Student fieldwork not authorised by Department

- Research involving children as participants
- Research involving non-competent adults as participants
- Research conducted overseas in areas designated by FCO as ‘essential travel only’ or ‘advise against all travel’
- Research that necessitates a criminal records check (DBS)
- Research that necessitates deception either involving dealings with participants (eg inaccurate study details in recruiting participants) or officials (eg border authority)
- Research that exposes participants or researcher to psychological or physical harm or unlawful activity
Student research techniques Exempt From Ethics Review and therefore always permissible

- electronic database searching
- hand searching of key journals
- searching of specialist websites
- using general search engines on the internet such as ‘Google’ and ‘Google scholar’
- asking personal contacts, authors and “experts in the field”
- consulting reference works and encyclopaedias such as Philosophers Index – International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences/Encyclopaedia of Political Theory/Oxford Reference Online/Cambridge Histories Online/Oxford Handbooks
- original documentation MRC/Archives (e.g. minutes, reports, correspondence)
- scholarly analysis and research catalogues, databases (e.g. books, journal articles, conference papers)
- facts and figures (UK Data Service/National Statistics/DataStream/OECD e.g. official publications and statistics)
- popular commentary and analysis (print and online news reports, broadcast media, political magazines, weblogs)
- All other secondary data for which you have permission to use from copyright holders and which was itself ethically approved.
’Rules of thumb’ for students and supervisors

• Don’t feel under pressure to design a research project involving fieldwork if you or your supervisor have doubts your ability to conduct the fieldwork safely.

• Do make sure that the fieldwork is necessary for the project and that a non-invasive research technique would not be better use of your time.

• Do make sure you understands the extra work and responsibility of fieldwork - including data protection, informant confidentiality, informed consent - as well as your supervisor’s responsibility during any proposed fieldwork.

• Do make sure that your are constructing a project that you are qualified and trained to conduct through prior qualitative and/or quantitative research modules.

• Do discuss with your supervisor whether the proposed fieldwork is not more suitable for a higher level of study (e.g. MA or PhD).
Contacts and Resources

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/skills/urss/

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/RIS/research_integrity/researchethicscommittees/hss_rec/apply/

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/researchers/opportunities/development_support/research_integrity

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/informationsecurity/

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/currentstudents/ethics

The concordat to support research integrity