

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:	Rifatun Nabi Chowdhury Rian
2	Student Number:	2510637
3	Email address:	2510637@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
4	Programme of Study:	MBA International Business (LCMB7035 Dissertation)
5	Supervisor:	Dr Jean Wang

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		X
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy		X
3	UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018		X
4	UWTSD guidance on the responsible use of generative AI in academic work		X

SECTION C: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Bold Reinvention or Heritage Dilution? A Qualitative Analysis of Jaguar's 2024 Rebrand and the Perceived Risk of Brand Heritage Equity Erosion		
2	Proposed start date:	17 July 2026	Proposed end date:	25 September 2026
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words in each section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: • <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> • <i>Proposed Research Question</i> • <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> • <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i>			

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	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 study examines how Jaguar's 2024 rebrand is described in public Jaguar/JLR communications and discussed in credible media, industry and expert sources. It focuses on the strategic tension between modern reinvention and the possible weakening of heritage associations. The study will examine perceived risk and public framing; it will not claim that Jaguar has experienced actual brand-equity erosion, measure sales performance, or make claims about private company information. Existing research on brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), corporate heritage brands (Urde, Greyser and Balmer, 2007), luxury branding (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012), authenticity (Beverland, 2005) and rebranding informs the study. The activity adds a focused case analysis of a current heritage-brand repositioning issue and its strategic implications for international business.
4	Proposed Research Question 1. How does Jaguar/JLR frame its 2024 rebrand in official public communication? 2. What themes emerge from media, industry and expert responses to the rebrand? 3. How is Jaguar's brand heritage represented as protected, transformed, diluted or placed at risk? 4. What strategic lessons can heritage luxury brands draw from Jaguar's repositioning?
5	Aims of Research Activity Aim: To explore how Jaguar's 2024 rebrand is framed and interpreted across public secondary sources, with particular attention to the perceived tension between luxury brand reinvention and heritage equity erosion. This aim is addressed through Objectives 1-4 below.
6	Objectives of Research Activity 1. To examine how Jaguar/JLR officially frames the 2024 rebrand and its intended strategic repositioning. 2. To identify key themes in media, industry and expert responses to the rebrand. 3. To analyse how brand heritage, luxury identity, authenticity and brand-equity risk are represented in these sources. 4. To evaluate strategic implications for heritage luxury brands attempting radical reinvention.
	Proposed data collection methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity to collect data, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	Proposed data collection methods This is a secondary qualitative study. No human participants will be recruited or contacted. After ethical approval, a purposive corpus of approximately 30-36 unique public documents will be assembled: 6-8 Jaguar/JLR communications or reports, 12-14 reputable news or business-media articles, and 12-14 attributable automotive, design or marketing-industry analyses. Academic literature will define concepts and support interpretation but will not form part of the coded response corpus. Included documents must be in English, have accessible full text, be published between 18 November 2024 and 31 March 2025, substantially discuss Jaguar's rebrand or repositioning, and come from a traceable organisation or identified professional author. Duplicates, passing mentions, unattributed reposts, individual social-media comments, private groups, confidential material and content requiring unauthorised access will be excluded. No author, spokesperson or commentator will be contacted. The student will record source details, publication date, URL, source type and relevant passages in a structured evidence record. Manual thematic analysis will involve familiarisation, initial coding, grouping related codes, reviewing and naming themes, and linking themes to the objectives and research questions. No participant data, automated sentiment scores, synthetic data or AI-generated coding will be used.

SECTION D: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?		X
2	Use of interviews?		X
3	Use of focus groups?		X
4	Use of participant diaries?		X
5	Use of video or audio recording?		X
6	Use of computer-generated log files?		X
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?		X

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8	Participant observation without their knowledge?		X
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?		X
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?		X
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?		X
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?		X
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?		X
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?		X
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?		X
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?		X
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.		X
	Details of any other primary data collection method: Not applicable. No primary data will be collected.		

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?		X
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?		X
3	Vulnerable adults?		X
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)		X
5	Prisoners?		X
6	Young offenders?		X
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?		X
8	People engaged in illegal activities?		X
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.		X
	Not applicable: no participant groups are involved.		

	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	N/A - no participants are involved.
11	Who will the participants be?	N/A - the study uses public documents and published commentary only.

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12	How will you identify the participants?	N/A - there is no recruitment, identification or participant contact.
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	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?			X
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?			X
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?			X
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?			X
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?			X
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?			X
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?			X
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?			X
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?			X
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	Not applicable: no participants are involved, so participant information, consent, withdrawal and debriefing arrangements are not required.			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?			X
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?			X
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?			X
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?			X
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
	N/A - no participants are involved, so payment, participant equipment, deception and participant-facing procedures do not apply.			

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.	
	No participants are involved; therefore there are no participant risks.	Not applicable. No participant data or contact is involved.
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	
	The topic concerns public debate about a commercial rebrand. It does not seek sensitive personal, medical, criminal or vulnerable-group information. Public reporting may contain strong opinions, which will be treated as source material rather than participant disclosure.	

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3	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Low risk: desk-based work may involve screen fatigue and there is a risk of misquoting or overinterpreting public statements about a real organisation.	Use reasonable screen breaks; keep traceable source records; distinguish source statements from interpretation; avoid defamatory or unverified claims; and follow copyright, referencing and university research guidance.
4	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	There is a low institutional risk if public material is represented inaccurately, if copyright is ignored, or if perceived risk is presented as proven brand-equity erosion.	Use credible and cross-checked sources, quote briefly where necessary, retain URLs and access details, follow Harvard/Cite Them Right and UWTSD data guidance, and report the study as an analysis of public framing and perceived risk.
5	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Negligible environmental risk: no physical experiment, travel, substances, animal work or field activity is planned.	Use digital sources where practical, avoid unnecessary printing or travel, and dispose of any paper responsibly.

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?	
	Not applicable - no participants are involved. No debrief or participant feedback is required. Research outputs will present source-attributed findings and a transparent limitations statement.	
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.	
	Not applicable - no participants will be recruited or contacted. Publicly accessible documents are used within the defined scope; no attempt will be made to access private, restricted or confidential material.	
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 confidentiality or anonymity arrangement is required because there are no participants. The study will identify public organisations and publications only where necessary for accurate citation and will not build personal profiles or draw conclusions about individual authors, spokespersons or commentators.	

SECTION H: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
1	“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.		X
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	Not applicable. The research will not collect participant data or create a dataset containing identifiable personal information. Public bibliographic details may appear only in normal academic citations and will not be analysed as personal data.		
	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’ –		X

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	(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	Not applicable: no special category data is collected or analysed.		

	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)?		X
6	University computers?		X
7	Private company computers?		X
8	Home or other personal computers?	X	
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?		X
10	“Cloud” storage or websites?	X	
11	Other – specify:		X
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:		
	Research records and drafts will be stored in the student’s password-protected UWTSD OneDrive project folder. A local working copy may be held on the student’s password-protected personal computer with current security updates. No participant or personal dataset will be stored. Records will contain public-source links, extracts, bibliographic details and analytical notes. Access will be limited to the student and authorised University staff. Files will be retained for the period required by UWTSD and then securely deleted unless University rules require longer retention.		

Data Protection			
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	X	
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?		X
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?		X
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?		X
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?		X
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?		X
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):		
	Public web pages or files may be accessed or downloaded electronically into the student’s research folder. No personal contact details, social-media identifiers, IP addresses, participant audio/video, personal dataset or special category data will be collected. No research dataset will be sent to other organisations or third-party services. The dissertation may cite public organisations and publications in the normal academic manner. Handling will follow the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and UWTSD guidance.		
20	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	The student as principal researcher, the named supervisor, and authorised UWTSD assessors or reviewers where access is required for supervision, ethics review or assessment.		

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21	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:	
	The student as principal researcher, subject to UWTSD supervisory and institutional oversight.	
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.	
	Research records will be stored in a restricted UWTSD OneDrive project folder, with any local working copy held on the student's password-protected personal computer. The digital material will consist of public-source copies or links, bibliographic records, relevant extracts and manual coding notes. No participant identifiers or consent forms will be created. Access will be restricted to the student and authorised University staff. Files will be retained until the project and required assessment or review period have ended, then securely deleted in accordance with UWTSD requirements.	
22	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtسد.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	X
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	X

SECTION I: Use of AI tools

Use of generative AI and other AI-based tools The research will not use AI to capture data, generate research evidence, analyse the dataset, classify source material or process personal or sensitive data. Limited AI assistance may be used to summarise selected publicly accessible source material and suggest sentence structures for clarity and fluency. Only when specifically instructed by the author and needed, it may also generate a draft conceptual framework, process diagram or thematic map. Every output will be checked and approved by the author.		YES	NO	N/A
1	Capture data?		X	
2	Generate and/or edit text?	X		
3	Generate graphics?	X		
4	Generate video?		X	
5	Generate sound/music?		X	
6	Generate code?		X	
7	Generate synthetic data?		X	
8	Analyse data?		X	
9	Analyse personal or sensitive data?		X	
10	Classify data?		X	
11	Do you intend to use the free version of any AI tools?	X		
Justification: limited text assistance may summarise selected public source material and suggest sentence structures to improve fluency. If needed and specifically instructed by the author, AI may generate a draft conceptual framework, process diagram or thematic map for review and revision. AI will not replace source checking, manual coding, interpretation or academic judgement, and it will not generate evidence or analyse the dataset. No personal, confidential, restricted or subscription-only material will be uploaded. All sources and final wording will be carefully checked by the author, and permitted use will be acknowledged as required.				
12	Tools: Google Gemini and OpenAI ChatGPT. Free versions may be used where permitted by the module brief and UWTSD guidance. The providers are based in the United States; the student will check applicable account terms and data-retention arrangements. The tools may provide limited public-source summarisation, sentence-structure support and, only when author-directed and needed, a draft conceptual framework, process diagram or thematic map. They will not receive personal, confidential or restricted material. Every suggestion and graphic will be checked by the author; the research design, coding, interpretation and submitted work remain the student's responsibility.			

SECTION J: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:	Rifatun Nabi Chowdhury Rian	Date: 20 July 2026
2	Supervisor:	Dr Jean Wang	Date: 20 July 2026
3	Signature:		