

**Imagine you are a member of a University Research and Ethics Committee. The purpose of this committee is to ensure that all research carried out is a) based on appropriate scientific research methods and b) is ethical. For each of the following scenarios consider the following:**

- Does the proposed method suit the type of research question?
- Is there a better alternative way of answering this question?
- What are the potential limitations of the proposed research and how could the research team deal with these?
- What are the ethical issues associated with this research?
- What further information is needed in order to fully evaluate these proposals?

**Research Proposal 1:**

A researcher is interested in exploring why some people may be more likely to help others in need. The researcher intends to hold a focus group and explore the reasons why people may help others, why they may decide not to help others and how often they engage in helping behaviour.

**Research Proposal 2:**

A student wants to explore the effects of alcohol on perceived attractiveness of members of the opposite sex. The student intends to mix some alcohol with a soft drink and to give the participant a questionnaire rating attractiveness of female photos before and after. The student will not tell the participant that he/she has been given alcohol.

**Research Proposal 3:**

A researcher wants to explore people's implicit attitudes towards gay couples, using a computer-based task. Participants will be told that the purpose of the study is to explore processes of visual attention.

**Research Proposal 4:**

A research team wants to explore the psychological impact of going cancer surgery. The research team wish to give patients questionnaires measuring anxiety, distress, negative emotions and coping styles one day before surgery, one day after surgery, three months later, five months later, 6 months later and at one –year follow-up. They also wish to interview some patients about their experience before and after surgery.

**Research Proposal 5:**

A research team wants to explore the effect of viewing violent acts upon attitudes. They decide to stage a fight between two men, one black and one white, in the middle of town and later interview all the people who witnessed it about how their attitudes towards different races.