) conform to the appropriate regulatory framework or legislation, and have approval from their local Research Ethics Committee. Any such work must follow the guidance of the National Centre for the Replacement, Reduction and Refinement of Animals in Research, known as the 3Rs. In all cases, advice must be sought from INSPIRE for any proposed research involving animals, either at UWTSD, or by research collaborators in partnership with UWTSD. This should be at the very early stages of research design, so that an appropriate due diligence exercise can be undertaken.

Will the research involve any work with any of the following animals (including observation in their natural habitat)		YES	NO
A5.1	Any living vertebrates, other than humans?	☐	☐
A5.2	Any living cephalopods?	☐	☐
A5.3	Has INSPIRE undertaken an initial due diligence exercise?	☐	☐
A5.4	Due diligence assessment appended to this application?	☐	☐
Please provide a summary of the due diligence exercise, noting arrangements for compliance with the necessary regulatory frameworks and legislation. Please append the full due diligence assessment from INSPIRE.			
A5.5	Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

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APPENDIX 6: Research with Staff or Offenders in Prison Establishments and Probation Services

Research with staff and/or offenders in prison establishments, the Probation Service or within His Majesty's Prison and Probation Services requires additional approvals.			
Will the research involve any of the following?		YES	NO
A6.1	Staff in prison establishments	☐	☐
A6.2	Offenders in prison establishments	☐	☐
A6.3	The Probation Service	☐	☐
A6.4	His Majesty's Prison and Probation Services	☐	☐
All researchers wanting to conduct research with staff and/or offenders in prison establishments, the Probation Service regions or within HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Headquarters are required to formally apply for research approval to the HMPPS National Research Committee (NRC). Before doing so, INSPIRE must undertake an initial due diligence exercise. If you have not contacted INSPIRE, please do so immediately. If YES to any of the above, please confirm:			
A6.5	Has INSPIRE undertaken an initial due diligence exercise?	☐	☐
A6.6	Have you applied to the HMPPS National Research Committee (NRC)?	☐	☐
A6.7	Has HMPPS National Research Committee approval been granted? If yes, please append to this application.	☐	☐
A6.8	Due diligence assessment appended to this application?	☐	☐
Please provide a summary of the due diligence exercise, noting arrangements for compliance with the necessary regulatory frameworks and legislation. Please append the full due diligence assessment from INSPIRE.			
A6.9	Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

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APPENDIX 7: Health and Social Care Research

All health and social care research must have a sponsor as defined by the Health Research Authority UK Policy Framework for Health & Social Care. The University will under no circumstances act as the sponsor of health and social care research (i.e. that which requires approval by a NHS Research Ethics Committee). In all cases, therefore, an appropriate collaborating partner must lead the research. Any health and social care research therefore requires an initial due diligence exercise, which will be undertaken by INSPIRE. The purpose of the due diligence exercise is to ensure that the University has the capability to undertake the research, either independently or in collaboration with research partners. This will include advice on suitable collaborative arrangements and the appropriate involvement of UWTSD researchers in the proposed research study. This is likely to apply to the following areas:				
Will the data processing involve:			YES	NO
A7.1	Participants who have been recruited on the basis of medical and health conditions, life stage or other physical or mental attribute.	☐	☐	
A7.2	Participants who will engage in physical exercise, activity or exertion of any kind, or who use exercise equipment, assistive devices or other apparatus for the purposes of the research study. This includes interventions that are minimally invasive.	☐	☐	
A7.3	Patients and users of the NHS (including NHS patients treated in the private sector).	☐	☐	
A7.4	Individuals identified as potential participants because of their status as relatives or carers of patients and users of the NHS.	☐	☐	
A7.5	Patients who are cared for in private and voluntary sector nursing homes.	☐	☐	
A7.6	Confidential patient information.	☐	☐	
A7.7	Clinical trial of a medicinal product or medical device.	☐	☐	
A7.8	Access to organs or other bodily material of past and present NHS patients, or any material consisting of or containing human cells.	☐	☐	
A7.9	Use of human tissue (including non-NHS sources) where the collection is not covered by a Human Tissue Authority licence.	☐	☐	
A7.10	Foetal material and IVF involving NHS patients.	☐	☐	
A7.11	The recently deceased under NHS care.	☐	☐	
A7.12	NHS staff or premises.	☐	☐	
A7.13	Practising midwives conducting a clinical trial.	☐	☐	
A7.14	Investigational medicinal product.	☐	☐	
A7.15	Medical devices that are not CE-marked or CE-marked medical devices that have been modified or are being used for a new purpose.	☐	☐	
A7.16	Exposure to ionising radiation.	☐	☐	
A7.17	Other health and social care related research.	☐	☐	
<i>Please specify</i> Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			☐	☐
Researchers proposing to work on projects involving health and social care research must check whether their study meets the HRA definition of research and whether it should undergo ethics review by a NHS Research Ethics Committee. If you have answered YES to any of questions A7.1-A7.17 then this is likely to be the case and sponsorship by a third party will be required. This can be checked via the Health Research Authority's Decision Tool : https://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/				
A7.18	Does the research meet the HRA definition of research?	YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐
A7.19	Is the Research being sponsored by a collaborating partner?	YES ☐	NO ☐	N/A ☐

A7.20	Has NHS ethics approval been granted?	YES	NO	N/A
		☐	☐	☐
A7.21	Has INSPIRE undertaken an initial due diligence exercise?	YES		NO
		☐		☐
Please provide a summary of the due diligence exercise, noting arrangements for compliance with the necessary regulatory frameworks and legislation. Please append the full due diligence assessment from INSPIRE. If you have not contacted INSPIRE, please do immediately.				
A7.22	Contact INSPIRE for support on this section. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

A7.23	Have you been granted NHS ethical approval?	YES	Click to continue to Section R	NO	Return to the main form
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APPENDIX 8: Export Control for Research with Potential Military End Uses

Export controls apply to the physical, electronic or oral transmission outside the UK of applied research, sensitive technology, software and equipment that could potentially be misused, either directly or indirectly, for military purposes. These legal controls are a serious obligation and UWTSD researchers must actively manage the risks of these being misused to fuel conflict, threaten national security, support terrorism and crime, violate human rights or proliferate Weapons of Mass Destruction. UWTSD's Export Control Policy provides a clear six step process to determine if your research is covered by export controls. Please complete the following screening to judge if you need to complete a full export control assessment. If you are in any doubt, then please contact INSPIRE. Any research in UWTSD involving the following high-risk areas must be screened.

Will the research involve:

Defence		YES	NO
A8.1	Military equipment and munitions	☐	☐
A8.2	Defence equipment, including satellites	☐	☐
A8.3	Technical data, including some border and port information	☐	☐
A8.4	Dual use research	☐	☐
Materials and Technologies		YES	NO
A8.5	Nuclear materials, facilities and equipment	☐	☐
A8.6	Chemicals, microorganisms and toxins	☐	☐
A8.7	Electronics design, development and production	☐	☐
A8.8	Computers	☐	☐
A8.9	Telecommunications	☐	☐
A8.10	Sensors and lasers	☐	☐
A8.11	Navigation and avionics	☐	☐
A8.12	Marine technology	☐	☐
A8.13	Composite materials	☐	☐
A8.14	Aerospace and propulsion	☐	☐
Sensitive Information		YES	NO
A8.15	Cryptology	☐	☐
A8.16	Counterterrorism	☐	☐
A8.17	Counternarcotics	☐	☐
A8.18	Cyber-related	☐	☐
A8.19	Non-proliferation	☐	☐
A8.20	Transnational criminal organisations	☐	☐

Genetic Resources		YES	NO
A8.21	Genetic material of actual or potential value	☐	☐
A8.22	Organisms, or parts thereof	☐	☐
A8.23	Populations (or organisms)	☐	☐
A8.24	Other biotic components of ecosystems	☐	☐
A8.25	Domesticated or cultivated species in which the evolutionary process has been influenced by humans	☐	☐

Will you be exporting military or dual-use technology, now or possibly in the future? This information may take many forms, including:		YES	NO
A8.26	Physical transfer of goods, technologies, material or equipment	☐	☐
A8.27	Blueprints	☐	☐
A8.28	Plans	☐	☐
A8.29	Diagrams	☐	☐
A8.30	Models	☐	☐
A8.31	Formulae	☐	☐
A8.32	Tables	☐	☐
A8.33	Engineering designs and specifications	☐	☐
A8.34	Manuals and instructions	☐	☐
A8.35	Software	☐	☐
A8.36	Know-how	☐	☐

Will your project transfer technology using any of the following physical methods?		YES	NO
A8.37	USB flash drives	☐	☐
A8.38	Portable hard drives	☐	☐
A8.39	Laptops	☐	☐
A8.40	Tablets	☐	☐
A8.41	Intangible forms by using electronic media, such as email, phone storage and cloud file sharing	☐	☐
A8.42	Physical exports	☐	☐

Will your project involve any of the following?		YES	NO
A8.43	Oral transfer by phone or videoconferencing or presentations	☐	☐
A8.44	Travelling overseas for any purpose, while unintentionally carrying any of the above.	☐	☐
A8.45	Will you be hosting foreign visitors?	☐	☐

If you answer YES to any of questions A8,1-A8.45 then you should complete a full export control assessment and append that to this application. Before doing this please contact INSPIRE who will advise further.		YES	NO
A8.46	Full export control assessment required?	☐	☐
A8.47	Full export control assessment completed?	☐	☐
A8.48	Full export control assessment appended?	☐	☐

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