

PG2 / E1 — Application for Ethical Approval

BMHP6020 Independent Project | BSc (Hons) Health and Social Care | UWTSD London

Prepared: 21 October 2026 • Research type: structured literature review using published secondary research

STATUS: WORKING DRAFT FOR SUPERVISOR REVIEW — NOT FORMALLY SUBMITTED OR APPROVED. The first stage of the Independent Project (including the methodology poster) is still being finalised. Personal declarations, signatures and formal approval must be completed only by the appropriate person.

This document transfers the fields available in the university PG2/E1 form text shared by the student (April 2022) into a readable completed draft. The UWTSD website also lists a newer November 2025 PG2 template. Before official submission, check the current Moodle/module-supervisor submission format.

SECTION A — About You (Principal Researcher)

A1 Full name: Sandra De Cassia Xavier Lima Gomes

A2 Category: ☒ Undergraduate student; ☐ Member of staff; ☐ Taught postgraduate; ☐ Postgraduate research student; ☐ Honorary research fellow

A3 Academic discipline: Health and Social Care

A4 Campus: UWTSD London (Canary Wharf)

A5 University email: 2335184@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

A6 Contact telephone: 07395 524250

A7 Student number: 2335184

A8 Programme of study: BSc (Hons) Health and Social Care — Level 6, Group 2

A9 Supervisor: Dr Jolly Nwankwo, Lecturer in Health and Social Care; j.nwankwo@uwtsd.ac.uk (confirmed by email 21 October 2026)

SECTION B — Approval for Research Activity

B1 Has the research activity received approval in principle? ☐ YES ☒ NO / not evidenced as formally approved. Approval date: not applicable.

B2 Source of approval: Not applicable at this stage. Dr Nwankwo confirmed that the PG2 can still be submitted and that he will review after submission. His message does not constitute formal research ethics approval.

SECTION C — Internal and External Ethical Guidance

Core guidance identified for the project:

- UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice (July 2022) and the current Research Ethics and Integrity Policy (2025–26) — ethical conduct and fair reporting.
- UWTSD Research Data Management Policy (2022) and UWTSD Research Data Management guidance — secure storage and responsible records management.
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 — relevant if identifiable information is encountered.
- Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) qualitative checklist (2024) — methodological quality appraisal.

- Thomas and Harden (2008) — thematic synthesis method.

C Declaration of reading/adherence: ☐ **To be ticked by the student only after personally reviewing the relevant UWTSD documents and confirming compliance.**

SECTION D — External Collaborative Research Activity

D1–D3 External institution / contact person / email: Not applicable — no external collaborators or participating organisations are proposed.

Item	Yes	No
D4 Externally funded research	☐	☒
D5 KESS scholarship funding for the research	☐	☒
D6 Undertaken as a specifically employed or voluntary research role	☐	☒
D7 Paid employment to undertake this research	☐	☒
D8 UWTSD APLP professional learning partnership	☐	☒

D9–D10 Partner permission and partner ethics system: Not applicable — no external organisation is involved.

SECTION E — Details of Research Activity

E1 Indicative title: Barriers Preventing Women from Leaving Abusive Intimate Partner Relationships in the United Kingdom: A Structured Literature Review

E2 Proposed start date: **After written ethics clearance / supervisor confirmation. EXACT DATE TO BE AGREED.**

E2 Proposed end date: **Before final BMHP6020 project submission. EXACT DATE TO BE CONFIRMED WITH SUPERVISOR.**

E3 Purpose of research activity (under 300 words):

Domestic abuse is a significant concern for health and social care services. Women experiencing abusive intimate partner relationships may face multiple interacting barriers to leaving, including fear of retaliation, coercive control, emotional attachment, economic dependence, caring responsibilities, housing insecurity, and limited access to suitable support. Leaving may not be safe or immediately possible, and the study will avoid language that places blame on survivors.

The proposed project will examine published UK-focused research on the experiences of adult women facing such barriers. It will compare how individual, relational, social and structural circumstances influence access to safety, including potential differences relating to migration status and social support where these are evidenced. Its contribution will be a transparent critical synthesis of existing findings, identifying implications and gaps for health and social care practitioners.

An initial UWTSD library discovery search was carried out on 20 October 2026 using domestic violence / UK / women-related concepts and 2016–2026, English-language, article and peer-reviewed filters; the interface

displayed 642 records. This was an initial search output, not 642 included studies. Full eligibility assessment and quality appraisal have not yet been completed.

E4 Research question: What are the main barriers preventing adult women from leaving abusive intimate partner relationships in the United Kingdom?

E5 Aim: To critically synthesise published UK evidence about psychological, social, financial, cultural and structural barriers affecting adult women who seek to leave abusive intimate partner relationships.

E6 Objectives:

- Identify barriers reported in relevant UK research, including coercive control, fear and economic dependence.
- Examine how housing, children, social networks, immigration-related circumstances and service responses affect options for leaving.
- Critically appraise included studies and compare patterns, contradictions and limitations in the evidence.
- Use thematic synthesis to draw out implications for safe, sensitive health and social care support.

E7 Proposed methods (under 600 words):

The project will undertake a structured literature review of existing published research. No interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation, recruitment or collection of confidential case files will take place. The core synthesis will prioritise qualitative studies of adult women's experiences; mixed-methods studies may be included if relevant qualitative findings can be extracted. Published policy and specialist reports may support the background but will be distinguished from empirical studies.

Searches will use the UWTSD Library discovery service and relevant accessible databases within ProQuest, alongside other available sources such as PubMed or CINAHL if university access is confirmed. Google Scholar may support citation tracking, but formal search results will be documented by database. The concepts will combine synonyms for “domestic abuse”, “intimate partner violence”, “coercive control”, “women”, “leaving”, “separation”, “barriers” and “United Kingdom” using AND/OR. Exact search strings, databases, filters, dates and number of results will be logged.

Proposed inclusion: English-language, UK-relevant peer-reviewed empirical literature published in 2016–2026; adult women (18+) experiencing abuse from an intimate partner; and findings concerning barriers to leaving or separation. Non-UK studies will be excluded from the central synthesis unless UK findings are separately available. Editorial or opinion-only materials, perpetrator-only interventions, and studies not addressing the question will be excluded. These boundaries will be discussed with the supervisor before final screening.

Titles and abstracts will be screened, then potentially relevant full-text articles reviewed. Duplicate records and the reasons for full-text exclusions will be logged. A structured extraction table will summarise author, year, sample, setting, methods, reported barriers, findings and study limitations. The CASP qualitative checklist will support critical appraisal. Thematic synthesis, informed by Thomas and Harden (2008), will develop initial codes, descriptive themes and analytical themes. Contradictory findings, limitations and potential bias will be reported rather than forcing agreement.

Only lawful access to published academic literature will be used. No new personal data from survivors will be sought. Findings will be paraphrased respectfully, cited accurately, and recorded in university-approved, access-restricted academic storage. Literature-review materials and drafts will be retained or disposed of according to UWTSD requirements.

E8 Location of research activity: United Kingdom (desk-based online searches and analysis using university library resources and the student's secure computer). No site visits or participant-facing fieldwork.

E9 Research activity outside the UK: No overseas activity is planned. UK research will be the focus; a source authored overseas does not entail research contact abroad.

E10 Use of documentation not publicly available: ☒ NO ☐ YES. University-subscription academic publications may be used under authorised library access; confidential records and restricted participant files will not be sought.

E11 If Yes, documentation permissions: Not applicable.

E12–E19 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: Potential relevance (subject to supervisor review): A healthier Wales and A more equal Wales, through the potential relevance of domestic-abuse services, safety and inequalities. The study concerns the wider UK and is not a Wales-specific evaluation.

Item	Yes	No
E12 A prosperous Wales	☐	☒
E13 A resilient Wales	☐	☒
E14 A healthier Wales	☒	☐
E15 A more equal Wales	☒	☐
E16 A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	☒
E17 A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	☒
E18 A globally responsible Wales	☐	☒

SECTION F — Scope of Research Activity

Item	Yes	No
F1 Questionnaire or similar instrument	☐	☒
F2 Interviews	☐	☒
F3 Focus groups	☐	☒
F4 Participant diaries	☐	☒
F5 Video or audio recordings	☐	☒
F6 Computer-generated log files about research participants	☐	☒
F7 Participant observation with knowledge	☐	☒
F8 Participant observation without knowledge	☐	☒
F9 Access to personal/confidential	☐	☒

information without consent		
F10 Harmful or offensive tests / stimuli / presentations to participants	☐	☒
F11 Potentially embarrassing acts affecting self-esteem	☐	☒
F12 Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities	☐	☒
F13 Deception	☐	☒
F14 Administration of substances or placebo	☐	☒
F15 Working with live vertebrate animals	☐	☒
F16 Procedures potentially damaging to the environment	☐	☒
F17 Any other primary data collection	☐	☒

F17 Details of other data collection: None. Literature review only; no primary data collection.

All Section F responses are NO based on the declared secondary-research design. This does not amount to ethics approval.

SECTION G — Intended Participants

Not applicable: no participants will be recruited, enrolled, contacted, observed, interviewed or asked to consent. The copied PG2 instructions state that applicants with no participants should proceed directly to Section H.

G1–G12 Categories, number, selection and recruitment: None; expected participants: zero.

G13–G28 Participant information, consent, debriefing, equipment, payment and deception: N/A — no direct participants; no consent forms or incentives.

SECTION H — Anticipated Risks

H1 Full formal risk assessment appended: ☒ NO ☐ YES; desk-based secondary review only (additional assessment can be provided if required by supervisor).

H2 Risks to participants and mitigation: No direct participants are recruited, so no participant contact risk. Published accounts of abuse will be represented respectfully, with identifying detail excluded when unnecessary.

H3 Sensitive subject matter and safeguarding procedures: The review discusses domestic abuse, coercion and possible severe harm, but does not invite new disclosures from survivors. No individual interviews or recruitment will occur. If an unforeseen disclosure arises outside the review, the researcher will seek supervisor and university safeguarding guidance rather than independently handling a research case.

H4 Risks to investigator and mitigation: Reading distressing descriptions could cause emotional discomfort or fatigue. Work will be paced, with breaks, supervisor support and university wellbeing support where needed; only desk-based work is planned.

H5 Risks to university and mitigation: Potential inaccurate claims, inadvertent identifying quotations, plagiarism, insecure files or mishandling sensitive material. Use original citation, source verification, critical appraisal, limited access, university-approved file storage and supervisory review.

H6 Environmental risks and mitigation: Negligible risks from online desk research; avoid unnecessary printing or travel; no substances, fieldwork or wildlife impacts.

H7–H8 DBS requirement/certificate: ☒ N/A — there will be no contact with minors or vulnerable research participants. Certificate number: N/A.

SECTION I — Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

I1 Participant debriefing and feedback: Not applicable — no participants. Academic findings will be made available to the supervisor/examiners through the normal submission route.

I2 Informed consent arrangements: Not applicable — the project analyses published sources, with no new participant consent or personal data collection.

I3 Confidentiality and anonymity: No confidential participant datasets or case files will be accessed. Published research will be cited appropriately; identifying details of survivors in case descriptions will not be unnecessarily repeated.

SECTION J — Data Protection and Storage

J1 Does research involve personal data collected or processed about study participants? ☒ NO ☐ YES. No raw identifiable participants or case records; standard bibliography and article author names are scholarly citations.

J2 If Yes, type and reason: Not applicable. The research will use publication metadata, search logs, anonymised thematic notes and academic drafts.

J3 Special-category personal data about recruited participants? ☒ NO ☐ YES. Published discussions may concern sensitive experiences but the study will not acquire identifiable raw records.

J4 If Yes, description and necessity: Not applicable.

Item	Yes	No
J5 Manual / paper files	☐	☒
J6 University computers for storing study data	☐	☒
J7 Private-company computers	☐	☒
J8 Home / personal computer	☒	☐
J9 Laptop or portable devices	☒	☐
J10 Cloud/web storage (university Microsoft 365 only)	☒	☐
J11 Other unlisted storage method	☐	☒

J12 Security, backups and confidentiality: The student will store article PDFs, search logs, extraction tables and drafts only on a password-protected personal computer and university-provided Microsoft 365/OneDrive/SharePoint, where available and authorised. Account access will be restricted; an approved University cloud folder will serve as a backup. No confidential case notes or raw participant records will be held. Public file sharing and unencrypted USB transfers will be avoided. Retention/deletion will follow the current UWTSD policy and supervisor advice.

Item	Yes	No
J13 Electronic transfer of academic study materials	☒	☐
J14 Data sharing beyond immediate research team (authorised academic assessment only)	☒	☐
J15 Sharing research materials with other organisations	☐	☒
J16 Import/export of personal research data outside the UK	☐	☒
J17 Use of research-subject addresses/postcodes/emails/telephone numbers	☐	☒
J18 Publication identifying individual survivors	☐	☒
J19 Research record management (search log/extraction spreadsheet)	☒	☐
J20 Deposit of original research dataset in an archive	☐	☒

J21 Details of Yes selections: Published articles, bibliographic information, search logs, extraction tables and dissertation drafts will be transferred electronically within the university-supported academic environment. Study materials may be accessed by Dr Nwankwo and authorised UWTSD markers/reviewers as part of assessment. No identifiable new participant dataset will be shared or exported. A password-protected spreadsheet or document will organise non-personal research records.

J22 Who has access: Principal researcher Sandra Gomes; supervisor Dr Jolly Nwankwo; authorised UWTSD academic examiners/markers and administrators as needed for evaluation.

J23 Research data custodian: Sandra Gomes (student researcher), under UWTSD academic/data management requirements.

J24 Storage location, security, duration and archiving: Secure personal laptop/computer and university-approved Microsoft 365 academic storage; access restricted to university account where possible. Notes and drafts will be retained through assessment and any applicable appeals/retention period, and then handled according to UWTSD instructions. Exact retention duration is pending confirmation. No independent public data archive is proposed.

J25 UWTSD Research Data Repository: No original dataset is planned for deposit: no primary participant data. The project may contain review tables and bibliographies; confirm any repository requirement with supervisor.

J26 Have you read UWTSD data management guidance? ☐ YES — STUDENT TO TICK AFTER READING.

J27 Are you aware you must retain research material until completion / end of funding? ☐ YES — STUDENT TO CONFIRM AFTER READING UWTSD POLICY.

Checklist before official submission

- ☐ Confirm mobile number (A6) is still current.
- ☐ Confirm planned start and end dates with Dr Nwankwo (E2) and any formal approval-in-principle process (B).
- ☐ Read UWTSD ethics and data management policy, then personally tick Section C / J26 / J27 acknowledgements.
- ☐ Check the UWTSD November 2025 PG2 form against this student-completed answer sheet; transfer answers if requested by Moodle.
- ☐ Student to review all declared factual answers and personally sign/date only where the official form requires it.
- ☐ Submit PG2 by the route advised for undergraduate students; after actual submission, email Dr Nwankwo confirming completion and where it was submitted.
- ☐ Do not enter a supervisor signature, ethics outcome or approval date; none have been granted yet.

Methodological references / guidance (for supervisor review)

Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2024) CASP Checklist: Qualitative Research. <https://casp-uk.net/casp-checklists/CASP-checklist-qualitative-2024.pdf>

Thomas, J. and Harden, A. (2008) “Methods for the thematic synthesis of qualitative research in systematic reviews”, BMC Medical Research Methodology, 8, article 45. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-8-45>

UWTSD, Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice (2022); current university Research Ethics and Integrity Policy (2025–26); and UWTSD Research Data Management Policy (2022). See UWTSD Research and Digital Services policy pages.

No claim is made here that the 642 search results were fully screened, that the literature review is completed, or that research ethics approval has been granted.