



Ethics checklist

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Privacy

If your project involves observing research subjects, have you made sure you will not invade their privacy?

Have you taken account of the different cultural conventions that influence our understanding of privacy and public spaces?

Confidentiality

Have you made plans to remove from your material anything that might identify your research subjects?

Have you made plans to secure tapes and other data securely, without labels indicating participants' real names?

If you are going to attribute material to your subjects, have you decided how you will get their agreement?

If your project involves the discussion of sensitive topics, have you decided how you will make clear that participants have the right to refuse to answer questions on these?

Will your research involve the collection of personal information about participants without their knowledge?

Does it involve the collection of sensitive material from the Internet? If so, have you made plans to get written consent to use this information?

If it involves the examination of records or documents containing confidential material, have you decided how you will get permission from the relevant authority to use them?

Will the project involve sharing the information with others – if so, you will need to inform your sources?

Informed consent

Do your research subjects know why you are asking them your questions or conducting your tests?

Do they know what their contribution will be?

Do you plan to explain your methods, including how the information will be used, stored and used again?

Will you compose a participant information sheet explaining these things?

Will you ask your subjects to give their consent in writing?



Will you make clear that participants have the right to withdraw, with a cut-off date after which participant data cannot be withdrawn?

Have you decided how you will ensure that participants are free from any form of coercion to participate?

Are there third parties that are likely to be affected by the research?

If you will have to resort to deception to get accurate results, have you made plans to explain and justify your decision afterwards?

If there are participants whose first language is not English, have you made arrangements to ensure their informed consent?

Does your research involve vulnerable participants, whose informed consent will involve briefing parents, teachers or carers?

Safety

Is your project likely to involve a level of physical or psychological risk to your subjects beyond that encountered in normal life?

Is it likely to benefit participants directly or indirectly?

Will you be observing subjects? If so, do you know how you will make sure your presence is not causing any stress or anxiety?

Does your project involve animals?

Does it involve vulnerable groups, like children and those with cognitive impairment?

To get access to your research subjects, will you need to contact parents, guardians or organisations responsible for their safety?

Does the project involve any possible risk to your own safety?

Have you planned to give participants the contact details of help lines and counselling services, if they experience anxiety or distress as a result of your research?

Fairness and impartiality

Have you ensured that your project will not exclude or discriminate against certain groups?

Is there any possibility of conflicts of interest that would compromise the objectivity of your project?

Will you benefit directly or indirectly from financial or other benefits as part of the project?

Are the research findings likely to affect the interests of a participant?
