

Research Proposal

Research Question

To what extent and in what ways can solos as part of an international expedition undertaken by young adults contribute to increased wellbeing?

Aim

The overall aim of this research is to advance an understanding of the extent and ways solos as part of an international expeditions can contribute to increased wellbeing for young adults.

Objectives

- 1) Identify the ways solos as part of an international expedition undertaken by young adults contribute to increased wellbeing.
- 2) Evaluate critically the current literature around wellbeing in relation to solos and identify any gaps in existing research.
- 3) Explore participants views and perspectives on the extent solos contribute to increased wellbeing.
- 4) Formulate recommendations for practitioners on utilising solos as a technique for improving wellbeing for young adults on international expeditions with the aim of maximising their benefits.

Theory

The solo experience is described by Knapp and Smith (2005) as an escape from normal life where participants spend a varying period of time alone and in silence within a wilderness area (Daniel *et al.*, 2014; Naor and Mayseless, 2020; Peterson *et al.*, 2021). Williams (2012) highlights that time is not a defining characteristic and that solos may range from multi-day experiences to 20 minute or hour-long experiences. These experiences are typically facilitated with the facilitator playing a key role in the briefing, discussions during solos and how they are reviewed after (Peterson *et al.*, 2021; Naor and Mayseless, 2020; Williams, 2012). This facilitator led approach is contested by both Williams (2012) and Campbell (2010) who suggest a more participant led approach may have greater impacts, though Williams (2012) concedes some restraints placed by the facilitator may be necessary for real world practice. The purposes of solos are typically related to reflection, self-reliance, resourcefulness, and confidence building (Daniel *et al.*, 2014). In addition to this there is also evidence to suggest that they can affect the general sense of wellbeing in participants and provide a connection to nature (Daniel *et al.*, 2014; Freeman *et al.*, 2017; Peterson *et al.*, 2021, Williams, 2012).

The positive impacts of time spent in nature on health and wellbeing are well documented (Dobson *et al.*, 2021; Shanahan *et al.*, 2019). The restorative elements of increased time in

nature are linked to both Kaplan and Kaplan (1989) Attention Restoration Theory and Ulrich (1984) Stress Recovery Theory (Freeman *et al.*, 2017). Attention Restoration Theory supports the notion that participants' capacity to maintain attention is depleted over prolonged periods which can lead to tiredness, irritability, and a lack of concentration. Restorative environments in nature that meet the four elements of being away, extent, compatibility and fascination can provide the opportunity for recovery from mental fatigue (Louriero *et al.*, 2021; Kaplan and Kaplan 1989). Stress Recovery Theory stipulates that being within nature will diminish recovery time from stressful events, the predisposition of humans to resonate with natural surroundings will lead to reduced negative feelings and have a physiological effect in the form of reduced heart rate and blood pressure (Loureiro *et al.*, 2021; Ulrich, 1983). This is further supported by Wilson's (1984) Biophilia Hypothesis that indicates human desire for nature connection is partially innate (Williams, 2012). Naor and Mayseless (2020) highlight how solos are therefore a common method of intervention within both therapeutic and educational nature-based approaches.

Stott *et al.*, (2015) literature review and thematic analysis on youth expeditions found that commonly associated outcomes included:

- Upward personal growth (realising potential): increased confidence; physical and social resilience; self-reliance and ability to overcome challenges.
- Outward personal growth (learning about others): improved social skills.
- Inward personal growth (learning about self): improved emotional stability; better able to reflect on events.
- Downward personal growth (learning about environment): increased environmental appreciation and awareness.

These outcomes relate strongly to the general purposes of solos on educational outdoor learning initiatives which Daniel *et al.*, (2014) relate to reflection, resourcefulness and confidence building all of which may be seen as personal growth outcomes. Peterson *et al.*, (2021) highlights how many of these personal growth outcomes could also be related to wellbeing, such as self-actualisation and reflection as well as emotional and physical restoration.

I have outlined the area of solos as a common tool for both therapeutic and educational nature-based approaches and highlighting how the outcomes can be strongly related to both personal growth outcomes and wellbeing outcomes. I have demonstrated from literature the need for further study on utilising solos as a tool for practitioners to improve wellbeing for young adults on international expeditions. This research will contribute to the existing discourse surrounding solos and wellbeing within the context of young adults on international expeditions and provide practical recommendations on enhancing wellbeing for facilitators therefore providing the rationale for my research.

Theoretical and Methodological Basis

To provide a theoretical basis for my research I have identified Seligman (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing theory. It identifies five essential pillars to wellbeing:

1. Positive Emotions (P)
2. Engagement (E)
3. Positive Relationships (R)
4. Meaning (M)
5. Achievement/Accomplishment (A)

Eacker (2020) and Peterson *et al.*, (2021) criticise the PERMA model as focusing purely on mental wellbeing. Consequently, I will be adding their recommended 6th element of “vitality” which refers to physical wellbeing with the model now being referred to as PERMA-V. Kern *et al.*, (2015) further explains these components by “Positive Emotion” is referring to feeling joyful, content, and cheerful. “Engagement” is referring to mental connection to activities and feeling engaged in life. “Positive Relationships” include feeling satisfied with social connections and feeling supported and cared about by others. “Meaning” is referring to recognising that your own life is valuable and feeling connected to something greater than yourself. “Achievement/Accomplishment” is referring to feeling capable of undertaking daily activities and making progress towards goals.

As I am interested in solos, which by their nature require the facilitator to be mainly or wholly absent, I will be taking a phenomenological methodology to my research by asking participants about their interpretation of their lived experience of their solo (Biggam, 2018). Phenomenological research focuses on the belief that there are multiple equally valid perspectives of reality that are dependent on the context of when and where they are made making the approach appropriate for considering the solo experience contributing to an individual’s wellbeing (Biggam, 2018). My approach will be inductive as it will maintain a methodological flexibility and limit findings to the presentation and description of the most important themes found within the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Lui, 2016).

My involvement with participants will be that of a facilitator and due to the limited time for the study solos will largely be facilitator led with participants given designated timeframes and locations in line with the attached risk assessment. I will consciously attempt to limit my bias, though my personal and professional experience could influence the data analysis and research findings. However, I plan to limit any bias through data collection techniques as explained below.

My data collection methods will be semi-structured interviews collecting qualitative data (Biggins, 2018). These interviews will take place during the “debriefing” element of the solo and will be audio recorded using an Otter AI transcription app, the transcription will then be

checked against the audio. I will be using Peterson *et al.* (2021) questions to frame the semi-structured interview of:

1. Description of the place in detail. Where did you go? What was it like there? What were the features of your surroundings?
2. Description of their activities. What did you do?
3. Description of the perceived experiences. How did you experience your solo time? How did you feel? What did you think about?

The participants responses to the semi-structured interviews will be analysed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing and interpreting themes within qualitative data (Clarke and Braun, 2017). I will use existing literature surrounding the 6 pillars of PERMA-V as a framework for initial themes but allow emergent findings to occur in addition to these (Eacker, 2020; Kern *et al.*, 2015; Peterson *et al.*, 2021). My sample will consist of three male participants aged 25-30 who will be attending an international trip to Iceland with myself for 13 days from 29th March – 11th April 2022 and engaging in day treks within the Icelandic wilderness. Solos will be performed once at the beginning, once in the middle and once at the end of the trip.

Ethical Considerations

Ethic approval will be sought by University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). The physical and psychological health of participants will be confirmed verbally before beginning the study with consent obtained that participants understand their role and are happy to take part. Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw their data from the study and will be made aware that their data will be used within the assignment and pseudonyms used to protect their anonymity. As this study will take place in a remote setting internationally both a country specific risk assessment for Iceland will be attached and a specific risk assessment for the solo activity submitted alongside the ethics form. These risk assessments will be updated dynamically by myself once at location as a qualified U.K summer mountain leader and holding a first aid qualification. All participants are adults experienced in the outdoors and comfortable in a wilderness setting. This study will adhere to UWTSD and BERA guidelines

Timeline

11 th March – 29 th March	Prepare interview questions, obtain Otter ai subscription,
29 th March – 11 th April	Complete trip to Iceland, solos and interview participants
11 th April – 17 th April	Check transcription and interpret results
18 th April - 13 th May	Create Poster and write up reflection paper

1601 Words (including titles)

References

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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.

Delete the Guidance Notes at the end of the form BEFORE submitting your application

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Patrick Rutledge			
2	Tick all boxes which apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
3	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student
					☒
4	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	School of Sport, Health and Outdoor Education			
5	Campus:	Carmarthen			
6	E-mail address:	Patrick.rutledge@btopenworld.com			
7	Contact Telephone Number:	+447854487819			
For students:					
8	Student Number:	1922832			
9	Programme of Study:	MA Outdoor Education			
10	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Dr Andy Williams			

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):	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
3	<i>Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval</i>	Institute Research Committee	☐		
4		Other (write in)	☐		

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, 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.	
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice	☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☒
3		☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

1	Does the research activity involve collaborators outside of the University?	YES	☐	NO	☒	
2	If Yes, please provide the name of the external organisation and name and contact details for the main contact person and confirmation this person has consented to their personal data being shared as part of this collaboration.					
3	Institution					
4	Contact person name					
5	Contact person e-mail address					
6	Has this individual consented to sharing their details on this form?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
7	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
8	Is your research externally funded	YES	☐	NO	☐	
9	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
10	paid or voluntary capacity?	Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
11	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	☐
12	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

13	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☒
14	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	To what extent and in what ways can solos as part of an international expedition undertaken by young adults contribute to increased wellbeing?		
2	Proposed start date of your research (not your course start date):	29 th March 2022	Proposed end date:	11 th April 2022
3	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: • <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> • <i>Proposed Research Question</i> • <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> • <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how <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>			
4	Purpose of Research Activity Please see attached proposal (this box should expand as you type)			
5	Research Question Please see attached proposal (this box should expand as you type)			
6	Aims of Research Activity Please see attached proposal (this box should expand as you type)			
7	Objectives of Research Activity Please see attached proposal (this box should expand as you type)			
8	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.			
9	Semi structured interviews, please see attached proposal for further details. (this box should expand as you type)			

10	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
11	International trip in Iceland (this box should expand as you type)
12	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.
13	Please see attached risk assessment (this box should expand as you type)

14	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
15	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 prevailing data protection law of the country in question and England and Wales. (this box should expand as you type)		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

1	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
2	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☐	☒
3	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
4	Use of diaries?	☐	☒
5	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
6	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
7	Use of video or audio recording?	☒	☐
8	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
9	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
10	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
11	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
12	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
13	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
14	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
15	Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box	☐	☒

	For example, 'focus groups'. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) in this box and tick the accompany box.		
16	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

		YES	NO
1	Who are the intended participants:		
2	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
3	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
4	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
5	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
6	Prisoners?	☐	☒
7	Young offenders?	☐	☒
8	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
9	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
10	Others (please identify specifically any group who may be unable to give consent) please indicate here and tick the appropriate box.		
11	Other – please indicate here: (this box should expand as you type)	☐	☒

12	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
13	How many participants are expected?	3 participants (this box should expand as you type)
14	Who will the participants be?	3 males aged between 25-30 (this box should expand as you type)
15	How will you identify the participants?	With pseudonyms (this box should expand as you type)

16	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
17	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
18	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
19	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
21	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
22	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
23	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
24	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☐	☐	☐
25	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
26	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
27	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

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

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

1	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.						
2	Full risk assessment completed and appended?		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>☒</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>☐</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	☒	No	☐
Yes	☒						
No	☐						
3	Risks to participants For example: emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information						
4	Risk to Participant: Please refer to attached risk assessment <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How will you mitigate the Risk to Participant <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>					

5	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			
	Please refer to attached risk assessment <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			
6	Risks to investigator For example: personal safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest			
	Risk to Investigator: Please refer to attached risk assessment <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How will you mitigate the Risk to Investigator: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
7	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection			
	Risk to University: Please refer to attached risk assessment <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How will you mitigate the Risk to University: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
8	Disclosure and Barring Service			
9	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
10	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐

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?
	Discussion during interview. Sharing of results as appropriate. <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.
	Briefing before engaging in solo activity. <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.
	Pseudonyms used and data will not be shared. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

In completing this section refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and the extensive resources on the University's Research Data Management web pages (<http://uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/>).

1	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
	"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.	☐	☒
2	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	(this box should expand as you type)		
3	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
	"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),	☐	☒
4	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	(this box should expand as you type)		

5	Will the research activity involve storing personal data and/or special category data on one of the following:	YES	NO
6	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
7	University computers?	☐	☒
8	Private company computers?	☐	☒
9	Home or other personal computers?	☒	☐
10	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
11	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☐	☒
12	Other – specify:	☐	☒
13	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	Recordings will be transcribed by Otter AI app and emailed to myself. Laptop is password protected.		

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
14	All Data Storage		
15	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
16	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
17	Sharing of data with others at the University?	☐	☒
18	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
19	Export of data outside the European Union or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
20	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
21	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
22	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
23	Data archiving?	☐	☒
24	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and DPA (and/or any international equivalent):		
	Recordings will be transcribed by Otter AI app and emailed to myself.		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
27	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.		
	Storage on laptop and cloud storage for duration of relevance to MA course.		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
28	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>		
	No		
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
29	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
		NO	☐
30	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	☒
		NO	☐

SECTION K: Declaration

31	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/		
	Signature of applicant:	<i>PJR</i>	Date: 11/03/22

For STUDENT Submissions:

32	Director of Studies/Supervisor:		Date:
33	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

34	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
35	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 (and have NOT completed Section H of this form) (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.
☒	I have deleted the guidance notes before submitting the PG2 for consideration

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/>

Application Process

All staff research projects and all research students must submit the Ethical Approval Form to the University Research Ethics Committee via the Academic Office (pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk). Staff research directly in relation to personal study for taught undergraduate or Masters programmes should be submitted via the Institute procedures explained below.

Taught masters and taught undergraduate research Ethical Approval Forms are considered **within Institutes**. Institutes will provide details of the specific processes for this. Where the Ethical issues within any single ethical application are of particular concern the Institute will refer these to the University Research Ethics Committee. Any student activity that involves the collection of primary data needs to undergo Ethical approval, this includes assignment work as well as dissertations.

Notes for guidance in completion of this form

Section A: About You

Please complete all relevant sections

Section B: Approval for research activity

Research proposals must be approved in principle before applying for Ethical Approval. The proposal approval only becomes final when the ethical approval is received.

The process for proposal approval varies according the individual and programme of study:

- Research students, by application on form PG1 to the Research Degrees Committee
- Taught students by review of research proposal within Institutes (Institutes provide specific details of these processes)
- Staff, by agreement by the Academic Director/Assistant Dean

Section C: External Ethical Guidance materials

Many discipline areas are required to operate with the discipline specific codes of research ethics (for example health, psychology, education etc.), any such codes must be listed and you must tick to confirm that you have consulted with these.

Section D: External Collaborative Research Activity

Provide details of the external collaborative partners, where appropriate you might want to submit a copy of the external collaboration agreement with the Ethical Approval Form. If the partner requires the research to be subject to its own internal Ethical approval process then please provide details of that process and a copy of any final (or interim) approvals received from the organisation.

Section E: Details of Research Activity

Remember that the individuals reviewing this Ethical Approval Form may not have seen your research proposal, and also may not be experts in the specific area of your research. The information provided should therefore be jargon free and clearly stated.

Indicative Title: please use the same title as used on the research proposal.

Purpose: the Ethical approval process will want to ensure that the methods you propose are adequate and appropriate to address the research aims and objectives. Excessive additional data collection can be seen as unethical.

Proposed Methods: the Ethical approval process seeks to ensure that you understand the methods that are intended, and that the implementation of those methods will be appropriate and without unnecessary impact on respondents. This section must explain how the methods described will lead to the collection of necessary and sufficient data, but not excessive data. Please be specific.

Location: this needs to mention geographical location and also local situation (for example, within Local Authority Offices in Cardiff, using a private room but close to other individuals). If you are collecting data within an organisational setting then you need to explain the permissions that you have obtained to do this.

Research Activity outside of the UK: please complete this section in detail, and note any guidance you have received. Also describe your own familiarity (or not) with the location that you will be utilising.

Section F: Scope of Research Activity

Please tick ALL of the research activities that might be undertaken. If any additional types of activity are intended then please add an extra box and describe these.

If you have answered no to all questions in F then sections G and I do not need to be completed. . Signatures are still required in section K.

Section G: Intended Participants

Please tick all categories that might apply.

Numbers & Source: if you are using a series of different methods or research activities please list numbers for each stage/phase. Be clear about how you will find respondents. Will you use intermediaries, and if so how? How will you ensure compliance with your sampling strategy?

Information for participants: all participants should be appropriately informed about the research, what is expected of them and what will happen to the information that they provide. The Ethical review process does not ask to see this documentation, but requires this to be reviewed and approved by the Director of Studies in the case of research students, the supervisor/module tutor in relation to students on taught programmes and the Academic Director/Assistant Dean in relation to staff research.

Section H: Anticipate Risks

All research carries some level of risk. The answers you provide to questions in this section will be reviewed to ensure that you have an appropriate understanding of the type of risks involved and how you can mitigate against these risks. If you have completed a full risk assessment, as required for example for laboratory work, field work, clinical tests, diving operations, or by a collaborative partner, you may append that to this form. In that case, please tick the box indicating this has been provided. You will not then be required to complete Section H.

Risk to participants Think very carefully about how your actions/questions/discussions might affect the people you are involving as participants. You might identify the risk as small but it would still be a risk. Many types of question have the potential to make respondents less content with their life / job; you need to recognise and try to ameliorate any such effects

If these are business owners, time with you may reduce profit.

In some locations physical risk is very real to both participants and yourself, please consider this.

Risk to you, the researcher Think about where you will meet people, if there are any dangers involved in the location. If you are meeting people as individuals think about using a public place. In general do not visit people in their own homes or remote locations. If you are talking to individuals about certain issues think about how their responses might affect you emotionally. What about the risk of collecting insufficient data?

Risk to the University When undertaking your research, you are acting as a member of the University (student or staff). Professionalism is important, so it is important to be well organised and well prepared. Punctuality, clarity etc. are all part of this. What will you do to ensure this? You must ensure you do not harm the good name of the University in any way and do nothing to undermine the reputation of the research it conducts and sponsors. Upholding high standards of conduct and integrity are vital in this regard. You must also conduct the research in such a way to minimise the potential for claims of negligence made against the University, its researchers and any collaborating individual or organisation. In this respect you should always comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, as well as the university's Research Integrity and Ethics Code of Practice. Research misconduct in this respect can take many forms, including:

- fabrication: making up results or other outputs (eg, artefacts) and presenting them as if they were real
- falsification: manipulating research processes or changing or omitting data without good cause
- plagiarism: using other people's material without giving proper credit
- failure to meet ethical, legal and professional obligations: for example failure to declare competing interests; misrepresentation of involvement or authorship; misrepresentation of interests; breach of confidentiality; lack of informed consent; misuse of personal data; and abuse of research subjects or material
- improper dealing with allegations of misconduct: failing to address possible infringements such as attempts to cover up misconduct and reprisals against whistle-blowers

Adverse Outcomes. Think carefully about the possibilities, and cover here

Section I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

Feedback to participants: outline your approach. Will interview transcripts be shared with respondents to check accuracy? Will summaries of questionnaire analysis be made available to respondents in some way? Will an overview report be provided? How and when?

Informed consent: Draft letter / e-mail / or heading (or footer) section of questionnaire must be approved by DoS/supervisor (if research student), supervisor/module tutor if taught student, or Academic Director / Assistant Dean if a member of staff.
Confidentiality/Anonymity. Explain clearly how you will ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

Section J: Data Protection and Storage

Before completing this section it is necessary to read the University's Research Data Management information. The questions that follow are designed to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act as well as established research protocols.

Many research activities will involve electronic transfer of data and use of data management systems in the summarisation and analysis of data. You will need to explain these in relation to compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Think carefully about who will have access to your data, this will include supervisors and examiners. Also that a thesis will be made available via the University library and the British Library system. If you are seeking an access bar for a period of time after completion then mention it here. If you will provide a copy of your findings, or intend to give a presentation, to a facilitating/ supporting/accessing organisation then explain that in this section. But also think about the general principle of data sharing, as explained in the Research Data Management information.

In terms of storage of data please ensure security, and also mitigate against loss of data.

Section K: Declaration

Ensure the appropriate countersignatures have been provided

Look carefully at the checklist and ensure that you comply with and tick all that are relevant to your research.

Iceland Generic Risk Assessment

Dates of trip: 29th March – 11th April

Outward Journey: FI451 LHR-KEF 1305 29th March 2022

Return Journey: FI450 KEF-LHR 0740 11th April 2022

Group Size: x 4

Emergency Kit carried:

Head torches

First aid kit

Spot Tracker Gen3 satellite SOS system

Mobile Phones

Group Shelter

Personal Travel Insurance and Emergency Procedure:

All participants will have personal travel insurance and all group members will have all emergency numbers and next of kin details with daily check ins with next of kin via ok signal on SPOT Tracker. Local Hospitals identified and all group members first aid trained and aware of evacuation routes.

The following apps will be downloaded to smart phone before the trip:

Veður – Icelandic Meteorological Office – forecasts and weather warnings.

Iceland 112 – official app for Iceland's emergency services – sends SMS to emergency services with the phones GPS location, before calling 112.

Reference: Risk Identification, mitigation and control measures: a practical guide for teachers to manage risk and hazard on tour ICELAND RISK ASSESSMENT. 2015. [online] Available at <https://www.rayburnstours.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/GEOG-Iceland-RA.pdf> [Accessed 11 Mar. 2022].

Hazard	Potential Risk	Control Measures
Winter Weather: Icy surfaces, Icicles, Snow cover, Snow overhangs, Frozen bodies of water	Slips and falls – minor injuries, strains, fractures Icicles May detach causing minor or severe injuries Slips and falls. Hidden hazards – minor or severe injuries Unsupported – falls and injuries, minor/severe Falling through. Hypothermia. Drowning	Briefing that surface may be slippery for participants. Appropriate footwear and hands free for balance. Keep back from dangerous features and limit lingering underneath. Limit loud noises. Dynamically assess conditions and appropriateness before proceeding with activities. Do not walk on frozen bodies of water.
General Weather Extremes of climate – high and low temperatures Rain – getting wet Sudden changes in weather/storms and high winds	Heat stroke /dehydration / hypothermia / sunburn Discomfort / hypothermia Reduction in visibility / lightning strikes / unable to keep upright	Waterproofs and extra layers of clothing carries. Professional weather forecast checked. Stick to routes and marked paths. Carry water.
Traffic Moving vehicles in car parks Road traffic	Collision with pedestrians – injuries/fatalities	Awareness of moving vehicles. Stay away from roadside Face oncoming traffic. Use crossings when available.

Slips and trips Rough surfaces Slippery surfaces Steps and stairs	Injury from fall – minor cuts and abrasions, more severe strains or fractures	Participants briefed to watch where putting feet. Appropriate footwear worn Stick to prepared paths and walkways. Use handrail if appropriate.
Becoming lost	Accidents whilst alone	GPS device carried. SPOT tracker carried to signal for help. Map and compass carried. First aid kit carried
Members of public Crowded pavements Unknown locals/ visitors/ tourists	Spilling onto roadway – collision with vehicles – injuries/fatalities. Conflict/confrontation.	Avoid blocking easy movement of other pedestrians. Avoid walking on the road.
Driving Vehicle	Faulty Vehicle Traffic Collisions	Vehicle inspected before being driven. Drivers have full U.K driving licence and will have an alert front passenger.
Additional hazards and risks		Additional hazards and risks can emerge at any time. Dynamic Risk Assessment will be completed ahead of any activity.

Iceland Solos Activity Risk Assessment

Solo activities will take place at the beginning, middle and end of the trip when deemed appropriate within the trip's itinerary and weather conditions.

Timeframe and locations will be agreed upon between participants and facilitator at the time and be specific to the site.

Facilitator will stay in a known position to participants with first aid kit, group shelter and SOS beacon. Participants will keep radios to signal for help if required during Solo.

Hazard	Potential Risk	Control Measures
Route Distance – too far for participants Terrain – too technical for participants Paths – not visible or narrow with potential to fall off.	Participant gets lost. Participants injures themselves on solo. Participant falls from height.	Safety Briefing ahead of time by facilitator. Agreed timeframes and distance between participant and facilitator. Participant to carry radio. Facilitator at known local position with first aid kit, SOS beacon and group shelter.
Monitoring Competent facilitator Participants know how to seek help	Participant gets lost. Participants injures themselves on solo. Participant falls from height.	Facilitator first aid trained. Agreed timeframes and distance between participant and facilitator. Participant to carry radio. Facilitator at known local position with first aid kit, SOS beacon and group shelter.

Site features – Specific hazards of individual site	Site specific hazards occurring.	Dynamic risk assessment taken at each site.
Weather Extreme Weather Cold Reduced visibility	Heat stroke /dehydration / hypothermia / sunburn Discomfort / hypothermia Reduction in visibility / lightning strikes / unable to keep upright	Waterproofs and extra layers of clothing carries. Professional weather forecast checked. Stick to routes and marked paths. Carry water.
Physical condition of participants. Participants physically capable of taking part in activity.	Participants physically unable to carry out activity and has accident.	Participants seen to be physically fit in outdoors ahead of time and verbally checked before commencement.
Psychological condition of participants. Over confidence / Lack of confidence within the team with consequential risk of other hazards and of a breakdown of discipline / awareness.	Participants psychologically unable to carry out activity and has accident.	Participants seen to be psychologically fit in outdoors ahead of time and verbally checked before commencement.