APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically.

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".

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Sanobia Nosheen Ahmed
2	Student Number:	2314145
3	Email address:	2314145@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
4	Programme of Study:	BSC Applied Computing
5	Supervisor:	Dr. Alireza Esfahani

SECTION B: 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	**NA**	☐
4	***NA***	☐

SECTION C: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	STUDY Track		
2	Proposed start date:	1-Apr-2026	Proposed end date:	30-Jun-2026

Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words in each section)

Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below:

- *Purpose of Research Activity*
- *Proposed Research Question*
- *Aims of Research Activity*
- *Objectives of Research Activity*

	Demonstrate, briefly, how **Existing Research** has informed the proposed activity and explain • *What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge* • *How it addresses an area of importance.*
3	**Purpose of Research Activity** This research aims to explore how students track their studies and manage their learning activities. The study focuses on understanding students' study habits, time management, and the tools or methods they use to monitor their academic progress. The purpose of this research is to identify patterns in how students organise their studies and to determine whether study-tracking methods improve academic performance. The research will collect information directly from students to gain real insights into their daily study routines. (this box should expand as you type)
4	**Research Question** How do students track their studies, and how does this affect their learning and academic performance? (this box should expand as you type)
5	**Aims of Research Activity** 1. To explore how students organise and track their study activities 2. To identify common study tracking methods used by students 3. To examine the relationship between study tracking and academic performance 4. To provide recommendations for improving study habits (this box should expand as you type)
6	**Objectives of Research Activity** • To design and distribute a questionnaire to students • To collect data on study habits and tracking methods • To analyse student responses • To identify key trends and patterns • To present findings and recommendations (this box should expand as you type)
	Proposed data collection methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that **may** be used in the research activity to collect data, 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	A questionnaire will be the primary tool for collecting data for this study. The purpose of the questionnaire is to collect data regarding students' time management strategies, study habits, and academic progress monitoring techniques. To allow students to give more thorough answers, there will be a few open-ended questions in addition to a mix of closed-ended questions, such as multiple-choice and rating scale questions. Students will receive the questionnaire in person. This strategy will enable effective data collection from more people in a shorter amount of time. The goal of the study will be communicated before participation, and participants will receive explicit instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. To protect privacy and promote truthful responses, all comments will be gathered anonymously. No personally identifiable information will be needed. Students are free to discontinue participation at any point prior to turning in their answers. Both quantitative (such as the frequency of study tracking and the kinds of procedures employed) and qualitative (such as individual judgements on the efficacy of study tracking methods) data will be gathered. While qualitative replies will offer a more in-depth understanding of students' experiences, quantitative data will enable the discovery of patterns and trends.

	Only the researcher will have access to the responses after the data has been safely recorded and archived. After that, the data will be analysed to support the goals and objectives of the study. (this box should expand as you type)

SECTION D: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	**YES**	**NO**
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☐	NA
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: NA (this box should expand as you type)	☐	☒

If you have ticked NO to every question then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and you may skip section E and continue to section F.

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

SECTION E: Intended Participants

	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: Complete this only if your participants cannot give consent. This includes animals NA (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?	4 TO 5 *(this box should expand as you type)*
11	Who will the participants be?	Classmates. *(this box should expand as you type)*
12	How will you identify the participants?	Study with me *(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			
	You should be able to tick YES for all of these questions. If not, then explain why not in this box. NA *(this box should expand as you type)*			

	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			
	You should be able to tick NO for most of these questions. For any cases that you have ticked YES then provide details in this box. If you are using cameras/voice recorders to record interviews, then please state that in this box. NA *(this box should expand as you type)*			

SECTION F: 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.	
1	**Risks to participants** For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information. If you have identified in section D that there are no participants, then enter N/A and go skip to question 3.	
	Risk to participants: Participants may feel slight discomfort when answering questions about their study habits. *(this box should expand as you type)*	*How you will mitigate the risk to participants:* Participants will be informed that participation is voluntary, and they can skip any questions or withdraw at any time. *(this box should expand as you type)*
2	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	
	No sensitive, illegal, or highly personal topics will be included in the questionnaire. *(this box should expand as you type)*	
3	**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: Possible risks include time pressure and workload stress. *(this box should expand as you type)*	*How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:* The researcher will follow a structured timeline and seek guidance from the supervisor when needed. *(this box should expand as you type)*
4	**University/institutional risks** For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: There is a small risk related to data protection and confidentiality. *(this box should expand as you type)*	*How you will mitigate the risk to the University:* All data will be handled in accordance with GDPR and university policies. *(this box should expand as you type)*

5	**Environmental risks** For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: There are no environmental risks associated with this research. *(this box should expand as you type)*	*How you will mitigate the risk to environment:* NA *(this box should expand as you type)*

SECTION G: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

If you have identified in section D that there are no participants, then enter skip this section and continue to section H.

1	**Feedback** What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	At the conclusion of the survey, participants will get a brief debriefing outlining the goal of the study and the intended use of their data. They will be made aware that their answers are voluntary and anonymous. Participants will have access to an email address where they can ask questions or get a summary of the findings. As soon as the questionnaire is finished, a debriefing will take place. *(this box should expand as you type)*
2	**Informed consent** Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	Before participating in the study, participants will get comprehensive information on the study's objectives, the nature of involvement, and the intended use of their data. Additionally, they will be made aware that participation is entirely voluntary and that they are free to stop at any moment before sending in their answers. Before filling out a paper questionnaire, participants will be required to sign a consent form. Before any data is gathered, this procedure guarantees that each participant provides informed consent. . *(this box should expand as you type)*
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.
	No names or other personally identifiable information will be needed, and all participant replies will be gathered anonymously. The information will be kept private and utilised exclusively for this study. To ensure that no specific participant may be recognised, the results will be presented in a generalised manner. *(this box should expand as you type)*

SECTION H: 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*		**x**

	video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.		
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	This includes audio/video data of participants but can also include IP addresses and usernames. Names, addresses and emails also count, as do consent forms. NA *(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),*	☐	xx
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	What counts as 'sensitive' will differ between cultures. Any information on behaviour that is not in accordance with cultural norms would count as sensitive personal data. NA *(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:		
	All data will be stored securely on a personal computer and, where applicable, in manual (paper) form. Passwords will be used to secure digital data and any portable storage devices. Paper documents will be kept in a secure location. No personally identifiable information will be kept, and all data will be anonymised. Only the researcher will have access to the data, and backup copies will be safely stored to prevent data loss.		

	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	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/or any international equivalent):		
	This includes data such as drafts of your thesis as well as experimental or survey data. An example of suitable text is given below. *NA* *(this box should expand as you type)*		
20	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Normally, the principal researcher, possibly also the supervisor and, if the project has an industrial partner, a representative of that partner. Possibly also an external examiner or second marker? *(this box should expand as you type)*		
21	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Usually, the principal researcher. *(this box should expand as you type)*		
22	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.		
	Only paper questionnaires will be used to gather all data. Only the researcher will have access to the completed surveys, which will be safely kept in a locked drawer or folder. Anonymity will be guaranteed since no personally identifiable information will be gathered. The information will be kept private and utilised exclusively for this study. *(this box should expand as you type)*		
22	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	☒	
23	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	☒	

SECTION I: Use of AI tools

Use of generative AI and other AI-based tools There are a number of ethical issues relating to the use of generative AI and other AI-based tools, including data security, output bias, and output errors. In general you should assume that any generative AI or other AI-based tool that you pay to use is more secure and accurate than one which is free to use. Will the research use AI tools to do any of the following:		**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**
1	Capture data?	☐	☒	☐
2	Generate and/or edit text?	☐	☒	☐
3	Generate graphics?	☐	☒	☐
4	Generate video?	☐	☒	☐
5	Generate sound/music?	☐	☒	☐

6	Generate code?	☐	☒	☐
7	Generate synthetic data?	☐	☒	☐
8	Analyse data?	☐	☒	☐
9	Analyse personal or sensitive data?	☐	☒	☐
10	Classify data?	☐	☒	☐
11	Do you intend to use the free version of any AI tools?	☐	☒	☐
If you have answered **YES** to any of questions O1-O11, please provide justification detailing why this is necessary for the research.				
12	NA *(this box should expand as you type)*			

SECTION J: 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:**	Sanobia	**Date:** 18 Mar 2026
2	Supervisor:	Alireza Esfahani	**Date:02/04/2026**
3	Signature:	*Alireza*	