Guidelines for completing the PAIS-REC Application Form B

Research ethics Form B must be completed by all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students (including applicants for the URSS student research scheme with supervisors located in PAIS) who wish to conduct research involving the collection of human data. Please read the following note carefully before completing Form B as inadequate information may delay authorisation for your project. Please also read carefully the departmental guidelines on ethical research before completing this form.

General guidance in filling out this form

- All research projects involving human participants involves ethical considerations. In particular, such research raises issues of trust and integrity in relationships between researcher and subject; protection of researcher and participants from harm; the right of all participants to withdraw from research at any time; and the safe storage and processing of personal data.
- PAISREC (the departmental ethics committee) will need to see evidence that the applicant is aware of relevant issues, such as those noted above, and how the researcher plans to address them.
- If any risks to researcher or research participants are identified, the student must explain how they intend to minimise and/or monitor these risks and also why such risks are made necessary by the research design.
- Fieldwork which involves the researcher being located outside the UK is classified by the Department as inherently sensitive and it will not normally be authorised for undergraduate or taught undergraduate students. This is because the ethics clearance we can give for student research at these levels does not straightforwardly apply to research conducted outside the UK.
- Fieldwork which involves children (persons under the age of 18) is classified by the Department as inherently sensitive and it will not normally be authorised for undergraduate or taught undergraduate students.
- Fieldwork which would involve further training outside the module in which the research is located - or a security or legal clearance that the student does not already have - will not normally be authorised.
- During fieldwork, students are expected to have a personal security plan in place involving regular contact with their supervisor(s) and a plan what they and their supervisor if an emergency arises in the course of the fieldwork.

Applicant and Supervisor Details

- As this is a student project, the supervisor and the student are co-applicants and jointly responsible for the application and the research project. The supervisor is responsible for the safety of the student during any fieldwork, for assisting the university in dealing with any complaints or queries that arise from the fieldwork, and for making sure data protection laws and policies are followed with regard to any human data collected and stored by the project.

Project title

- A draft dissertation (project) title is acceptable but it must be discussed and agreed with your supervisor prior to submission of this form.

Method and materials (Questions 1-11)
(a) Recruitment of Participants (Q4-8)

- How will potential participants be identified and how many participants will there be? Please identify inclusion and exclusion criteria and explain the purpose behind such criteria.
- Will any vulnerable groups be recruited?
- What materials will be used to recruit participants? Where will these materials be advertised?
- When designing the recruitment emails or recruitment request, you should be clear as to the purpose of the research and what is demanded of participants.

(b) Participant Benefit/Risk (Q9-10)

- Please highlight any potential harm/risks that the participant (and the researcher) may suffer as being part of this study. This should include any physical, psychological or social discomfort or harm that may result from their participation in this project.
- Please outline what steps the researcher will take to minimize and monitor this harm/risk.

(c) Informed consent (Q11)

- Obtaining informed consent is vital to the ethical conduct of research involving human participants. Fully informed consent is a process by which a participant in research understands the nature and consequences of participating in research and is free to choose to consent to participating.
- Describe the process you will use to ensure your participants are freely giving fully informed consent to participate. This will usually include the provision of an information sheet, and will normally require the completion of a consent form. Templates for these forms can be found here.
- Written consent from participants will normally be required for all projects (except questionnaires when completing and returning a completed questionnaire is considered to be consent).

Data (Questions 12-16)

(a) Data minimisation and transparency (Q12)

- Only the amount of data required for the study should be collected, from the minimum number of participants (researchers should justify this with a sample size calculation to evidence this is appropriate to the methodology, statistical analyses required and research outcomes/objectives). This means that only the minimum amount of personal data should be collected from each participant, again justified by the research design. It also means that the degree of sensitivity of the personal data collected should also be minimised - if special category (sensitive) data is not required to achieve the outcomes of the project, it should not be collected. E.g. is knowing a participant’s religious beliefs or ethnicity relevant to the research question? If not, it shouldn’t be collected.
- Any personal data collected must be obtained openly and honestly and without any misleading intentions. This means that data cannot be collected for purposes other than the stated objectives of the project which have been communicated to the participants (e.g. through the recruitment process, participant information sheet, and consent form).

(b) Pseudonymisation/anonymisation (Q13)

- Data should be anonymised/pseudonymised as soon as possible.
Pseudonymisation involves the removal of direct or common identifiers from the data set, which are then replaced with a number or a code so data can be continually collected about an individual without recording their identity. For pseudonymised data to be secure, the key to re-identifying individuals from the data must be stored separately and securely to the research data. Access to this key should be restricted. If you no longer need to be able to identify a participant, the key should be destroyed.

Data is only considered anonymous when there is no possible way to identify an individual either directly or indirectly from the data set.

(c) Data Storage and protection (Q 14)

- Detail here the security arrangements for the stored data (original data, including any consent forms and other copies of relevant documentation for the project, must always be kept in a secure location).
- What technical measures will be used e.g. password protection, encryption, restricted access, locked filing cabinets should be applied. All researchers should use University managed devices (laptops/PCs/phones) when processing personal data for research.
- Research data should be stored on University secure servers if possible.
- Any hard copy data e.g. consent forms should be stored in accordance with the University’s information handling procedure: https://warwick.ac.uk/services/idc/informationsecurity/handling
- It is expected that a separate informed consent (or ‘opt ins’) be obtained from research participants if they are to be audio or video recorded at any time.

(d) Length of Storage & Data Destruction (Q15)

- Data should be stored in a way that would make it secure for a period of 10 years after the work is completed.

(e) Using data for new purposes (Q16)

- Reuse of data for future research is not always known at the outset but if you are planning for the data to be made available for use in future research, this should be made clear to all participants. Please note any future use of the data for research will require a new research ethics application to the relevant committee.

Additional relevant information

- Please give any additional information about your project that you believe to be relevant to this project in this box.

Ethical Reviewer Authorisation for Student Projects

- You will receive, within 20 working days of the submission deadline, an ethics feedback form giving details of the Committee’s. Decisions and any additional conditions of approval will be stated on this feedback form. The decisions range from approved with no conditions, approved with minor (or major conditions), or not authorized.
- Students may be asked for more information before an approval decision is made such as the submission of a Participant Information Leaflet (PIL), participant consent form, and (for interview or survey projects) an indicative list of questions to be put to participants.
- Where student and supervisor wish to appeal a decision, the applicant will normally be requested to submit a full application through the Faculty Ethics Committee ethics review process (HSSREC).
- Students will not be authorized to commence fieldwork before authorization from either PAISREC or HSSREC: submitting Form B is not evidence of ethics clearance.

- Projects that are deemed research ethics compliant will be signed here on behalf of the Department’s Ethics Committee. The ethics form will then be kept on file on the PAIS server.