

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

RESEARCH STUDENTS

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

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

This document is also available in Welsh.

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

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.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

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**: "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".

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

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Wenrui 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:	Education and Humanities			
4	Campus:	Swansea			
5	E-mail address:	2319170@student.uwtsd.ac.uk			
6	Contact Telephone Number:				
For students:					

7	Student Number:	2319170
8	Programme of Study:	EDD - Doctorate of Education
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Dr. Julia Holloway

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	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
2	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) Dr. Julia Holloway	☒	20/03/2025	

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, 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 Code of Practice				☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy				☒
3	British Educational Research Association (BERA) Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research(2024)				☒

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

1	Institution				
2	Contact person name				
3	Contact person e-mail address				
4	Is your research externally funded?	YES	☐	NO	☐
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐
6	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO
7		Employed	YES	☐	NO
8	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership	If YES then the permission question below does not need	YES	☐	NO

	(APLP)?	to be answered.				
9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Examining the Implementation Efficacy of Public English Policies in Chinese Universities: A Critical Literature Review Through the Lens of Teachers' Perspectives			
2	Proposed start date:	11/2025	Proposed end date:	03/2027	
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how Existing Research has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>				
3	Purpose of Research Activity This research aims to understand how university English teachers in China navigate and implement national public English policies, such as standardized curricula and exams, in their daily teaching practices. While these policies are designed to enhance students' global competitiveness through economic imperatives (Hu and McKay, 2012), their success depends heavily on teachers' ability to adapt them to real classroom needs (Ball, 1994). However, little is known about the challenges teachers face, particularly in contexts marked by rural-urban resource disparities (Zhou, 2020), or the strategies they use to balance policy requirements with student learning. By focusing on teachers' experiences as active agents in policy reinterpretation (Priestley et al., 2015), this study seeks to shed light on the human side of policy implementation, offering insights that can help improve both teaching quality and context-sensitive policy design. References Ball, S.J. (1994) <i>Education reform: A critical and post-structural approach</i>. Buckingham: Open University Press. Hu, G. and McKay, S.L. (2012) 'English language education in East Asia: Some recent developments', <i>Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development</i>, 33(4), pp. 345–362. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2012.661735 Priestley, M., Biesta, G. and Robinson, S. (2015) <i>Teacher agency: An ecological approach</i>. Bristol:				

	Policy Press. Zhou, M. (2020) 'Educational inequality in rural China: A case study of English language teaching resources', <i>Comparative Education Review</i>, 64(2), pp. 231–250. https://doi.org/10.1086/707773 (this box should expand as you type)
4	Research Question How do Chinese university English teachers adapt public English policies to meet classroom realities, and what systemic challenges influence their ability to do so effectively? (this box should expand as you type)
5	Aims of Research Activity The study has three main aims: To uncover how teachers interpret and adjust national policies to fit their students' needs. To identify obstacles that hinder teachers' effectiveness, such as limited resources or rigid administrative rules. To explore how teachers balance the demands of teaching English for global communication with preserving local cultural values. (this box should expand as you type)
6	Objectives of Research Activity To achieve these aims, the research will: Interview teachers from diverse universities to gather firsthand accounts of their experiences. Analyze how policies are applied differently in urban and rural settings. Develop practical recommendations for policymakers to better support teachers. (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. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	1. Semi-Structured Interviews ● Participants: 15–20 university English teachers and administrators from diverse institutions (e.g., urban vs. rural, tier 1 vs. tier 3 universities). ● Format: Conducted online via platforms like Zoom, each lasting 45–60 minutes. ● Content: Open-ended questions focusing on: ■ How policies (e.g., CET-4/6 exams, EMI programs) are interpreted and adapted in classrooms. ■ Challenges faced (e.g., resource limitations, administrative pressures). ■ Strategies for balancing global mandates with cultural preservation. ● Recording: Audio-recorded with consent, then transcribed verbatim for analysis. 2. Purposive and Snowball Sampling ● Sampling Strategy: ■ Purposive: Select participants based on specific criteria (e.g., ≥5 years of teaching experience, involvement in policy implementation). ■ Snowball: Ask initial participants to recommend colleagues with relevant insights. ● Inclusion Criteria: ■ Teachers from universities with varying resource levels (urban/rural). ■ Administrators involved in curriculum design or policy oversight.

3. Document Analysis

- Sources:
 - Policy Documents: National guidelines (e.g., College English Curriculum Requirements), university syllabi, and institutional reports.
 - Student Records: De-identified academic performance data (e.g., CET-4/6 pass rates) from participating universities.
- Purpose: Contextualize interview data by comparing policy objectives with institutional practices.

4. Supplementary Surveys

- Participants: 100–150 students from participating universities.
- Design: Short Likert-scale questionnaire (online) to assess:
 - Perceptions of curriculum relevance and teaching quality.
 - Satisfaction with English learning outcomes.
- Analysis: Descriptive statistics (e.g., mean scores) to identify broader trends.

5. Data Analysis Techniques

- Thematic Analysis:
 - Code interview transcripts using NVivo software to identify recurring themes (e.g., “resource gaps,” “policy resistance”).
 - Compare findings across urban and rural contexts.
- Triangulation: Cross-check interview data with document analysis and survey results (if used) to enhance validity.

6. Ethical Considerations

- Informed Consent: Provide participants with written explanations of the study’s purpose, data usage, and anonymity guarantees.
- Confidentiality: Store data on password-protected devices; anonymize transcripts (e.g., use pseudonyms like “Teacher A”).
- Right to Withdraw: Allow participants to exit the study at any stage without penalty.

7. Limitations and Adaptability

- Geographic Scope: Focus on eastern China initially; expand to western regions if feasible.
- Method Flexibility: If additional methods (e.g., classroom observations) are later deemed necessary, separate ethical approval will be sought.

(this box should expand as you type)

Location of research activity

Identify all locations where research activity will take place.

1. Participant Institutions (Physical Locations)

- Urban Universities:

Jinan: Shandong University (山东大学)

Qingdao: Ocean University of China (中国海洋大学), Qingdao University (青岛大学)

Yantai: Yantai University (烟台大学)

Weifang: Weifang Medical University (潍坊医学院)

- Rural Institutions:

Linyi: Linyi University (临沂大学)

Dezhou: Dezhou Vocational and Technical College (德州职业技术学院)

Heze: Heze University (菏泽学院)

2. Online Platforms (Virtual Locations)

- Interviews: Conducted via Microsoft Teams, with participants joining from campuses or homes in Shandong.
- Surveys: Distributed through university email systems or local platforms like Wenjuanxing (问卷星).

3. Document Access Points

- Government Sources:

Shandong Provincial Department of Education for regional policy guidelines.
Ministry of Education (national-level documents, accessed remotely).

- University Portals:

Online repositories of Shandong University, Ocean University of China, and other participating institutions for syllabi and internal reports.

4. Researcher's Base

Data Analysis and Administration: Conducted at Shandong University (Jinan Campus).

(this box should expand as you type)

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. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.

1. Local Ethical Guidelines and Permissions

- Ethical Approval:

- All research involving human participants in China requires approval from local Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) at participating universities (e.g., Shandong University's Ethics Committee).

- Additional approval may be needed from the Shandong Provincial Department of Education for studies involving public schools or government policies.

- National Regulations:

- China's Ethical Review Measures for Life Science and Medical Research Involving Humans (2023) mandates informed consent, data anonymization, and participant rights to withdraw.

- Compliance with the Cybersecurity Law (2017) and Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) (2021) is required for data collection, storage, and cross-border transfers.

2. Ethical Stipulations Beyond UK Norms

- Data Localization:

All research data collected in China must be stored on servers physically located within China (e.g., Alibaba Cloud servers in Shandong). Cross-border data transfers require government approval.

- Cultural Sensitivities:

- Avoid politically sensitive topics (e.g., critiques of national education policies). Focus discussions on pedagogical practices rather than policy shortcomings.

- Ensure anonymity for participants, especially in rural areas, where communities are closely knit and identities may be easily inferred.

- Vulnerable Populations:

Rural teachers or students from low-income backgrounds may face power imbalances. Explicit consent must emphasize voluntary participation without institutional coercion.

3. Licenses and Permissions

- University Access:

Written permission from university authorities (e.g., Shandong University's Academic Affairs Office) is required to conduct interviews or access internal documents.

- Government Collaboration:

For studies involving policy analysis, collaboration with local education bureaus (e.g., Jinan Municipal Education Bureau) may be necessary.

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	4. Researcher's Positionality ● Residency: The researcher resides in Shandong Province, China, simplifying logistics and local compliance. ● Cultural Competence: Fluency in Mandarin and familiarity with Shandong's educational context mitigate risks of misinterpretation. 5. Key Ethical Risks and Mitigations ● Political Sensitivity: ■ Risk: Criticizing national policies (e.g., CET-4/6 exams) could lead to institutional backlash. ■ Mitigation: Frame questions neutrally (e.g., "How do you implement policies?" rather than "Do you agree with policies?"). ● Data Privacy: ■ Risk: Legal penalties for mishandling personal data under PIPL. ■ Mitigation: Use pseudonyms, anonymize transcripts, and store data on approved local servers. ● Rural Vulnerabilities: ■ Risk: Participants in rural institutions (e.g., Heze University) may fear professional repercussions. ■ Mitigation: Assure confidentiality and avoid recording identifiable institutional details. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents <u>NOT</u> publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
11	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	YES	NO
12	A prosperous Wales	☐	☒
13	A resilient Wales	☐	☒
14	A healthier Wales	☐	☒
15	A more equal Wales	☐	☒
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	☒
17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	☒
18	A globally responsible Wales	☐	☒
19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

SECTION F: 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 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).

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

SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

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

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? Primary Participants (Interviews): ● 15–20 university English teachers and administrators from Shandong Province. ● Breakdown: ■ 8–10 teachers from urban universities (e.g., Shandong University, Ocean University of China). ■ 5–7 teachers from rural institutions (e.g., Linyi University, Heze University). ■ 2–3 administrators involved in policy implementation (e.g., academic affairs officers). (this box should expand as you type)
11	Who will the participants be? ● Teachers: ■ Full-time university English instructors with ≥3 years of experience in public English education. ■ Representing diverse institutional tiers (e.g., top-tier urban universities vs. rural vocational colleges). ● Administrators: Department heads or curriculum designers responsible for implementing national policies. ● Students (Optional Surveys): Undergraduates enrolled in public English courses (non-English majors). (this box should expand as you type)
12	How will you identify the participants? ● Identification: ■ Teachers/Administrators: Collaborate with university academic offices to identify eligible candidates based on experience and roles. - Use publicly available faculty directories (e.g., university websites) to target specific departments. ■ Students: Random sampling of students enrolled in mandatory English courses, facilitated by university registrars. ● Recruitment Strategies: 1. Official Channels: Obtain permission from university authorities to send recruitment emails or flyers to potential participants.

	2. Snowball Sampling: Ask initial participants (teachers/administrators) to recommend colleagues meeting the criteria. ● Online Platforms: Post recruitment notices on university forums or social media groups (e.g., WeChat/QQ groups for faculty). <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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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)?	☒	☐	☐
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>				

Information for participants:		YES	NO	N/A
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 H: Anticipated Risks

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	☒
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: 1. Emotional Discomfort: - Participants (teachers/administrators) may feel uneasy discussing challenges in policy implementation, especially if critiques of institutional practices or national policies are perceived as politically sensitive. - Rural participants might fear professional repercussions if their identities are inadvertently disclosed. 2. Breach of Confidentiality: Risk of personal or institutional data leakage, violating China's Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL).	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: 1. Emotional Discomfort: Neutral Question Design: Avoid direct critiques of policies (e.g., "How do you adapt policies?" instead of "Do you disagree with policies?"). 2. Anonymization: Use pseudonyms (e.g., "Teacher A," "University X") and avoid recording identifiable details (e.g., specific department names). 3. Voluntary Participation: Clearly state in consent forms that participants can skip questions or withdraw anytime without penalty.	
	3. Power Imbalances: Rural teachers or junior faculty may feel pressured to participate due to hierarchical relationships with administrators or institutional gatekeepers. 4. Technical Vulnerabilities: Online interviews/surveys may expose participants to data security risks (e.g., hacking, unauthorized access). <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	4. Confidentiality Assurance: ■ Data Localization: Store all recordings and transcripts on Alibaba Cloud servers within Shandong Province, complying with China's cybersecurity laws. ■ Secure Access: Restrict data access to the research team via password-protected devices. 5. Power Imbalances: ■ Independent Recruitment: Use third-party platforms (e.g., university portals, snowball sampling) to reduce gatekeeper influence. ■ Consent Emphasis: Highlight in written consent that participation is voluntary and unrelated to professional evaluations. 6. Technical Security: ■ Encrypted Platforms: Conduct interviews via Tencent Meeting or Zoom with end-to-end encryption. ■ Data Deletion: Permanently delete raw recordings after transcription and anonymization.	

3	(this box should expand as you type) 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
	Scope of Sensitivity This research focuses on teachers' experiences with public English policies in Shandong Province, China. While the study does not involve illegal activities (e.g., drug use, criminal behavior), discussions may touch on politically sensitive topics such as: ■ Critiques of national education policies (e.g., CET-4/6 exams). ■ Institutional challenges (e.g., resource gaps, administrative inefficiencies). ■ Tensions between global mandates and cultural preservation. Mitigation Procedures a. Pre-Interview Safeguards: Informed Consent: ■ Clearly state in consent forms (in Mandarin) that participants are not required to disclose sensitive opinions and may skip any question. ■ Explicitly note that illegal activities are outside the study's scope and will not be discussed. Neutral Question Design: Avoid leading questions (e.g., "How do you adapt policies?" instead of "Do you disagree with policies?"). b. During Data Collection: Voluntary Participation: Reiterate participants' right to pause or withdraw at any time without repercussions. Anonymization: Use pseudonyms (e.g., "Teacher A") and avoid recording identifiable details (e.g., specific university names). c. Post-Interview Support: Debriefing: Provide a summary of the study's purpose and offer participants the opportunity to ask questions or express concerns. Counseling Resources: Share contact information for university-affiliated mental health services (e.g., Shandong University's Psychological Counseling Center). Legal Compliance and Mandatory Reporting Consent Form Clauses: Include a statement that any disclosure of illegal activities (e.g., academic fraud, corruption) must be reported to Chinese authorities under national law. Example: "If information related to illegal activities is disclosed during this study, the researcher is legally obligated to report it to the appropriate authorities." Researcher Training: The researcher will consult with Shandong University's legal office to ensure compliance with China's Criminal Law and Cybersecurity Law. Cultural Sensitivity Avoiding Political Risks: Frame discussions around pedagogical practices rather than policy critiques. Use euphemisms for sensitive terms (e.g., "challenges" instead of "failures"). Localized Support: Provide helpline numbers for Shandong Provincial Education Hotline to address institutional grievances unrelated to the study.

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	1. Political Sensitivity: Discussing education policy challenges in China may inadvertently touch on politically sensitive topics, leading to institutional scrutiny or reputational risks. 2. Emotional Distress: Handling participants' frustrations about policy implementation could cause secondary stress. 3. Data Security Breaches: Cyberattacks or accidental data leaks during online interviews/surveys may expose the researcher to legal penalties under China's Cybersecurity Law. 4. Conflict of Interest: Perceived bias if the researcher is affiliated with participating universities. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:</i> 1. Political Sensitivity: Avoid direct critiques of national policies; focus on pedagogical practices. 2. Consult with Shandong University's legal office to ensure compliance with local regulations. 3. Emotional Distress: Schedule regular debriefing sessions with academic supervisors to address stress. 4. Data Security: Use encrypted platforms (e.g., Tencent Meeting) and store data on Alibaba Cloud servers in China. Complete cybersecurity training mandated by the university. 5. Conflict of Interest: Disclose institutional affiliations in consent forms and maintain neutrality during interviews. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: Data Privacy Violations: Breaches of China's Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) could result in fines or reputational damage. Adverse Publicity: Critiques of education policies in research findings might attract negative media attention. Legal Non-Compliance: Failure to obtain proper approvals (e.g., IRB, provincial education authorities). <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to the University:</i> Data Privacy: Anonymize all data and restrict access to the research team. Conduct annual PIPL compliance audits. Reputation Management: Share findings through academic channels (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) rather than public media. Collaborate with university PR teams to frame results constructively. Regulatory Compliance: Secure ethics approvals from Shandong University's IRB and provincial education bureaus before data collection. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: Electronic Waste: Energy consumption from online data collection (e.g., cloud storage, video calls). Paper Usage:	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to environment:</i> Energy Efficiency: Use energy-saving devices and limit cloud storage to essential files. Paper Reduction:

Printing consent forms or transcripts . (this box should expand as you type)	Digitize consent processes. Recycle any printed materials. (this box should expand as you type)
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Disclosure and Barring Service				
	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
7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐
8	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 I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when? Immediate Post-Participation Debrief: When: After each interview or survey completion. How: Provide a verbal summary of the study's purpose and how their input contributes to understanding policy implementation. Content: Reiterate confidentiality measures. Offer contact details (email/phone) for follow-up questions. Final Study Summary: When: After data analysis is complete (approximately 3 months post-data collection). How: Teachers/Administrators: Email a non-technical summary in Mandarin, highlighting key findings and policy recommendations. Students (if surveyed): Share anonymized aggregate results via university portals or class announcements. Content: General trends (e.g., common challenges in policy adaptation). No individual or institution-specific data. (this box should expand as you type)
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. Pre-Consent Information: ● Written Information Sheet: Distributed via email or in person, detailing: ● Research objectives and procedures (e.g., interview duration, topics). ● Voluntary participation and withdrawal rights. ● Potential risks (e.g., mild stress) and safeguards (anonymity). ● Data usage and storage protocols under China's Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL). Consent Process: ● Written Consent: ● Signed physical or digital forms (e.g., e-signature via Wenjuanxing).

	- Includes sections for: Agreement to participate. Permission to audio-record interviews. Acknowledgment of data anonymization. - Oral Confirmation: For participants uncomfortable with written forms (e.g., rural teachers), verbal consent will be audio-recorded with their permission. Timing: Consent obtained at least 48 hours before data collection, allowing participants time to review materials. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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.
	Data Anonymization: Pseudonyms: Replace real names with codes (e.g., "T1" for Teacher 1, "U1" for Urban University 1). Redaction: Remove identifiable details from transcripts (e.g., specific department names, locations). Secure Data Handling: Storage: Audio files and transcripts stored on password-protected Alibaba Cloud servers in Shandong Province. Physical documents (if any) kept in locked cabinets at Shandong University. Access: Limited to the research team via two-factor authentication. Publication Safeguards: Aggregate Reporting: Findings published in grouped formats (e.g., "rural teachers reported..."). No Indirect Identifiers: Avoid citing unique combinations of traits (e.g., "a female professor at a top-tier rural university"). Exceptions: Non-Anonymous Quotes: If a participant requests attribution (e.g., administrators advocating policy change), written consent for named recognition will be obtained separately. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION J: 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	1. Audio Recordings: - Type: Voice data from semi-structured interviews with teachers and administrators. - Identifiable Elements: Voice patterns, which can indirectly identify participants.		

	2. Demographic Information: - Type: Non-sensitive details such as institutional affiliation (urban/rural university), teaching experience (years), and role (teacher/administrator). - Identifiable Elements: Combined with contextual factors (e.g., unique institutional challenges), these details could theoretically identify participants in small or specialized communities. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
	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 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:		
4	Biometric Data: Type: Audio recordings of interviews (voice data) Reason for Collection: Essential to capture nuanced teacher perspectives and ensure accurate transcription/analysis. Indirect Political Opinions: Type: Discussions about policy challenges may inadvertently reveal views on government education mandates. Reason for Collection: Critical to understanding barriers to policy implementation. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	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:
	To ensure the security and confidentiality of all collected data, the following measures will be implemented: 1. Password Protection: Access to electronic data will be restricted through the use of strong, unique passwords. Passwords will be regularly updated and stored securely. 2. Anonymization and Pseudonymization: As previously mentioned, all data will be anonymized by removing direct identifiers such as names and contact information. Participants will be assigned pseudonyms or codes to further protect their identities. 3. Secure Storage: Electronic data will be stored on secure servers with restricted access. Physical data, such as consent forms, will be stored in locked cabinets in a secure location. 4. Data Backup: Regular backups of all data will be performed to prevent data loss in the event of a system failure or other unforeseen circumstances. Backups will be stored in a separate, secure location. 5. Access Control: Access to the data will be limited to the researcher and any authorized research personnel. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

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?	☐	☒
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	Use of data management system?	☒	☐
20	Data archiving?	☒	☐
21	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 any international equivalents, where appropriate):		
	Only the researcher enables the access to the data. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Only the researcher enables the access to the data. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Only the researcher enables the access to the data.		

	(this box should expand as you type)		
24	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. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not. Data Storage Arrangements: Research data, including interview transcripts and audio recordings, will be stored primarily on an encrypted external hard drive. This hard drive will be dedicated solely to this research project. Security Measures: • Encryption: The entire hard drive will be encrypted using a strong encryption algorithm (e.g., AES 256-bit) to protect the data from unauthorized access. • Password Protection: Access to the hard drive will be password-protected with a strong, unique password. • Physical Security: The hard drive will be stored in a secure location, such as a locked cabinet in the researcher's home or office, to prevent physical theft or damage. • Limited Access: Only the researcher will have access to the hard drive and the data stored on it. Data Retention: Data will be retained for a period of fixed years following the completion of the research project. This timeframe is necessary to allow for potential follow-up studies, publications, or verification of findings. Data Format: Data will be stored in the following formats: • Interview Transcripts: Microsoft Word (.docx) or plain text (.txt) files. • Audio Recordings: MP3 or WAV files. Data Archiving: After the fixed-year retention period, the data will not be archived. Due to the sensitive nature of the data and the potential risks associated with long-term storage, it will be securely and permanently deleted using data sanitization methods to ensure that it cannot be recovered. This decision is made to prioritize the privacy and confidentiality of participants. (this box should expand as you type)		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwt.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i> Data of the research will not be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository. (this box should expand as you type)		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwt.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
27	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	☒

SECTION K: 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 Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/			
1	Signature of applicant:	Wenrui Yin	Date: 20 March 2025

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Catherine Morgan	Date:
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
5	Signature:		

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

☐	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☐	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☐	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☐	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.
☐	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.

RESEARCH STUDENTS ONLY

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

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.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.