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Module 3 BMPF7008 Work-Based Learning Project

Is mixed voice quality perceived as belting in Hispanic cultures?

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WBL PROJECT PROPOSAL

1. Project Title

Is mixed voice quality perceived as belting in Hispanic cultures?

2. The context

a. **What is the setting for the project?**

The purpose of this research is to evaluate Hispanic perceptions regarding voice qualities ranging from a lighter mix to a heavier belt to determine those that are perceptually identified as belt quality and to evaluate the perceived impact on vocal health, in producing those qualities.

b. **What is the current (and, if relevant, historic) situation in this setting?**

In my experience, there is a cultural preference for belting quality that is heavier and possibly strained. I have noticed as well that there is limited regard for vocal health.

3. The justification

a. **Why are you undertaking this project?**

The findings of this research are intended to improve my professional practice, as well as support my students' performance and vocal health as it relates to the production of belt quality. Making an impact in my culture and community is also a key point of why I am doing this research.

b. **How does this project sit within the context you have described?**

Understanding the perceptions of Hispanic singers regarding mixed and belt voice qualities.

4. The intended impact

a. **What do you hope to impact/achieve/accomplish through this project?**

This research activity aims to identify, from Hispanic speakers' perceptions, the accepted range of vocal fold mass to be considered as a belt, ranked from lighter to heavier.

b. **What might the wider ramifications of this project be to the context described?**

It is really important to discover singers' perceptions of the weight of the voice regarding vocal health, which ultimately contributes to their desired tonal outcome. Balancing vocal health and sustainability, with culturally appropriate quality, is the desired impact.

5. The outlined intention

a. In brief, what do you intend to do, how/when/where do you intend to do it?

- Define the range of vocal qualities that are considered/classified belting, and their associated definitions, using academically available information
- Select Hispanic voice teachers and singing students as participants (mainly in Mexico City), and evaluate their perceptions and opinions through qualitative research methods.
- Evaluate the perceptions of sustainability, vocal health, and acceptance as belt quality based upon listening samples and establish strategies that can be used to train students in the production of a healthy belt quality.
- Conclude if lighter belt quality (mixed voice) would be accepted in Hispanic culture.

b. Proposed methods, including a justification of those methods

This investigation will use qualitative research. Participants will be 5 singing students and 5 voice teachers. Purposive sampling would be the type of sampling that will be selected for this research. According to Winter (2020), this type of sampling occurs when the researcher makes a judgmental decision regarding the characteristics of the subjects. For better performance of the participants, students must have the range and vocal technique to belt, and voice instructors must be certified or prove their expertise in voice teaching. Voice teachers and students will participate in the questionnaire next to be described, but a selection of two students will also try belting techniques (described in point 5).

1. Literature Review

Books, articles, and journals are available in the UWTSD library as well as The Voice Student Centre resources to review and analyse literature related to mixed voice qualities, belt qualities, vocal health and vocal mass, including both Hispanic and English sources to compare training methodologies and perceptions of the belt, as they relate to vocal health.

2. Questionnaire

Throughout a questionnaire, participants will hear samples of 5-10 seconds, of different singers with different voice qualities, ranging from a lighter belt (mix) to a heavier belt. Participants should describe their perceptions through yes/no and open-ended questions. Samples will be selected with my tutor, and we will focus on choosing evident examples of different ways in which belting is approached. Our ear and the history of the chosen artists will give us an insight into the type of singing each sample represents.

3. Perceptive journal

I will evaluate the samples through my perceptions, and document my personal research process and conclusions, as well as the results obtained with my students.

4. Designing strategies to achieve a healthier lighter belt quality

The literature review, the questionnaire results and the perceptive journal will be key sources for my own development of a teaching strategy for belting to Hispanic students.

5. Teaching strategies to achieve a healthier lighter belt quality

2 students from the initial group of participants, will be subjects of a voice lesson and my strategy will be tested with them.

6. Interview students about their perceptions

The same 2 students will be interviewed to obtain more insights on the topic. Perceptions and sensations of the teaching session will be discussed in depth.

c. An expected timeline

	MARCH 1-14	MARCH 14-31	APRIL 1-14	APRIL 15 - 30	MAY 1-14	MAY 15-31	JUNE 1-14	JUNE 15-30	JULY 1-14	JULY 15-31
ETHICS FORM										
LITERATURE REVIEW										
PROPOSAL										
CREATION AND REVIEW OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS										
RESEARCH										
INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS										
DRAFT MODULE 3										
CORRECTIONS AND LAST DETAILS										
JUMP START 2 MIN PRESENTATION CHALLENGE										
FINAL SUBMISSION WRITTEN PAPER										
FINAL PRESENTATION OF RESULTS										

6. The ethics and insider research

a. A brief explanation of the ethical implications of the project, as well as the impact of being an insider researcher upon the project

The people who participate in the listening study (perception subjects) as well as the students who try the strategies (test subjects), are at risk of emotional distress and confusion regarding the listening task and data protection. Risks will be mitigated by reassuring that there is no right or wrong answer. Storing all gathered information in a secure hard drive, and a protected folder on the cloud will be fundamental for the protection of participants.

Test subjects are also prone to vocal harm if trying to practise belt with a poor technique. Risks are mitigated by encouraging the fact that this research is a safe space to explore perceptions, as well as the idea that trying new vocal styles or techniques, should preferably be done when supervised by a certified vocal instructor. Subjects will be asked to share if something does not feel proper or comfortable honestly.

Ethical implications for myself involve a conflict of interest because of my closeness to the culture and emotional distress if feeling the pressure. I will mitigate those risks by creating research instruments as objectively as possible, taking care of my general health and time management objectives while working on this project, and ensuring that this project will add positive value to the participants' vocal practice.

7. Personal learning outcomes

The importance of the findings of this research related to my professional practice is enormous. Belting is a theme that passionates me and that most of my students want to achieve. It is fundamental for me to extend my knowledge and perceptions to grow and create a positive impact on my students.

Scott, S. (2022) 'Insights, Considerations, and Suggestions for the Practitioner-Researcher in Voice Studies', Voice & speech review, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), pp. 1–20. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2022.2137972>.

Winter, Debbie. (2020). Understanding Research Methods: From Singing Teacher to Practitioner Researcher. 10.13140/RG.2.2.16046.13122.

Winter, D. (2022) 'Exploring the Narrative: Voice Practitioner Research and the Literature Review Process'.

Introduction

This research focuses on Hispanic students' and teachers' perception of mixed voice as it relates to belt quality, considering cultural, phonetical and vocal health aspects. Precautions and special attention should be taken into account when teaching and executing a belting technique; singers should be cautious about their vocal health and use common sense when singing to avoid pushing (Peckham, 2010). A mixed voice approach, with no chest dominance when belting, may generate a less risky voice quality.

I am a Mexican singer, arranger, composer, and vocal instructor. I focus on contemporary commercial music; belting has become my style's protagonist. As a Latin American vocal teacher, it has been my experience that our culture prefers heavier and more strained belts. Being part of a Postgraduate Certificate from the United Kingdom has also given me another perspective regarding vocal health that has raised my concern for the health and well-being of the singers with whom I am working.

In my experience, the general concerns about vocal health are minimal in Mexico and Latin American countries compared to the United States of America or the United Kingdom. When we link this phenomenon to the execution of belting, the desired outcomes of Hispanic singers when executing this particular technique are often unhealthy. To address this particular concern, I hope to evaluate a range of vocal fold mass conditions, from lighter to heavier, to determine the ones that may be acceptable for the perception of belt quality. Qualitative data will be gathered to learn about the opinions of voice students and vocal instructors who are from Spain and Latin America.

The term "Hispanic" refers to the people of Spain and Spanish-Speaking countries, especially those from Latin America (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010). Understanding the perceptions of Hispanic singers and professionals regarding mixed and belt voice qualities could give me more tools to offer healthier solutions in my professional practice without diminishing the tonal outcome that Spanish and Latin American singers want to achieve. It is also important to consider the specific aspects of the Spanish language, such as their specific phonemes. Identifying and highlighting the most important cultural aspects shaping singers' vocal path is crucial. Creating a positive impact in my community's execution when singing and caring for their vocal health is one of my primary goals.

Literature review

In the last 100 years, belting has become a prominent aspect of CCM, Commercial Contemporary Music (Jennings, 2014). Belting has historically received less scientific attention in research and pedagogical training practices, than classical genders (Lo Vetri, 2008). There has been even less research focused on belt quality within the Spanish/Latin American communities.

Belting was associated with vocal unhealthiness (McGlashan et Al., 2017). However, even though there is still no consensus on the definition of belting (DeLeo LeBorgne et Al., 2010), several authors now conclude that there are various ways of producing healthy/mixed singing (McGlashan et al., 2017).

Sundberg et Al. (2012) defined belting as "the speechlike, yell-like, or shouting voice production heard in commercial vocal substyles". These substyles include pop, R&B, rock, country, jazz, and musical theatre. Belting also has its production substyles, which can be considered brassy, ringy, speechlike, nasal, or heavy (Popeil, 2007).

Belting is a speechlike type of singing (Lo Vetri, 2008). This technique is known for the high-range utilisation of the chest voice register, which shortens the vocal tract and provides a richer tone colour (Titze, 2007). An elevated larynx must match the second harmonic with the first formant on open vowels (Schutte et al., 1993). The first academic to investigate the physiological settings of belting was Lawrence V (Mc Glashan et al., 2017). Lawrence (1979) mentions in his book "Laryngeological Observations on Belting" that belting is associated with a high tongue position, a tilted epiglottis and a constricted pharynx. The awareness of this laryngological setting is essential to prevent a vocal fold lesion, which could appear due to misuse by yelling, screaming or singing with improper technique (Yeakel et al., 2021).

It has been noted that some vowels are difficult to produce in belt quality, particularly in the high range; for example, there comes the point where it would be pretty complicated to belt or sing "speechlike" [i] or [ɪ] vowels at a high range (Herbst et al., 2023). The use of systematic vowel modification for achieving the musical demands of a specific song is very likely in CCM singing (Herbst et al., 2023). Most of the available academic information on this topic focuses on Anglo-speaking singers. It is important to note that the lack of resources in Spanish is quite a challenge due to both languages' significant linguistic differences. Vowel modification is limited to Hispanic singers because Spanish vowel phonemes are so limited, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Vowel sound comparison between English and Spanish

Inglés	Español		
I	i	Fit /fɪt/	Iglesia
i		Feet /fi:t/	
e	e	red /rɛd/	Estado
ə		About /əbaʊt/	
ɜ:		Her /hɜ:r/	
æ	æ	Back /bæk/	
ɑ:	ɑ	Map /mæp/	Ayer
ʌ		Ask /ɑ:sk/	
ɒ	o	Far /fɑ:r/	
ɔ:		Cup (kʌp/	
u:	u	Under /ʌndər/	
ʊ		Box /bɒks/	Ostión
		bought /bɔ:t/	
		Too /tu:/	
		Shoe /fu:/	Unión
		Book /bʊk/	

Source: (Finch &Ortiz, 1982)

This last example is one of the various aspects we can acknowledge when working with students whose primary language is Spanish. Another critical factor to consider is the culture's behaviour regarding vocal aspects. Latin American culture must be adequately concerned about vocal health or proper health technique (Dipp, 2022). This factor, and the limited Hispanic academic resources, could play an essential part in the general behaviour of singers and voice professionals of the region. One of the few literature resources in Spanish describes belting as "what happens when the chest register extends to higher lengths of the vocal range, avoiding the natural transition to head voice in women or falsetto in men. Belters use only chest registers way ahead of what is usual" (Mel Gowland & Saporiti, 2017, p.137). This description is part of an academic manual created by the National Institute of Music in Argentina. The use of the chest register past its typical point of transition to head voice is an example of the tendency of the tendencies of Latin American Singers. If we compare this literature to the definitions mentioned at the beginning of this section by authors of the Anglo-speaking world, we can note that perceptions vary significantly.

The idea of treating belting as chest-voice-only has impacted, significantly the performance of Hispanic singers. In my practice, I have noticed that some singers want to achieve the "belted sound", but the only acceptable way is to accomplish it only with the chest voice sensation. A normal chest voice quality is not dangerous, but vocal health gets endangered when the chest voice is pushed beyond its limits in terms of maintaining a hyper-functional component.

Breathing also has to be addressed specifically for belting (van Doorn, 2021). Even though there is a limited quantity of academic resources discussing the topic, G. Kayes (2003) recommendation is breathing in the ribs and generating smaller lung volumes when belting.

This investigation aims to determine the culturally accepted tonal outcome when belting without compromising the vocal health of those who want to achieve it.

For this project, it is essential to acknowledge the following terms:

- Vocal fold mass: The Cambridge Dictionary (2020) defines mass as “the amount of matter in any solid object or volume of liquid or gas”. Vocal fold (VF) mass is typically discussed as the amount of vocal fold that makes contact during each cycle of vibration. Increased vocal fold contact elevates both subglottic pressure or the amount of air pressure built below the vocal folds during the time the vocal folds are adducted (together). Increased subglottic pressure also results in an increase in phonatory threshold pressure, or the amount of airflow and pressure needed to set the vocal folds into oscillation. (Obert, 2023).

The vocal fold mass options for this analysis are thick or thin. The Estill Voice Model (EVM) suggests that when the VF mass is thicker, the VF vibrates all the way, from bottom to top (Salsbury, 2014). It also constitutes that when they are thinner, only the top of the folds vibrates together, generating less intensity and volume (Salsbury, 2014).

The following figure illustrates the actions of the cricothyroid and thyroarytenoid muscles.

Figure 2: Cricothyroid

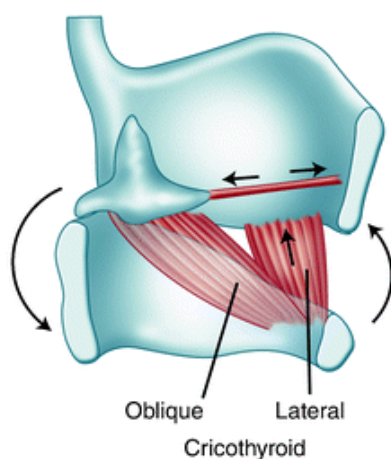
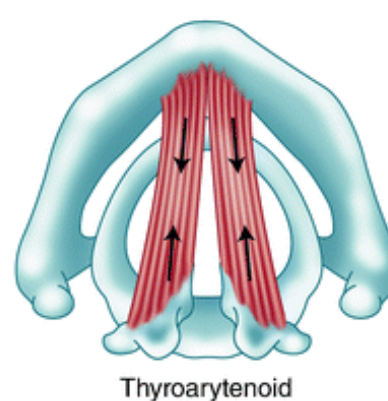


Figure 3: Thyroarytenoid



Source: (Wadie M. et al., 2012)

When the vocal folds become stretched and thinner, higher pitches and increased vibrations occur; the cricothyroid (CT) muscle (Figure 2) takes action in this scenario (Gagné, 2015).

The vocal folds naturally thicken in the lower range due to the contraction of the thyroarytenoid (TA) muscle (Gagné, 2015) (Figure 3).

A healthy belt involves the coordination of both TA and CT muscles (Dipp, 2022), whereas one that maintains minimal CT contraction in the higher range may be considered pushed or hyper-functional.

- Heavy belt: will be used when singers use the thicker vocal fold configuration; greater VF mass.
- Lighter mix: will be used when singers use the thinner (both CT and TA configuration) vocal folds configuration; less VF mass.

Methodology

This project seeks to understand the perceptions of Hispanic singers regarding belt quality using culturally sensitive data collection measures. This purpose strongly suggests that qualitative methods should lead the research to achieve a holistic understanding.

Qualitative methods are commonly applied in social sciences (Ugalde & Balbastre, 2013) and tend to be more flexible and open than quantitative research methods (Ugalde & Balbastre, 2013) and are often chosen because of their explanatory power, which also may help clarify quantitative methods' results (Ugalde & Balbastre, 2013). Qualitative research is characterised by its researcher's involvement, holistic perspective, and execution of data analysis during the data collection (Denscombe, 2014).

Due to the objectives and needs of this investigation, the best way to have an accurate insight into what beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings our participants have is by working with qualitative instruments in this research.

SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The type of sampling selected for this research is purposive sampling. According to Winter (2020), this type of sampling happens when the researcher makes a critical decision regarding the characteristics of the subjects.

In this specific case, two groups of participants were selected:

- The first group is comprised of 5 Hispanic vocal instructors, with more than 2 years of teaching experience and certificated by institutions such as the Institute for Vocal Advancement, Modern Vocal Training, Vocology in Practice and Speech Level Singing. Ages vary between 25 to 35 years old.
- The second group includes 5 Hispanic students from different vocal coaches to avoid bias. For better performance, the participants must have the range and vocal technique to belt and be interested in the concept, as well as consider belting part of their style. Ages vary between 17 to 22 years old.

METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

- Survey:

Surveys require selecting a sample from the overall population and the study of it through questionnaires (Costley et al. 2012). This cost-effective method is suitable for collecting qualitative and quantitative data (Denscombe, 2014). Distribution of surveys can be done in

different ways, but choosing an online survey (in contrast to postal, face-to-face, or telephone surveys) offers the advantage of automatically gathering and transferring the answers from the questionnaires (Denscombe, 2014). That is why a short online survey could be a good starting point for this research.

The questionnaire utilizes Google Forms to generate an easily-accessible and professional-looking questionnaire that can be distributed online. The questionnaire is 100% qualitative and includes only open-ended questions. This open-ended questionnaire seeks to analyze the perceptions of Hispanic singers regarding the vocal fold mass configurations as presented in 10 different audio selections. The audio selections include a variety of vocal fold mass conditions that may or may not be perceived by the listeners as belt quality. The questionnaire structure is almost the same for students and vocal instructors, with slight changes to the initial questions. The structure of the questionnaire is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire in English and Spanish

VOCAL COACHES	STUDENTS
INTRODUCTION	
Thank you for your participation. This questionnaire is going to take 10 to 20 minutes of your time. Your answers will be part of a research study conducted by The Voice Study Centre and The University of Wales Trinity St. David MA student body. Answer in English or Spanish, as you prefer. ----- Gracias por participar. Este cuestionario tomará 10-20 minutos de tu tiempo. Tus respuestas serán parte de un estudio realizado por alumnado de The Voice Study Centre y la Universidad de Gales Trinity St. David. Puedes contestar en inglés o en español.	
INICIAL QUESTIONS	
Age/Edad:	
Briefly describe, in your opinion, the characteristics of a great belt (you can exemplify with some artists that achieve your desired characteristics):	Briefly describe your trajectory as vocal instructor (certifications, studies, etc)
QUESTIONS (This section applies to each audio)	
Do you perceive this as a belt? / Consideras que el/la cantante está belteando?	
Why? / ¿Por qué?	
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy / Por favor describe tu percepción del peso de la voz, desde ligero hasta pesado	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness? / ¿Qué percibes en cuánto al brillo o la oscuridad de la voz?	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath? / ¿Qué crees que está pasando con su respiración?	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health? / ¿Escuchas algo que te haga preocuparte acerca de la salud vocal del/la cantante?	
Is this execution sustainable and healthy? / ¿Es esta una ejecución sustentable y saludable?	
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy? / ¿Por qué lo consideras saludable/no-saludable?	

- Perceptive Journal

Throughout the process, I evaluated the samples through my perceptions, documenting my research process, conclusions, and results obtained with my students. This point of the research was personal, just to fulfil the development of the project.

- Development of strategy

After analysing the data, I proposed a teaching strategy for my Hispanic students to find the best vocal fold mass configurations and timbre characteristics from bright to dark, to achieve a healthy and sound-rich belt, culturally accepted by Latin American and Spanish students

- The teaching of the strategy

Following completion of the questionnaire and development of a teaching strategy, two of the five initial survey participants were trained to produce a belt quality that is culturally accepted as well as one that promotes healthy vocal habits. The participants were asked to select a Hispanic contemporary song with a belted note that they wanted to achieve. They were asked to sing it once, and then after specific vocal exercises and work throughout the song, they were asked to sing it one last time. These students (one male and one female) were asked to share their thoughts on the teaching strategy as well as their opinion regarding the achieved sound.

- Interview: students' perceptions

After the singing lesson, students were asked the following questions:

1. How is your desired sound when belting?
2. What do you think about your first attempt to hit that note?
3. What do you think about the second?
4. Which one do you think is healthier?
5. Which one do you prefer the most?

An open interview process may allow the questioning process to be expanded at the moment as needed for clarification and to assure rich data collection.

INSIDER RESEARCH ETHICS

As a Latin American singer, I have to be careful about the personal bias that I may have of my culture or my own perceptions of singing and belt quality. I need to analyse the variety of perceptions that conform to this research without judgment or one-sidedness.

This project carries some important ethical considerations that I also appraise to follow as a singing teacher in my professional practice:

1. Confidentiality

This aspect is fundamental, and participants' information will be password protected. A selection of participants was made, but all answers to the initial questionnaire were anonymous to prevent insecurity when answering. The students participating in the singing lesson have consented, and outcomes will only be used for educational purposes.

2. Concern about physical well-being

An incorrect belting technique could lead to a vocal injury. Vocal health must be the principal goal when treating this topic with participants, avoiding unsustainable practices that could lead to damage. The length of time the students engage in trials of belt quality will be kept to a minimum duration of less than 15 minutes to assure vocal health. I must be listening for indications that the trials should be terminated such as audible strain or student expression of discomfort.

3. Concern about emotional well-being

Singing may mean vulnerability for some students, and explicitly belting could represent some stress due to its nature and complexity. When building a safe space to explore and improve that specific vocal practice, patience, honesty about sensations, and respect are fundamental.

Findings

As mentioned in the previous section, this research is start-based on a survey implemented for voice professionals and singing students. They had to evaluate ten audio samples containing brief clips (under 20 seconds) of people singing in a range of qualities in the Spanish language.

RESULTS

Students' questionnaire had the next question: **Briefly describe, in your opinion, the characteristics of a great belt (you can exemplify with some artists that achieve your desired characteristics):**

1. "In my opinion, a great belt is balanced, does not generate tension and at the same time, sounds powerful."
2. "I would say a belt sounds full and rich. It is quite bright and has a good resonance."
3. "Voice stability, above all, has to be notorious that it is not a harmful technique to the singer; it requires constant training to acknowledge what happens with your body when you are achieving a good belt."
4. "Good connection between chest voice and head voice: a good mix. Good breathing technique."
5. "I consider that belt is a way of singing a note that belongs to the high vocal range of any person (taking into consideration its tessitura), and that makes the illusion that it is still in chest voice, even though it is a high note."

Mentioned artists as an example of great belt executors were: Celine Dion, Whitney Houston, Demi Lovato, Mariah Carey, Bruno Mars, Ariana Grande and Adele. It is important to note that no Hispanic artists were mentioned.

SURVEY RESULTS COMPARISON

AUDIO 1: <https://youtu.be/j2akrBbDVio>

The audio sample of an acoustic version of “Sodio” by Mexican singer Danna Paola (2020). The selected part belongs to a live variation of the song just before the final chorus. The sung notes of that fragment oscillate between G4 to C5, being the last note the predominant one in the audio.

Table 2: Audio 1 Results

AUDIO 1	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?	YES: 3 NO: 2		YES: 5	
Why?	Yes - It sings a high note with a chest register sensation and no tension. - She is carrying her voice over most Women's break. - Sung notes are further than what chest voice can achieve. It required a little extra in the head voice and air stability to keep it simple and with a good sound.	No -The note interval is not as significant to develop a good belt. These notes could be achieved with just a chest voice. -The note is not high enough to be considered as a belt.	Yes - It has a predominant chesty outcome. - She predominately uses her chest voice in a register that could be sung in the head or a lighter mix voice. - The acoustic quality. It has a boost at higher frequencies, but it maintains the body. -It is above her bridge. It sounds rich and profound.	
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 1 In-between: 4 Light: 0		Heavy: 3 In-between: 2 Light: 0	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 4 In-between: 1 Dark: 0		Bright: 3 In-between: 2 Dark: 0	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	Participants agree that she has controlled respiration, even though the initial exhalation is perceptible.		Most teachers agree that there is a small amount of pressure on the breathing and excess airflow. The rest consider that breathing is normal.	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	All agree, no.		Most teachers agree that no. The rest are concerned that this execution could lead to vocal fatigue.	

Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 5	Yes: 3 No: 2
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy?	Students mention that it sounds controlled and it does not sound risky.	Teachers mention that although it is primarily balanced, the weightiness could cause long-term issues.

This first question launches a little discrepancy between the students' and the vocal teachers' perceptions. For students, almost every aspect of this execution is ok, but we can not ignore that some of them felt the need to hear a higher note for considering it a genuine belt. On the vocal coaches' side, there is more concern about vocal health.

AUDIO 2: <https://youtu.be/2AaHvEEJKP8>

Fragment two is a vocal run that the Spanish artist Rosalía (2020) sang live when performing “Catalina”. The notes go up and down from G#4 to C#5.

Table 3: Audio 2 Results

AUDIO 2	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?	YES: 3 NO: 2		YES: 5	
Why?	Yes - There is a chest voice in the higher range. -Even though there is a mix, it has an extra punch that gives more body to the sound.	No -There is too much head voice -It does not have the “yell-like” illusion.	Yes All participants agree that she is chest dominant despite those notes being above the passage.	
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 4 In-between: 0 Light: 1		Heavy: 5 In-between: 0 Light: 0	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 3 In-between: 1 Dark: 1		Bright: 3 In-between: 1 Dark: 1	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	They consider that breath is controlled.		They all imply that It is not fully controlled and sounds tight.	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	No, they consider she has excellent technique.		Most teachers agree that excess resistance and effort could be unsustainable.	
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 5		Yes:1 No:4	
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy?	Students mention that it sounds controlled and it does not sound risky.		Teachers mention that although primarily balanced, the weightiness could cause long-term issues.	

The same situation as the previous analysis: some students need more weightiness and higher features to consider this a belt, even though most consider it an excellent execution. Conversely, vocal instructors perceived that there are important aspects to pay attention to turn this into a more sustainable performance.

AUDIO 3: <https://youtu.be/Y0aetNERDII>

This fragment was taken from the song “Parte de Mi” in its Tiny Desk Version. The singer is the Argentinian Nicki Nicole (2021), and this is the last vocal feel that she makes before the song's final section. The sung notes of this audio oscillate between A4 to D5.

Table 4: Audio 3 Results

AUDIO 3	Students			Vocal Coaches		
Do you perceive this as a belt?	No: 5			No: 5		
Why?.		No			No	
		All students agreed that it was just head voice.			All teachers agree that it is light and head-voice configured	
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 0	In-between: 0	Light: 5	Heavy: 0	In-between: 0	Light: 5
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 5	In-between: 0	Dark: 0	Bright: 2	In-between: 3	Dark: 0
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- She is letting large amounts of air to make the sound soft and airy - It is manageable by the singer - It sounds like a little air leak			- breathing is smooth - a slight excess of airflow		
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	No, they consider the sound is beautiful.			Most teachers consider that there are no worries. Only one recommends moderation of the airflow.		
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 5			Yes: 5		
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy?	They consider it healthy because it sounds effortless and smooth.			Teachers answered that there are no harmful aspects to this execution.		

There is a consensus in this audio. For being passed as a belt, this execution would need more “chesty” configuration, weightiness, and vocal fold mass.

AUDIO 4: <https://youtu.be/Rmh85lV1hmY>

This is a section of a live version of “Detrás de mi Ventana”, sung by the Mexican artist Yuri (2017). This is the last vocal *fee*/ she makes before concluding the song. The range of notes present in the fragment is F4 to C5.

Table 5: Audio 4 Results

AUDIO 4	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?	YES: 4 NO:1		YES: 3 NO:2	
Why?	Yes - High note with chest voice sensation - it is over her break zone - the mixed voice that turns completely into chest voice	No - If this would be sung one pitch and a half higher, it definitely would be a belt	Yes - For the level of weight that she is managing - Open vowels above the bridge, chest-like resonance - Mix with chesty configuration	No - Pharyngeal sound creates the illusion. - It is a good mix, but it does not have a belt quality.
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 5 In-between: 0 Light: 0		Heavy: 3 In-between: 2 Light: 0	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 2 In-between: 2 Dark: 1		Bright: 1 In-between: 2 Dark: 1	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- She uses a vocal cry to manage her air supply better. - She has an excellent physical condition because respiration is not perceptible. - It is controlled		- natural breathing - maybe she is breathing more than what she really needs.	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	Most students answered no. Only one is concerned about the note and the fact that she has to be careful with the note's weight if she is willing to repeat the performance.		Most teachers consider that everything is ok. Only one teacher mentioned long-term lesions if this outcome gets out of control.	

Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	<table><tr><td>Yes: 4</td><td>No:1</td></tr></table>	Yes: 4	No:1	<table><tr><td>Yes: 3</td><td>No:2</td></tr></table>	Yes: 3	No:2
Yes: 4	No:1					
Yes: 3	No:2					
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy?	Yes: It sounds controlled and rich. No: There is too much chest voice.	Teachers say yes, but it is almost on the line of turning unhealthy if there is more resistance. The 2 “no” assure that she may be at risk of obtaining a long-term lesion.				

Through this audio, we can note the expected pattern that vocal coaches are paying more attention to health issues than students are. Students may appear more aware of the notes' weightiness and highness level. However, some teachers also needed more chest-like sounds to consider this a belt.

AUDIO 5: <https://youtu.be/5w1OgleezPQ>

In this fragment, we hear the Spanish singer, David Bisbal, singing a Bb4 and then passing to an Ab4. This was part of a live performance.

Table 6: Audio 5 Results

AUDIO 5	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?	YES: 2 NO: 3		YES: 4 NO: 1	
Why?	Yes - It is at the upper part of the range - It sounds mixed and light because of the singer's timbre, but it is a belt.	No - It is very light - It is not that high - It sounds effortless	Yes - Because of the level of weightiness - Chest voice is above the bridge	No - That is head voice
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 2 In-between: 3 Light: 0		Heavy: 3 In-between: 1 Light: 1	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 2 In-between: 2 Dark: 1		Bright: 2 In-between: 2 Dark: 1	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- Is controlled - cutting at the end - lacking air		- a small amount of airflow - generating tension.	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	All students agree, no.		Pressure, effort and level of compensation.	
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 5		Yes: 3 No: 3	
Why do you consider it healthy/not-healthy?	- It does not sound pushed - It is controlled and has no effort - It is an achievable note		-Voice is on its limit -Much effort	

Even though some teachers hear potential risks to vocal health, others do not consider they may be harmful factors at all. Students are still in the same pattern; for some, it is still low or weightless enough not to be considered a belt. I want to highlight that one student considered it not to be a belt because he/she does not hear effort.

AUDIO 6: <https://youtu.be/dyUcveYvgzg>

This is part of the song “Castillos” by the original cast of the musical “Mentiras, el musical” (2009). The original song is by Argentinian Amanda Miguel. The Mexican musical “Mentiras” uses it as the play's opening, and the fragment belongs to the vocal riff before the chorus. The vocal range of this part goes from a B4 to an E5.

Table 7: Audio 6 Results

AUDIO 6	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?	YES: 3NO: 2		NO: 5	
Why?	Yes	No	Yes	
	- High strong notes - Very brilliant and whole	- It sounds nasal but has no chest voice. - It is a brilliant mix that could be confused as a belt	- a head voice with nasal resources - chest voice does not extend the passage - Too much head voice	
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 2In-between: 3Light: 0		Heavy: 1In-between: 0Light: 4	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 4In-between: 0Dark: 1		Bright: 2In-between: 2Dark: 1	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- she is letting out the air evenly - Sounds controlled - Little bit of push or effort		- little cut - Is holding back airflow - Changing air pressure to change the notes	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	Some students consider that they hear the tension and exaggerate the effect.		Most teachers say no. Yes answers involve the pressure of external muscles to achieve such nasality in the high register.	
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 3No: 2		Yes: 3No: 2	

Why do you consider it healthy/not-healthy?	Healthy: it does not sound harmful. Not Healthy: She relies significantly on her throat and high larynx.	Healthy: it sounds light and balanced. Not-Healthy: Not a stable larynx position. It sounds like much effort.
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I consider this audio to be one of the most interesting ones. For the student group, opinion is divided. Could this open the possibility of implementing a lighter mix as a belt? Or is the highness of the articulated figure giving this audio a chance?

Vocal coaches agree that this configuration is not a belt at all, even though they think there are vocal health concerns to be addressed.

AUDIO 7: <https://youtu.be/DvVDMRYNK9U>

This is Mexican singer Cristian Castro (2022) in a live stream that he made during quarantine, singing an acapella version of his iconic song “Azul”. The note B4 belongs to the end of the song's last chorus.

Table 8: Audio 7 Results

AUDIO 7	Students			Vocal Coaches		
Do you perceive this as a belt?	NO: 5			NO: 5		
Why?		No			No	
		- Too heady - Too light - It is just a stable head voice			- It is head voice -CT is too involved -Too much air	
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 0 In-between: 1 Light: 4			Heavy: 0 In-between: 0 Light: 5		
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 1 In-between: 1 Dark: 3			Bright: 4 In-between: 1 Dark: 0		
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- He is letting the air out in a considerable amount. - Breathing goes fading.			- There are airflow breaks - Mostly normal breathing.		
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	All agree, no.			All agree, no.		
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 5			Yes: 5		
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy?	- Balanced and healthy. - Not pushed or tense. - Really clean			- Although it is not the brightest and most sustained voice, it is not harmful - Good balance. - Well-executed head voice		

This light configuration did not pass as a belt for any participants. The seek for heaviness remains.

AUDIO 8 <https://youtu.be/4rMP1EVYTv4>

This is the only singer not Hispanic because I was interested in the comparison that participants may make. This is a fragment of “Oh Holy Night”, So Hyang’s (2013) version. This occurs almost at the end of her performance, between various vocal feels. The audio's sung notes move between a G5 and an A5.

Table 9: Audio 8 Results

AUDIO 8	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?				
	YES: 4	NO: 1	YES: 2	NO: 3
Why?	Yes	No	Yes	
	- The sound she is making is full and rich. - It is exceptionally high - Well-executed mix	- This is a head voice with a nasal outcome	- Bright and heavy - Mix with chest outcome - Powerful and sound rich	- It is a well-mixed head voice in treble register - It is just head voice - There is a good mix. However, the sound turns more into a more ct dominant.
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy				
	Heavy: 3	In-between: 2 Light: 0	Heavy: 3	In-between: 0 Light: 2
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?				
	Bright: 5	In-between: 0 Dark: 0	Bright: 5	In-between: 0 Dark: 0
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- Good support - She is letting the air out evenly		- Low airflow for that kind of note - Well controlled - Constant	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	All agree, no.		Most teachers say no. Some answers desire to hear more of this singer.	
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 5		Yes:4	No:5
Why do you consider it healthy/not-healthy?	Students imply that even though it is a very high note, it sounds controlled and effortless.		Teachers share that there is a good level of balance and coordination but that she has to be careful	

		because it is a complex execution.
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I chose So Hyang because her standard of powerful singing is lighter and healthier than what we are used to as Hispanics. This was an audio that polarised the belting perception. It is a fact that it sounds healthy, but still, some participants expect more weight to approve a belt.

AUDIO 9: <https://youtu.be/OsefmCeyBlc>

This is part of Kalimba's (2011) big band version of "Todo se Derrumbó". What is heard on the audio is the outro of the song. The predominant sung note is an A4.

Table 10: Audio 9 Results

AUDIO 9	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?	YES: 5		YES: 5	
Why?	Yes - He sings notes over his break and sounds robust. - I recognise his voice, and he always has an excellent belt execution - He never drops the chest voice	No	Yes - Balancing chest and head voice, prioritising lower harmonics in an above bridge register - It sounds like a balanced mix where we can still hear TA features - Even though he sings an “I”, he is not losing strength.	
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 5 In-between: 0 Light: 0		Heavy: 3 In-between: 2 Light: 0	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 3 In-between: 1 Dark: 1		Bright: 3 In-between: 1 Dark: 1	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- He is letting the air out evenly in the extended note. - It is well controlled		- Stable - Well controlled - Good airflow	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	All agree, no.		All agree, no.	
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes:5		Yes: 5	
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy?	- It does not sound yelled or extremely nasal - It is clean and precise		- It sounds balanced, and with no external pressures - Amazing mix - I do not hear effort or tension	

This has been the audio with more alike answers. Mexican singer Kalimba may significantly represent how a healthy but sound-rich belt must be sung for us Hispanics. All participants agree that the sound and the execution are good.

AUDIO 10 <https://youtu.be/26uJ0bcLEr0>

The fragment is the outro of a live session version of the song “El Poeta” by Mexican singer Humbe. He starts the fragment singing a sustained C5 and then going down to a C4.

Table 11: Audio 10 Results

AUDIO 6	Students		Vocal Coaches	
Do you perceive this as a belt?	YES: 3 NO: 2		YES: 1 NO: 4	
Why?	Yes - Nasal quality helps pass it as a belt - The sound is above their voice break, and it does not sound like their throat is tightening	No - It is a mix with a lot of head voice - It is not physically possible to reach that note with the chest voice	Yes - Even though it is mostly head voice, the open resonance is predominant and bright	No -Good mix with head voice predominancy -Maybe on the last note, but overall, is too heady -Too light for a belt
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy	Heavy: 0 In-between: 2 Light: 3		Heavy: 2 In-between: 0 Light: 3	
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness?	Bright: 3 In-between: 1 Dark: 1		Bright: 3 In-between: 1 Dark: 1	
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath?	- It is controlled - It is constant		- For the way it ends, maybe it is struggling a little with airflow - It is well balanced.	
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health?	All agree, no.		All agree, no.	
Is this execution sustainable and healthy?	Yes: 5		Yes: 5	
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy?	- it sounds comfortable and free, like it is effortless.		-It sounds balanced, even though the larynx is high.	

	- It sounds solid and neat. - I know this artist, and he implies that it is essential not to abuse this type of note because they are in a dangerous zone	-There may be extra resistance, but it gives an exciting sound. Controlling that, this artist would not have a significant issue. -It sounds free and smooth.
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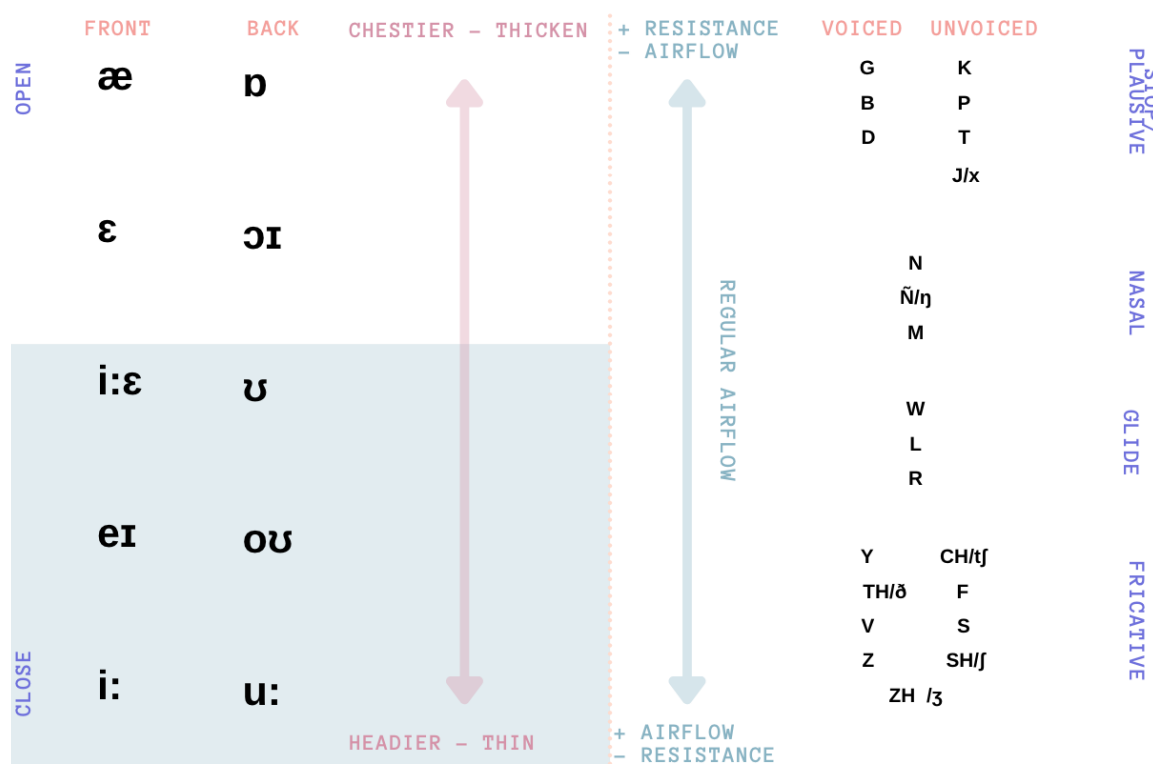
Even though this sound is quite interesting for participants, most of them do not consider it a belt because of the usage of his head voice. It has also been recurrent that head-voice dominant fragments tend not to light so many worries about vocal health.

Teaching Strategy and Final Interview

As a result of my experience as a vocal coach, and all the research that has impacted my professional practice, I have created Figure 3. My premise is that vowel and consonant selection can significantly support the thickening or the thinning of vocal fold mass.

For this particular project, we are evaluating options that could help students find a slightly thinner vocal fold mass, as well as a lighter mixed quality. That is why, for this scenario in particular, the vowel focus is on the highlighted part of the chart.

Figure 3: Vowel and consonant strategies



Students were asked to sing a belted part of any Hispanic song. Based on Figure 3, resonance strategies will be focused on creating muscular memory by repeating vowels that decrease the resistance and vocal fold mass, because participants are students who often prefer a heavy belt. If the initial VF Mass of the student is thicker, the strategy would be to

teach him/her/they the opposite for him/her/they to find balance in between. We will utilise vowel modification and extend to phonemes that may not be exclusive to the Spanish language. Specific steps will depend on the student and the desired song. A summary of results is presented in Figure 12.

Table 12: Teaching strategy and interview results.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2
Gender:	Male	Female
Background:	21 year old tenor.	23 year old mezzo.
Song and fragment to work with:	Me Va Extrañar- Ricardo Montaner Last chorus Main belted parts to work with are highlighted: <i>Me va a extrañar y sentirá</i> <i>Que no habrá vida después de mí</i> <i>Que no se puede vivir así</i> <i>Me va a extrañar</i>	Perdón - Ha-Ash Second chorus Main belted parts to work with are highlighted: Hoy te pido perdón, perdón, perdón Por haberte confiando sin dudar mi corazón Entregar mi alma a tus brazos Por confiar mi cuerpo en tus manos Perdón, perdón, perdón Por crearme esta falsa historia de amor Y te pido perdón, perdón
Results	Both students made vocal exercises with descendant scales. “Bei” and “mi” were sung for the exercises by the male participant, and “wi”, “nu” and “me” were the ones sung by the female student. They were also asked to change temporarily some consonants and vowels of the song. For example, instead of “me va a extrañar” - “me vi i extrañar”. Lastly, without them noticing, they were asked to sing the belted part one semitone higher than the original tone, to encourage the usage of a lighter mixed voice. Both students achieved a lighter sound and felt comfortable with it. Even though they usually prefer a heavier belt, experiencing a healthier option that still has a rich rounded sound worked well and was acceptable for them.	
INTERVIEW		
How is your desired sound when belting?	“It depends on the song, but most of the time I search for a heavy/chestier outcome.”	“It does not has to sound like if I am using head voice. My chest voice has to be predominant.”
What do you think about your first	“It felt pushed because I really wanted that chesty outcome, but I was not	“It hurted.”

attempt to hit that note?	comfortable.”	
What do you think about the second?	“It feels healthier, stable and I dont feel tired.”	“It did not hurt and felt effortless”
Which one do you think is healthier?	“The second.”	“The second.”
Which one do you prefer the most?	“Second.”	“Second, because is more sustainable”

Conclusions

There is a variety of reasons why Hispanic singers tend to search for a heavy belt involving only their chest voice; they may associate it with more power or more resonance, but important limitations, mostly in terms of sustainability, have to be pointed out.

When students notice that a mixed voice approach increases options when belting, they may be more likely to explore that possibility. This balanced approach supports sustainable vocal health, enabling singers to perform with power, ease, and consistency across a wider range of musical material.

Relying on the possibilities of vowel and consonant modification could help vocal coaches and students to achieve an acceptable belt quality without compromising vocal health. A good example throughout this investigation is the most suitable and accepted sound in the implemented survey: Audio 9. Between a lighter mix and a heavy belt, this execution does not rely entirely on the thyroarytenoid muscle. Notably, there is coordination and mixed voice quality.

Hispanic singing education needs to gain more terrain. As singers are aware of their vocal health, they get more open to new paradigms and accept healthier alternatives. In a culture where we admire strained high notes, a mixed belt quality is a clear possibility.

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Appendix 1: Students' Consent Form

Title of project:

I _____ voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my questionnaire and class experience within two weeks after completion of these, in which case the material will be deleted.

I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

I understand that participation involves completion of an anonymous online questionnaire, an experimental singing class and an interview.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I agree to my online class and interview being video-recorded.

I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by not mentioning my name and disguising any details of my responses which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

I understand that disguised extracts from my responses may be quoted in the written report and presentation and possibly in future published papers or at conferences.

I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

I understand that signed consent forms and original video/audio recordings will be retained in a password protected laptop until October 2023.

I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information. Researcher: Laura Aurora Larenas López
lauralarenas1@gmail.com

Supervisor:

Signature of research participant _____

Date: _____

Signature of researcher _____

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study.

Date _____



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:	Laura Aurora Larenas López			
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:	WAPPAR			
5	Campus:	Carmarthen			
6	E-mail address:	lauralarenas1@gmail.com			
7	Contact Telephone Number:	+52 1 55 1803 4462			
For students:					
8	Student Number:	2130651			

9	Programme of Study:	MA in Professional Practice (Voice Pedagogy)
10	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Nick Samuel

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	☐		
3		Institute Research Committee	☐		
4		Other (write in) WAPPAR Ethics Board Representative	☒		

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 paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO ☐
10		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:	Is mixed voice quality perceived as belting in Hispanic cultures?		
2	Proposed start date:	20th March	Proposed end date:	6th July
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 Existing Research 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 The purpose of this research is to evaluate Hispanic perceptions regarding belting and mixed voice, and to identify if there are key cultural factors that singing teachers have to consider when teaching belting to Latin-Hispanic culture. It is fundamental to consider how these factors of perceptions directly affect or endorse the Hispanic singers' vocal health. (this box should expand as you type)			
5	Research Question			

	What is the mixed voice and could it pass for belting in Hispanic culture? (this box should expand as you type)
6	Aims of Research Activity Identify the cultural role of belting in Latin America and Spain and its pedagogical implications. Analyse the Spanish language features when singing, belting and using head voice, chest voice and mixed voice registers. . Discover whether a singer's perceptions of vocal usage support or endanger vocal health. The findings of this research are intended to improve my professional practice, as well as support my students' performance and vocal health. Making an impact in my culture and community, is also a key point of why I am doing this research. (this box should expand as you type)
7	Objectives of Research Activity - Build a solid theoretical ground with the academically available information. - Select voice teachers and singing students as participants, and evaluate their perceptions and opinions through mixed methods research. - Evaluate the necessities regarding vocal health for Hispanic singers. - Conclude if the mixed voice approach regarding belting is viable, accepted and/or necessary in Hispanic culture. (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	This investigation will use mixed qualitative and quantitative research. There will be a selection of 5 Hispanic singing teachers and 5 Hispanic singers/students as participants. 1. Literature Review Books, articles, and journals available in the UWTSD library as well as The Voice Student Centre resources to review and analyse literature related to registers and in particular belt, in relation to Hispanic culture. 2. Questionnaire Throughout a questionnaire, participants will hear samples of 5-10 seconds, of different singers with different voice qualities and register usages. Participants should describe their perceptions of head voice, mixed voice, and chest-voice sounds and evaluate which characteristics create a "good" belt, through multiple option and scale-grading questions. Samples will be selected with my tutor, and we will focus on choosing evident examples of different ways in which belting is approached. Our ear and the history of the chosen artists will give us an insight into the type of singing each sample represents. 3. Focus group If considered necessary, teachers and students (each group separately) will be required to discuss qualitative features of the research in a focus group. Discussion of different vocal register usage, belting characteristics, vocal technique, and cultural aspects are the themes that will be treated through this session.

	4. Interview A selection of 2 students and 2 teachers will be made, and each will be interviewed to obtain more insights on the topic. Perceptions of belting and mixed voices will be discussed in depth. 5. Observation If needed, observation of the student's performance when singing. 6. Quasi-experiment If needed, evaluation of vocal features of the 5 students using a spectrograph, in order to have more tools to evaluate the singular characteristics of chest-dominant belt, head-dominant belt and/or mixed voice, and the Spanish language. This part of the research will only be used if it is necessary.

10	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
11	Vocal studio in Mexico City Online tools (ej, zoom, virtual- surveys) <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
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	There is not a specific document that contains ethical guidelines for educators in Mexico City, but I will base on the ethical standards that the Mexican university: Tecnológico de Monterrey, states. Code of ethics can be read here: https://tecoundsradio.tec.mx/sites/g/files/vgjovo991/files/Codigo-de-Etica-Institucional-Tec-de-Monterrey_0.pdf <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

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. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

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: Focus group Survey/questionnaire Interview QuasiExperiment using spectrograph (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

1	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
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: Complete this only if your participants cannot give consent. This includes animals. (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?	10 (this box should expand as you type)	
14	Who will the participants be?	5 Hispanic voice teachers, 5 Hispanic students (this box should expand as you type)	
15	How will you identify the participants?	Certified voice instructors from Latin America and Spain, preferably based in Mexico. Singing students from Latin America, preferably based in Mexico. Contact with participants will be hybrid: online and presential. Purposive sampling would be the type of sampling that will be selected for this research. According to Winter (2020), this type of sampling occurs when the researcher makes a judgmental decision regarding the characteristics of the subjects. For better performance of the participants, students must have the range and vocal technique to belt, and voice instructors must be certified or prove their expertise in voice teaching. (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	You should be able to tick YES for all of these questions. If not, then explain why not in this box. (this box should expand as you type)			

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	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. Line 30: If you tick yes, as you're using cameras/voice recorders to record interviews, then please state that in this box. Voce vista and recorded interviews. (this box should expand as you type)			

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.
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	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?	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: Emotional distress regarding singing. Vocal harm if trying to practice belt with a poor technique. Data protection <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to Participant</i> Encouraging the fact that all voices are different and that this research is a safe space to explore perceptions. Encouraging as well that trying new vocal styles or techniques, should preferably be done when supervised by a certified vocal instructor. Storing all gathered information in a secure hard drive, and a protected folder on the cloud, mainly google drive. <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		
	<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: Conflict of interest because of my closeness to the culture. Emotional distress if feeling pressure. Unavailability of participants.	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to Investigator:</i> Create research instruments as objectively as possible. Taking care of my general health and time management objectives while I am working on this project. Make sure that this project will add positive value to their vocal practice, for them to be interested in participate.	
7	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection		
	Risk to University: Data protection	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to University:</i> Securing confidentiality of the gathered information with protected storage.	

	(this box should expand as you type)	(this box should expand as you type)
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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?
	After finishing the research project and getting it evaluated, the conclusions of the investigation will be shared with the participants. (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.
	When using virtual methods, there will always be a consent to virtually sign by clicking "Next", before the survey or questionnaire begins. When experimenting with voce vista, being interviewed or participating in a focus group, participants will sign on paper their 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 are needed for the purposes of this investigation. All answers will be anonymous and used only for this project's objectives. no names (this box should expand as you type)

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	☒	☐

	<i>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.</i>		
2	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
	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. Audio/video data. General location data (city). Place of birth. Growing-up city or cities. Cultural or social identity. Mails and telephones for communication. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
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:		
	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. Racial or ethnic group. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
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:		
	All data will be kept in protected cloud storage on my personal Google Drive account which will not be shared. Audio/visual data will be transcribed and would be shown to participants to check the accuracy of reporting. Any USB sticks and/or hard drives used to store or transfer data will be password protected. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password-protected folder. <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):		
	All data will be encrypted and kept in protected cloud storage on my personal Google Drive account which will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected. All data transfers will be encrypted and password protected. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password protected folder. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted. In accordance with the DPA2018, participants will have the right to ask to see what data is held relating to them, and this data will be deleted immediately if the participant requests this, in which case the data will not be used in the project. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Principal researcher. <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:		

	Principal researcher. <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.
	All data will be encrypted and kept in protected cloud storage on my personal Google Drive account which will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected, and will be reformatted at the end of the project in order to destroy the data. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted. <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:	Laura Aurora Larenas López	Date: 7/02/23

For STUDENT Submissions:

32	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Louise Emanuel	15.3.23
33	Signature:	Louise Emanuel	

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 to 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.