# **SCHOOL OF LAW - RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION**

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| This form is for those members of academic staff, PGR, JD and MPhil students who are planning to conduct research with human subjects or obtain data from the Internet or other database. As such, you are now required to complete a more detailed research ethics application.  Please answer each question as concisely as possible. **If a question does not apply, please write in ‘N/A’ and move on.**  Please note: If your research **solely** involves the analysis of data either from the Internet or other database with **no human subject** involvement you may progress directly to **Section 5: Anonymity, Confidentiality and Data Security** after entering your details.  Depending on the type of project you are undertaking this this document should be submitted online along with copies of any other relevant documentation including:  **The Participant Information Sheet (PIS)**  **The consent form (or assent form if participants cannot consent themselves)**  **Survey and interview questions**  **Peer review comments** |

## INTRODUCTION

If you have any queries please contact the School of Law REC Chair, Professor Graham Ellison ([g.ellison@qub.ac.uk](mailto:g.ellison@qub.ac.uk))

## Details (all applicants)

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| Name: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Staff / Student number: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Project Title: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Project description. Please include a summary of your research including the research questions, a statement of methodology and the type data you propose to collect (max 1000 words). [see Note 2] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

## SECTION 1: The Research Team

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| 1. | Please explain briefly what the roles and responsibilities of each member of the research team will be. [see Note 3] | |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | | |
| 2. | If (a) you are not the Principal Investigator, please explain whether ethics approval has been granted at the lead researcher’s home institution (b) what aspects of the data collection you are responsible for and what this ethics application pertains to. [see Note 4] | |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | | |
| 3. | | Please explain who will oversee the day-to-day management of contract research staff especially if they have been hired to collect or analyse data. [see Note 5] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | | |

# **SECTION 2: Location of the investigation**

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| 1. | Does this research have an international component? Please explain. [see Note 6] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 2. | Will this research require separate ethics approval from local partners or stakeholders as per QUB’s [Policy on the Ethical Approval of Research](https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/Governance-ethics-and-integrity/FileStore/Filetoupload,1021071,en.pdf). |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |

# **SECTION 3: Your project**

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| 1 | Please describe the groups or individuals that will be participating in your project and what they will be required to do. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 2 | Does this project involve an element of covert research or deception whether in whole or in part? (i.e. participants are not aware that they are being studied). Please explain. [see Note 7] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 2a | If covert methods are deployed, please provide a robust justification for why they are necessary to the fulfilment of the project’s aims? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 3 | Please describe what your participants / respondents will do in the study? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 4 | How are participants going to be identified and recruited to your project? [see Note 8] |
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| 5 | Do any of your research subjects meet the criteria for vulnerability noted in Section 2.4 of the University's Policy on the Ethical Approval of Research? Please explain. [see Note 9] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 6 | For academic staff projects only, please explain whether the PI and / or CIs have previous experience with conducting research with vulnerable groups. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 7 | Please describe what steps you are putting in place to ensure that research subjects are not in any way disadvantaged by participating in this research? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 8 | What will participants be told about the research and how will this be explained to them? (A copy of the participant information sheet should be sent along with this application). [see Note 10] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 9 | If you are asking participants about sensitive topics, particularly those that have the potential to cause them psychological distress, what steps will you put in place to minimise the risk of harm? Please explain. [see Note 11] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |

# **SECTION 4: Informed Consent**

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| 1. | Please explain in detail how you propose to manage the process of informed consent. For example, how will you ensure that your participants fully understand what you are trying to do in the research and the potential risks to them of participation? (Please note that a copy of the consent / assent form must be included with this application). [see Note 12] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 1a. | Will any of your participants be unable to provide informed consent to their participation in the research by virtue of age or some other factor? Please explain. |
|  | |
| 1b. | If this is the case (see 1a above) how will consent (or assent) be obtained (e.g. from a legal guardian, parent, institutional authority)? (Please note that a copy of the consent / assent form must be included with this application) |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 2. | Please explain at what stage participants can withdraw from the research. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 2a. | If a participant wishes to withdraw what will happen to their data? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 3 | If you are conducting research where the participant’s first language is not English what steps will you take to ensure that they fully understand their involvement in the project? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 4. | If you are recruiting participants from an organisation (e.g. police, prison service, court service, law firm, NGO etc) do you plan on obtaining organisational consent for employees to be interviewed or surveyed? Please explain. [see Note 13] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 4a. | If you are not going to obtain organisational consent for your project, please explain why not. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 5. | Depending on your sample are there any issues around disclosure and confidentiality that may arise in your research? If so, please explain how you propose to deal with this. [see Note 14] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 6. | If the If the research is to be conducted in an international jurisdiction, have you satisfied yourself that local laws regarding potential participant disclosure of criminal or prohibited activities are being complied with? [please explain] [see Note 15] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |

**SECTION 5: Anonymity, Confidentiality and Data Security**

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| 1. | Please explain the type(s) of data you are collecting or analysing in your project. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 2. | Could any of the data you are collecting in your research be regarded as *personal data* according to the 2018 Data Protection Act? [see Note 16] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 2a. | If so, please explain what aspects of the data may be construed as *personal data* under the legislation. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 3. | Please explain how you propose to anonymise your data or if the data cannot be fully anonymised, please provide a justification for using it. [see Note 17] |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 4. | If you have obtained information (e.g. legal files, medical files, employment records etc) from a confidential database please explain how you were given access to this data? *If not applicable, please go to question 5.* |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 4a. | If you have obtained information from a confidential database has the 'owner' of this data (e.g. government department, organisation, NGO etc) placed any restrictions on (a) what elements of the data can be used (b) and what the data can be used for? Please explain. *If not applicable, please go to the next question* |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 5. | Please indicate what steps you will take to preserve the confidentiality of the data gathered in your project? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 6. | Where will all forms of data be stored and how? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 6a. | If data is to be stored across multiple sites, are you confident that rigorous mechanisms to maintain data security will be in place in each site? Please explain. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 6b. | Who will have access to the data? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |
| 7. | How will the outcomes of the research be disseminated?  Will you seek to publish the research and if relevant, how will you ensure that no identifiable information will be published without consent whether this is from a human subject or information obtained from a database record. Please explain. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | |

# **SECTION 6: Researcher safety**

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| 1. | Are there any potential risks either to yourself or to other members of the research team in conducting this research? If so, please specify what these might be. [see Note 18] |
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| 2. | Where will the data collection take place? (e.g. QUB premises, support group organisation etc) |
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| 3. | If QUB premises are not to be used, how have you satisfied yourself that adequate Health and Safety arrangements are in place to prevent injury or harm to either yourself or to your participants? Please explain. |
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| 4. | If you or any other member of the research team is undertaking research away from Northern Ireland what protocols will you put in place to manage your own safety and that of researchers involved in the project? [please list] |
|  |  |
| 5. | Research in conflict arenas carries additional risks. If you are planning to conduct research in a conflict zone or area of social and political instability, please explain what additional steps you will take to ensure your own safety and that of other researchers. [see Note 19] |
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| 6. | If you are interviewing political activists and others who may be at risk of reprisal for participating in the research what steps will you take to ensure their safety? [Please explain] |
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THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM