



ECDE7018

SESSION 4



ETHICS IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

ETHICS COMMITTEE AND THE ETHICAL APPROVAL PROCESS



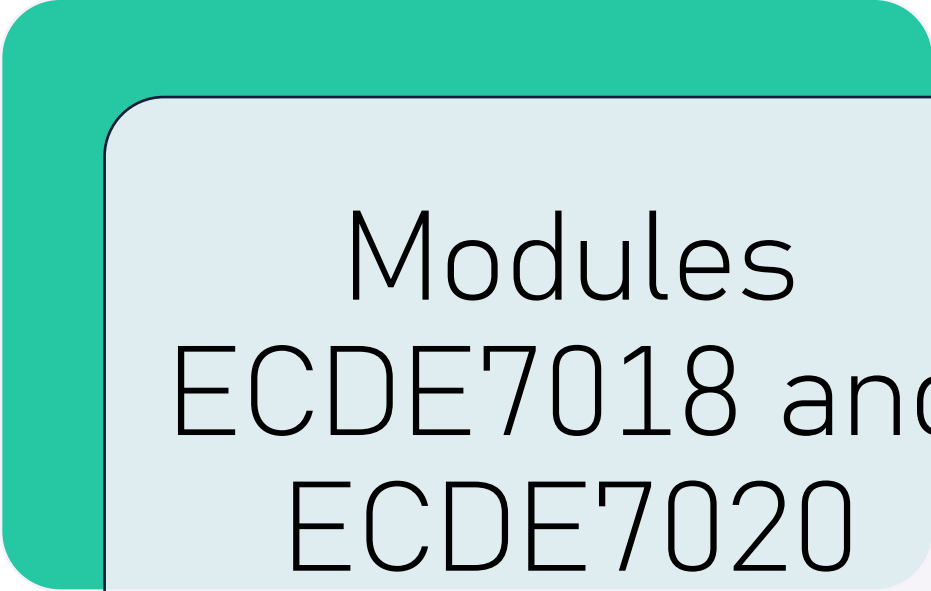
Do I need ethical approval?

All research requires you to consider the ethical implications.

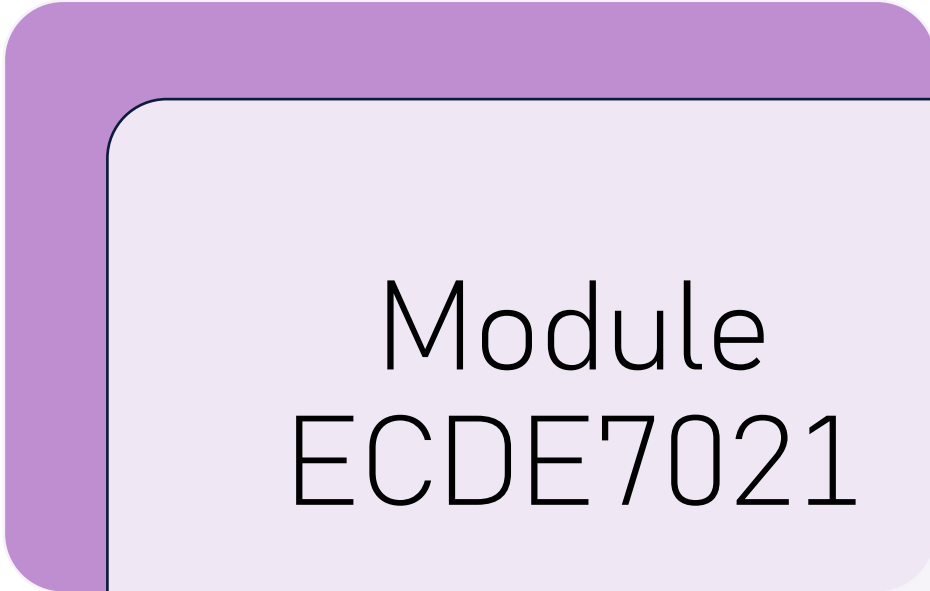
All students must submit an ethics form formally to the Ethics Committee **BEFORE** carrying out any data collection.



What does this mean for you?



Modules
ECDE7018 and
ECDE7020



Module
ECDE7021



ECDE7021

- An ethical approval panel or 'ethics committee' is a group of people, with good collective understanding of research ethics, who meet to discuss the ethical implications of research proposals.
- The ethics committee will consider the researcher's proposed actions in meeting the ethical implications.
- The panel will **approve**, **conditionally approve** or **reject** applications.

Ethics Form

- What can you offer in FULL confidence?
 - never promise what you cannot offer.
- Adults must be fully (and accurately) informed.
- Children must not be misled and should be informed as fully as appropriate for their age and level of attainment.



What is the meaning of
the word 'ethics'?

Write down some
words.



Ethics?



Justice

Rights

Morals

Duty

Fairness

Responsibilities

Privacy

Respect

Integrity

Minimise harm

Dignity

Legalities

Values

Regulations

Common sense

Considerations

Consent

Assent



What do we mean when we say 'behaving ethically'?

What are 'ethics'?

Ethics refers to rules of conduct; typically, to conformity to a code or set of principles (Robson, 2002:65).

In education, this code is set out by the British Education Research Association (BERA).

www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024



Why do we have ethical codes?

Introduced after WWII atrocities in death camps

(the **Nuremberg Code** – a set of research ethics principles for human experimentation set as a result of the subsequent Nuremberg trials at the end of the Second World War)



e.g. how long a human can stay in ice cold water before they freeze.

Why would this information be useful?

Pause for thought:

How do we regard the data that were collected in the death camps?

- Data was rigorously collected
- Data provided information that is highly useful to medical research.
 - How is it useful?

Is it ethical to use this data?

Ethics is dealing with the dilemma of right or wrong.



The Little Albert Experiment

Watson & Rayner (1920)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGn_EoHi0vc

www.verywellmind.com/the-little-albert-experiment-2794994



Obedience Experiment (Milgram, 1963)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBDkJ-Nc3lg

www.simplypsychology.org/milgram.html



Stanford Prison Experiment (Zimbardo, 1971)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAX9b7agT9o

www.simplypsychology.org/zimbardo.html



An Ethical Dilemma



The mood at Swansea High School is tense with anticipation.

For the first time in many, many years, the rugby team has made it to the semi-finals. The community is excited too, and everyone is making plans to attend the big event next Saturday.



Paul, the coach, has been waiting for years for his team to reach the semi-final.

With only one more week to practice, he tells the team that no-one can break the rules...



The Rules...

Everyone must be at practice each night at the scheduled time –

NO EXCEPTIONS.

Anyone who breaks the rules will be suspended for one full week.



On Tuesday, Inam is late to the practice.

Inam is late because she had to take her little sister to the doctor as she is very ill.



If Paul follows the rules,
Inam will not play in the
semi-finals.

But the whole team is
depending on her.

What should Paul do?



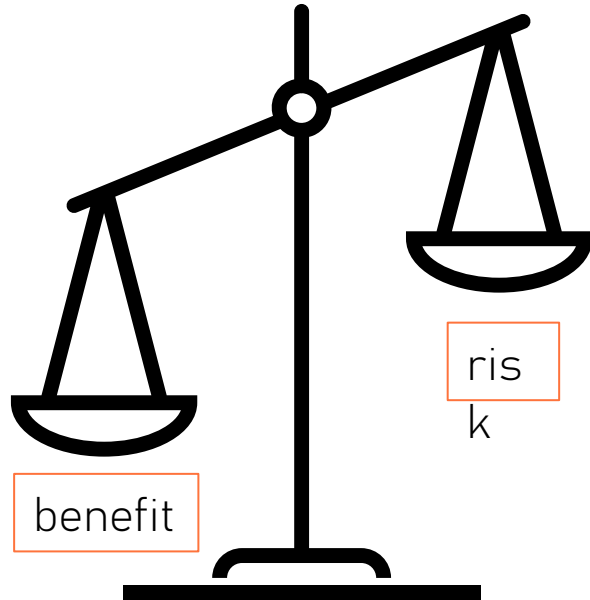
On Wednesday, Julia is late because she was given detention for not doing her homework.

Julia is a brilliant rugby player. If she does not play, they are unlikely to win.

What should Paul do now?



Are 'ethics' absolute?



Ethical decisions are usually **choices** related to the balance between benefit and risk.

These choices are guided by:

- Ethical guidelines
- Ethics committees
- Ethics approval processes

Are 'ethics' absolute?



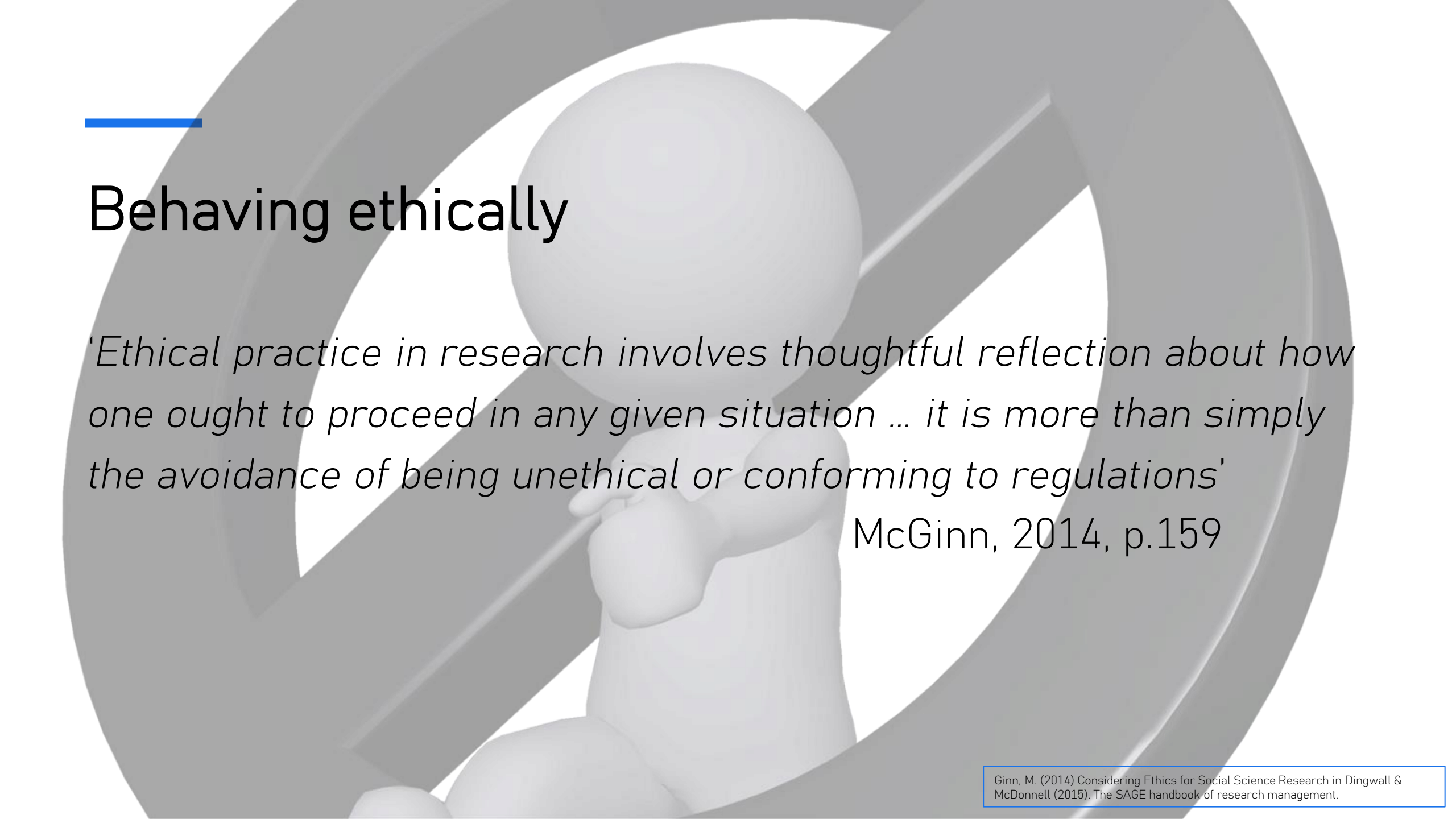
Copyright © 2011 R.J. Romero. www.hipaaCartoons.com

"I've been getting annoying pangs of conscience when faced with ethical dilemmas. Got anything for that?"

Is there a 'right' and 'wrong' response to an ethical dilemma?

On the one hand, we want to improve a learning experience which is of benefit (to learners, teachers, other participants).

On the other hand, it could cause harm.



Behaving ethically

'Ethical practice in research involves thoughtful reflection about how one ought to proceed in any given situation ... it is more than simply the avoidance of being unethical or conforming to regulations'

McGinn, 2014, p.159



The background features several vertical, slightly curved light trails in blue, purple, orange, and yellow, creating a sense of motion and depth. A solid blue vertical bar is positioned on the left side of the image.

Where do ethical
considerations fit
into this
assignment?

Assessment Component 2 – 50%

Written Assignment: 3750 words

Submission: **06/01/25**

Return: 03/02/25

With reference to relevant literature, identify an area of research you may want to explore. Outline your preferred approach (qualitative/quantitative/mixed methods) to this enquiry by focusing on one or more of your research questions. Plan an appropriate data collection process and associated analysis of the data, reflecting on its strengths and limitations.

Section	Suggested content	Suggested word count
Introduction	Briefly introduce your topic and the research question that you have chosen to focus on in this part of the assignment. What is the aim of your study?	200
Chosen method	What is/are your chosen method(s)? • Quantitative • Qualitative • Mixed-methods approach	1000
Sampling	What is/are your sampling method(s)?	600
Ethics	What are the ethical considerations that relate to your study?	500
Research tool(s)	What is/are the research tool(s) that you have selected?	1000
Data analysis method(s)	Which method(s) of data analysis have you chosen?	400
Conclusion	<u>Summarise</u> your intentions.	50

Assessment Component 3 – 25%

Written Assignment: 1875-word equivalent

Submission: **05/01/26**

Return: 02/02/26

Consider the ethical implications of your identified research question, critically reflecting upon the ethical issues surrounding the research process.

Using the UWTSD Ethics form, outline the responses you would provide to address the research question(s) discussed in Component 2.

. You will need to complete the following sections:

- **H** – Anticipated risks
- **I** - Feedback, consent and confidentiality
- **J** - Data protection and storage

- 
- SECTION L: Types of Personal Data
 - SECTION M: Participant Information and Consent
 - SECTION Q: Risk Assessment

SECTION M: Participant Information and Consent

Information for participants

It is normally expected that those participating in research should do so having given their informed consent. If this is not appropriate or practical, explicit justification must be provided, in line with prevailing disciplinary conventions. Please note however, that informed consent to participate in the research is separate from consent to process (e.g. collect, analyse, store, reuse or share) personal data, as the University's lawful basis for processing personal data in research activities is part of its 'public task'.

YES

NO

N/A

- 1 Will you obtain written consent for participation?
- 2 Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?
- 3 Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?
- 4 Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their participation (if relevant)?
- 5 Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?
- 6 Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their participation (if relevant)?
- 7 Will participants be made aware of the information that may be collected and for what purpose?

SECTION L: Types of Personal Data

Personal Data

Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018)?

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 and transcription of such are considered to be personal data.

If you ticked YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:

SECTION Q: Risk Assessment

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

Risk:

2 Social risks: disclosures that could affect participants standing in the community, in their family and their job.

YES

NO

Legal risks: activities that could result in the participant, researchers and / or University committing an offence; activities that might lead to a participant disclosing criminal activity to a researcher which would necessitate reporting to enforcement authorities; activities that could result in a civil claim for compensation

YES

NO

How will you address any risks?

How will you address any risks?

YES

NO

How will you address any risks?

How will you address any risks?

YES

NO

How will you address any risks?

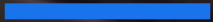
Assessment Information

ECDE7018 Assessment Component 1 Proposal Form DOCX

ECDE7018 PG2 Form AC3 DOCX

Title Page Template DOCX

Researcher Positionality and Position





Researcher Positionality

In a qualitative research process, the researcher is the main instrument of data collection, making positionality an important aspect to acknowledge in research.

Positionality is an acknowledgment of where the researcher stands relative to their research participants.



Researcher Positionality

Positionality refers to a number of self-identifications ranging from:

- the researcher's background
- personal experiences
- gender identity
- national origin
- other factors that the researcher brings to the research process.



Researcher Positionality

It can also be:

- an acknowledgment of their outsider status relative to the study participants
- personal stories about interactions
- power dynamics with the study population
- life experiences

that bring the researcher to the research question that they are addressing.

Researcher Positionality: Unconscious Bias

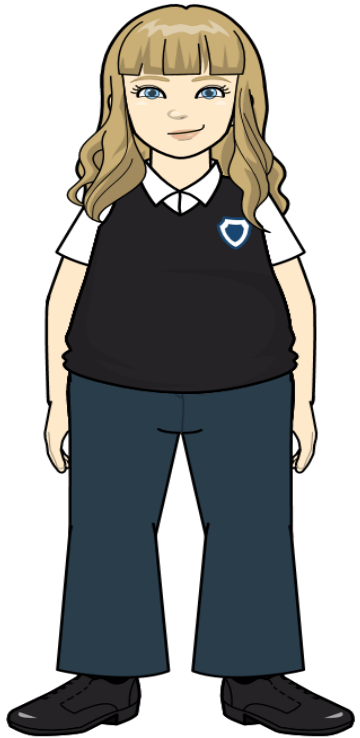


Ethical Practice

- making (ethical) judgements about behaviour

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3h-T3KQNxU>

Who likes



Sophie



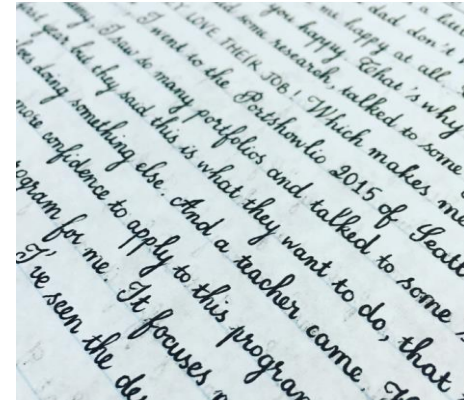
Jenny



Sanje



Jack



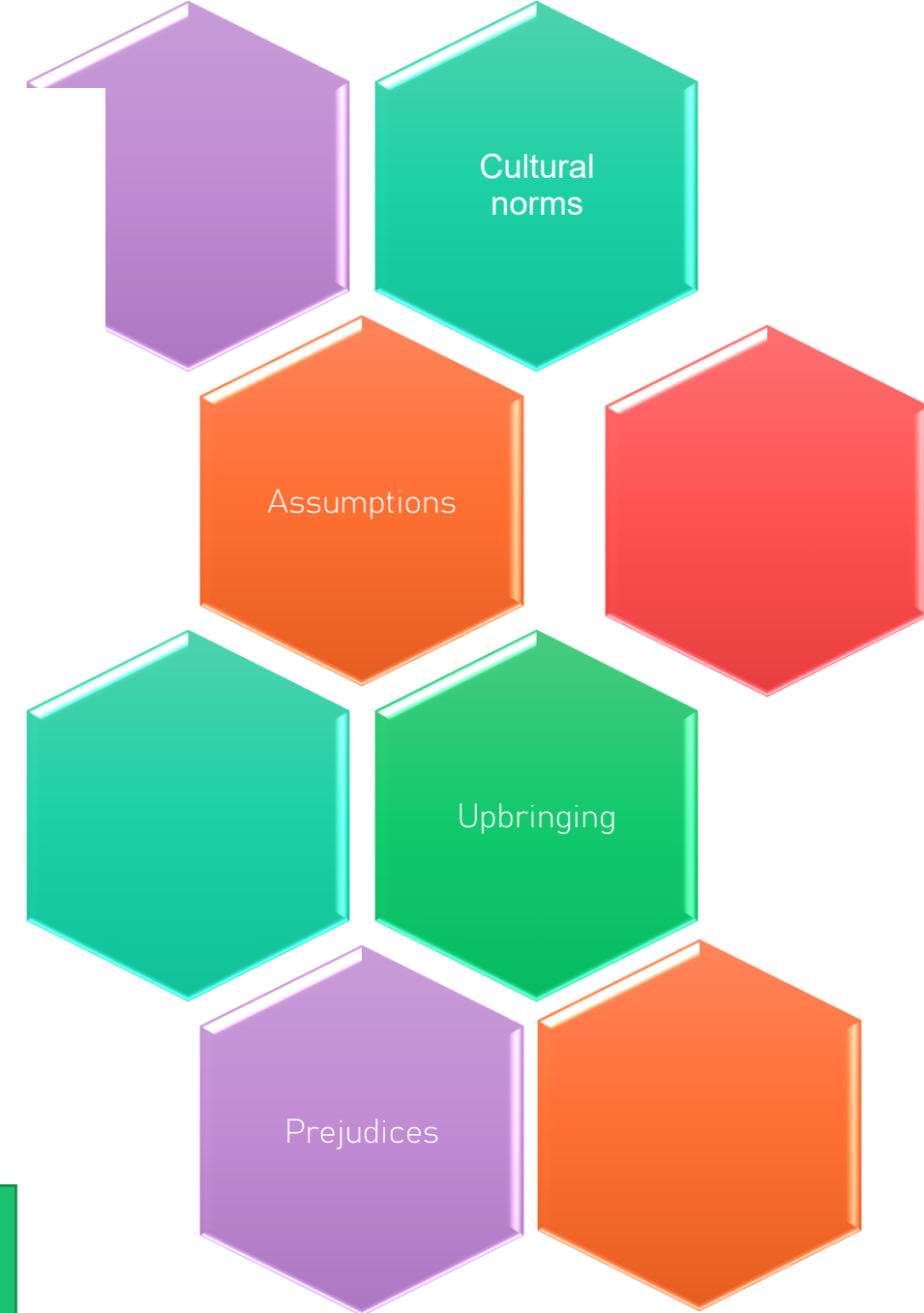
Importance of recognising researcher positionality

- Everybody brings a set of cultural norms and practices to their working environment which affects their attitudes and behaviour.

In research, this can affect how you interpret situations.

- We all make assumptions which comes from a variety of sources: upbringing, media, work colleagues, neighbourhood, religion, experiences etc.
- Many of these prejudices are so deep, they are often sub-conscious.

We can do something about our prejudices by being aware of them and finding out more information to



Types of unconscious bias

Like me/ Affinity

- Affinity bias is when we favour people who we share qualities with.

Beauty

- Beauty bias suggests we believe a more beautiful person complete a task better than someone less conventionally attractive.

Contrast

- Contrast effect is when we compare one thing to another rather than the whole piece of work on its merits.

Gender

- Gender bias is when you think one gender may be better at a task than another. (She has lovely writing.)

Halo

- Halo bias is when you focus on one great positive while ignoring any flaws.

Horns

- This is the opposite to the Halo effect. Someone did one bad thing, so there is an assumption that they will do more bad things.

Having unconscious bias is normal

- Ignoring it is not ok.
- It impacts how we value, group, treat and engage with people every day.



STRATEGIES TO REDUCE EFFECT OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



Challenge stereotypes



Notice in others



Be aware of own



Look for alternative points of view



Spend time with people different to yourself



Challenge assumptions
Challenge traditions

How could your implicit bias affect what you record as a non-participant observer in a research study?

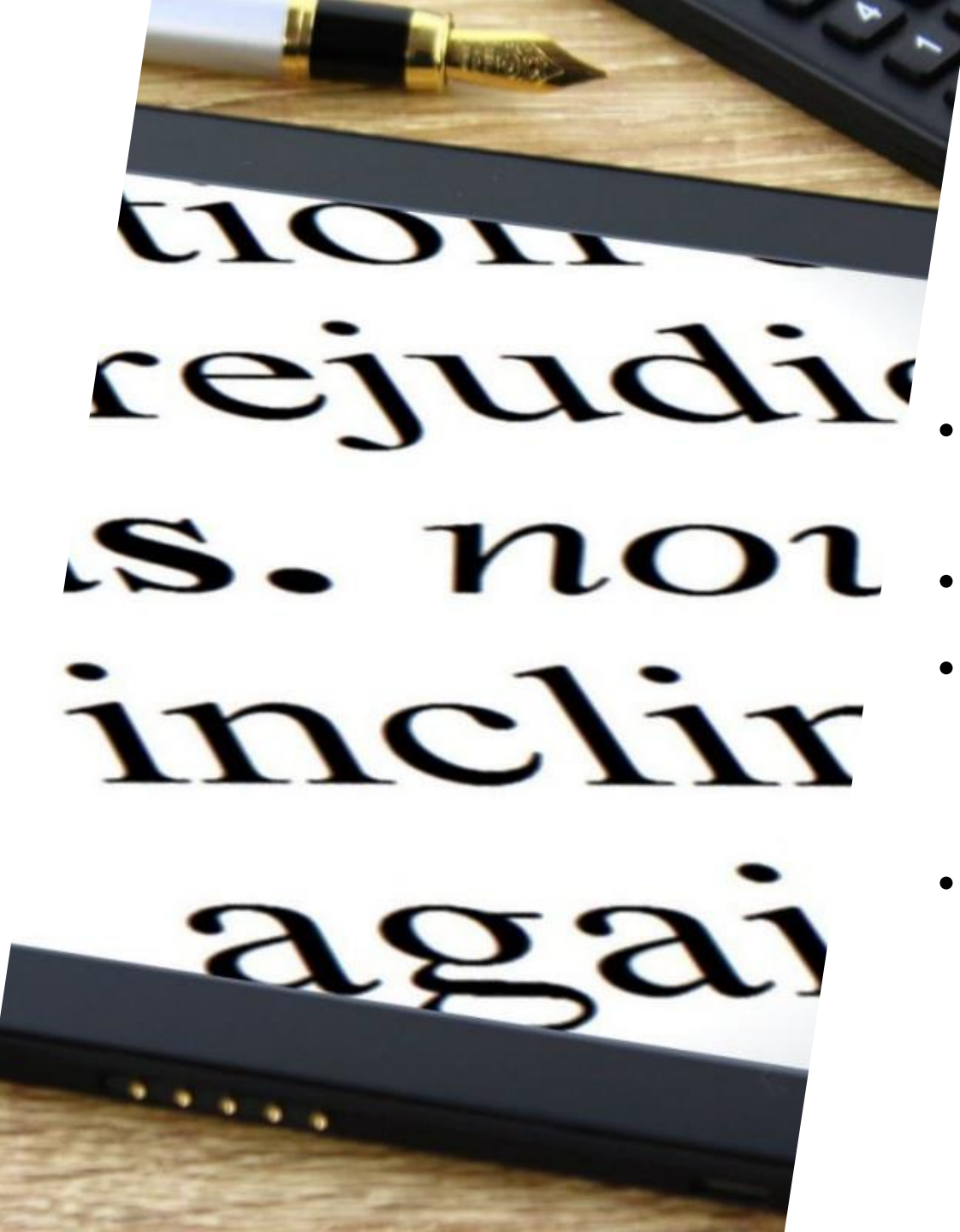


<https://youtu.be/MTYn1WRCuoU>

- Just as children are pre-programmed with bias, adults are too.
- What effect might that have on the validity of your observations?

Another example:

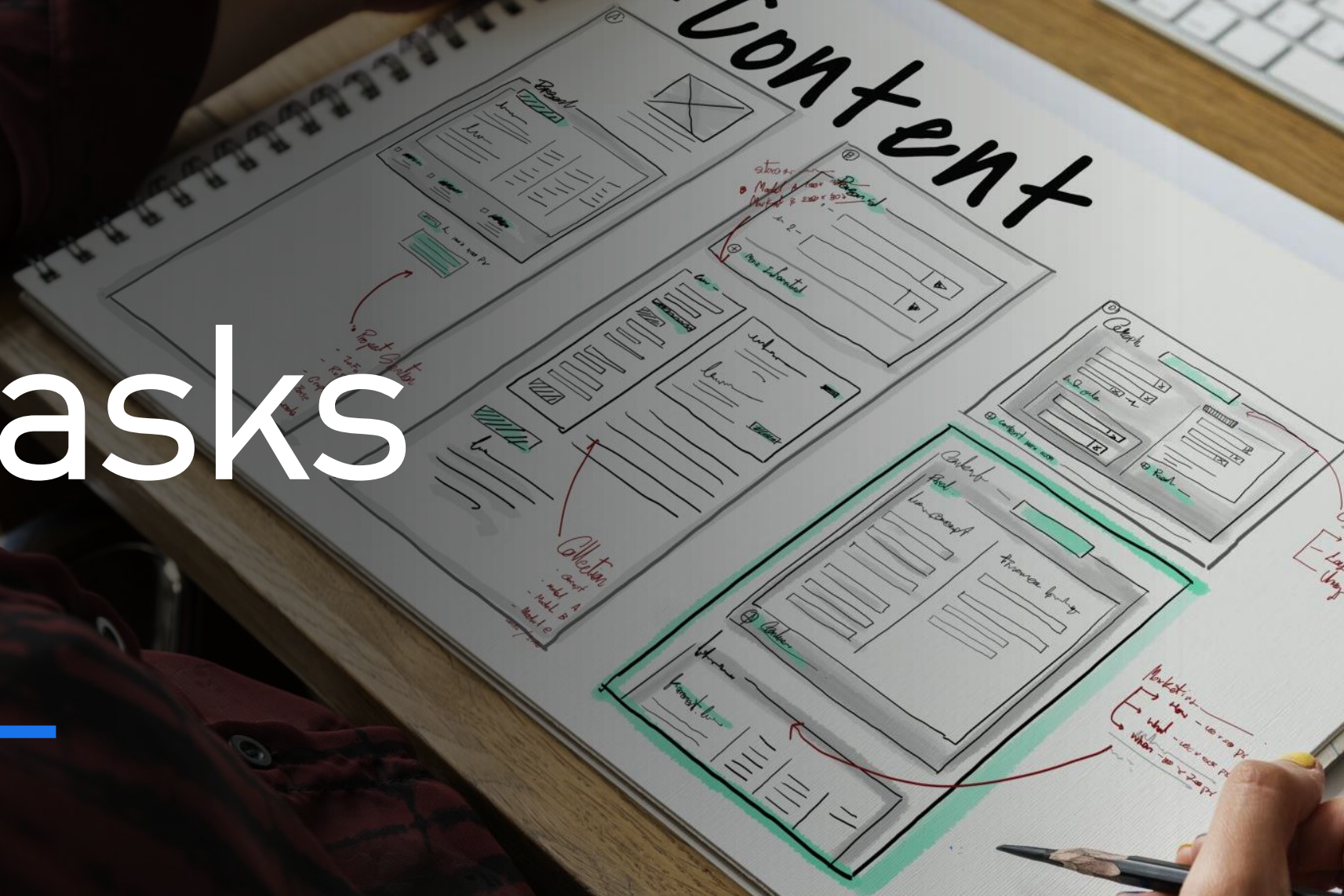
www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRZPw-9sJtQ



Researcher Positionality

- Your experiences shape your implicit bias and your positionality.
- It can affect how you interpret data.
- To assume that we treat everyone the same and not see colour or differences has its limitations (Michael & Samuel, 2012)
- By being aware of your position, it means you can look for alternative points of view and challenge assumptions.

#Content



Task 1 – Reading Activity

- Read Holmes (2020)
- Moodle / Ethics

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Researcher Positionality - A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research - A New Researcher Guide

Andrew Gary Darwin Holmes

School of Education, University of Hull, Hull, England

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5147-0761>

Abstract

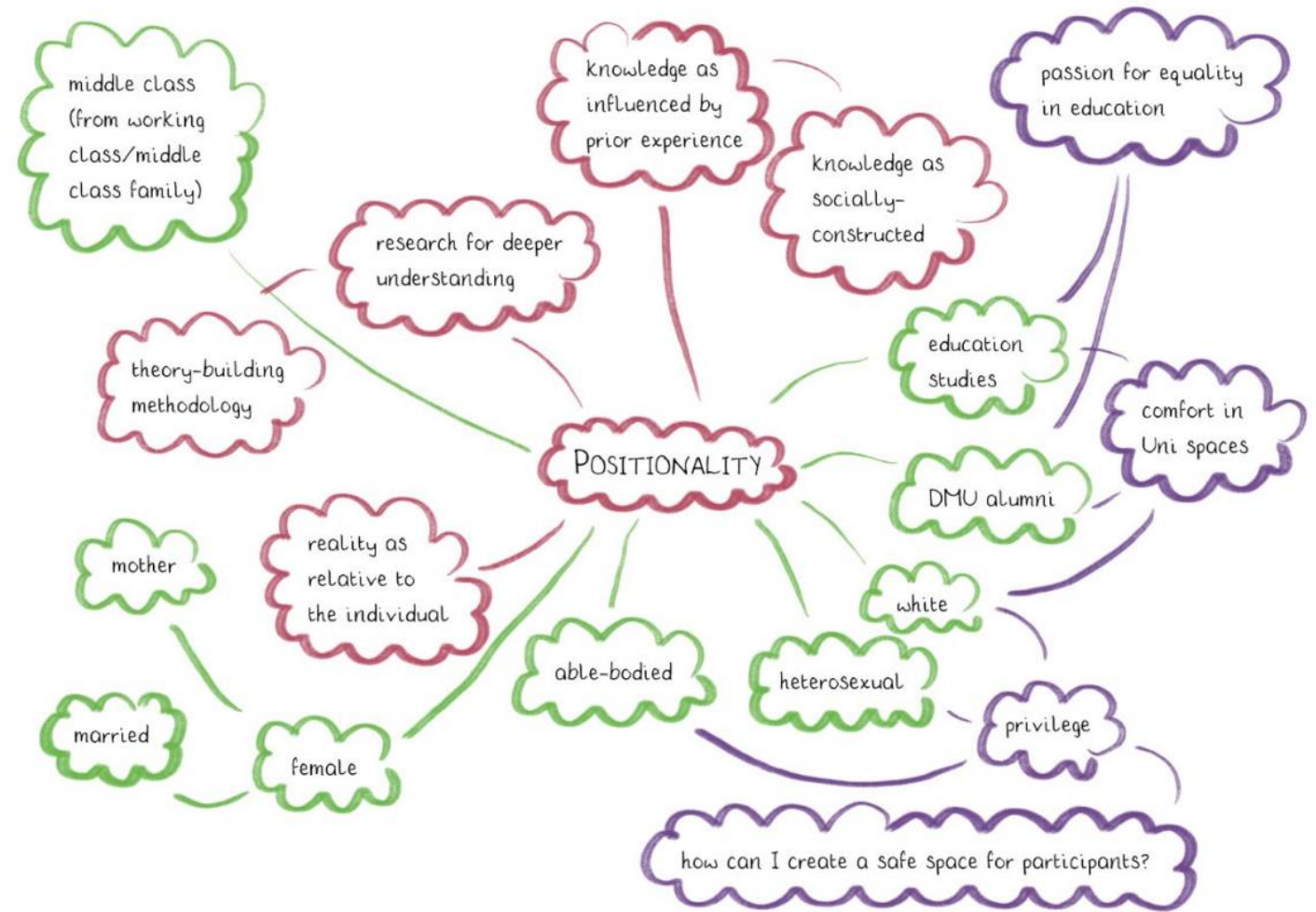
Masters and PhD student researchers in the social sciences are often required to explore and explain their positionality, as, in the social world, it is recognized that their ontological and epistemological beliefs influence their research. Yet novice researchers often struggle with identifying their positionality. This paper explores researcher positionality and its influence on and place in the research process. Its purpose is to help new postgraduate researchers better understand positionality so that they may incorporate a reflexive approach to their research and start to clarify their positionality.

Keywords: Researcher Positionality, Reflexivity, Epistemology, Ontology, Insider and Outsider research

Task 2 – Mapping Activity

Consider:

- How does my identity influence my views?
- What are my views on the subject I am investigating?
- What are my views on my participants?
- What are my views on the research process and context?
- How has my positionality changed over time?



Jacobson, D., & Mustafa, N. (2019). Social Identity Map: A Reflexivity Tool for Practicing Explicit Positionality in Critical Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919870075>