1. **If Ricardo is not responsible for determining allowable access, should he release the names and addresses?**

According to the Association for Computer Machinery (ACM), Ricardo should not under any circumstances release the names and addresses to anyone. The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct highlights the importance of protecting confidentiality with some exceptions. However, Ricardo would only be allowed to disclose information to appropriate authorities, which Beth certainly isn't (ACM, n.d.). With additional authorizations made by supervisors/authorities, Beth could probably gain access to confidential data. Nevertheless, if the data was highly protected by strict policy, where only a few people had access to it, then even permission from the authorities would not suffice.

1. **Suppose Ricardo were responsible for determining allowable access to the files. What ethical issues would be involved in his deciding whether to grant access to Beth?**

The first and foremost act should be to respect privacy. Therefore, even if he were responsible for determining allowable access, he should consider the risks associated with the purpose of collected data, since the data should not be used for unintended purposes (ACM, N.D.). In that case, he should have been informed by Beth, about her intentions of what she wanted to do with the data. Additionally, as by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the controller shall be able to demonstrate that the data subject has consented to processing of his or her personal data (EUR-Lex, 2016).

Another ethical issue could be related to the importance of keeping the data in safe and confidential place. Therefore, accessing the confidential data by Beth should have been controlled. (Portal Diplomatico, n.d.).

1. **Should Beth be allowed to contact the individuals involved? That is, should the Records department release individuals' names to a researcher? What are the ethical issues for the Records department to consider?**

Beth should be allowed to contact the individuals, even just to notify them, and let them know, how their data is going to be used, together with the purpose and lawful basis of accessing their data (ico, 2022).

The records department as a controller, should request for sheets and forms of research participants provided by Beth. The department has every right to be informed about the process in order to oversee the data access as a controller (European Commission, 2021).

1. **Suppose Beth contacts the individuals to ask their permission, and one-third of them respond giving permission, one-third respond denying permission, and one-third do not respond. Beth claims that at least one-half of the individuals are needed to make a valid study. What options are available to Beth?**

Beth should try to make a second contact to the ones that didn’t respond and the ones that denied permission. For the latter individuals it would be ideal if she could address their concerns. This would allow her to gain their attention and showcase her intentions, with the benefits they would bring to the research. Additionally, if she still lacked the number of participants she might consider receiving additional contacts from other organisations.

References:

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