MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester

School of Law

Ethics approval for student research projects with young adults and children

This template allows the School of Law to approve student research projects (at UG, PGT and PGR level) that comply with the template. If the Student's research project does not comply with the template then the student's ethics approval application form must be referred to UREC for approval.

1. Details of project

- The project is to be conducted by a student within the School of Law
- The research aims and the reason for the research has been fully justified
- The proposed data collection and analysis methods are appropriate for the study
- The scientific quality of the research has been assessed by an internal review, carried out by proposed project Supervisor, PGR Panel, or relevant course leader, within the School of Law
- A full risk assessment has been undertaken for UK and/or overseas research (which may fall within one of the School of Law's Generic Risk Assessments)
- The student has successfully completed a relevant School course unit which covers research methods and design which includes guidance on ethics and has discussed the ethical implications of the research with the supervisor.
- In the case of some projects, where the project forms part of a course unit, the student will have covered research methods and design and guidance on ethics, as part of the course unit, before the project begins and will have discussed the ethical implications of the research with the course leader

2. Methodology

Student research projects working with young adults/children fall into the following two categories:

- Largely quantitative
- Largely qualitative
- Mixed methods

Working with young adults/children requires that the methodology is not only appropriate for children but that it fully takes consideration of the need to take extra care. The student needs to demonstrate that they are prepared to be adaptable and have thought through appropriate mechanisms to take account of participants becoming distressed or disturbed whilst participating in the research. The nature of the participant group pre-supposes that contact with the participants will be direct.

3. Participants

Participants in the study are children and young adults under the age of 18.

It is appropriate that they are included in the study as the research is about children/young adults

The student researchers have satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosures, issued through the University of Manchester in relation to the student's current research programme.

The study will not include people from the following groups, classed as vulnerable:

- Adults in emergency situations e.g. e.g. internally displaced people, those in refugee camps, or seeking asylum
- Adults detained under mental health legislation
- Adults with dementia
- Prisoners
- Young offenders
- Adults in Scotland who are unable to consent for themselves
- Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. those in care homes, medical students, employees.

Permission for the study to take place has been gained from the relevant authority or organisation with responsibility for the participants. Where necessary, additional permissions have been gained from persons responsible for activities within sub-settings of organisations [for example, Head Teacher and Class teacher]. Permission has also been taken from the parent or guardian of the child and, where possible, the child. This will take the form of an active opt-in process, where the parent/guardian and child give explicit permission to the School and/or researcher for child to participate. Usually this will take the form of signed consent; where this is not possible (e.g. parents and/or child are illiterate), the researcher will gain witnessed oral consent, preferably audio recorded.

4. Recruitment

4.1. Identifying participants to recruit

Participants will be identified by the student researcher or person in authority

Recruitment is conducted by the student unless they are in a position of authority over potential participants. In this case recruitment activities are undertaken by a 'facilitator' who is a colleague/manager with whom the potential participants do not have a dependent relationship.

4.2. Recruitment methods

The recruitment will be via:

- Personal letters/ emails/ follow up phone calls
- Posters
- Advertisements
- Known or named client groups (school children, patients etc)
- Networks and recommendations
- Personal introduction in face-to-face settings

Recruitment by a person in authority will be via:

- Organisational records

4.3. Informed consent

An information sheet (Appendix 1), accessible to the group concerned has been prepared which gives participants/parents[1] full details of the project. It will be made clear to participants/parents that:

- No one will be made to participate in the research study against their will, and no undue influence will exerted in order to persuade the participant to take part in the research.
- Participation is entirely voluntary and refusal will attract no sanction and no reason for non-participation is required.
- Participants/parents are informed that if they agree to participate in the study, they are free to leave the study at any time without being required to give reasons for leaving.
- Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible. The exception would be if the child/young person revealed that they are being harmed in any way, then the researcher has a duty to report to an appropriate authority. Depending on the age of the young person/child at the time this will be done with their knowledge and wherever possible it will be agreed with them whom to tell.

4.4. Incentives

Participants will not receive any incentive for participating in the study, other than, where appropriate, travel expenses or a gift voucher to a value not exceeding £20.

5. Details of risks

5.1. Procedures to be undertaken

None other than those taught as part of the students' **professional training** or forming part of an existing **professional role**.

Training constitutes the student having discussed the ethical implications of the project with the supervisor or course leader; plus successful completion of one or more of the following course units/workshops, or, where the project constitutes an integral part of the course unit, completion of the sections of the course which give guidance on research methods and ethical practice:

For undergraduates:

- LAWS10072 Criminological Research Methods
- LAWS20441 Accessing and Understanding Data for Criminologist
- LAWS20452 Data Analysis for Criminologists
- LAWS30610 Long Dissertation

[1] 'Parent' refers to an individual fulfilling a parental role in relation to a child. It therefore includes other family members, foster parents and other persons who have the main caring responsibility for the child

For postgraduates:

- LAWS69990 PG Law Research Skills
- LAWS70821 Introduction to Statistics and Data Analysis
- LAWS71131 Researching Social Issues: An Introduction
- LAWS71362 Qualitative Research Methods
- LAWS70492 Measures and Correlates of Crime
- LAWS70452 Evaluating Policy and Practice
- CSEP60032 Research Ethics
- CSEP60112 Research Ethics

Professional role constitutes evidence of qualification and authorised current practice.

5.2. Activities to be undertaken

- Questionnaire administered by a person in authority – maximum 30 minutes
- Questionnaire administered by the researcher – maximum 30 minutes.
- Keeping a diary – average 10 minutes per day over 1 month.
- Attending a focus group – maximum 30 minutes each for children under 12; maximum 2 hours for participants aged 12-18 years.
- Attending one or more interviews – maximum 30 minutes each for children under 12; maximum 2 hours for participants aged 12-18 years.
- Participating in an activity organised at the instigation of the researcher, which the researcher observes - maximum 4 hours
- Participating in activities that form part of everyday routines that are observed by the researcher and in which the researcher may also participate - no time limit, but the participant (or parent or relevant management authority on his/her behalf) can withdraw or ask the researcher to withdraw from interaction with the participant at any time

A copy of questionnaires and/or focus group/interview questions/ or main topics and areas to be investigated is attached and appropriate to the study.

The student has discussed the ethical implications of the project with the supervisor or course leader; plus successful completion of one or more of the following course units/workshops, or, where the project constitutes an integral part of the course unit, completion of the sections of the course which give guidance on research methods and ethical practice:

For undergraduates:

- LAWS10072 Criminological Research Methods
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For postgraduates:

- LAWS69990 PG Law Research Skills
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- LAWS70492 Measures and Correlates of Crime
- LAWS70452 Evaluating Policy and Practice
- CSEP60032 Research Ethics
- CSEP60112 Research Ethics

5.3. What are the potential adverse effects, risks or hazards for research participants, including potential for pain, discomfort, distress, inconvenience or changes to lifestyle for research participants?

No, or only marginal adverse effects, risks or hazards for research participants have been identified, including potential for pain, discomfort, distress, or changes to lifestyle, at the time of application.

5.4. Will individual or group interviews/ questionnaires discuss any topics or issues that might be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the study (e.g. during interviews/group discussions, or use of screening tests for drugs)?

No individual or group interviews/ questionnaires will set out to discuss any topics or issues that might be embarrassing or upsetting, nor is it likely that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the study (e.g. during interviews/group discussions). However, as the participant group are young adults/children then it is recognized that topics or issues that the researcher considers to be non-embarrassing or upsetting may cause discomfort for the participant.

5.5. Expected total duration of participation in the study for each participant
Normally, no more than four hours.
However, in studies involving ethnographic methods, such as participant-observation, involvement of the research subjects does not have a clear time-limit and, in the course of normal social interaction, participants may engage periodically with the researcher over many months. However, the participant (or a parent or relevant management authority on his/her behalf) can withdraw or ask the researcher to withdraw from interaction with the participant at any time.

5.6. What is the potential for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience to the researchers themselves? *(If any)*
There are no potential adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience to the researchers themselves identified at the time of application.

6. Safeguards

6.1. What precautions have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?

Marginal risks identified for participants.

- If the activity is inconvenient then it will either be cancelled or rearranged for a time that is convenient for the participant. Continuation in the study at a later date will only be agreed with full consent from the participant and parent.
- If participants work in the same organisation where the research is being carried out then due care will be taken to ensure that the research will not interrupt normal organisational procedures.
- Where it is considered that there may be a **marginal likelihood** of a topic or issues being sensitive, difficulties are to be averted by a procedure of gaining ongoing consent. If distress occurs then the researcher will either stop the activity (dependant on the severity of the reaction) or will move on to the next area. It will be made clear to participants/parents that the participant can decline to answer particular questions or discuss particular topics.

Marginal risks identified for researchers.

- A risk assessment has been completed by the researcher's supervisor and has identified only marginal risk levels. A copy of the assessment and recommended safeguards is attached.

6.2. Informed consent

Informed consent will be obtained from all participants/parents by the researcher, where practicable. Where appropriate, this will involve a signed consent form (see Appendix 3 for an example), but, where the formality of a signed record may create discomfort and distrust or where participants are illiterate, it may also involve only oral consent, which will be witnessed by a third party and preferably audio recorded, and be negotiated on an on-going basis to keep participants/parents fully aware of the research process. In projects using mainly ethnographic methods, obtaining informed consent from everyone present in an informal social situation may not be practical, but due care will be taken to ensure participants are not liable to suffer any harm as a result of the research process. Unless their consent has been obtained to the contrary, every effort will be made to ensure that participants' identities will be protected.

Information on the research (Appendix 2), in a format appropriate to the participant group, has been produced for the participants and parents. Explanations of what the research entails will be conveyed in an age-appropriate fashion. In any case, the information will include the following details:

- the name of the researcher and contact details for the researcher or research facilitator for any questions prior to deciding whether to take part.
- an explanation that it is a student project and what the researcher is hoping to achieve in the research
- what is going to be done by the researcher

- a clear explanation of what the participant is expected to do during the study
- a statement that the participant is not obliged to take part, and may withdraw at any time, may choose not to answer particular questions or discuss topics that they do not wish to.
- a clear statement of payment of travel expenses or offer of gift voucher.
- a clear statement on confidentiality and data security and usage.

Other information that will be included is as follows:

- duration of the study
- location of the study
- anticipated outcomes in respect of publication of findings

6.3. Will a signed record of consent be obtained?

Where appropriate a signed record of consent will be obtained (see Appendix 3 for an example), but some research may also involve only oral consent (see 6.2), which will be negotiated on an on-going basis to keep participants fully aware of the research process.

The consent of a parent **only** will be obtained where the child is too young to comprehend the issues involved or the nature of the research and it is part of routine practice e.g. joining a reading table.

Participants/parents have the right to decline the use of audiovisual media such as audio recorders and video cameras, and use of direct quotations from transcripts in any published documents. Specific permission will be sought via the record of consent for the use of recording devices and quotations.

6.4. How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the research?

A minimum period of 24 hours will be given for the participant/parent to decide whether to take part in the research.

6.5. What arrangements are in place to ensure participants receive any information that becomes available during the course of the research that may be relevant to their continued participation?

If any information, pertinent to the study, becomes available as the study progresses then participants/parents will be informed immediately. Participants/parents will be reminded that their participation is voluntary and they are free to withdraw at any time.

6.6. What arrangements have been made to provide indemnity and/or compensation in the event of a claim by, or on behalf of, participants for (a) *negligent* harm and (b) *non-negligent* harm?

The research is being carried out wholly within the UK and if granted ethical approval, will be covered under the University's insurance arrangements for students conducting research.

7. Data protection and confidentiality

7.1. The researcher will abide by the provisions of the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy.

Data and results obtained from the research will only be used in the way(s) for which consent has been given.

Data will be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Not kept longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the participant's rights
- Secure
- Not transferred to settings without adequate protection.

7.2. What measures have been put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data? Give details of whether any encryption or other anonymisation procedures have been used and at what stage?

Anonymity will be preserved by the removal of identifiers and the use of ID numbers or pseudonyms, breaking the link between data and identifiable individuals.

Where such links need to be preserved in order to match data sets in a repeated measures design, coding frames including participant identities are to be kept securely in a locked draw (or other secure location, e.g. encrypted data stick) accessed only by the researcher and separate from the data base. It is University policy that all University-owned laptops, regardless of funding source, must be encrypted. No personal or confidential University data should be stored on unencrypted personal laptops, computers, memory sticks or other portable devices – see link to policy: http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/secure-it/encryptionsw/)

Where it is pragmatically impossible to preserve anonymity without invalidating the purpose of the research, as in the writing of some ethnographic accounts or in ethnographic audiovisual productions, the subjects will be made aware of this and their consent sought through appropriate adjustments to the standard consent form.

7.3. Where will the analysis of the data from the study take place and by whom will it be undertaken?

The analysis will take place in a **private** study area by the student researcher conducting the study.

7.4. Who will have control of and act as the custodian for the data generated by the study?

The supervisor will control and act as custodian for the data generated by the study.

7.5. Who will have access to the data generated by the study?

The student researcher will have access to the data generated by the study. In addition the student researcher's supervisor may see the data, in order to guide the student in analysis, but only when all links that could identify individual participants have been removed (except when research participants/parents have expressly permitted the use of their real identities).

In instances where research material may be placed in an archive that is open to researchers and other students, as may be the case with audiovisual and other ethnographic materials, the participants/parents will be made aware of this and their consent obtained through appropriate adjustments to the standard consent form.

7.6. For how long will data from the study be stored?

The university guidance recommends that data should be stored for a minimum period of 5 years; should researchers wish to store data beyond this timeframe then they should provide written justification for doing so.

Data will normally be stored in a locked drawer or secure computer facilities. After the student has left the University, the data will be stored in a secure environment, accessed by the student researcher only.

8. Reporting arrangements

8.1. Please confirm that any adverse event will be reported to the Committee

Any adverse event will be reported to the UREC committee.

8.2. How is it intended the results of the study will be reported and disseminated?

Dissertation/short report to participants/parents.

8.3. How will the results of research be made available to research participants and communities from which they are drawn?
In undergraduate projects, results will not routinely be offered, unless specifically requested by the participants/parents. In PGT and PGR projects, participants/parents will be offered the option of requesting a short report, in an appropriate format, detailing the main results of the study. No individual feed back to be given to participants as links between the data and individuals will have been broken.

9. Funding and sponsorship

UG and PGT student projects do not have external funding, therefore the sponsor is the supervisor of the student. PGR projects may have external funding, but the sponsor is still the supervisor of the student.

10. Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest has been identified at the point of application. Should a conflict of interest become apparent as the study progresses then UREC will be informed.

Appendix 2

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Participant information sheet

Note: this is a sample sheet and can be adapted according to the nature of the research project (e.g. whether it is an undergraduate, PGT or PGR project).

What is the title of the research?

Who will conduct the research?

What is the aim of the research?

Why have I been chosen?

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

What happens to the data collected?

How is confidentiality maintained?

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

What is the duration of the research?

Where will the research be conducted?

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

What benefit might this research be to me or other subjects of the research?

Contact for further information

What if something goes wrong?

Appendix 3

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[insert title of dissertation/project/research]

[remove questions 3 and 4 if not relevant within your research]

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please read the consent form and initial it:

	Please Initial Box
1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.	
2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to any treatment/service	
3. I understand that the interviews will be audio/video-recorded	
4. I agree to the use of quotations that are anonymous/attributed (delete as appropriate)	

I agree to take part in the above project

Name of participant	Date	Signature
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature

Appendix 4

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School of Law

[insert title of dissertation/project/research]

[remove questions 3 and 4 if not relevant within your research]

CONSENT FORM FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN

If you are happy for your child to participate please read the consent form and initial it:

	Please Initial Box
5. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.	
6. I understand that my child's participation in the study is voluntary and that s/he is free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to any treatment/service	
7. I understand that the interviews will be audio/video-recorded	
8. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes that are anonymous/attributed (delete as appropriate)	

I agree to take part/that my child can take part in the above project

Name of parent/guardian	Date	Signature
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature