CASA Ethics Procedure for MSc/MRes Dissertations

Form A: Screening of Ethical Risk

Please only use Acrobat Reader to fill in this form.
Do **not** use MacOS Preview.

There are different ways of addressing ethical considerations while conducting research at UCL. This form will help you define the level or ethical risk that your research poses and the corresponding ethical review procedure path. Besides this ethical screening, you may need to complete a Risk Assessment if your research involves fieldwork. ***You must complete this form and any follow-up step before you can begin with your research.***

Code of practice

Whether you are doing minimal, low, or high-risk research you should start by reflecting and identifying potential ethical issues arising from your research. If your research involves human participants, there are a series of principles or accepted ethical standards for conducting research in the UK:[1]

- Benefit and harm: when conducting research involving human participants, you must balance out the benefits that your research could contribute to the society against the potential risks or harms for the participants involved in your research.
- Informed consent: you should provide clear information to your participants about their rights so that they can make an informed decision about whether they want to take part in your research. You should not induce, coerce or pressure them to participate and they should know that they can revert this consent.
- Confidentiality: you should ensure that the participation in your research remains confidential. Data should remain anonymous. The level of anonymity should reflect participants' consent.

There are other ethical principles that vary by field and type of research. Review other ethical principles that may apply to your research.[2]

Responsibility

As a researcher (including at an undergraduate or postgraduate level) you are responsible for safeguarding research integrity, confidentiality, and the well-being of participants. Therefore, you must define the level of ethical risk that you research implies, which you will do in this screening form. Depending on the outcome of the screening, you may need to seek and obtain ethical approval before you can begin with your research.

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1 'Accepted ethical standards', accessed 27 March 2024, https://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/accepted-ethical-standards.php

2 Consult the 'Practicing ethics' project for a review of ethical principles relevant for research and practice in the built environment. 'Practicing ethics', accessed 29 July 2021, https://www.practisingethics.org/project

1. Personal details

Student name:	Student email address:	Student number:
Nooriza Maharani	nooriza.maharani.24@ucl.ac	24200749
Supervisor name:	**Supervisor email address:**	**Date:**
Dr Ollie Ballinger	o.ballinger@ucl.ac.uk	10/04/2025

2. Details of the research

2.1. Title or topic

Exploring Spatial & temporal Deforestation in Indonesian Borneo from 2000-2025

2.2. Project summary (max 250 words)

Provide a brief description **in plain English** of your project, detailing which methods you plan to use and what sources of information (e.g. databases, interviews) will you use and how you will access it (e.g. open data, how you will approach participants).

Background : Extensive research has documented deforestation in Indonesian Borneo caused by factors such as agriculture, mining, and logging. However, the role of government-led projects in forest conversion remains under-explored, despite their significant contribution to hectares of forest conversion.

Aim : Explore the dynamics of deforestation in Indonesian Borneo from 2000 to 2025, with a focus on quantifying the rate and the extent, also highlighting forest conversion caused by government-led national strategic projects

Method:
Step 1: Split Indonesian Borneo into several parts to avoid memory error in GEE
Step 2 : Classify forested area with rule of NDVI > 0.7 which indicate a dense canopy

2.3. Risk assessment

☒ Confirm that you are **not conducting fieldwork** (e.g. collection of data/observations carried out outside UCL premisses.[3] This can be within the UK or abroad.

– OR –

☐ Confirm that you are **planning to conduct fieldwork** and that you will complete a risk assessment. Contact CASA's Teaching Team (casa-teaching@ucl.ac.uk).

[3] UCL Fieldwork Approved Code of Practice 2006 (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/earth-sciences/study-here/fieldwork)

2.4. Selection of Ethics Committee

■ Confirm that your research falls within the domain of **University Research** and, therefore, does not involve procedures that require external ethical review.

For more information about how to determine the domain of your research refer to UCL Research Ethics.

– OR –

☐ Confirm that your research must be evaluated by one of the following external Research Ethics Committee: the NHS Research Ethics Committee, the Social Care Research Ethics Committee, the Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee or the Animal Welfare Ethics Review Board. If so, you must follow the ethics review procedure of the respective institution.

If your research falls into the domain of NHS research, are you are planning to conduct fieldwork *overseas*?

☐ **Yes.** Please move to section 3 and complete the remainder of this form.

☐ **No.** You do not need to complete the remainder of this form.

– OR –

☐ Confirm that your research **already has ethical approval** from a **UK** institution and state the name of the institution below. You do not need to complete the remainder of this form.

3. Screening for low risk

	YES	NO
3.1. Will your research use data that are not already in the public domain or open to researchers? → *Data in the public domain include Open Data, Census data, datasets provided through UCL Library or the UK Data Service.* If you are using open data, please provide relevant URLs here: 1. Landsat 2000-2025, Hansen Forest Loss, Global Land Cover Dataset https://developers.google.com/earth-engine/datasets	☐	✔

3.2.	Will you collect, access, use, store or process data that are not anonymised or, if anonymised, may allow easy re-identification of individuals or may be classified as Personal Data? → *Personal Data comprise data pertaining to a person who could directly or indirectly be identified from that data, including data that you are collecting simply to contact your participants, such as names, residential addresses, email addresses, telephone number or IP addresses. Check UCL Guidance for processing personal data.*	☐	✔
3.3.	Will your research involve observational methods where human participants will be recorded by means of video or audio recordings and can be identified?	☐	✔
3.4.	Will your research involve the opinions of individuals outside the public arena? → *Individuals in the public arena include publicly appointed officials, artists, public figures.*	☐	✔
3.5.	Will your research involve 'data scraping'? → *This would include web pages, forum posts, and APIs provided by third parties **where the data scraped relates to human subjects**.*	☐	✔

4. Screening for moderate or high risk

		YES	NO
4.1.	Will your research involve participants that could be identified as vulnerable (both directly or accidentally recruited), such as children, people with learning disabilities, asylum seekers or victims of crime?	☐	✔
4.2.	Will your research involve participants access to whom requires the permission of a gatekeeper, such as adult professionals, family members or community leaders?	☐	✔
4.3.	Will your research involve intrusive interventions, such as taking blood/DNA samples, administering drugs, performing imaging techniques or MRI scans?	☐	✔
4.4.	Will your research involve the discussion of sensitive topics, such as terrorism, pornography, experiences of violence and abuse or criminal behaviour, or any other topics that may be particularly sensitive due to specific cultural or political characteristics of the group you are researching?	☐	✔

4.5.	Will your research present a significant risk of harm (beyond harm encountered in normal life) to the rights and well-being of participants or/and of a member of the research team? *→ This may include physical, emotional psychological harm (e.g. distress, humiliation or anxiety) or reputational, legal or financial harm.*	☐	☑
4.6.	Will your research involve a risk of disclosure of confidential information, such as information concerning participants' involvement in illegal activities?	☐	☑
4.7.	Will your research involve an element of deception or covert methods of observation or data collection whereby identifiable human participants are included without their knowledge, fully informed consent cannot be obtained, or only limited consent is sought?	☐	☑
4.8.	Do you intend to offer monetary compensation or incentives (other than a copy of your report or refreshments during the interview) to recruit participants?	☐	☑
4.9.	Will your research involve participants that are your own family, friends, colleagues, or clients that would make them obliged (due to their relationship with you) to reveal information that they would otherwise not disclose?	☐	☑
4.10.	Is your research commissioned by the military or falls under a European Union (or other) security programme?	☐	☑

5. Screening outcome

Before selecting the screening outcome, is there any additional information that you think the reviewer might need to confirm the level of risk? **This is optional.**

See next page to select the situation that applies to you.

☒ You answered NO to all questions in sections 3 and 4.

This means that your research poses **minimal** ethical risk and does not require further ethical review.

– OR –

☐ You answered YES to one or more questions in section 3 and NO to all questions in section 4.

This means your research poses **low** ethical risk and must be assessed by the Departmental Ethics Committee.

– OR –

☐ You answered YES to one or more questions in section 4.

This means that your research poses a **high or moderate** ethical risk and must be assessed by UCL Research Ethics Committee (REC).

6. Supervisor sign-off

Please send this completed form to your supervisor for sign-off.

Supervisors only:

☒ I confirm that all information provided in this form is accurate and that I agree with the screening outcome.

Supervisors: please return form to student.

7. Next steps

Please submit your form to Moodle.

If the ethical risk of your research is:

- **Minimal/exempt:** Await confirmation on Moodle. You may proceed with data collection when confirmed.
- **Low:** You must complete *Form B: Low Risk Ethics Application & Data Protection Registration* by downloading the PDF from Moodle.
- **High or Moderate:** Follow UCL step-by-step guide to develop and submit your High-Risk REC application to UCL. Discuss this with your supervisor, who will support you in this process and submit the form on your behalf to UCL REC.

  Note to supervisors: Please send completed form to ethics@ucl.ac.uk with your student copied into the email.