Ethical Compliance Form for UG and PGT Projects[*]
School of Engineering and Informatics University of Sussex

This form is applicable to projects that involve other people ('participants') in the research and/or conduct of a project, for example, getting comments about a system or design, getting information about how a system could be used, or testing and evaluating a working system. If no other people have been involved in the collection of information, then you do not need to complete this form.

If your evaluation complies with **all** of the points below, please complete and sign this form (and have your supervisor sign it) and submit a signed copy with your final project report/dissertation.

If your evaluation **does not** comply with **all** of the points below, then you will need to apply for ethical approval from either the School Research Ethics Officer (for low risk projects) or the Sciences and Technology Cross Schools Research Ethics Committee (for high risk projects). Information about the application procedure and further guidance, including templates for the consent form and information sheet, can be found here:

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/spg/researchgovernance/apply

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1. Participants were not exposed to any risks greater than those encountered in their normal working life.

   Investigators have a responsibility to protect participants from physical, mental and emotional harm during the investigation. The risk of harm must be no greater than in ordinary life. Areas of potential risk that require ethical approval include, but are not limited to, investigations that occur outside usual laboratory areas, or that require participant mobility (e.g. walking, running, use of public transport), unusual or repetitive activity or movement, that use sensory deprivation (e.g. ear plugs or blindfolds), sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, political behaviour, ethnicity) or those which might induce discomfort, stress or anxiety (e.g. violent video games), bright or flashing lights, loud or disorienting noises, smell, taste, vibration, or force feedback.

2. The study materials were paper-based, or comprised software running on standard hardware.

Participants should not be exposed to any risks associated with the use of nonstandard equipment: anything other than pen-and-paper, standard PCs, mobile phones, and PDAs is considered non-standard.

3. All participants explicitly stated that they agreed to take part, and that their data could be used in the project.

    Participants cannot take part in the study without their knowledge or consent (i.e. no covert observation).

    If the results of the evaluation are likely to be used beyond the term of the project (for example, the software is to be deployed, or the data is to be published), then signed consent is necessary. A separate consent form should be signed by each participant.

    Otherwise, verbal consent is sufficient, and should be explicitly requested in the introductory script (see Appendix 1).

4. No incentives were offered to the participants.

    The payment of participants must not be used to induce them to risk harm beyond that which they risk without payment in their normal lifestyle.

5. No information about the evaluation or materials was intentionally withheld from the participants.

    Withholding information from participants or misleading them is unacceptable without justifiable reasons for doing so. Any projects requiring deception (for example, only telling participants of the true purpose of the study afterwards so as not to influence their behaviour) are deemed high risk and require approval from the relevant C-REC.

6. No participant was under the age of 18.

    Any studies involving children or young people are deemed to be high risk and require ethical approval through the relevant C-REC.

7. No participant had a disability or impairment that may limit their understanding or communication.

    Projects involving participants with disabilities are deemed to be high risk and require ethical approval from the relevant C-REC.

8. Neither I nor my supervisor is in a position of authority or influence over any of the participants.

    A position of authority or influence over any participant must not be allowed to pressurise participants to take part in, or remain in, any study.

9. All participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time.

All participants have the right to withdraw at any time during the investigation. They should be told this in the introductory script (see Appendix 1).

10. All participants have been informed of my contact details, and the contact details of my supervisor.
    All participants must be able to contact the investigator and/or the supervisor after the investigation. They should be given contact details for both student and supervisor as part of the debriefing.

11. The evaluation was discussed with all of the participants at the end of the session, and all participants had the opportunity to ask questions.
    Participants must be provided with sufficient information in the debriefing to enable them to understand the nature of the investigation.

12. All the data collected from the participants is stored securely, and in an anonymous form.
    All participant data (hard-copy and soft-copy) should be stored securely (i.e. locked filing cabinets for hard copy, password protected computer for electronic data), and in anonymous form.

Project title: 3D Video Game: Hope and Control

Student's Name: Alexander John Noles

Student's Registration Number: 22206049

Student's Signature: Alex N

Supervisor's Name: Paul Newbury

Supervisor's Signature: Paul Newbury

Date: 04/11/2024

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Appendix 1: Introduction and Debriefing Scripts

If you intend to obtain verbal consent from your participants, you need to create an introduction script, to read out at the start of the study, and a debriefing script, to read out at the end of the study. You should get your supervisor's approval for your introduction and debriefing scripts before commencing your study. **NB: When submitting the signed Ethical Compliance form, you do not need to include this Appendix.**

Introduction Script

The introduction script must:
- state the general aim of the study
- explain why you need the involvement of other people
- describe what will happen in the study
- describe what data will be collected
- reassure the participant that any data collected will be stored securely, and in an anonymous format
- explain what interaction the participant may have with you during the study
- reassure the participant that this is not a test of ability
- state that the participant may withdraw at any time
- seek explicit consent
- allow the participant to ask questions

An example introductory script (italics indicate required information, some of which will be specific to your project):

Web Interface Investigation
Final Year Project, 2014-15
Jane Student

The aim of this study is to investigate the suitability of a new website [*state the general aim of the experiment*]. We cannot tell how good this website is unless we ask those people who are likely to be using it, which is why we need to run studies like these [*explain why you need the involvement of other people*]. I will give you some time to browse the website, before asking you to answer some questions [*describe what will happen in the study*].

I will be observing you while you perform the tasks [*describe what data will be collected*]. If you have any questions, please ask me, and please let me know when you are finished [*explain what interaction the participant may have with you during the study*].

I will ask you some questions at the end of the study [*describe what will happen in the study*]. Please remember that it is the system, not you, that is being evaluated [*reassure the participant that this is not a test of ability*].

You are welcome to withdraw from the study at any time [*state that the participant may withdraw at any time*]. Please be assured that any data collected will be stored securely and in an anonymous form [*describe how the data will be anonymised and stored*].

Do you agree to take part in this evaluation? [*seek explicit consent*]. Do you have any questions before we start? [*allow the participant to ask questions*].

Debriefing Script

The debriefing script that is used at the end of the study must:
- restate the main aim of the experiment
- if applicable, explain any other, related aims of the experiment, and any particular data collected
- allow the participant to make comments or ask questions
- give contact details for the student and supervisor
- thank the participant

An example debriefing script (italics indicate required information, some of which will be specific to your project):

Web Interface Investigation
Final Year Project, 2014-15
Jane Student

The main aim of the experiment was to investigate the suitability of this website [*restate the main aim of the experiment*]. In particular, I was looking to see whether you made use of the site map, and whether any of the links on the website seemed to be confusing. I wanted to know how easy the pages are to navigate [*if applicable, explain any other, related aims of the experiment, and any particular data collected*].

Do you have any comments or questions about the experiment? [*allow the participant to make comments or ask questions*]. Here are my contact details, and those of my supervisor, and please let us know if you have any further questions about this study [*give contact details of student and supervisor to participant*]. Thank you for your help [*thank the participant*].