

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

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

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: “creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications”. As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the “principal researcher”.

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

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Amma-harar Russell Young	
2	Student Number:	1808757	
		1808757@student.uwtsd.ac.uk	
3	Email address:		
4	Programme of Study:	MBA International business	
5	Supervisor:	Hoang Nguyen	

SECTION B: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.		
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice		☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy		☒
3			☒
4			☒

SECTION C: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	An Analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategies at Hilton Hotels and Their Impact on Customer Satisfaction		
2	Proposed start date:		Proposed end date:	

	Introduction to the Research 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>
3	Purpose of Research Activity This paper presents how CSR practises influence customer satisfaction within the hospitality industry. The research questions relate to the impact of hotel CSR activities on customer perceptions, trust, and degree of overall satisfaction. The proposed research focuses on Hilton Hotels as a case study within a global hospitality market. The study investigates the impact of environmental sustainability programmes on customer perceptions of hotel services. The research investigates how community engagement programmes improve customer relationships with hospitality organisations. This article discusses how ethical business practises influence customer trust in hotel brands. The research examines how responsible business behaviour can promote customer loyalty in hotels. This essay examines the available academic resources to understand the associations between customer satisfaction and CSR strategy. This paper will focus on the reports of the hospitality industry in order to find out the overall CSR practises adopted by the international hotel organisations. The present paper reviews Hilton sustainability reports to understand specific CSR programmes that the organisation has taken. It examines the effectiveness of CSR communication strategies in raising customer awareness of responsible hospitality practises. The study focuses on secondary reports to identify trends in CSR activities and customer perception changes. The paper will explore how CSR activities create brand image and competitive advantage in hospitality sectors. The research introduces fresh concepts on the subject of CSR implementation within international hotel organisations. The study adds to the understanding of how responsible business strategies influence customer satisfaction results. The research assists hospitality managers to come up with CSR strategies that lead to improved customer relationships in the long run. The study identifies salient CSR initiatives that promote customer trust and satisfaction in the hospitality sector. The research provides recommendations on how hotels can integrate CSR practises in their business models. The article establishes the role of ethical management practises in building a sustainable hospitality sector.
4	Research Question How does corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Hilton Hotels relate to customer satisfaction in the hotel industry?
5	Aims of Research Activity • To speak about CSR practises implemented by Hilton Hotels. • To investigate the impacts of CSR projects on the customer satisfaction and perceptions. • To establish the impact of CSR in boosting brand image and customer loyalty in hospitality.
6	Objectives of Research Activity • To review existing literature on CSR and customer satisfaction in hospitality. • To review Hilton Hotels' CSR reports. • To determine whether CSR strategies have an effect on customer trust and participation. • To identify the benefits of CSR strategies to hospitality organisations.

	Proposed data collection methods (maximum 600 words) The research employs the secondary data collection method to obtain relevant information on CSR strategies. The study collects information using academic journal articles on CSR and management in hospitality. The research reviews scholarly articles to understand what is known regarding CSR practises within the hotel industry. The paper is a review of literature on hospitality management to identify important CSR practises useful in international hotels. The research analysed published articles to explore relationships between CSR initiatives and customer satisfaction. The study collects data using industry reports to understand the CSR trends in the hospitality industry. This paper relies on source materials within the hospitality sector to derive the list of the responsible business practises embraced by hotels. The article examines professional research reports to gain insight on CSR developments in international hotel organisations. The analysis source is sustainability reports published by the Hilton Hotels and affiliated organisations. The study examines corporate responsibility reports in order to identify environmental and social programmes employed at Hilton Hotels. The research collects relevant information on authoritative texts within the scope of business ethics and hospitality management. The study will use online academic databases to access peer-reviewed journals and industry resources. To locate credible scholarly sources, the study uses scholarly databases such as Google Scholar. The study utilises university library databases to ensure the provision of quality academic materials. This research collects secondary data through the use of publicly accessible company reports published by Hilton Hotels. To get to know about Hilton environmental and community engagement activities, the paper reviews official sustainability reports. The research material provides information on reliable research publications in the hospitality sector on the topic of CSR implementation in hotel operations. The study explores relevant industry analyses to identify the trends of responsible business practises in hospitality. The research collects data from diverse authoritative sources to improve accuracy and believability of findings. The study codifies the obtained resources to support the systematic study of strategies of CSR. Furthermore, the study is also able to conduct interviews with key stakeholders in Hilton to obtain information about the corporate sustainability efforts. The analysis of Hilton's CSR initiatives resulted in a more profound understanding of the effects that the company had on the environment and local communities. Research data were analysed using the qualitative thematic analysis to identify patterns of relevance. The research examines prevailing themes on CSR operations and customer satisfaction within the literature on hospitality. The research establishes patterns within the scholarly and business literature on CSR and its impact on consumers. The study evaluates the impact of environmental sustainability programmes on customer attitudes towards hospitality organisations. The papers analyse how community engagement programmes influence customer satisfaction and trust in hotels. The article discusses how ethical business practises can improve customer relationships in hospitality brands. The paper also aligns the findings of other sources to harmonise CSR observations. The study identifies thematic results and presents clear explanations of how CSR influences customer attitudes. The research interprets data that has been analysed to present relationships between CSR strategies and hospitality performance. The document explains key findings that warrant conclusions about CSR activities at the Hilton hotels. The entire sources of information are properly recorded in the study to maintain transparency and academic integrity. The paper is written in compliance with the principles of writing academic references in order to credit the authors and sources used in the research.
7	

SECTION D: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☐	☒

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2	Use of interviews?	☐	☒
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☐	☒
	Details of any other primary data collection method: (this box should expand as you type)		

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

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

SECTION E: Intended Participants

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☐	☒
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒

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9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☒
	Details of any other participant groups: No animal or human subjects are involved in this research. The study uses only secondary data sources such as books, industry reports, business publications, and academic journal articles. There are no groups involved as participants, and there are no people who are not able to give consent.		

Participant numbers and source This research does not involve human participants , as it is based solely on secondary data sources .		
10	How many participants are expected?	There are no human subjects in this study since all its sources are secondary sources, including scholarly journal articles, books, industry reports, and company reports. Therefore, no participants will be enlisted or contacted in the context of this research project.
11	Who will the participants be?	This research will not involve any participants. The study will look at literature that is available, as it will look into what has been released publicly in the form of academic literature, reports on the hospitality industry and reports on the corporate sustainability of organisations such as Hilton Hotels.
12	How will you identify the participants?	Participants will not be identified or contacted because the research relies solely on secondary data. Relevant information will be collected from reliable academic databases, university library resources, and publicly available company reports.

Information for participants:		YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☐	☐	☒
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☐	☐	☒
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☐	☐	☒
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☐	☐	☒
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☐	☐	☒
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☐	☐	☒
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☐	☐	☒
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☐	☒
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
No direct involvement is present in this study because it is conducted exclusively on secondary data, i.e., academic sources, industry publications, and publicly accessible corporate records. So no physical risks, no emotional distress, no disclosing personal information to the participants.				

Information for participants:		YES	NO	N/A
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24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
	Not applicable. This research uses secondary data only and does not involve human participants, interviews, surveys, or recordings. Therefore, no participants will be paid, no specialist equipment will be used with participants, and no deception will occur.			

SECTION F: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.	
1	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information. If you have identified in section D that there are no participants, then enter N/A and go skip to question 3.	
	Risk to participants:	How you will mitigate the risk to participants:
	No direct involvement is present in this study because it is conducted exclusively on secondary data, i.e., academic sources, industry publications, and publicly accessible corporate records. So, no physical risks, no emotional distress, no disclosing personal information to the participants.	The ethical risk is low because human subjects are not used. No individual or confidential participant data will be collected or shared, and any data used will be publicly available and published.
2	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities	
	This paper is not going to discuss personal topics such as crime, sex and money. The study focuses on organisational CSR strategies and customer satisfaction using published academic and industry literature. Therefore, there are no sensitive issues that would entail participant support or intervention.	
3	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Risk to the investigator:	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:
	Possible risks are misinterpretation of secondary data, researcher bias in analysing literature, and the possibility of academic dishonesty (including accidental plagiarism or improper citing of sources).	Ethical risk is minimal since no human subjects were used. Data used will be openly available and published, and no personal or confidential information about the participants will be collected or released.
4	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University:	How you will mitigate the risk to the University:
	The copyrighted work may be abused, the published information may be interpreted wrongly or there may be a reputational risk in cases where the research is not conducted in compliance with	They will be referenced and cited according to the academic standards. The research will follow the university's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of

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	ethical principles.	Practise and data protection policies.
5	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: This study is not based on any fieldwork, lab work or field interaction with the environment. Therefore, environmental risks are unlikely.	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to environment:</i> As the research is based entirely on secondary data analysis conducted through digital resources, it will have no direct impact on the environment.

SECTION G: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

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

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	This research project does not entail human participants because it involves only secondary data sources, such as academic journal articles, books, industry reports and company publications. Therefore, participant feedback or debriefing is not required.
2	Explain to prospective participants, before consenting, what it means to participate. Describe the process of full consent of the participants and then the data collection. Where consent, by so doing, would not be justified, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with the current data protection legislation.
	No participant recruitment or primary data collection is involved in this research. Any information used in the study will be obtained via publicly available secondary sources. Accordingly, informed consent is not required from participants.
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 participant recruitment or primary data collection is involved in this research. Any information used in the study will be obtained via publicly available secondary sources. Accordingly, informed consent is not required from participants.

SECTION H: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 "GDPR" and the Data Protection Act 2018 "DPA")?	YES	NO
1	<i>"Personal data" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.</i>	☐	☒
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		

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2	No personal data will be collected in this research, as it will be conducted using only secondary data sources. The analysis data will be gathered through publicly available academic sources, industry publications and company reports. Every source will be cited appropriately, and this ensures academic integrity and transparency.		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	☒
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	The work does not involve the collection and analysis of special category data as provided in the GDPR. It is limited only to organisational strategies and information which are already available in open academic and industrial literature.		

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☒	☐
7	Private company computers?	☒	☐
8	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☐	☒
10	“Cloud” storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	All research information, notes and draughts will be stored in password-protected folders on the university Office 365 OneDrive system. Access will be granted only to the principal researcher and the research supervisor. Passwords will also secure files on personal computers. All the materials will not be used beyond academic uses and will be discarded after the research project has been finished according to university policies with regard to data management.		

Data Protection			
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO

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13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☒	☐
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and/or any international equivalent): When using the University Office 365 system to access academic journal articles or provide draught work to the supervising researcher, there is a possibility of electronic data transfer. No personal information will be revealed. The information will be stored in secure cloud storage using a password at the university and will be used solely in scholarly research.		
20	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity: The principal researcher and the research supervisor will have access to research data. University assessors (i.e., external examiners or internal moderators) can also check the work with a view to academic assessment.		
21	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity: The principal researcher will act as the custodian of the research data.		
22	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. A password-protected folder within the University Office 365 OneDrive system will store all research data. Duplicates may be stored on a secured personal computer that is used to study. The data will be held up until the research project is completed and, thereafter, be destroyed safely in accordance with the university data management policies.		
22	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtسد.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	☒	
23	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	☒	

SECTION I: Use of AI tools

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Use of generative AI and other AI-based tools There are a number of ethical issues relating to the use of generative AI and other AI-based tools, including data security, output bias, and output errors. In general you should assume that any generative AI or other AI-based tool that you pay to use is more secure and accurate than one which is free to use. Will the research use AI tools to do any of the following:		YES	NO	N/A
1	Capture data?	☐	☒	☐
2	Generate and/or edit text?	☒	☐	☐
3	Generate graphics?	☐	☒	☐
4	Generate video?	☐	☒	☐
5	Generate sound/music?	☐	☒	☐
6	Generate code?	☐	☒	☐
7	Generate synthetic data?	☐	☒	☐
8	Analyse data?	☒	☐	☐
9	Analyse personal or sensitive data?	☒	☐	☐
10	Classify data?	☒	☐	☐
11	Do you intend to use the free version of any AI tools?	☒	☐	☐
If you have answered YES to any of questions O1-O11, please provide justification detailing why this is necessary for the research.				
12	Research and organisation of ideas: AI tools may be used to simplify the academic writing process. They will assist in language editing, information summarisation and text structuring alone. The researcher must read and verify all the outputs to be accurate and academic. AI will not be used to conduct any original research or analyse any personal data.			

SECTION J: Declaration

The research may include the use of AI applications, such as ChatGPT or Microsoft Copilot, to facilitate the editing and formatting of written materials. They are global cloud-computing applications developed by technology companies. They will be used in accordance with the University policies regarding academic integrity and the use of AI. The researcher will critically assess all outputs and reference all academic sources accordingly.

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	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:	A.Russell	Date:18.3.2026
2	Supervisor:		Date:
3	Signature:		