



ETHICS

ETHICS COMMITTEE AND THE ETHICAL APPROVAL PROCESS



BEHAVING ETHICALLY

'Ethical practice in research involves thoughtful reflection about how one ought to proceed in any given situation ... it is more than simply the avoidance of being unethical or conforming to regulations'

McGinn, 2014, p.159

DO I NEED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

In schools and other education settings we might ask whether we need ethical approval when our research is related to developing our teaching practice (our pedagogy).

All research requires you to consider the ethical implications; when you are asking participants to do or provide anything **that is in addition to normal classroom activity** then usually you need to seek ethical approval.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

An ethical approval panel or 'ethics committee' is a group of people, with good collective understanding of research ethics, who meet to discuss the ethical implications of research proposals.

The ethics committee will consider the researcher's proposed actions in meeting the ethical implications.

The panel will approve, conditionally approve or reject applications

ETHICS FORM

What can you offer in FULL confidence?

- never promise what you cannot offer

Adults must be fully (and accurately) informed.

Children must not be misled and should be informed as fully as appropriate for their age and level of attainment.

ETHICS FORM

All students must submit an ethics form formally to the Ethics Committee before carrying out research.

In order for you to demonstrate your knowledge of ethical considerations, you will need to complete an ethics form and include it in your assignment as an appendix.



COMPLETING
THE ETHICS
FORM

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

Full Name:					
Tick all boxes which apply:		Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☒	Postgraduate Research Student	☐
Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:					
Campus:					
E-mail address:					
Contact Telephone Number:					
For students:					
Student Number:					

SECTION A



SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☒	NO	☐
			Date	
If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
	Institute Research Committee	☐		
	Other (write in) Write supervisor's name here	☒	Write the date that you are filling in the form here	

SECTION B

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials



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, 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.

UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice	☐
UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☐
/ Add BERA (2018) here – full title	☐

SECTION C

Put crosses in the boxes!

SECTION D

Leave blank



SECTION E: DETAILS OF RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Your title can change,
even after you have
received ethical approval.

Start date = start of data
collection
End date = usually assignment
return date

This is 300 words IN
TOTAL, not 300
words per section.

Indicative title:

Proposed start date:

Proposed end date:

Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words)

Ensure that you write for a **Non-Specialist Audience** when outlining your response to the three points below:

- *Purpose of Research Activity*
- *Proposed Research Question*
- *Aims of Research Activity*
- *Objectives of Research Activity*

Demonstrate, briefly, how **Existing Research** has informed the proposed activity and explain

- *What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge*
- *How it addresses an area of importance.*

Purpose of Research Activity

(this box should expand as you type)

Research Question

(this box should expand as you type)

Aims of Research Activity

(this box should expand as you type)

Objectives of Research Activity

(this box should expand as you type)

SECTION E

(this box should expand as you type)

Proposed methods (maximum 600 words)

Provide a brief summary of all the methods that **may** be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be **needed**.

(this box should expand as you type)

This should include what sort of data you intend to collect and how you intend to collect it and analyse it.

Any audio/video recordings of interviews with participants are classified as Personal Data under GDPR. If you intend to use these, then note this here, in Section F and in Section J.

Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☐	☐
Use of interviews?	☐	☐
Use of diaries?	☐	☐
Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☐
Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☐
Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☐
Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☐
Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☐
Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☐
Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☐
Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☐
Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☐
Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☐
Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box For example, 'focus groups'. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) in this box and tick the accompany box.		
Details of any other primary data collection method:	☐	☐

(this box should expand as you type)

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

SECTION F

The information here **MUST** match the information that you gave in Section E; i.e.....

Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☐	☐
Use of interviews?	☒	☐
Use of diaries?	☐	☐
Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☐
Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☐
Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☐
Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☐
Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☐
Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☐
Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☐
Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☐
Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☐
Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☐
Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box For example, 'focus groups'. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) in this box and tick the accompany box.		
Details of any other primary data collection method:	☐	☐

(this box should expand as you type)

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

(this box should expand as you type)

Proposed methods (maximum 600 words)

Provide a brief summary of all the methods that **may** be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed.

I will carry out an interview...

(this box should expand as you type)

All the ticks here need to be discussed here.

SECTION F - PARTICIPANTS

	Participant numbers and source
--	---------------------------------------

	Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?
--	--

Be specific!

Answer for each
data collection tool
separately.

Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
How many participants are expected?	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
Who will the participants be?	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
How will you identify the participants?	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

There will be a maximum of 14 participants in total to form two focus groups: a student group of between 6 and 8 participants and a staff group of between 4 and 6 participants.

Current participants in xxx (the context) and staff involved in the assessment of the programme.

I will email an invitation to participate in the research focus groups to around 30 students who have been assessed as part of the xxx programme. A recruitment criterion for the maximum range for the widest diversity will be used to recruit up to 8 panel members. Between 6-8 participants will form the focus group and, for those who wish to participate, an email with a briefing will be sent that clearly explain the ethical aspects and purposes of the research. Once the student group is established, participants will be contacted by email with a briefing detailing their involvement in the research, seeking informed consent and providing information expectations of professional conduct for focus discussion.

To form the staff group, an email will be sent to key staff in specific roles to invite them to a focus group. This group will include between 4-6 participants within specific roles.

10	How many participants are expected?	M F E
11	Who will the participants be?	
12	How will you identify the participants?	

Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☐	☐	☐
Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☐	☐	☐
Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☐	☐	☐
Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☐	☐	☐
If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☐
Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☐	☐	☐
With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☐	☐	☐
Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☐	☐	☐
Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☐	☐
If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			

Make sure that you have a cross in each line.

SECTION H: ANTICIPATED RISKS

2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
	<table><tr><td data-bbox="336 725 1360 799">Risk to participants:</td><td data-bbox="1360 725 2372 799"><i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i></td></tr></table>	Risk to participants:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i>
Risk to participants:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i>		

2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 731 1360 798">Risk to participants:</td><td data-bbox="1360 731 2372 798"><i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i></td></tr> </table>	Risk to participants:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i>
Risk to participants:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i>		

Write the risks here.

Number each one.

Number each response.

Begin with 'I will...'

2	Risks to participants
	For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information
Risk to participants:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i>

*Physical or psychological harm

*Emotional distress

*Potential for discomfort and disagreement amongst participants during the group discussion may be considered harmful to the professional and reputational of individuals in the research.

*Disturbance to relationships

*Risk that participants may feel coerced into giving positive or biased responses to questions due to relationships and position in the organisation as an employee

PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM

Remember:
I will...

Adhere to child protection and safeguarding regulations.

Ensure informed consent and assent process are robust and thorough e.g. clarity regarding the purposes, benefits and risks of taking part in the research, ensuring that young people fully understand their own position in relation to the research, and their right to withdraw from it at any time.

Establish positive communication with parents and any gatekeepers of provision that the young people attend. Work collaboratively with them in promoting an understanding of the research purposes, and the rights of the young people participating in it, and those that chose not to do so.

Ensure that interviews are conducted on a one-to-one basis in a safe and private space, in which participants can express themselves freely without fear of recrimination from staff or peers.

Ensure robust procedures for maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants to the research.

Avoid revealing any stigmatising information regarding any of the participants, ensuring that their participation remains confidential.

Ensure procedures for data storage are in accordance with university procedures and ethical guidelines.

EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

Ensure access to appropriate support should this become evident and reconsider/revise the approach being taken.

Work with gatekeepers in clarifying the availability of support services for those participating in the research.

Work collaboratively with gatekeepers in exploring any issues that may arise in the interviews which may be a cause of distress to each of the young people taking part in the research.

Be clear with the young people regarding the conduct of the interviews, the area to be covered, and their rights to stop the interview or withdraw from it at any time. Consult with staff, parents/guardians, to gain an understanding of personal circumstances of the young people participating in the research in order to ensure that the interviews are conducted in a sensitive way, and that the interview subject matter does not cause distress.

Ensure, as fully as possible, that participants understand the nature of the research, its purposes, and possible implications in order to avoid misunderstandings and manage expectations. Ensure regular follow-up communication with participants in order to re-affirm consent and to update them on the progress of the research.

POTENTIAL FOR DISCOMFORT AND DISAGREEMENT

To avoid discomfort and disagreement during the focus group discussion, I will develop a discussion guide which will define the parameters and scope of the questions being discussed. Participants will be given a participant information sheet intended to remind them of the following: Context and background to the research; Purpose of the discussion; Research questions; Informed Consent; Specific questions/statements to be addressed; Use of the data gathered in the discussion; Closure and briefing on the use of the information and data gathered in the discussion.

I will moderate the discussion, providing reminders throughout as to the purpose of the discussion so as to ensure professional decorum is maintained in line with UWTSD codes of conduct. During the discussion about the xxx, if group members begin to be critical in a way that exposes participants to any degree of risk to the reputation of individuals or UWTSD, I will remind group members of their obligations with regards to professional conduct.

DISTURBANCE TO RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF

Ensure clarity with all young people and staff/gatekeepers regarding the aims and focus of the research.

Minimise disturbance of day-to-day activities within the provision due to the research project.

Ensure confidentiality and anonymity of those participating in the research at all times.

Ensure appropriate and secure storage of data. Reassure participants that the information that they provide will not be disclosed without their consent.

Ensure interviews are conducted in a suitably confidential environment.

Work with gatekeepers to promote an understanding of the nature of the research, and to gain assurances that the young people's participation in it is fully supported and will not result in recrimination by staff or peers.

RISK THAT PARTICIPANTS MAY FEEL COERCED INTO GIVING POSITIVE OR BIASED RESPONSES

Prior to the group interview, participants will be provided with a participant information sheet with which informed consent will be sought. To avoid the risk of participants feeling coerced, a debrief and synopsis transcript of the discussion will be available to participants following the discussion.

(the non-credit experts at your type)

4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Risk to the investigator:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:</i>

4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest
Risk to the investigator:	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:

Allegations while conducting interviews

Accusations of fabrication or falsification of data

Concerns of coercion

Participants may wish to withdraw

A possible conflict of interests between the researcher and participants

A confidentiality breach due to data being released accidentally

Risks relating to the possibility of unexpected negative emotions of the interviewees owing to, for example, an uncomfortable interview place, the anxiety for unintentional disclosure in reference to the participants or for any unintentional inappropriateness of conduct violating any possible document.

ALLEGATIONS WHILE CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

Ensure access to a suitable space that secures the confidentiality of the of the participant contributions, whilst also being visible to other colleagues.

ACCUSATIONS OF FABRICATION OR FALSIFICATION OF DATA

Clarify with participants regarding access to transcripts of interviews or field notes.

Ensure debriefing with participants to include recapping on and clarifying where necessary the contributions that they have made.

Work with gatekeepers to promote a comprehensive understand of the nature of the research project.

CONCERNS OF COERCION

It will be made explicit that participants are free to disengage and that in that event, this will not impact on assessment or outcomes of their programme of study.

PARTICIPANTS MAY WISH TO WITHDRAW

In the case of withdrawal from the student group, discussions would be conducted with the remaining participants and new participants will be recruited, if necessary, who will be fully briefed, and whose informed consent will be sought. For the case of a withdrawal from the staff group, a nominee will be sought in the relevant department/specialism.

A POSSIBLE CONFLICT OF INTERESTS BETWEEN THE RESEARCHER AND PARTICIPANTS

Where there is a potential conflict of interest between the researcher and the participants, for example the researcher may be involved in some aspect of the assessment of participants work, the researcher will not assess that participant's work.

A CONFIDENTIALITY BREACH DUE TO DATA BEING RELEASED ACCIDENTLY

The research will be stored on the UWTSD cloud and any recordings, data or transcript will be password protected in electronic folders on UWTSD systems and subject to university protocols. However, GDPR statements will be included in any participant information and consent and that the researcher has completed training on GDPR and will ensure that all records are kept in secure cloud locations as a precaution and not on any hard drive.

RISKS RELATING TO THE POSSIBILITY OF UNEXPECTED NEGATIVE EMOTIONS OF THE INTERVIEWEES...

Be cautious about the places to have interview and choose quiet and public places. The participants are assured that all the personal data of the participants are securely stored in the safe place such as...

All the related laws and regulations should be carefully studied before the research activities to avoid unintentional misconduct that arouse suspicion and antagonism from authorities.

	(this box should expand as you type)	(this box should expand as you type)
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University:	How you will mitigate the risk to the University:

5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	<i>(write how situation expands as you type)</i>
	Risk to the University:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to the University:</i>

Reputational damage (Potential complaint against the researcher for causing emotional distress or embarrassment that could cause reputational damage)

REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE

Ensure adherence to the UWTSD code of ethics and research standards and commonly agreed standards of good practice.

Ensure compliance with data storage regulations and university guidelines and security procedures.

Ensure that research methodology is robust and that methods are appropriate.

Adhere to the UWTSD code of conduct (and also the EWC code of conduct if you are a teacher).

Establish clarity regarding procedures on reporting of disclosures in field work settings.

Work with partners to promote a comprehensive understanding regard the nature of the research in order to avoid misunderstandings and manage expectations.

		(this box should expand as you type)
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment N/A	How you will mitigate the risk to environment:

Use of paper

Travel -carbon footprint

	(this box should expand as you type)	
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment N/A	How you will mitigate the risk to environment:

USE OF PAPER

TRAVEL - CARBON FOOTPRINT

This research activity will mostly use electronic systems reducing the need for bleached paper and need for travel.

SECTION I: FEEDBACK, CONSENT AND
CONFIDENTIALITY

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

You don't need to email your participants with your final report. A good alternative is to set up an email address that they will be able to contact for further details or results.

Feedback

What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?

Include each research tool separately here.

(this box should expand as you type)

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 data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.

And here.

(this box should expand as you type)

Confidentiality / Anonymity

Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.

(this box should expand as you type)

Paper questionnaire = participants sign a consent form.
Online questionnaire = screen before the questions start that acts as a consent form, informing participants that by clicking on the NEXT button they are providing consent.



SECTION J: DATA PROTECTION AND STORAGE

‘Personal data’ includes audio/video data of interview participants.

“to one or more factors specific to the physical...identity of that natural person”

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

In completing this section refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and the extensive resources on the University's Research Data Management web pages

Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 "GDPR" and the Data Protection Act 2018 "DPA")?	YES	NO
"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.	☐	☐

If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:

(this box should expand as you type)

Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
"Special category data" means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects' – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	☐

If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	
5	Manual files (<u>i.e.</u> in paper form)?	Paper copies of consent forms?
6	University computers?	
7	Private company computers?	
8	Home or other personal computers?	Home PC? or laptop???
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	
10	“Cloud” storage or websites?	Storage?
11	Other – specify:	

NB – this question refers to “collected data, drafts of the thesis [or dissertation], or materials for publication”

SECTION J: QUESTION 12

“For all stored data...”

All data will be kept in password protected personal computer. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password protected folder. If any cloud storage is needed, the University Office 365 system will be used, which will be encrypted and the data in the cloud is anonymised. The data will be stored until receipt of the dissertation result and then deleted. Participants will have the right to ask to see what data is held relating to them and these data will be deleted immediately if the participant requests this, in which case the data will not be used in the project.

SECTION J: QUESTIONS 21 & 24

Each participant's electronic consent form and data from interviews, class observation and questionnaire will be stored in a secure place in a password protected personal computer or the University Office 365 system which will be encrypted. All personal identification information will be removed or anonymised during transcription.

Signed informed consent forms in paper form will be kept in a locked file cabinet and will be unavailable to anyone except the researcher. On receiving the feedback and mark for this piece of work, the signed informed consent forms will be destroyed and audio- and/or video-taped data will be deleted.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small green leaf. The hand has red-painted fingernails. Two speech bubbles are overlaid on the image. The background is a blurred green.

GOOD LUCK!

Any questions?