

COMPUTING PROJECT ETHICS CHECKLIST

*This checklist is designed to help you to decide whether or not ethics approval is required and, if required, to decide on the appropriate ethics review procedure –
please read Annex 0 and 1 on page 5 before you complete this form*

Please Note:

- α) This Checklist should be completed for **all** projects.
- β) All questions on this checklist should be completed.
- χ) Contact details (email address) should be given for supervisor and student.
- δ) Supervisors should read and sign this checklist (in the correct box – EITHER/OR – not both boxes) BEFORE it is submitted to the Ethics Administrator for sign off by the Chair of the Research Ethics Panel.
- ε) Guidance on the 2 different ethics review procedures that together make up the University's Ethics Review System (i.e. 'University' and 'NHS') is available on the University Ethics website.
- φ) If your project will involve human tissue/biological fluids you should contact the UoB Designated Individual for the HTA licence, Dr Sue Boyce for advice (s.g.boyce@bradford.ac.uk or on 01274 235879)
- γ) **If this Checklist is NOT correctly completed, it will be returned to you unauthorised.**

Project Title: Improving content discovery through combining linked data and data mining techniques

Name of Supervisor: Dhavalkumar Thakker

Contact Details – D.Thakker@bradford.ac.uk

Department/School Faculty of Engineering and Informatic

Name of Student : Ross Fenning

Contact Details – ross.fenning@bbc.co.uk

Has student attended appropriate ethics training (Project Ethics lecture): Yes

Please give summary of project (max 150 words): *to be typewritten*

A study into using tools of the semantic web and linked data to extract sufficient information about BBC content via the public website such that we can use machine learning to group related content together.

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|------------|---|----------------|
| Q1 | <p>Is the proposed project an <u>empirical research project</u> involving people?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• will the project include primary data collection from human subjects, their data or their tissue?• Will it constitute an ‘investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding’? (this includes work of educational value designed to improve understanding of the research process) <p>If you answer ‘Yes’ to Q1 ethical approval may be required, move to Q2.</p> <p>If you answer ‘No’ to Q1 then a research ethics review is <u>not</u> required and you are not required to submit this checklist. You should still complete the form as Appendix B of your dissertation.</p> <p><i>Note: there may be occasions where a project is not defined as research but still raises ethical issues – please submit for review if you think this is the case.</i></p> | No No No |
| Q1a | <p>Is the proposed project an <u>audit</u> involving humans?</p> <p>A more detailed definition of Research, Audit and Service Evaluation is available on the University Ethics website.</p> <p>If you answered ‘Yes’ to Q.1a then ethical review is required.</p> | No |
| Q2 | <p>Will the project involve the <u>NHS</u>?</p> <p>see Research Ethics and Governance in NHS and Social Care page of the website</p> <p>If you answer ‘No’ to Q2 move on to Q3</p> | No |

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| | If you answer 'Yes' to Q2 ethical approval will be required by NHS Research Ethics Committee (REC) | |
| Q3 | <p>Will the project involve any of the following in the UK:</p> <p>Testing a medicinal product Investigating a medical device Taking samples of human biological material (e.g. blood, tissue) Prisoners or others in custodial care (e.g. young offenders) as participants Adults with mental incapacity as participants Other vulnerable groups (e.g. vulnerable children) as participants</p> <p>If you answer 'Yes' to Q3 ethical approval will <i>usually</i> be required through Ethical Tissue or NHS Research Ethics Committee (REC) or where the project includes participants which need approval under the Mental Capacity Act approval will be required by the Social Care REC.</p> <p>If you wish to source material from Ethical Tissue at the University, they can be contacted on 01274 235897 or visit www.ethicaltissue.org</p> <p>See information specific to research in Social Care on the University Ethics website</p> <p><i>If you answer 'No' to Q3 move on to Q4</i></p> | No |
| Q4 | <p>Will the project involve human participants and/or human data (<u>but not accessed through the NHS</u>)?</p> <p><i>If you ticked 'Yes' please give details of:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Interviews (how many, how long will they last),</i> <i>2. who you intend to interview,</i> <i>3. where interviews will take place and</i> <i>4. attach interview guidelines or the questions you intend to ask:</i> | No |
| Q5 | <p>Will the project involve <u>human tissue (but not requiring NHS approval – see Q3)</u>?</p> <p>If you answer 'Yes' to Q5 University ethical approval is required</p> <p>If you require advice on human biological material please contact Human Tissue Act (HTA) Designated Individual: Dr Sue Boyce [s.g.boyce@bradford.ac.uk] on ext 5897 or visit www.ethicaltissue.org</p> <p>If you answered 'Yes' to Q5, is the human material over 100 years old and archaeological?</p> | No |
| Q5a | <p>If 'YES' please refer to the Biological Anthropology Research Centre (BARC) guidelines at http://www.barc.brad.ac.uk/BARC_human_remains_policy.pdf</p> | No |
| <p>If you answer 'No' to Q5 and have answered 'No' to Q2, Q3 and Q4 ethical approval is not required.</p> | | |

PLEASE COMPLETE and SIGN ONE of the two boxes below

(in the case of a student project, we do require a Supervisor's signature in whichever box is relevant, before we can have the checklist signed off by the Research Ethics Panel):

1. I have discussed this project with my student AND/OR
2. I confirm that there are no ethical issues requiring further consideration.

(Any subsequent changes to the nature of the project will require that the Panel are informed of all changes)

Signed by (Supervisor):

Signature: Date:

PLEASE PRINT NAME ...DHAVALKUMAR THAKKER.....

Signed by (Student):

Signature: Date:

PLEASE PRINT NAMEROSS FENNING.....

OR

I confirm that there are ethical issues requiring further consideration and will either:

1. refer the proposal to Ethical Tissue, or,
2. fill in and submit a full ethics application to be considered by the appropriate Research Ethics Panel.

Signed by (Supervisor);

Signature: Date:

PLEASE PRINT NAME

Signed by (Student):

Signature: Date:

PLEASE PRINT NAME

Annex 0

Computing Projects Issues based on University Guidelines for Research Projects - Ethical Scrutiny by a University Research Ethics Panel is not required if:

following points in Annex 1 below

- The work uses Public Domain or Fictional Data:
- The work involves Simple Uncontentious Questionnaires or User Testing of Systems:

Annex 1

Ethical Scrutiny by a University Research Ethics Panel is not required if:

- The project is NOT a research project. There may be occasions where a project is not defined as research but still raises ethical issues – please submit for review if you think this is the case.
- The research project will only involve unlinked or aggregated human data which was collected and which was, at the time, subject to relevant research ethics panel approval.
However, where this is the case the researcher should at least confirm this in an email to the Research Support Unit's Ethics Administrator so that the Ethics Administrator has a record and can inform the Chair of the appropriate Research Ethics Panel that the researcher plans to go ahead without ethics approval. The email should confirm that the research project does not require ethics approval because it only involves unlinked or aggregated data, which when originally obtained from people was obtained in accordance with the protocol as approved at the time by an appropriate research ethics panel. The email should also briefly explain how the researcher now plans to use the unlinked or aggregated data.
- The research is Public Domain Data:
The Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) Research Ethics Framework states that ethics approval may not be required for data sets that exist in the public domain (e.g. datasets that are available from the Office for National Statistics or from the ESRC's Data Archive) so long as the appropriate permissions from individuals have already been obtained (i.e. informed consent) and where it is not possible to identify the individuals from the information provided. It must be remembered that public domain data is still covered by the laws of copyright.
- The research involves Simple Uncontentious Questionnaires:
If a research project's only involvement with human subjects is a simple brief questionnaire with uncontroversial content it may not require ethical approval. It is the Principal Investigator or Principal Supervisor's responsibility to decide whether a project comes under this category and must indicate this at Q.4 on the checklist and attach the questionnaire document for information.

Guidance on supervisor and principal investigator sign off of uncontentious research

Audit and service evaluation are usually uncontentious, and guidance on how to differentiate between research, audit and service evaluation is given at: University Ethics website.

Even where a project is clearly research, as a supervisor or principal investigator, you can sign off simple, ethically uncontentious projects as not needing further ethical scrutiny. To do this, you should consider the level of risk to participants and researchers, the level of effort required by participants, the level of intrusion into participants' lives and the level of sensitivity of both the general subject matter and the information requested of participants. Basically, the lower these levels, the more likely the research is to be uncontentious and the more confident you should feel about signing off.

The following examples may help.

These studies can almost always be signed off by the supervisor or principal investigator:

- Brief questionnaires asking opinions about matters which are clearly not sensitive (attitudes to a product, beliefs about the usefulness of a course).
- Brief interviews about such topic.
- Observational studies about everyday behaviour in public places which involve no risk to subjects or the researcher.

But the following studies almost always need further scrutiny by a University Ethics Panel:

- Long questionnaires (these require considerable potential inconvenience to subjects).
- Long interviews
- Any questionnaires which ask subjects about intimate behaviours or issue likely to cause distress or would in other ways normally be regarded as contentious or sensitive (e.g. illegal activities, attitudes to abortion, capital punishment, immigration, euthanasia).
- Any interviews which examine these matters.
- Observational studies which involve intimate behaviours, behaviours which are not normally public or which might normally be considered contentious or sensitive (Activities of ethics committees, appointment committees, etc; professional consultations).

Naturally, this list is for illustration only, and should not be considered in any way exhaustive, permissive or prescriptive. For example, there are many categories of research not mentioned here which would definitely require ethics approval (e.g. treatment research). Rather the list demonstrates the issue of proportionality. Thus, even though the method may be the same for activities requiring and not requiring further scrutiny, the content in some way distinguishes between the two categories.

At the same time, there is obviously some middle ground. Are ethics committees not public? Is what is discussed so sensitive that the proposal needs further scrutiny? What about asking people about their views on the actions of senior members of staff in their organisation? Probably, it is in these middle ground areas that further advice should be sought from a Panel Chair about whether the project can be signed off by the supervisor or principal investigator alone. Given that, in so doing, the supervisor or PI is attesting to the ethical probity of the study, it is usually best to err on the side of caution where there is uncertainty. Panel chairs are very happy to advise.

(Dr Martin Brinkworth, Chair, Biomedical, Natural, Physical and Health Sciences Research Ethics Panel,
m.h.brinkworth@bradford.ac.uk, ext. 3584

Dr Clare Beckett, Chair, Humanities, Social and Health Sciences Research Ethics Panel,
c.beckett@bradford.ac.uk, ext. 3521)

Include pages 1-4 as Appendix B in your Dissertation

If there are ethical issues

Please submit this checklist to:

Lynda Nuttall, Ethics Administrator, RKTS, in hard copy or by email to l.d.nuttall@bradford.ac.uk

Research and Knowledge Transfer Support, ext. 3170