Application for Cross-University Ethical Approval

1. Research Details

Name:	Jacob Barrow
School or Professional service department:	School of Computing
Email:	40337360@live.napier.ac.uk
Contact number:	07437767306
Project Title:	An investigation into news articles' incongruence
Start Date:	17/09/2021
Duration of Project:	6 months
Type of Research: UG	

2. Screening Questions

Please answer the following questions to identify the level of risk in the proposed project:
If you answer 'No' to all questions, please complete Section 3a only.
If you have answered 'Yes' to any of the questions 5-14 please complete Section 3a and 3b.
If you have answered 'Yes to any of the questions 1-4, complete all of Section 3.

	You Must Answer All Questions	Yes	No
1.	Is the research clinical in nature?	☐	X
2.	Is the research investigating socially or culturally 'controversial' topics (for example pornography, extremist politics, or illegal activities)?	☐	X
3.	Will any covert research method be used?	☐	X
4.	Will the research involve deliberately misleading participants (deception) in any way?	☐	X
5.	Does the Research involve staff or students within the University?	☐	X
6.	Does the Research involve vulnerable people? (For example people under 18 or over 70 years of age, disabled (either physically or mentally), those with learning difficulties, people in custody, migrants etc).	☐	X
7.	Is the information gathered from participants of a sensitive or personal nature?	☐	X
8.	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?	☐	X
9.	Have you identified any potential risks to the researcher in carrying out the research? (for example physical/emotional/social/economic risks?)	☐	X
10.	Are there implications from a current or previous professional relationship i.e. staff/student/line manager/managerial position that would affect the voluntary nature of the participation?	☐	X
11.	Will the research require the use of assumed consent rather than informed consent? (For example when it may be impossible to obtain informed consent due to the setting for the research – e.g. observational studies/videoing/photography within a public space)	☐	X
12.	Is there any risk to respondents' anonymity in any report/thesis/publication from the research, even if real names are not used?	☐	X

1 3.	Will any payment or reward be made to participants, beyond reimbursement or out-of-pocket expenses?	☐	X
1 4.	Does the research require external ethics clearance? (For example from the NHS or another institution)	☐	X
1 5.	Does the research involve the use of secondary data?	X	☐

3A. Details of Project

In this section please provide details of your project and outline data collection methods, how participant consent will be given as well as details of storage and dissemination.

Please give a 300 word overview of the research project
In order to train and evaluate an algorithmic approach to detecting incongruence between an article's headline and it's body, participants will be asked to read a news article and provide a rating of how well the headline matches the body text. As well as the rating, the time a participant takes to reach that rating will also be recorded, to allow for further analysis of the results and provide legitimacy – if someone has taken more time to read the article, this could provide some insight into the variations in ratings.

Data Collection	
1.	**Who will be the participants in the research?**
	Anonymous participants, sourced from various locations (friendship groups, online forums)
2.	**How will you collect and analyse the research data? (please outline all methods e.g. questionnaires/focus groups/internet searches/literature searches/interviews/observation)**
	The data will be collected using a custom-made website on a secured server
3.	**Where will the data will be gathered (e.g. in the classroom/on the street/telephone/on-line)**
	Online
4.	**Please describe your selection criteria for inclusion of participants in the study**
	Adults above the age of 18
5.	**If your research is based on secondary data, please outline the source, validity and reliability of the data set**
	The news articles participants will be reviewing have been collected from a range of online news sites (BBC, The Daily Mail, The Independent, Huffington Post).

Consent and Participant Information	
7.	**How will you invite research participants to take part in the study? (e.g. letter/email/asked in lecture)**
	Posts made on online forums and facebook groups

8.	**How will you explain the nature and purpose of the research to participants?**
	Before they proceed to the rating section of the site, participants will be shown a description of the study, the nature of data to be collected, and how it will be stored and made available
9.	**How will you record obtaining informed consent from your participants?**
	A participant will not be able to access the collection aspect of the website without ticking a checkbox confirming they understand and agree to the terms of the study.
Data storage and Dissemination	
10.	**How and in what format will data be stored? And what steps will be taken to ensure data is stored securely?**
	The data collected will only be a number value that represents the participant's rating, and the length of time (in seconds) taken to arrive at that rating.
11.	**Who will have access to the data?**
	After the study, the dataset will be made public
12.	**Will the data be anonymised so that files contain no information that could be linked to any participant?**
	Yes – no identifiable data will be stored
13.	**How long will the data be kept?**
	Indefinitely
14.	**What will be done with the data at the end of the project?**
	It will be made publicly accessible
15.	**How will the findings be disseminated?**
	The findings will be reported in the dissertation of my honour project
16.	**Will any individual be identifiable in the findings?**
	No

3B. Identification and Mitigation of Potential risks

This section is designed to identify any realistic risks to the participants and how you propose to deal with it.

1. **Does this research project involve working with potentially vulnerable individuals?**

Group	Yes	NO	Details (for example programme student

			enrolled on, or details of children's age/care situation, disability)
Students at Napier	☐	☐	
Staff at ENU	☐	☐	
Children under 18	☐	☐	
Elderly (over 70)	☐	☐	
Disabled	☐	☐	
Migrant workers	☐	☐	
Prisoners / people in custody	☐	☐	
Learning difficulties	☐	☐	

2. If you are recruiting children (under 18 years) or people who are otherwise unable to give informed consent, please give full details of how you will obtain consent from parents, guardians, carers etc.

3. Please describe any identified risks to participants or the researcher as a result of this research being carried out

4. Please describe what steps have been taken to reduce these identified risks? (for example providing contact details for appropriate support services (e.g. University Counselling, Samaritans), reminding participants of their right to withdraw and/or not answering questions, or providing a full debriefing to participants)

5. If you plan to use assumed consent rather than informed consent please outline why this is necessary

6. If payment or reward will be made to participants please justify that the amount and type are appropriate (for example the amount should not be so high that participants would be financially coerced into taking part, or that the type of reward is appropriate to the research topic).

3C. Justification of High Risk Projects

If you answered 'Yes' to the screening questions 1-4 this section asks for justification on the choice of research topic and methodology.

1. **If you have answered yes to question 1 please give a full description of all medical procedures to be used within the research and provide evidence that the project has obtained NHS ethical approval.**

2. **If you have answered yes to questions 2 (research into a controversial topic) please provide a justification for your choice of research topic, and describe how you would deal with any potential issues arising from researching that topic.**

3. **If you have answered yes to questions 3 or 4 (use of deception or covert research methods) please provide a justification for your choice of methodology, and state how you will mitigate the risks associated with these approaches**.

Declaration	
☐	I consider that this project has no significant ethical implications to be brought to the attention of Research Integrity Committee
☐	I consider that this project may have significant ethical implications to be brought to the attention of the Research Integrity Committee
Researcher Signature:	**Date:**
Director of Studies/Supervisor/Principal Investigator Signature:	**Date:**

Checklist
All applications require the following to be submitted with the application form

Participant Information Sheet	X
Informed Consent Form	X
Interview/Survey Questions	X

A PDF information sheet and consent form are attached – a text version will appear on the website before participants are shown articles to rate, as well as a download link to the PDF file.

A screenshot of the rating page for an example article is also attached.