

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: “creative 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, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the “principal researcher”.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Dil afroze khan
2	Student Number:	2508106
3	Email address:	2508106@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
4	Programme of Study:	MSc Public Health and Social Care in Practice
5	Supervisor:	Dr wenli wu

SECTION B: 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, location-specific codes of research ethics, and 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 Code of Practice	✓
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	✓
3		✓
4		✓

SECTION C: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Evaluating Barriers to Mental Health Support for Young Adults in Urban UK: A Systematic Literature Review		
2	Proposed start date:	May 2026 12/06/2026	Proposed end date:	Aug 2026 29/08/2026

	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words in each section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: <i>This research is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) designed to understand the challenges young adults (18-25) face when accessing mental health services in urban UK settings. It will not involve human participants. The purpose is to synthesise existing published, peer-reviewed qualitative studies to identify common themes related to barriers like stigma and service accessibility. The key objective is to consolidate this fragmented evidence to provide a robust, evidence-based overview that can inform policy and practice for improving youth mental health services.</i>
	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
3	Purpose of Research Activity This SLR addresses the nationally important issue of youth mental health by systematically synthesising existing qualitative evidence. It will add to the body of knowledge by creating a comprehensive overview of barriers, providing a more robust evidence base than any single study to inform service improvement strategies.
4	Research Question What does existing qualitative literature identify as the key barriers for young adults (18-25) accessing mental health services in an urban UK setting?
5	Aims of Research Activity To systematically review and synthesise existing qualitative evidence on the perceived barriers to accessing mental health support for young adults (18-25) in the urban UK context.
6	Objectives of Research Activity 1. To determine within the available literature the most crucial individual, social and structural factors that young adults feel impede their access to mental health help. 2. To integrate the qualitative data regarding the functions of mental health literacy, stigma (self-stigma and perceived stigma), and historical experiences in help-seeking behaviours. 3. To review the recurring themes in the literature on the challenges and opportunities presented by an urban environment to the issue of gaining access to mental health care. 4. To develop evidence-based recommendations to be used by the providers of the public health and social care based on the synthesised evidence to transform the accessibility and acceptability of mental health services among this population group. (this box should expand as you type)
	Proposed data collection methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity to collect data, 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. You do not need to justify the methods here, but instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary to complete your project.
7	This is an SLR and involves no primary data collection. Data will be sourced exclusively from existing, published academic literature. The method involves a systematic search of academic databases (e.g., PubMed, PsycINFO), screening of articles against pre-defined inclusion criteria, and extraction of relevant findings from the final selection of peer-reviewed papers.

SECTION D: Scope of Research Activity

	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: (this box should expand as you type)	☐	☐

If you have ticked NO to every question then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and you may skip section E and continue to section F.

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION E: Intended Participants

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☐	☒
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒

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7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.		☒
	Details of any other participant groups: Complethisonlyifyourparticipantscannotgiveconsent.Thisincludesanimals	☐	☒

	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	N/A.
11	Who will the participants be?	N/A

12	How will you identify the participants?	N/A (

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☐	☐	☒
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☐	☐	☒
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☐	☐	☒
16	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?	☐	☐	☒
17	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☐	☐	☒
18	If questionnaires are used, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☐	☐	☒
19	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☐	☐	☒
20	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☐	☒
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in away appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☐	☒
22	If NO to any of the above questions, please give an explanation.			

	Informationforparticipants:	YES	NO	N/A
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24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☐	✓
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☐	✓
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☐	✓
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☐	✓
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details.			
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

SECTION F: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researcher(s), and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.	
1	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information. If you have identified in section D that there are no participants, then enter N/A and go skip to question 3..	
	Risk to participants:	How you will mitigate the risk to participants:
	N/A.	
2	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) 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>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
3	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: Minimal. Limited to ergonomic risks from prolonged computer use,	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: mitigated by regular breaks.
4	University/ institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: Minimal. Risk of data loss.	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: mitigated by using the University's secure, backed-up OneDrive storage
5	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	

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	Risk to the environment: N/A.	How you will mitigate the risk to the environment:
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SECTION G: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

If you have identified in section D that there are no participants, then enter skip this section and continue to section H.

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	N/A - This research does not involve human participants.
2	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.
	N/A - This research does not involve human participants.
3	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.
	N/A - This research does not involve human participants.

SECTION H: Data Protection and Storage

	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
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 is considered to be personal data..	☐	☒
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2			

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	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subject’s – (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:		
4			

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?		☒
6	University computers?	☒	☐
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☒	
9	Laptop computers/CDs/Portable disk-drives/memory sticks?	☐	☒

10	“Cloud” storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	All research materials (articles, data extraction forms) will be stored on the University's secure Office 365 OneDrive and a password-protected, encrypted personal laptop.		

	Data Protection		
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☐	☒
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒

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15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and/or any international equivalent): <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
20	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity: <i>The data will be accessed by the Principal Researcher (student) and the Academic Supervisor. It may also be accessed by a second marker and/or an external examiner for assessment purposes.</i>		
21	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity: <i>The Principal Researcher (student) will be the custodian and have control over the research data.</i>		
22	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. <i>All research data will be in digital format (e.g., PDFs, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets). Data will be stored on the University's secure, password-protected Office 365 OneDrive, which is regularly backed up. A working copy may be kept on a password-protected and encrypted personal laptop. The data will be stored for the duration of the project and will be securely deleted after the final mark has been ratified by the examination board.</i>		
22	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtss.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	☒	
23	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	☒	

SECTION I: Use of AI tools

Use of generative AI and other AI-based tools 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:	YES	NO	N/A
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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				

SECTION J: Declaration

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	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 Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:	Dil afroze khan	Date: 12.07.2026
2	Supervisor:	Wenli Wu	Date: 14.07.2026
3	Signature:	Wenli Wu	