

Advocating for individuals experiencing mental and physical abuse in the 21st century

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DECLARATION FORM



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DECLARATION

I certify that the whole of this work is the result of my individual effort, and that all sources have been acknowledged.

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DECLARATION

I am satisfied that this work is the result of the Student's effort.

Signed: _____ (Lecturer)

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CONTENTS

DECLARATION FORM	2
CONTENTS.....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
ABSTRACT.....	5
1. INTRODUCTION.....	6
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1. Introduction.....	10
2.2. Theme 1 Mental and physical domestic abuse: key differences	10
2.3. Theme 2 Coercive controlling behaviour and links to physical abuse..	13
2.4. Theme 3 Death rates linked to domestic abuse	16
2.5. Theme 4 policies and legislation: 21st century changes	20
2.6. Theme 5 Positive interventions	23
2.7. Conclusion	26
3. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS	27
3.1. Introduction.....	27
3.2. Theme 1 Gender	27
3.3. Theme 2 Culture	29
3.4. Theme 3 Class.....	31
3.5. Conclusion	32
4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	34
5. REFERENCES.....	40
6. APPENDICES	51
6.1. Appendix 1: Proposal	52
6.2. Appendix 2: Ethics Form	58

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores whether experiences of domestic abuse differ depending on the type of domestic relationship.

It examines the current literature in 5 topic areas, namely, key differences between mental and physical domestic abuse, coercive controlling behaviour and links to physical abuse, death rates linked to domestic abuse, 21st century changes in policies and legislation, and positive interventions. From this review, 3 key themes emerge which are, gender, culture and class.

The research findings indicate that domestic abuse can affect anyone from any section of society, but that it is still predominantly women who suffer at the hands of their male partners. However, there has been a rise in reported incidents of domestic abuse within the LGBTQ+ community, but abuse within these types of relationships is still not very well understood and there are few, if any, specialist support networks available.

Future implications for research include looking at the need for a more inclusive approach to policy-making to ensure that the needs of all the diverse communities within society are considered. It is also recommended that more funding be made available for specialist training opportunities for the multi-agencies involved in domestic abuse situations, as well as for the advocacy and support networks needed for victims, survivors and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Key words: *Domestic abuse, gender, sexuality, LGBTQ+, advocacy, multi-agency support and training.*

1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores whether experiences of domestic abuse differ depending on the type of domestic relationship. According to the Home Office (2023), anyone can become a victim of domestic abuse, “regardless of sex, gender reassignment, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality, or background”.

Section 1 of the *Domestic Abuse Act 2021* defines “domestic abuse” as the abusive behaviour of one person towards another person who are “personally connected” to each other. Abusive behaviour can be physical or sexual, violent or threatening, controlling or coercive, psychological or emotional, and/or economic (Home Office, 2023). This definition is confirmed by the National Centre for Domestic Violence (2023) who also agree that “it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct”, it is still domestic abuse (The Home Office, 2023, no date; National Centre for Domestic Abuse, 2023). The Home Office (2023) states that:

Domestic abuse most commonly takes place in intimate partner relationships, including same sex relationships. Intimate relationships can take different forms, partners do not need to be married or in a civil partnership and abuse can occur between non-cohabiting intimate partners. As with all forms of abuse, abuse in intimate relationships can vary in severity and frequency, ranging from a one-off occurrence to a continued pattern of behaviour.

(Home Office, 2023, no page)

Moreover, one of the most dangerous times is when the victim leaves the relationship, as the abuse often becomes more violent and can even lead to the victim being killed (Home Office, 2023; National Centre for Domestic Abuse, 2023).

It is important to examine this subject area of domestic abuse because, although domestic abuse happens a lot in the UK, overall convictions are low, as the Office for

National Statistics (ONS) (2023, no page) illustrates in its statistics “domestic abuse data from incident to conviction in England and Wales for the year ending March 2023”. Their data shows that in 2023 there was 2,124,000 estimated instances of domestic abuse. Moreover, of these, 899,918 were reported to the police, and out of these there were 69,314 referred suspects. Furthermore, 47,361 suspects were then charged with domestic abuse offences, and of those 39,198 were actually convicted via the criminal justice system (ONS, 2023).

In Wales, the figures from Welsh Women’s Aid (2020) are just as concerning with them saying there were 22,431 survivors having support through them in 2019/2020, and this figure had increased by 4% from the year before. During 2016/2017 in England and Wales, domestic abuse cost the economy and society an estimated £66 million (National Centre for Domestic Abuse, 2023). Out of this, £14 million of was due to people being absent from work as a result of domestic abuse, which caused rising economic costs (National Centre for Domestic Abuse, 2023).

Domestic abuse has been around for ever and in the old days husbands were allowed to hit their wives, it was viewed as a private matter between the husband and his wife, and an area not accounted for in law (Erez, 2017). However, nowadays it is illegal because our culture has changed, so more types of behaviours are classed as domestic abuse, which in the old days would have been accepted as part of married life. Moreover, with so many new changes in society in modern times, domestic abuse is now happening within a variety of intimate LGBTQ+ relationships, as well as traditional heterosexual relationships (Donovan and Barnes, 2020; Interventions Alliance, 2021). Therefore, it is no longer just male perpetrators and women victims/survivors, figures are now rising for other minority sections in our communities, for example lesbian couples (Donovan and Barnes, 2020; Interventions Alliance, 2021). Also, due to people campaigning and

advocating for relatives and friends who are victims of domestic abuse, and because of social media, there is wider coverage in the public domain which raises awareness (Barlow, 2023).

Therefore, this dissertation aims to understand the extent of domestic abuse in the UK and Wales, who the victims and perpetrators are, when, and in what situations it is most likely to happen. The aim is to try and understand why it happens, what the key underlying causes are, and then to discover what current interventions are being used as ways to help better understand why domestic abuse occurs in the first place and how it might be prevented in future. Another key area that is looked at is whether the types of domestic abuse differ depending on the type of domestic relationship, for example, whether it is a gay/lesbian or a heterosexual relationship.

To explore these issues, the literature review examines the facts around domestic abuse in Wales and the UK. The main themes which emerge from the literature review include: mental and physical abuse and the key differences between them; the link between coercive controlling behaviours and physical abuse; death rates linked to mental and physical abuse; policies and legislation regarding mental and physical abuse and finally, there will be an exploration of the current interventions available to help make a positive difference for those affected by mental and physical domestic abuse. These themes are further explored in the discussion and results section looking at the following:

- Understanding the key differences between mental and physical abuse and the impact on victims/survivors

- Exploring the ways coercive controlling behaviours can potentially lead to physical abuse
- Examining whether domestic mental or physical abuse results in higher death rates for victims, and whether male victim/survivors are more prone to suicide than female victims/survivors, and if so, the underlying reasons as to why, for example the dynamics of lesbian relationships, or males more reluctant to reach out for help due to male pride.
- Investigating policies, legislation, and the law to see how things have changed in the 21st century, and whether support and outcomes for victims/survivors are the same for heterosexual and LGBTQ+ relationships.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section outlines some of the definitions of mental and physical domestic abuse. It describes some of the ways perpetrators abuse their victims, the types of mental and physical injuries that result from domestic abuse, and outlines some of the associated statistics.

2.2 Theme 1: Mental and physical domestic abuse - key differences

Safe Lives (2019a) say that the Government of England and Wales define domestic violence and abuse of anyone 16 or over, and any one displaying any of these behaviours of controlled, forced threatened behaviour, aggression or abuse whether it is by an intimate partner, a family member, or in the case of gender or sexuality. The abuse can be regarded or recognised as psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and/or emotional behaviours that negatively impact the victim/survivor (Safe Lives, 2019a). This section examines the key characteristics of mental and physical abuse, to help build an understanding of the differences and highlight any links between them and their impact on victims/survivors.

According to Engel (2023) mental abuse is much more than people think it is. They suggest that when the words 'emotional abuse' are said they are thought of as one partner verbally putting the other partner down, whether their words make them look small in front of others or behind closed doors. However, non-physical behaviour, as it can also be known, is much more than just verbal abuse (Engel, 2023). It can be controlling behaviour leading to mental emotional abuse, and the signs can show that the person is being isolated and intimidated to the extent of making them feel worthless (Engel, 2023). This can happen because of the constant criticism and belittling, which just makes the victim feel they cannot do anything right even when they aim to please

the abuser (Engel, 2023). This is also noted in Welsh Government legislation as coercive controlling behaviour. The Welsh Government (2024, no page) describe coercive control as when:

...a person with whom you are personally connected, repeatedly behaves in a way which makes you feel controlled, dependent, isolated, humiliated or scared. The following types of behaviour are common examples of coercive control:

- isolating you from your friends and family
- controlling how much money you have and how you spend it
- repeatedly putting you down, calling you names or telling you that you are worthless
- monitoring your activities and your movements
- threatening to harm or kill you or your child
- threatening to publish information about you or to report you to the police or the authorities

(Welsh Government, 2024, no page)

Victims of mental abuse can have many psychological feelings as the abuser is actually getting inside their mind which is soul destroying for the victim, and the constant insults can lower their self-esteem which can scar them for life as they end up feeling worthless about themselves (Engel, 2023). Engel (2023) further highlights how the victim can feel as if they are literally losing their mind as the mental abuse has such a big impact on them that they start to question themselves. They can end up thinking they are the one in the wrong, and they are doing everything wrong and letting everyone down, and that the abuser is the one who is right about everything (Engel, 2023). When the victim feels this way, they can end up feeling depressed, emotionally drained, and so lost (Engel, 2023).

Emotional abuse has been noted by survivors as saying they felt worse by emotional abuse and found it to be more damaging to them psychologically compared to violent abuse (Engel, 2023). According to Safe Lives (2019b), survivors of mental abuse have said it felt as if their abuser was infiltrating their brain; the negative messages they

would get all the time would make the victims feel it was having an impact on their cognitive mind, which resulted in weakening their emotions and judgements of themselves. Furthermore, Safe Lives (2019b) suggest that mental abuse will also have an extreme psychological impact of confusion for the victim. They found, through speaking to professionals, that the victim is not always fully aware of what is happening at first, as they may be loved-up with their partner and thinking this is the way that affection works. However, over time they could then become dependent on their abusive partner through the control their abuser has created (Safe Lives, 2019b). This means that many victims do not feel they are being abused, as many people think of abuse as physical. It is not until they leave, and the relationship ends that they look back and realise that they are actually survivors of abuse (Safe Lives, 2019b).

Women's Aid (2024) suggest that friends or family, or in other words the victim's support network, can often identify that the abuser is belittling or controlling the victim, and if they say anything and the victim then confronts their abuser, they will say that the support network is trying to turn the victim against them. Moreover, they will state that the friend or family member is no good, and the victim can end up pushing away their only support. The abuser does this because they feel threatened by the presence of the victim's support network (Women's Aid, 2024).

In terms of physical abuse there are several definitions, for example, The Welsh Government (2024, no page) state that:

...physical abuse can range from your partner using force/ violence or objects to hurt you. Physical abuse can include: slapping and/or punching, kicking, burning, shaking, strangling, throwing items, use of knives or other weapons...

(Welsh Government, 2024, no page)

Likewise, the Oxford Reference (2024, no page) says that:

Any incident of violence, threatening behaviour, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional) between

adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Persons who are subject to domestic violence (or those afraid of future violence) may seek protection in a number of ways [through the court] under the *Family Law Act 1996*...
(Oxford Reference, 2024, no page)

According to the British Medical Association Board of Science (2014), the types of violence that abused men experienced was “hitting, stabbing with an object, kicking, biting, seizing the throat, and scratching” with more than 50% of them being hit with an object, such as a vase. Of all the men abused, it seems that only around 32% of them felt able to speak to the police about their experiences, with only 15% of those then going on to officially report what had happened (British Medical Association Board of Science (2014). In contrast, Macdonald (2021) says that women are more likely to experience violence resulting in broken bones, sprains, cuts and bruises, neck, back, and abdominal injuries. These victims may try and get help many times before they actually achieve it safely, and in terms of the numbers that attend A and E, nearly 23% of these victims are at high risk of repeated domestic violence, and one in ten victims that are at medium risk (Macdonald, 2021).

2.3 Theme 2: Coercive controlling behaviours and links to physical abuse

As previously mentioned earlier in Theme 1, when someone is in an intimate relationship with someone and their behaviour towards them is making them feel that they are being controlled, isolated, made to feel dependent, scared or humiliated, then the Welsh Government (2024, no page) describe this as coercive controlling behaviour. Victims/survivors often describe “the ‘drip, drip’ effect of coercive control which builds slowly and often escalates towards physical abuse over time” (Surviving Economic Abuse, 2023; Welsh Government, 2024, no page). Due to this slow build up

happening over time, it is not always noticeable, and the Welsh Government (2024, no page) quoted one victim as saying:

It steps up over the years, it starts off gradually controlling you and then you get sucked in even more. It's difficult to explain. It's not until you step back and you're out of it, you think why did I let anyone do this to me? I'm a confident person; why did I let someone take over my life?

(Welsh Government, 2024, no page)

Welsh Women's Aid (2024) suggest that survivors can feel that coercive control can have an impact on their survival in terms of their day-to-day life and their well-being. This is because the endless behaviours from their abuser is taking all the power and control, making the survivors feel they are losing their independence and making them feel isolated and scared (Surviving Economic Abuse, 2023; Welsh Women's Aid, 2024). However, coercive control can be very complex for the survivor and the people close to them to recognise, as the strategies the perpetrator uses can be very clever and spiral slowly overtime (Welsh Women's Aid, 2024). Moreover, coercive control is now legally known to be a key recognised kind of abuse in many types of close relationship (Welsh Women's Aid, 2024).

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2019, no page) "there were 17,616 offences of coercive control recorded by the police in the year ending March 2019, compared with 9,053 in the year ending March 2018".

According to the ONS (2019, no page), in the year ending in 2019, the CPS Case Information System had logged "1,177 crimes of coercive and controlling behaviours" where there had been a prosecution held at a magistrate's court. Furthermore, Barlow et al. (2018) found that the data Merseyside Police for domestic abuse showed that 95 per cent of the victims of coercive control were female and the perpetrator were 74 per

cent males, and 76 per cent of the cases of coercive control showed that the majority were in intimate relationships (ONS, 2019, no page). It has been found by the Crime Survey in England and Wales data that the two key elements of coercive behaviour were found to be constant feelings of deprivation and threats of violence, and that the victims of abuse were mostly women with men being the abuser (Myhill, 2015). Data from the ONS (2019, no page) supports this stating that “97% of defendants [that were] prosecuted for coercive and controlling behaviour in the year ending December 2018 were male”.

Some of the common abuse behaviours that are used in coercive control can be technical such as tracking devices on the victims phone, limiting their time on social media, the perpetrator bombarding the victim with text messages, and behaviours of checking up on them, isolation, threats, financial abuse, denial to the victim to seek support, and physical violence were all found in the study (Barlow et al, 2018). Regarding the links between coercive control and violence, it is worrying to note that Barlow et al. (2018) found in their research that “63% of coercive control cases featured reports of physical violence”

Intimate partner violence (IPV) - seen as coercive controlling violence - can be broken down into four different types which can be described as forms of emotional abuse, intimidation, and coercion and control, all of which can be linked with constant and violent physical abuse (Day and Bowen, 2015). The background to this lies in the belief of patriarchal terrorism which can be seen as a wife being terrorised by her husband, and they do not only suffer violence but also financial abuse, threatening behaviour, isolation and other means of controlling behaviours (Day and Bowen, 2015).

In England and Wales, it is an offence under the Serious Crime Act 2015 for a perpetrator to coercively control a victim (Welsh Government, 2024, no page). As a

result of this Act, the Government of England and Wales issued guidance, called the Controlling or Coercive Behaviour: Statutory Guidance Framework, to help support those agencies who find themselves supporting the victims/survivors of coercive controlling behaviours and violence.

Under Section 77 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, the UK Government (2023) says that any individuals or organisations investigating violations in connection to controlling or coercive behaviours under Section 76 must refer to the Act whenever they are working with victims, perpetrators and organisations, such as police, social service, advocates and any other multi-agencies involved. Moreover, the information in the guidance helps agency workers to identify and supply evidence towards arresting and prosecuting an offence of controlling and/or coercive behaviour (UK Government, 2023). Furthermore, changes to the 2015 Act of control and coercive behaviour came into force in 2023, yet if an offence happened before 2023 then this cannot apply, and if an agency worker is in any doubt regarding certain cases then they should speak with a professional domestic abuse police officer for Early Investigate Advice from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for the police (UK Government, 2023).

2.4 Theme 3: Death rates linked to domestic abuse

In the National Police Chiefs Council - Executive Summary, Findings and Recommendations: Domestic Homicides and Suspected Victim Suicides Year 3 Report (2020-2023), Hoeger et al. (2024), indicate that in England and Wales the Government and police reviewed all of the domestic abuse deaths that were related to suspected victim suicide following domestic abuse (SVSDA). Furthermore, they suggest that this information will help police forces across England and Wales to recognise that people suffering from domestic abuse are at higher risk of death caused by suicide (Hoeger et

al., 2024). The National Police Chiefs Council is only in its 3rd year of gathering statistics on suicide rates in those suffering domestic abuse, but it has already seen an increase in reported cases - one third up from the second year (Hoeger et al., 2024).

Similarly, looking at the statistics for England and Wales that have recorded deaths in general from domestic abuse, according to the National Police Chiefs Council (2024, no page), they can be broken down as follows:

A total of 242 domestic abuse related deaths were recorded between April 2022 to March 2023, including:

- 93 suspected victim suicide following domestic abuse (SVSDA)
- 80 intimate partner homicides (IPH)
- 31 adult family homicides (AFH)
- 23 unexpected deaths
- 11 child deaths
- 4 'other' deaths (individuals living together who are not family members or intimate partners)

(National Police Chiefs Council, 2024, no page)

Furthermore, it was recorded that the majority of the population of victims of domestic abuse were seen to be females between the ages of 25 to 54 years old, whilst the perpetrators were mainly males of the same age range as the females (National Police Chiefs Council, 2024). Moreover, the National Police Chiefs Council (2024) note that there was a slight increase in instances of domestic abuse deaths in people from non-British cultural origins. According to the London Mayor's Office (2022), the reason for this might be because of so-called 'honour killings'. Honour abuse can be seen in culturally ethnic minority communities, where the family, partner and others within these communities often think the behaviour of the victim has brought shame onto them (London Mayor's Office, 2022).

Some of the reasons for this level of violence can include being just because the victim has a boyfriend or girlfriend that is not from their family or wider community's culture or religion. Also, it may be because they are in an arranged, or forced marriage, they want to get out of by wearing clothes and doing activities that do not fit with the ideals of their specific culture (London Mayor's Office, 2022). There are also all forms of abuse that fall short of actually killing the victim, where honour based abuse (HBA) can be controlling behaviour, such as not letting them have an education, the victim is not allowed freedom, not letting them learn to speak English, threatening to have them deported, or removal of their children (Bates, 2020). Also, they may suffer physical abuse from members of the family with specific attacks, such as acid attacks, which can be life changing for the victim (Bates, 2020). Also, it is interesting to note that 80% of victims are being forced into marriage (Bates, 2020).

However, all of these are seen as crimes that can have a negative impact on the victim who may suffer weeks, months or years of abuse from family members or even from a wider range of criminal perpetrators from within their wider community (London Mayor's Office, 2022).

The London Mayor's Office (2022) explain how there is no discrimination when it comes to domestic abuse, it can happen to any gender and can be any form of abuse or violence. They note that England and Wales reported that in 2021-22 there were around 2.4 million people in the age range of 16-74 that had been a victim of domestic abuse. Out of that number were 1.7 million female victim-survivors and 699,000 male victim-survivors. Furthermore, by the age of 16, 30% of females will experience some form of domestic abuse (London Mayor's Office, 2022). Similarly, according to Man Kind (2022, no page) 'one in four women and one in six to seven men suffer from domestic abuse in their lifetime.' However, Man Kind (2022, no page) also note that 'there has

been a significant fall in partner abuse for both men and women over the past 15 years for victims [aged] between 16 and 59.'

Nevertheless, in England and Wales two females a week will be killed by a partner or ex-partner (London Mayor's Office, 2022). Yet, before any murder as a result of domestic abuse had happened, four out of five of the perpetrators were already known to the police (National Police Chiefs Council, 2024). Also, three in five of these men were known through previous domestic abuse incidents, and a third were known by other agencies working within the multi agencies in the past with regards to safeguarding the victim (National Police Chiefs Council, 2024). Some of the main risk indicators with regards to the perpetrator's past include coercive controlling behaviour, poor mental health, alcohol and/or drug abuse, and the termination of the relationship they are in (National Police Chiefs Council, 2024).

However, the London Mayor's Office (2022) reported that between 2020 and 2021, police referring females to women's refuge organisations for help noticed that there were 14% less black females being referred compared to white female victims. Furthermore, before getting help from an agency, a female victim is noted as saying it can take up to eleven attempts before the agencies give them any help, and for Black, Asian and other minority ethnic women, this can rise to up to seventeen attempts (London Mayor's Office, 2022). This may be because black women do not trust the police, because 'society does not treat all victims the same', therefore it is important that professionals do not have bias when dealing with ethnic minorities in domestic abuse situations (London Mayor's Office, 2022, no page).

The London Mayor's Office (2022) also found that four fifths of lesbian woman had been in a domestic abuse relationship, and it also noticed that LGBT+ victims and survivors will have suffered the abuse of many more perpetrators than females who

were in heterosexual relationships. This suggests that people from within the LGBT+ community are at a higher risk of suffering domestic abuse and may need additional support (London Mayor's Office, 2022).

2.5 Theme 4: Policies and legislation regarding mental and physical abuse

Historically it was part of societal norms for a man to hit his wife, and they were afraid to leave as they would lose everything, including their children (Williams and Walklate, 2020). Although social cultural norms have changed today, it was not until the *Custody of Infants Act 1839* (later updated to the *Infant Custody Act 1873* which states that custody must depend on needs of children) (UK Parliament, 2024) that women felt that they could leave their violent husbands, and keep their children with them. This Act 'Allowed mothers to petition for custody of their children up to the age of seven' (UK Parliament, 2024, p.1). *Married Women's Property Act 1870* (later updated to *Women's Property Act 1882*) stated that 'money and property earned by a woman in marriage is her own' (UK Parliament, 2024, p.1). Before this they were not allowed to keep their home, belongings, or take their children as the husband owned everything, including the children (Williams and Walklate, 2020). This prevented wives from leaving their husbands, so many continued to live with fear and abuse (Williams and Walklate, 2020). The *Criminal Procedure Act 1853* was then brought in during Victorian times and this may have been partly because Queen Victoria was female, so violence against women in domestic settings got more noticed (Williams and Walklate, 2020). Therefore, it seems that Victoria's reign played a significant role in highlighting the rights of women within, what she promoted as, a 'civilised society' (Williams and Walklate, 2020, p.309).

Up until this point, violence in the home was overlooked by the law; what happened between a man and his wife was seen as ‘domestic’, a private matter that the law would not intervene in (Williams and Walklate, 2020). Nonetheless, the *Criminal Procedure Act 1853* ‘tried to limit the level of “chastisement” a man was entitled to give to his wife or children’ (Williams and Walklate, 2020. p.309). The *Act* viewed any assault on a woman or boy under 14 years old as ‘criminal’ and this could result in six months in prison or a fine for the perpetrator (Williams and Walklate, 2020, p.309). Nevertheless, a lot of wives did not want their husbands to go to prison as they would end up with no money; it was more that they wanted their man to be publicly shamed for their behaviour in an effort for it to stop (Williams and Walklate, 2020). Even those campaigning for women’s rights could see how easy it was for the wives and families of those men who ended up in prison or with a fine to end up in financial crisis - six months in prison for a man would mean six months hardship, no income for his wife and family, and a risk of being socially excluded (Williams and Walklate, 2020).

Nowadays, the *Domestic Abuse Act 2021* applies to England and Wales and offers statutory guidance to support an understanding of the definitions of ‘domestic abuse’ and ‘personally connected’. Organisations in Wales are still to follow the *2015 Act* with the *2021 Act* to be used when dealing with certain situations as follows:

All organisations in Wales should refer to the relevant Welsh legislation and associated guidance in respect to devolved matters, such as the *Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015* ... and its associated guidance. We expect those carrying out devolved and non-devolved functions to continue to work together to implement the purposes of both the *2015 Act* and the *2021 Act* where relevant and appropriate.

(Domestic Abuse Act 2021)

Initially, according to the earlier *Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act 1976*, orders that were carried out at county courts and defined under Section 1, meant that a man and woman who were living together had to be man and wife and living in the same house (Bradley, 1978). Later, the *Family Law Act 1996* is what then covered domestic violence and this was put into place to empower the courts to place a restraining order on the abuser to protect the victim by law, so that the abuser could not go near them or their home (Murphy, 1996). More recently, the *Domestic Abuse Act 2021* came in, the first part of which covers how the relationship between the abuser and the abused person is dealt with, and the second part is what actually constitutes abusive behaviour (UK Parliament, 2024). According to the *Act* (UK Parliament, 2024) there are two governing measures, the first being that the abuser and the abused are over the age of sixteen, because if one or both of them are under the age of sixteen then it will be classed as child abuse, not domestic abuse. The second governing measure is that if the abuser and abused are related to each other, or in a relationship with each other, in other words personally connected, whether it is a family member or partner, then this will constitute domestic abuse (UK Parliament, 2024).

The *Civil Partnership Act 2004* has now given same-sex couples ‘the same legal rights and responsibilities as married heterosexual couples’ (UK Parliament, 2024). In addition, the *Domestic Abuse Act 2021* also applies to the *Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013*, which legalised civil marriage for same-sex couples in England and Wales (UK Parliament, 2024). This means that domestic abuse is treated the same in law, regardless of whether the abused and abuser are in a heterosexual or same-sex relationship (UK Parliament, 2024). Furthermore, the *Domestic Abuse Act 2021* defines any or all forms of mental or physical violence as abuse, for example psychological,

emotional, physical, sexual, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, and economic abuse (Office for National Statistics, 2021). Likewise, all of these also apply to heterosexual or same-sex relationships (Office for National Statistics, 2021; UK Parliament, 2024).

2.6 Theme 5: Positive interventions

Many survivors of domestic abuse need a lot of support after escaping their situation and may turn to, or be signposted towards, organisations such as Welsh Women's Aid (2024), so that they can get the help and support they need to recover and feel safe again. According to Welsh Women's Aid (2024) there is a need to explore positive interventions that aim to support people who are victims or survivors of domestic abuse. Welsh Women's Aid (2024) found that many survivors come together when they have support from organisation's such as Women's Aid UK, and share their stories of survival and show care for each other, which also helps new survivors coming through. Welsh Women's Aid (2024) also aim to help and support survivors of abuse whether victims are women or men, or if they are from the Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) and LGBTQ+ communities. For any person affected by domestic abuse Women's Aid offers professional advocacy services to support an individual with any court proceedings when they are facing the perpetrator (Welsh Women's Aid, 2024). This helps to empower the victim, give them inner strength and give them their voice (Welsh Women's Aid, 2024).

Likewise, the mental health charity Mind (2024, no page) also signposts survivors of domestic abuse to organisations such as the Samaritans and Victim Support, but they also suggest Hub of Hope which describes itself as a "UK-wide mental health service

database [which] lets you search for local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support” (Mind, 2024, no page). The results can also be filtered to help the victim/survivor find the type of tailored support they might need (Mind, 2024, no page).

In Wales there are advocacy services such as Calan domestic violence, which is a charity based provision (Cysur, 2023). Their model is for female victims who can get refuge with them, but they also offer support in the community as well as drop-in centres where they provide a range of programmes of interventions towards the prevention of domestic abuse in females (Cysur, 2023). Furthermore, Cysur (2023) mention CarmDAS, which is Carmarthen Domestic Abuse Services, who give support to women and children who have been victims of domestic abuse. This charity has been going since 1978 and is run by women for women (Cysur, 2023). Their model is seen as a stepping stone which helps to support women and children, who are escaping domestic abuse, by providing them with a safe place to stay, hidden away from the perpetrator, while they get back on their feet (Cysur, 2023). Also, to help women rebuild their lives after abuse they run a Back to Me well-being course to help them to become survivors, as many of the staff have personal experience of domestic abuse themselves (Cysur, 2023). Moreover, male victims of domestic abuse also have a course available to them; it is run by an organisation named Calans and called The Compass Programme for LGBTQ+ (West Wales Domestic Abuse Services, no date; Cysur, 2023). They have a course called The Myriad Programme and this is designed to help any victims regain their lives and to eventually become survivors (West Wales Domestic Abuse Services, no date; Cysur, 2023).

However, with regards to support specifically for the LGBT+ community, services “have no main source of funding...[therefore] the management of multiple funders is

an extra set of pressures for the LGBT+ specialist domestic abuse sector” (LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Service Provision Mapping Study, 2024), and this can make it difficult for some sections of the community to get the right type of support. This is a real concern when statistics show that “95% of gay men disclosed abuse from a male perpetrator...[and] 82% of lesbian women disclosed abuse from a female perpetrator” (Magić and Kelley, 2018).

Broberg (2022) says that there are men who are suffering from domestic abuse from a female perpetrator and it is so often not recognised that a man can actually be the one who is the victim. When they do reach out for help they are often turned away: “The female helpline told him that they could not offer him any help as they did not have the funding to support male victims” (Broberg, 2022, no page). There is also a stigma around men being abused, as it is somehow seen as weakness, but “with proper training, more funding, and less prejudice, we could destigmatise views of male victims of domestic abuse and provide much-needed support to those subject to this violent humiliation” (Broberg, 2022, no page). The need for NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care to acknowledge that to support victims of domestic abuse they need to train health professionals with adequate training (Broberg, 2022).

In summary, it is good that men are also recognised as being abused as this has been hidden in society for centuries, and finally it is being recognised that domestic abuse is not gender-based, but can affect anyone in society (UK Government, 2023). Women are also voicing their concerns and trying to get legislation changed to include men, as they are noticing that their fathers, brothers and sons are affected (Mankind, 2024). With all the advocacy support that is available it is nowadays a little bit easier for people from all sections of the community to access the support they need, however, a lack of funding remains a real problem in helping providers reach the minority sections of our

communities (UK Government, 2023). This is an important factor as domestic abuse has a big impact on the economy with days lost from work due to injuries, or an attempt to hide injuries (UK Government, 2023).

2.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this section of the dissertation explored definitions of domestic abuse, and looked at experiences of victims and survivors and the ways they differ depending on the type of domestic relationship they are in. The statistics were examined and it was found that anyone can become a victim of domestic abuse, despite their sexuality, age, ethnicity, or socio-economic status. It was noted that abusive behaviour can be physical, sexual, or emotional, and it became clear that victims of mental abuse suffer negative psychological impact which can be soul destroying for them, leaving them depressed, emotionally drained, and lost (Engel, 2023). However, although it happens a lot in the UK, overall conviction rates are low, which is a concern for charities and organisations involved in supporting victims and survivors. The next section discusses some of the common themes that have come out of the literature review, namely the lack of funding, LGBTQ+ community and BAME knowledge is scarce as their situations are often complex and difficult for mainstream communities to understand. Furthermore, the advocacy organisations who have the control over the funding and how it is distributed may not always recognise the plight of minority sections of society. Also, cultural differences can impact how victims and survivors access the support they need, including male victims of women perpetrators.

3 DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

This discussion section draws together the main themes that have come out of the literature review, namely gender, culture, and class, and examines the importance and meaning of what the literature is saying. It focusses on explaining and evaluating the current research and statistics linked to domestic abuse. It also shows the complex issues that the domestic abuse advocacy support organisations have to deal with on a daily basis, in order to try and provide the best support they can to the victims and survivors who reach out to them.

3.2. Theme 1 - Gender

The first key theme noted from the literature review is gender. These days the term ‘gender’ has become more complex with 72 different genders, although not all of these are currently legally being recognised (Office for National Statistics, 2021; (MedicineNet, 2024; UK Government, 2024). In simplistic terms gender can include, for example, male, female, non-binary, agender, cisgender and omnigender (MedicineNet, 2024). Safe Lives (2019a) describe how the Government of England and Wales define domestic violence and abuse of *anyone* 16 or over, which includes gender or sexuality.

It was found across all themes in the literature review that mental and physical domestic abuse is not gender specific. In the old days it was commonly believed that it was male perpetrators against women victims (battered wives), and that husband and wife disputes were seen as a ‘domestic’ incident that the police would not get involved with (Erez, 2017; Williams and Walklate, 2020). This is because society and legislation

perceived domestic abuse as a private matter between a husband and his wife (Williams and Walklate, 2020).

However, men may have been victims and suffered years ago, but it was seen as shameful and not macho, so it was not discussed openly in society and remained hidden (Williams and Walklate, 2020). Furthermore, these days the situation is a lot more complex as it seems that anybody can be a victim, regardless of gender. Moreover, if a lesbian or gay person is in an abusive relationship they now have the same legal rights as a straight married couple under the *Domestic Abuse Act 2021* as the *Marriage Act 2013* (UK Parliament, 2024). Furthermore, it has now been made legal for gay or lesbian couples to have civil marriages in England and Wales so they now have the same legal rights and responsibilities as straight married couples under *The Civil Partnership Act 2004* (UK Parliament, 2024).

Indeed, the London Mayors Office (2022) found that 80% of gay women had been in a domestic abusive relationship. Furthermore they also noted that LGBT+ people who were victims and survivors of domestic abuse had suffered at the hands of more perpetrators than heterosexual women had in their relationships. This shows that what the London Mayors Office (2022) say about domestic abuse being higher in the LGBTQ+ community, means that they do need further support.

However, statistically females between the ages of 25 to 54 are still amongst the highest number of victims of domestic abuse, and the perpetrators are still males of the same age groups as those females (National Police Chiefs Council, 2024). Despite this, the London Mayor's Office (2022) say there is no discrimination when it comes to domestic abuse, and that any form of abuse or violence can happen to any gender. Still, even more, the British Medical Association Board of Science (2014) found that of the males

that had suffered from abuse only 32% told the police, but the majority did not want to press charges, therefore only around 15% actually went ahead and did.

3.3.Theme 2 – Culture

The next key theme that became evident throughout the literature review is ‘culture’.

According to the Oxford Reference (2024, no page) culture is defined as:

The way of life of a people, including their attitudes, values, beliefs, arts, sciences, modes of perception, and habits of thought and activity. Cultural features of forms of life are learned but are often too pervasive to be readily noticed from within.

(Oxford University Press, 2024, no page)

It is clear from reading between the lines in the literature review that culture and personality are intertwined. According to Higgins (2008, p. 615), it appears that peoples culture and personalities, of themselves and others around them are linked, yet there is a difference between the two. When it comes to culture it is about the people sharing knowledge, information, common habits, and behaviours between themselves. When it comes to personalities it is how a person conducts themselves around significant others, and in particular how they behave in the social world around them (Higgins, 2008, p. 615).

In terms of the cultural link to domestic abuse, the London Mayors Office (2022) found that certain cultures with religious beliefs, for instance arranged marriages, or the victim being in a relationship that their families and community did not agree with due to their culture and religion, could result in abusive and violent acts against a victim. This could happen within the couple’s relationship, or through family members carrying out

honour-related violent punishment against the victim that they believe to be in the wrong (London Mayors Office, 2022).

The National Police Chiefs Council (2024) have said that the culture of alcohol and drug use were factors in a lot of the perpetrator's actions and behaviours, and this is also linked to personality traits and cultural influences. In terms of behaviours within family culture, research has shown that violent behaviour can be learnt as the function of a family unit, especially where abuse from father to mother has been witnessed by the child, who can learn from that and become a perpetrator when they become an adult and repeat the cycle within in their own family unit (Bonem, Stanley-Kime, and Corbin, 2008). Safe Lives (2019) also describes how domestic abuse is linked to past traumatic experiences. They found that 77% of male perpetrators had been exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). These types of experiences can result in mental health issues in adulthood which can then lead to domestic abuse situations (Safe Lives, 2019). Perpetrators may not have the tools to manage their behaviours, such as anger or resentment, and instead take their frustration and anger out on their partner (Safe Lives, 2019). Furthermore, Williams and Walklate (2020) had also said that, throughout historical times, hitting your wife was a part of social norms which means that there were no laws back then to protect potential victims from perpetrators of domestic abuse. This is because it was seen as a normal part of a husband and wife's family relationship and when children witnessed this behaviour they grew up copying it (Safe Lives, 2019; Williams and Walklate (2020).

3.4.Theme 3 – Class

The final theme that appeared to emerge from the research was 'class'. The Oxford Dictionary (2024, no page), defines social class as 'a system of ordering

society whereby people are divided into sets based on perceived social or economic status'. Berry (1994, cited in Bruns, 2014, p.1) suggests that domestic violence can affect anyone from any class within society, with abusers and victims coming 'from all walks of life'. They say that victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse can be from any background in society, from the lower classes right through to the higher classes and all 'types of backgrounds [including, but not limited to] race, occupation, socio-economic class, ethnic group, education level, and sexual orientation' (Berry, 1994, cited in Bruns, 2014, p.1). One of the possible key differences may be in how the different classes manage a domestic abuse situation, however, Bruns (2014) and Cares, Reckdenwald and Fernandez (2021) suggest that those from the lower classes are more likely to experience domestic abuse and appeared to be more open to seeking help and support from advocacy services than those from the wealthier classes

One of the reasons for this may be linked to feelings of embarrassment or shame, and the wealthier classes' perceived need to hide what is happening from family, friends, and/ or society in general (Bruns, 2014; Cares, Reckdenwald and Fernandez, 2021). This may be because people from the higher social classes might believe that they should not be experiencing this type of situation because they are 'better' than that, and that they are there to act as role models to the lower classes (Bruns, 2014; Cares, Reckdenwald and Fernandez, 2021). Therefore, whilst organisations such as Women's Aid offer professional advocacy services to *any* individual they are more likely to find themselves supporting the less well-off within society (Welsh Women's Aid, 2024). This is despite being able to help empower *any* victim or survivor of domestic abuse, help them find their inner strength, give them their voice, and support them through any court process (Welsh Women's Aid, 2024).

Furthermore, according to Kelly (2008, cited in Speed, 2022, p.13) the different social class of victims of domestic abuse may need many different types of support, for instance, ‘refuge accommodation, resettlement services and therapeutic interventions’, however, advocacy services may be needed instead if they need help dealing with any practical issues, or any court case, so that the victim’s rights and entitlements are met. However, having money and resources available to them may mean that those from wealthier classes are less in need of practical support as they are able to self-fund solutions to their domestic situation (Speed, 2022). Moreover, although there is a lot of backing towards the need for more advocacy services, the funding just is not enough, especially when compared with other available interventions that support victims of domestic abuse (Kelly 2008; Women’s Aid 2021, cited in Speed, 2022, p.348). However, according to Mayes, Moroz and Frolunde (2017), domestic abuse costs the UK an estimated £15.7 billion a year, so it is very damaging on an individual, social, and economic level.

3.5.Conclusion

The outcomes of this research demonstrate that there is still a lack of protection and support for people who are victims and survivors of domestic abuse. Also the shortage of studies means that it is much harder to implement changes in funding and legislation because the extent and complexity of the issue is not yet fully understood in terms of the sorts of people and types of relationships that are more prone to domestic abuse situations arising. It was only last year in Wales that Women’s Aid in Wales (2024) started to look into supporting all genders, therefore, more funding and research studies are needed to gain more knowledge about the extent of the problem (numbers, type of

abuse, who is affected or more likely to be affected) to support the diverse and complex gender specific domestic abuse situations arising within society. However, domestic abuse is very costly to society and Mayes, Moroz and Frolunde (2017) estimated that it costs nearly £15.7 billion a year in the United Kingdom.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been discovered that any gender can be affected by domestic abuse, and the victim or perpetrator can be a woman, man, gay, or lesbian. Furthermore, domestic abuse is also being recognised as a crime now, through policies and legislations, and society's attitudes have changed with the help of people having a voice through advocacy agencies pushing the Government for change, as well as the police getting a lot more specialist training over recent years to finally recognise that it is not just women that can be victims but men and those from the LGBTQ+ community too. It is important that anybody in society has a legal right to not be a victim of domestic abuse, that their voice is listened to and heard properly and not just suffer in silence, but to feel they can get the help and support they need.

Three key themes emerged from the literature review which were gender, culture and class, and recommendations will now be considered regarding future policies and advocacy support. The original research question examined whether 'experiences of domestic abuse differ depending on the type of domestic relationship' to see if the experiences of domestic abuse were different between different types of relationships. This is important for how policy makers go forward as it has now been shown through research that domestic abuse is not just a man abusing a woman, but that anyone can suffer and be a victim of domestic abuse whatever gender and/or sexuality they are. Therefore, domestic abuse can affect anyone in any type of domestic relationship and future policies and advocacy support services need to reflect this societal change in understanding so that everyone has the protection of the law and access to appropriate support services.

The first key theme that emerged from the literature review and was examined in the discussion was 'gender'. In England and Wales the Government state that domestic violence and abuse can involve any person over the age of 16 and of any gender or sexuality. Nowadays gender can be seen in society as more than just male, female or non-binary, however, not all are recognised as legal in law. Also, mental and physical domestic abuse was seen all through the themes of the literature review as not being gender specific, different to the past when it was the notion of a male perpetrator and female victim. Nevertheless, men may have been victims and suffered for many years in the past, but it remained silent in society and not spoken about. This may be because males were seen as macho and may have felt ashamed, whereas today's society is a lot more complex and understands that many people of different genders are victims.

Also, lesbians or gay people who are in an abusive relationship now have the rights of the law behind them in the same way as a straight married couple do. This is important because, for example, 80% of gay women reported having been in a domestic abuse relationship. Also, people in the LGBT+ community are nowadays reporting more often that they are victims of perpetrators within their relationships, which shows that this community need further support as they are also at a high risk for domestic abuse. Although according to statistics (National Police Chiefs Council, 2024) females around the age of 25 to 54 are still seen as the highest percentage of victims of domestic abuse with males in the same age group still seen as the main perpetrators. This is despite the London Mayors office (2022) having said that when it comes to domestic abuse there is no discrimination and any gender can be a victim of abuse and violence. Yet the British Medical Association Board of Science (2014) note when it comes to males who

had suffered from abuse only 32% reported it to the police with only 15% of those actually pressing charges.

Therefore, the key recommendations are that more research needs to be carried out to show a clearer picture of where and how domestic abuse is happening within the diverse communities that exist in society these days, so that policy makers can be more inclusive when laws and legislations are made. Also, more funding should be made available to support the multi agencies in getting training so that they can better understand the complex domestic situations that people find themselves in these days and can help advocate for victims/survivors.

The next key theme that became evident throughout the literature review was ‘culture’. Culture is about how people, between themselves, share knowledge, information, familiar patterns, and behaviours. Likewise, individual personalities show how people present themselves, and function amongst others significant to them within their community, and how a culture is then created. The connection between culture and domestic abuse was shown through the different cultures and their religious beliefs, such as arranged marriages. Also, when a community does not agree with a relationship because of cultural beliefs and religious differences, this can result in abuse and violence towards the victim and/or their partner by family or community members, which sometimes can result in honour killings.

Alcohol and drug use was also seen as a cultural factor which could be connected to the actions and behaviours of perpetrators, and which can be intertwined within their personality traits and influenced by culture. Research has shown that a family culture of violent behaviour could be learned through the function of a family setting, particularly if a father is abusing the mother and the child has observed it. The child

could grow up to think this behaviour of violence is a part of life, and in adult life they could then become a perpetrator, repeating the same cycle as the father. This could continue to repeat through generations to come (Bonem, Stanley-Kime, and Corbin, 2008).

Domestic abuse can also be connected to experiences of trauma from the past with 77% of male perpetrators having experienced ACEs resulting in mental health issues when they became adults and ending up as domestic abuse within their relationships (Safe Lives, 2019). Perpetrators may not know how to control their behaviours of anger and resentment and take it out through abuse and violence on their partner. In addition, past history showed that hitting your wife was seen as a part of societal norms and there were no laws to keep victims safe. Domestic abuse was viewed as just a way a husband would treat his wife and this would follow through to most of the children seeing this as normal (Safe Lives, 2019; Williams and Walklate (2020)).

It is recommended that personal, social, education (PSE) in schools includes relationship education, and lessons on respect and boundaries, and it should also uphold ideas of equality from a young age so that children know the difference between healthy and unhealthy or toxic relationships. Additionally, there needs to be more funding to have more specialist trained police officers with more powers to uphold the law and legislation so that they can link victims with advocacy support quickly so that they get the best support they need for them and their families.

The final theme that emerged from the literature review was 'class'. It was found that victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse can come from any class background within society. A possible key difference might be how the different classes cope with

domestic abuse situations. It was noticed that people from lower classes are more likely to experience domestic abuse, and seemed to be more open to getting help and support from advocacy services than those from the wealthier classes. Victims from higher classes in society were less likely to seek support preferring to hide what is happening due to feelings of embarrassment or shame. Therefore, although professional advocacy services are available to anyone, they appear to be used more by the lower classes within society (Welsh Women's Aid, 2024).

It was also noted that the different social classes of victims of domestic abuse means they may need different types of support, for instance, 'refuge accommodation' was common with lower classes as they had nowhere to go, and no money to pay for alternative accommodation. However, those from higher classes were able to self-fund solutions to their domestic situation, by moving in with family members or friends with spare accommodation (Speed, 2022). Moreover, there is a clear need for more advocacy services, with the current funding just not enough, and this is a big problem when domestic abuse costs the UK an estimated £15.7 billion a year (Mayes, Moroz and Frolunde, 2017).

There needs to be more research to support better understanding of domestic abuse, how and why it happens, and what can be done to stop it, so that it takes away the stigma for those who are suffering. Also, many victims seem to get the blame, or blame themselves, and this needs to stop if we are to find a way forward and stop domestic abuse.

There is also a need to try and break down class barriers so that people from higher classes in society do not feel the need to hide away from the problem of domestic abuse, and feel able to seek the help and support they need.

Finally, we need to acknowledge that perpetrators need help to break the cycle of abuse. This means that more funding should be made available for specialist advocacy services to support people from all sections of society in helping to combat domestic abuse, which includes help and support for perpetrators to recognise, and work at stopping, their abusive behaviour.

Therefore, advocacy services play a key role in helping to support victims and perpetrators to break the cycle of domestic abuse, so that future generations do not repeat these behaviours and people show respect for each other within their personal relationships and to each other in society as a whole.

Word count: 9764

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6. APPENDICES

a. Appendix 1: Proposal



Institute of Education and Humanities/
Yr Athrofa Addysg a'r Dyniaethau

**ECGE6003Q Dissertation Approval Form/
Ffurflen Gymeradwyo Traethawd Hir ECGE6003Q**

Student Name/ <i>Enw Myfyriwr</i>	Trudi Davies
Degree Scheme/ <i>Cynllun Gradd</i>	
Start date/ <i>Dyddiad cychwyn</i>	

I have completed about to complete* Part 1 of my degree.

*Please delete as appropriate.

Yr wyf wedi/ ar fun cwblhau Rhan 1 o fy ngradd

** Dileu fel sy'n briodol*

Title of Dissertation: <i>Teitl eich Traethawd Hir</i>
Advocating for individuals experiencing mental and physical abuse in the 21 st century
Research Question <i>Cwestiwn Ymchwil</i>
Does the experience of domestic abuse differ depending on the type of domestic relationship?
Aims and Objectives: <i>Nodau ac Amcanion</i>
Aims: To understand the key differences between mental and physical abuse, and their impact on victims/survivors
Objectives Explore the ways coercive controlling behaviours can lead to physical abuse

• Investigate suicide rates in males and females experiencing mental and physical abuse • Examine the law and whether it is the same for heterosexual and same sex relationships (looking at law and criminal procedures)
Dissertation Plan
<u>Literature Review</u> • To understand the key differences between mental and physical abuse, and their impact on victims/survivors • Explore the ways coercive controlling behaviours can lead to physical abuse. • Investigate suicide rates in males and females experiencing mental and physical abuse. • Examine the law and whether it is the same for heterosexual and same sex relationships (looking at law and criminal procedures) • Theme 1- mental and physical abuse: key differences Understanding the key differences between mental and physical abuse and its impact on victims/survivors (look at journals, police reports, information from news reports, policies and legislation, social theories, historical context and recent changes) • Theme 2 – • the link between coercive controlling behaviours and physical abuse ○ Investigate whether coercive controlling behaviours can lead to physical abuse (look at journals, advocacy and support organisations and charities, statistics) • Theme 3 – • Death rates linked to mental and physical abuse ○ Examine whether mental or physical abuse results in a higher death rate, and if men victim/survivors are more prone to suicide than women victims/survivors, and if so, the underlying reasons as to why. ○ • Theme 4 – policies and legislation regarding mental and physical abuse Explore policies, legislation, and the law to see how things have changed in 21st century and whether support and outcomes for victims/survivors are the same for heterosexual and same sex relationships (looking at policies, law and criminal procedures) Mental vs. Physical abuse: which is worse?

Have the dynamics between couples changed over the years (e.g. heterosexual couples, same sex couples etc.) Do victims/survivors have more of a voice nowadays? Is there more understanding and support? <u>Methodology</u> • Literature review • Collect and analyse existing studies, data and statistics already done by researchers as it is not realistic to get my own data as it is a fragile topic which people may not be willing to speak about and has ethical considerations that are difficult to overcome. • Which data collection methods? • Type of analysis ○ Journals ,books, articles from associations
Short Introductory Bibliography: <i>Llyfryddiaeth rhagarweiniol byr</i>
Refer to reference list below
Proposed Supervisor: <i>Goruchwyliwr awgrymedig</i>
Ken Dicks

- Ethics Form will be required

The above topic, proposal, and supervisor have been agreed:
Cytunwyd ar y pwnc, y cynnig a'r goruchwyliwr uchod:

Signed: *Trudi Davies* Student/Llofnod Myfyriwr

Date: 3rd October 2023
Dyddiad

Signed : Programme
Director/
Llofnod
rhaglen
Cyfarwyddwr y

Date:.....
Dyddiad

Please return this form to your Module Coordinator/Supervisor.
Dychwelwch y ffurflen hon at eich Cyfarwyddwr Rhaglen.

References

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FULL ACCESS

Book

Policing Domestic Abuse

Risk, Policy, and Practice

By [Katy Barrow-Grint](#), [Jacqueline Sebire](#), [Jackie Turton](#), [Ruth Weir](#)

Edition 1st Edition

First Published 2022

eBook Published 1 November 2022

Pub. Location London

Imprint Routledge

DOI <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003137412>

Pages 258

eBook ISBN 9781003137412

Subjects Health and Social Care, Law, Social Sciences

<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/stable/j.ctt7s1gr>

Insult to Injury: Rethinking our Responses to Intimate Abuse

LINDA G. MILLS

Copyright Date: 2003

Published by: [Princeton University Press](#)

Pages: 192

<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/stable/j.ctt7s1gr>

[Search for reviews of this book](#)

<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/stable/j.ctt4cg9d3>

Violence: A Micro-sociological Theory

Randall Collins

Copyright Date: 2008

Published by: [Princeton University Press](#)

Pages: 584

<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/stable/j.ctt4cg9d3>

[Search for reviews of this book](#)

<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/stable/j.ctt5hjd7q>

Victims as Offenders: The Paradox of Women's Violence in Relationships

SUSAN L. MILLER

Series: [Critical Issues in Crime and Society](#)

Copyright Date: 2005

Published by: [Rutgers University Press](#)

Pages: 184

<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/stable/j.ctt5hjd7q>

[Search for reviews of this book](#)

<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/43963>

BOOK

[Domestic Violence and Sexuality : What's Love Got to Do with It?](#)

Donovan, Catherine ; Hester, Marianne

2015; Bristol: Bristol University Press

This book provides the first detailed discussion of domestic violence and abuse in same sex relationships, offering a unique comparison between this and domestic violence and abuse experienced...

<https://sk-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/reference/the-sage-handbook-of-domestic-violence>

The SAGE Handbook of Domestic Violence

- **Edited by:**
[Todd K. Shackelford](#)
- **Publisher:** SAGE Publications Ltd
 - **Publication year:** 2021
 - **Online pub date:** February 10, 2021
- **Discipline:** [Counseling & Psychotherapy](#)
- **Subject:** [Domestic Violence](#), [Domestic Violence](#)
- **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529742343>
- **Keywords:**
[abuse](#), [child abuse](#), [domestic violence](#), [family violence](#), [intimate partne](#)

Understanding the economics of abuse: an assessment of the economic abuse definition within the Domestic Abuse Bill

Featured database: GenderWatch

[Sharp-Jeffs, Nicola](#)

.

[Journal of Gender-Based Violence](#)

; **Bristol** [Iss. 1](#), (Feb 2021): 163-173. DOI:10.1332/239788220X1607618104168

b. Appendix 2: Ethics Form

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

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:	Trudi Davies			
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 Communities			
4	Campus:	Carmarthen			
5	E-mail address:	1402946@student.uwtsd.ac.uk			
6	Contact Telephone Number:	07445529558			
For students:					
7	Student Number:	1402946			
8	Programme of Study:	BA Advocacy			
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Ken Dicks			

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) Ken Dicks	☒	26.9.2023	

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	[List any other relevant documents here] ☒

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	Institute of Humanities
2	Contact person name	Ken dicks
3	Contact person e-mail address	Ken.dicks@uwtsd.ac.uk
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 (APLP)?	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered. YES ☐ NO ☒
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:	Advocating for individuals experiencing mental and physical abuse in the 21 st century		
2	Proposed start date:	September 2023	Proposed end date:	May 2024
	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> To find out more about domestic abuse in different situations, e.g. heterosexual and same sex couples. To try and find out more about how people are protected in law, and supported by agencies in the 21st century. <i>Proposed Research Question</i> Mental vs. Physical abuse: which is worse? Have the dynamics between couples changed over the years (e.g. heterosexual couples, same sex couples etc.) Do victims/survivors have more of a voice nowadays? Is there more understanding and support? <i>Aims of Research Activity:</i> To understand the key differences between mental and physical abuse, and their impact on victims/survivors <i>Objectives of Research Activity:</i> - To explore the ways coercive controlling behaviours can lead to physical abuse - To investigate suicide rates in males and females experiencing mental and physical abuse - To examine the law and whether it is the same for heterosexual and same sex relationships (looking at law and criminal procedures) Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> 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			

	To find out more about domestic abuse in different situations, e.g. heterosexual and same sex couples. To try and find out more about how people are protected in law, and supported by agencies in the 21st century. (this box should expand as you type)
4	Research Question Mental vs. Physical abuse: which is worse? Have the dynamics between couples changed over the years (e.g. heterosexual couples, same sex couples etc.) Do victims/survivors have more of a voice nowadays? Is there more understanding and support? (this box should expand as you type)
5	Aims of Research Activity To understand the key differences between mental and physical abuse, and their impact on victims/survivors (this box should expand as you type)
6	Objectives of Research Activity • To explore the ways coercive controlling behaviours can lead to physical abuse • To investigate suicide rates in males and females experiencing mental and physical abuse • To examine the law and whether it is the same for heterosexual and same sex relationships (looking at law and criminal procedures) (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	(this box should expand as you type)
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	(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.
9	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

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? (this box should expand as you type)
11	Who will the participants be? (this box should expand as you type)
12	How will you identify the participants? (this box should expand as you type)

	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: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	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>	
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>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: <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: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: <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: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

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?
	 <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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.
	 <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.
	 <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.	☐	☐ NO
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	(this box should expand as you type)		
	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),	☐	☐ NO
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	(this box should expand as you type)		

	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:		

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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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):		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Researcher and Tutor (Ken Dicks)		
	<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:		
	Researcher and Tutor (Ken Dicks)		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
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.		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.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:		Date:

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:		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 AND 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.

You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore **it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.**

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.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages:

<https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>