

# Physical Sciences Ethics Committee

## CS Fast-Track Ethical Approval Form

### How to Use This Form

You can make a copy of the form for editing through File > Make a copy. The copy then can be shared between the student and the advisor and collaboratively filled online. If you prefer to fill the form offline, the file can be downloaded through File > Download in a variety of formats including Microsoft Word (.docx) and OpenDocument Format (.odt). Finalised forms can then be exported as PDF through File > Download and submitted following the guidance on submission.

### Notes before You Start

It is strongly recommended that you consult the guidance on the [CS Ethical Approval webpage](#). Non-compliance with the available guidance will lead to delays in the approval process.

This fast-track form is for **taught students** only. The form needs to be filled by the student and their advisor (or module leader if the project is a module assignment).

Research students and staff must complete the Full Ethical Approval Form found in the [CS Ethical Approval webpage](#).

**Students:** You need to discuss the ethical considerations of your project with your project advisor (or module leader if the project is a module assignment) and, if necessary, fill in a full ethics form to be submitted to the Physical Sciences Ethics Committee.

**Advisors (or Module Leaders):** You need to review and approve the completed form. Please ensure you are familiar with the University's [Code of practice and principles for good ethical governance](#) to guide your student effectively. Please seek guidance from the Departmental Ethics Officer(s) if you are uncertain about any ethical issue arising from this application.

## Section 1. Potential Ethical Issues

Does your project involve any of the following? Please mark Yes or No for **all** issues.

No.	Issue	Yes	No
1.1	Human participants (adults or children)	✓	
1.2	Human data (e.g. data collected through surveys and questionnaires on issues such as lifestyle, housing and working environments, and attitudes and preferences, and datasets including human data)	✓	
1.3	Applications that could potentially involve unethical practice, including potential dual-use applications (e.g. projects involving tools or data that can be used to attack systems)		✓
1.4	Funding sources or collaboration with potential to adversely affect existing relationships or bring the University or Department into disrepute (e.g. projects related to gambling, dark market, etc.)		✓
1.5	Restrictions on dissemination (e.g. not being allowed to publish certain datasets or results)		✓
1.6	Military or defence context		✓
1.7	Overseas countries under regimes with poor human rights record or identified as dangerous by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office		✓
1.8	Human material (e.g. tissue or fluid samples), vertebrates, especially mammals and birds, or any other organisms not previously mentioned		✓

If you answered **No** to all the above, you do not need ethical approval, so you do not need to continue filling in this form and you do not need to submit it for approval.

If you answered **Yes** to any of the above, you must complete this Fast-Track Ethical Approval Form, get it signed off by your project advisor (or module leader), and submit it for approval to the Departmental Ethics Officers.

The rest of this form is designed to verify specific conditions. If certain conditions are not satisfied, the form will guide you to complete a Full Ethical Approval Application, to be approved by the Physical Science Ethics Committee.

## Section 2. Project Information

Student Name	Thomas Murphy
Course Title	MSc Computer Science
Project Advisor	Farid Bello
Project Title	Learning the patterns of Warzone 2 gun popularity.

### Course Mode of Delivery:

<input type="checkbox"/>	On Campus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Online
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### Project Type:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Undergraduate Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Postgraduate Project
<input type="checkbox"/>	Undergraduate Module Assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Postgraduate Module Assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other - Please specify:		

## Project Description

2.1. Provide a clear statement of your research questions or your experimental hypotheses.

Exploring the patterns of balance and popularity of Call of Duty: Warzone 2 guns.

2.2. Briefly explain what you are going to do in your study. Give sufficient detail that a non-expert in the subject can understand what you are proposing to do.

This research project will explore and scrutinise the reasons guns become popular in battle royale/first person shooter games with a focus on the game *Call of Duty: Warzone 2* for research. It will look at old and current *Warzone* guns and identify the patterns and similarities between popular guns and then have a look at the efforts that publishers made to attempt to even out gun popularity to see more variety of weapons within the game. Updates to the game that are put in place to reduce a dominant gun's popularity are called balance patches. This research aims to understand the priorities of video game publishers when it comes to balancing their first person shooter games and uses the *Call of Duty* franchise for analysis as it is the most popular FPS game and *Warzone 2* is one of the most popular battle royale games. The project will aim to produce a software after

research has been gathered that can assist a player in selecting guns for *Warzone 2*.

## Section 3. Informed Consent

If you do not have participants in your study, please mark the following and skip to Section 4.

<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no participants in my study.
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If you have participants in your study, complete the following table.

If you answer **No** to any of the following, you must submit a Full Ethical Approval Form.

No.	Question	Yes	No	N/A
3.1	Will you inform the participants of the purpose of the study, the investigators, and any funding source?	✓		
3.2	Will you describe the procedures and the data collected to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect? Note: any personal or sensitive information, and any audio or video recording must be explained explicitly and in detail.	✓		
3.3	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs? Note: If there is a plan to publish data, e.g. direct quotations, on an individual basis (rather than in aggregate), the exact anonymisation method needs to be explained clearly.	✓		
3.4	Will you inform participants of any possible risks of participation?	✓		
3.5	Will you inform participants that their participation is voluntary, that they may withdraw from the research at any time (even after the data collection, for a reasonable and specified time period) and for any reason without any negative consequences, and how they can request withdrawal?	✓		
3.6	Will you obtain and record explicit consent for participation?	✓		
3.7	If the research is observational, will you obtain and record explicit consent to being observed?	✓		

3.8	If the research involves audio or video recording, will you obtain and record explicit consent to being recorded?	✓		
3.9	If there is a plan to publish data, e.g. direct quotations, on an individual basis, will you obtain and record explicit consent to such publication?	✓		
3.10	If you wish to contact participants in the future, will you obtain and record explicit consent to being contacted with the contact method specified?	✓		

If you answered **Yes** to any of the above, this must be explicit in your supporting documents, e.g. consent forms, information sheets, and questionnaires. You need to submit these supporting documents along with this form.

## Section 4. Protocol Issues

If you answer **Yes** to any of the following, you must submit a Full Ethical Approval Form.

No.	Question	Yes	No	N/A
4.1	Is your study designed to be challenging or disturbing (physically or psychologically) for anyone including yourself?		✓	
4.2	Will you deliberately mislead your participants?		✓	
4.3	Does your study involve taking bodily samples?		✓	
4.4	Is your study physically or psychologically invasive?		✓	
4.5	Could the methodologies or findings of your study damage the reputation of the University of York?		✓	

4.6. If there are any obvious or inevitable adaptations of your research findings to ethically questionable aims, e.g. tools or data that can be used to attack systems, please explain the measures you are putting in place to limit such adaptations.

There should be no such issues.

## Section 5. Health and Safety

Please identify any risks to the participants and state any precautions you will take to ensure their physical and mental health and safety. If you believe there are no risks, please state why.

No such risks will be encountered. Participants will fill out a simple online survey after reading a consent form that should not pose any kind of threat.

## Section 6. Vulnerable Groups and Animals

If you answer **Yes** to any of the following, you must submit a Full Ethical Approval Form.

If your participants are **patients**, in addition to the Full Ethical Application you must follow the Guidelines for Ethical Approval of NHS Projects.

If your project involves any vulnerable group, you may also need to obtain satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance (or equivalent for overseas students).

No.	Question	Yes	No	N/A
6.1	Does your project involve working with animals?		✓	
6.2	Does your project involve any of the following vulnerable groups?		✓	
	• Children under 18			✓
	• People with learning difficulties			✓
	• People who are unconscious or severely ill			✓
	• Patients, e.g. NHS patients			✓
	• Other vulnerable groups – specify below <div></div>			✓

## Section 7. Data Protection

If you answer **No** to any of the following, you must submit a Full Ethical Approval Form.

No.	Question	Yes	No	N/A
7.1	Any personal or sensitive data will be stored in password protected folders on computers controlled by the University or an approved partner.	✓		
7.2	Any hard copies of personal data (including any hard-copy consent forms) will be stored in a secure place within University premises, or those of an approved partner.	✓		
7.3	Only the student and advisor will have access to the data generated from the study. Note: The advisor may share the anonymised data with other researchers at the University of York, but the consent form needs to make this clear.	✓		
7.4	The data will be preserved beyond the study in line with University policy and will be placed in the custody of the advisor at the end of the project, or destroyed in accordance with information provided to participants.	✓		
7.5	<p>All data will be anonymised prior to analysis. Please state your method of anonymisation:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>The raw data, in terms of ticked boxes for questions answered, will be used in the research and the participants personal information will not be published anywhere.</p> </div>	✓		

## Section 8. Further Project Information

### Human Data

If you have participants in your project or if the data you are working with is about humans, briefly specify each of the following.

8.1. Who are the target participants or data subjects? And how are you recruiting them or how were the data about them collected?

This project may ask human participants with over 100 hours of Call of Duty: Warzone playtime their informed opinions on gun balancing to support/challenge points and hypotheses raised in this research.

8.2. Exactly what pieces of personal and demographic information you are collecting or using from an existing dataset? Explain why you need each.

The project will use publicly available data from *Call of Duty* fan sites that track gun popularity figures on their websites to identify the guns which have been, and currently are the most popular. If official *Call of Duty* data become available, it will only be used if published publicly and free to analyse.

8.3. How are you planning to publish your data and analysis results: on an aggregate basis or on an individual basis? If on an individual basis, explain why it is **necessary** to do so and if they will be anonymised.

Questionnaires will be aggregated so that conclusions are based on the majority of answers.

8.4. Is there a risk that the data or analysis results you publish can be de-anonymised? If yes, explain how you are planning to mitigate it.

No.

8.5. If you have questionnaires or interviews, will you give participants the option of skipping any questions they do not want to answer? If any of your questions is/are mandatory, explain why it/they must be.

Some questions will not be mandatory if they have not played Warzone 2 specifically as there would be no point in answering the questions specific to the game. All other questions about battle royale games in general must be answered so that enough data is gathered.



## External Datasets

8.6. If you are using external datasets, please identify the relevant dataset licence or terms of use and justify why your project would be compliant with those terms. If the data is about humans, please also provide evidence that the data was initially collected with consent.

Currently, the API (Application Programming Interface) for *Warzone 2* is not available meaning official datasets are not yet available to the public. If they become available then the project may use them but only if in the terms of use it is clearly stated that they are allowed to be used for educational purposes.

The project will definitely use data kept on fan websites such as *WZRanked* to provide a feel for what guns are popular. Data like this is made public to anyone and the data being used (just the data showing how popular a gun is) is not personal data as there is no identifying data associated with gun popularity. *WZRanked* prohibits the usage of their data for commercial and harmful purposes which obviously will not happen with this project.

*WZRanked*: <https://www.wzranked.com/>

*WZRanked* TOS: <https://www.wzranked.com/tos>

Another website similar to *WZRanked* that may be used is *WZStats*, which collects data in a similar way to *WZRanked* through data collection from people using their website. *WZStats* does not provide popularity over time statistics in the form of line graphs like *WZRanked* does but still does keep a list of the most popular guns in the META section of their website which is what this project will use. Like *WZRanked*, *WZStats* prohibits commercial usage of their data so using this data for personal and research usage will be within their terms of agreement.

*WZStats*: <https://wzstats.gg/>

*WZStats* T&C: <https://wzstats.gg/terms>

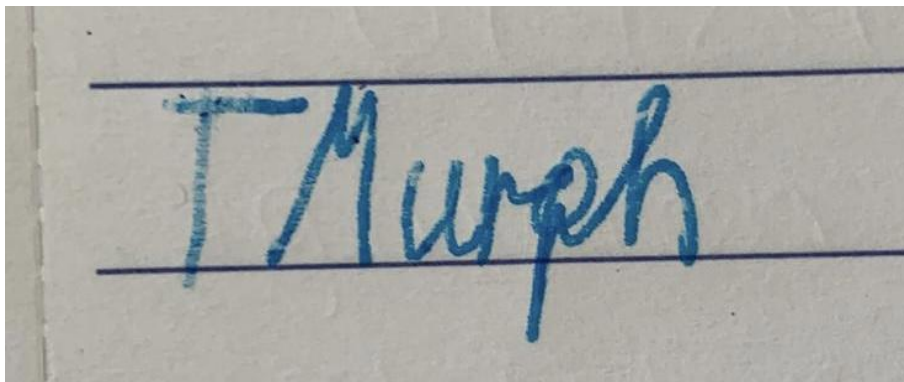
The websites do store some personal data about their users but this data will never be used for the purpose of this research project.

## Section 9. Student Declaration

Please mark boxes below that apply and sign.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I have considered the ethical implications of this project and have identified no significant ethical implications requiring a full ethical application submission to the Physical Sciences Ethics Committee.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I will include all supporting documents (e.g. consent form, information sheet, questionnaires, interview schedules) with this application.

✓	All the components specified in Section 3 are included explicitly in the information sheet / consent form submitted with this application.
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Student Name	Thomas Murphy
Student Signature	
Date	5.06.2023

## Section 10. Advisor (or Module leader) Approval

If this project is related to any previously approved work, please include the application reference for that work here and briefly explain the similarities and differences.

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Please mark boxes below that apply and sign.

	The student has taken all reasonable steps to ensure ethical practice in this study and I can identify no significant ethical implications requiring a full ethical application submission to the Physical Sciences Ethics Committee.
	I have checked and approved all supporting documents required for this application.
	I understand that completion of this form indicates that from the ethical point of view I am willing to share responsibility for the work being conducted.

Advisor Name	Oluwaseyi Oginni
Advisor Signature	O. Oginni
Date	06/06/2023

# Submission

Please make sure this form is completed in full, signed by both the student and the advisor, and accompanied by required supporting documents (e.g. participant information sheet and consent forms). Otherwise, the approval process is delayed.

Please convert this form to PDF after it is finalised and before submission.

Please submit this form and all supporting documents, preferably all in PDF (unless other file types are appropriate), to the Departmental Ethics Officers through the submission form listed in the [CS Ethical Approval webpage](#).