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| **Physical Sciences & Engineering**  **Ethics Review and Approval Form**  **for UG & PGT students** |  |

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Research projects cannot begin until ethical approval has been granted.**

Please complete the relevant sections of this form if, after filling out the relevant ethical review checklist (Annex A), you have identified a potential ethical issue. **Please submit a copy of the completed Annex A as part of your ethics application.**

If required, contact your Project Supervisor to obtain further guidance prior to the completion of this form.

Please refer to the ethical review procedures outlined in the Project Guidelines or contact the Course or Programme Coordinator for further advice on the application process.

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| **Name:**  **ID number:** |  |
| **School:**  **Department or discipline:** |  |
| **Programme (e.g., BEng, MSc):** |  |
| **Project Title:**  **Course Number and Name:** |  |
| **Names of other individuals involved in the research/project?** |  |
| **Name and email address of main supervisor:** |  |
| **Signature of main supervisor:** |  |
| **Application date:** |  |

**Please note:**

1. Research involving NHS staff, patients, facilities and premises may be subject to ethical review by an NHS ethics committee.  This includes research involving individuals when their status as NHS staff or patients is relevant to the research, even when a medical condition is not the subject of the research.  Research involving adults who do not have the capacity to consent may also be subject to these ethical review procedures.  Further guidance is available at [researchgovernance@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:researchgovernance@abdn.ac.uk)
2. Research involving animal and biological materials may be subject to additional approval requirements. Please contact your Supervisor for further guidance.
3. Research involving the collection of genetic resources (organisms, microorganisms, DNA, RNA, proteins, small molecules) from signatories to the Convention on Biodiversity/Nagoya Protocol requires a formal agreement to be in place before this research can begin. Contact your [Research Development Executive](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/contact-us/contact-us-10570.php#faq2) for further guidance.

**CHECKLIST**

The purpose of this checklist is to make sure no information has been inadvertently left out and to allow reviewers to assess the application more quickly. **If you do not complete the checklist and attach a completed Annex A (and any other documentation where required), the application will be returned to you, hence delaying the approval process.**

I confirm that if my project changes significantly then I will notify the Course/Programme Coordinator. YES/NO

I have **attached** a completed checklist (Annex A). YES/NO

I confirm that I have discussed this application with my supervisor. YES/NO

This project requires me to **travel outwith the UK** YES/NO

*If YES, please provide the following confirmation:-*

* I will comply with the requirements of the University’s [Overseas Travel Policy](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/travel-overseas-2130.php), including obtaining permission to travel (where required by the policy), completion of a [risk assessment](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/Overseas%20Travel%20Appendix_Field%20Trip%20and%20Travel%20Risk%20Assessment%20template%20v2.xlsx) and will obtain [University travel insurance cover](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/insurance-367.php#panel6305). YES/NO

*Other Attachments (delete YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE as appropriate)*:

I have attached a Participant Information Sheet. YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE

I have attached a Consent Form YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE

I have attached a schedule of questions for surveys and/or interviews. YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE

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| **Project description**  *Please attach a project descriptor or summary document (where available)* |  |

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| **Project start date and duration**  (i.e. the **particular piece of work for which you are applying for ethical approval** [not your overall programme of research]) |  |

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| **Project methodology** |  |

**Section 1: Research projects involving human participants (not NHS staff or patients)**

*If you answered `No’ to Q1 and Q2 then omit Q3 – 18 and proceed straight to Q19.*

**Recruitment Procedures**

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|  |  | **Yes** | **No** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **1** | Does your project involve human participants?  This includes use of surveys, questionnaires, on-line surveys and tests, focus groups and workshops where human participants provide information or data to inform the research. |  |  |
| **2** | (a) Does your project involve human remains?  (b) If so, does your work conform with the Historic Environment Scotland guidelines? |  |  |
| **3** | Does your project involve people less than 18 years of age[[1]](#footnote-1)? |  |  |
| **4** | Does your project involve people with learning or communication difficulties? |  |  |
| **5** | Is your project likely to involve people involved in illegal activities? |  |  |
| **6** | Does your project involve people belonging to a vulnerable group, other than those listed above? |  |  |
| **7** | Does your project involve people with whom you have, or are likely to have, a working or professional relationship: for instance, staff or students of the university, professional colleagues or clients? |  |  |
| **8** | Does your project involve people who do not have English as their first language? |  |  |
| **9** | Does your project require the recording of audio or video of participants or of others not involved in the research? |  |  |
| **10** | Do you plan to conceal your own identity during the course of your project? |  |  |

*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to any of the above questions, please provide further details.*

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*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to* ***Q1*** *then you must provide a Participant Information Sheet and a Consent Form. For web-based research, screenshots of the appropriate web pages suffice.*

*If your project involves surveys or interviews then you must provide a schedule of questions.*

*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to* ***Q3, Q4*** *or* ***Q6*** *then you will need to apply for disclosure through Disclosure Scotland if you intend to be alone with a research participant or have to take sole responsibility for the participants at any point during your research activity.*

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| **Consent Procedures** |  | **Yes** | **No** |
| **11** | Do you have set procedures that you intend to use for obtaining informed consent from all participants, including (where appropriate) parental consent for children? |  |  |
| **12** | Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary? |  |  |
| **13** | Will you obtain written consent for participation, including for audio and/or video recording? |  |  |
| **14** | Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason? |  |  |
| **15** | Will you give potential participants a period of time to consider participation? |  |  |
| **16** | Does your project involve concealment or deliberately misleading participants? |  |  |

*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to any of the above questions, please provide further details.*

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**Possible Harm to Participants**

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|  |  | **Yes** | **No** |
| **17** | Does the research have the potential to cause distress or discomfort to participants or any member of the research team? |  |  |
| **18** | Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing a detriment to their interests as a result of participation? |  |  |

*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to either of the above questions, please provide further details. Explain how this risk was assessed and how you propose to manage it.*

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**Section 2: Data protection, handling and storage**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

The General Data Protection Regulation imposes a number of obligations for the use of **personal data** (defined as any information relating to an identified or identifiable living person) or including the use of personal data in research.

If you are using personal data, you should consider whether your research requires a [Data Protection Impact Assessment](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/data-protection-6958.php#panel8628) (DPIA) and complies with the University Data Protection policy.

If you are, you now need to see the [Data Protection Checklist for Researchers](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/toolkit/documents/uploads/checklist_gdpr_for_research.pdf) for guidance.

If you then feel that a DPIA may be required or you need data protection advice, then you should contact the Data Protection Officer [dpa@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:dpa@abdn.ac.uk).

Please provide the following confirmation:

*I have read the above guidance and have met the relevant data protection obligations.*

**Please tick the box to confirm**

**In addition, you should also check the requirements for a Data Management Plan (DMP) in the** [**Research Data Management Policy**](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-research-and-knowledge-exchange/Research%20Data%20Management%20Policy.pdf) **and** [**Guidance**](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-research-and-knowledge-exchange/research_data_management%20guidance.pdf)**.**

**Once checked, please confirm the requirement by ticking one of the following:**

***No requirement for DMP***

***DMP required and this is attached***

**Please see** [**here**](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/toolkit/systems/data-managment-plan/) **for guidance on creating a DMP.  For further support, contact** [**digitalresearch@abdn.ac.uk**](mailto:digitalresearch@abdn.ac.uk)

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|  |  | **Yes** | **No** |
| **19** | (a) Will any non-anonymised and/or personal data be generated and/or used?  (b) Will you use an existing dataset in your research?  (c) If ‘yes’, do you have permission to do so? |  |  |
| **20** | Will any data be stored (temporarily or permanently) anywhere other than on password-protected University computers or servers? |  |  |
| **21** | Will you gain access to sensitive[[2]](#footnote-2) data about living individuals or organisations **that is not already publicly available elsewhere**?  If ‘yes’, will you gain the consent of the individuals concerned? |  |  |
| **22** | Does your project require access to personal data about participants from other parties (e.g., teachers, employers), databanks or files?  *If ‘yes’, please explain in the comments section below how you will gain the consent of these participants.* |  |  |
| **23** | Does the project involve collecting personal data from websites or from social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)? |  |  |
| **24** | Will the data be stored, collected or accessed from:   * outside the UK? * outside the EU? |  |  |
| **25** | Is the data likely to contain material that is indecent, offensive, defamatory, threatening, discriminatory or extremist?  *If yes, see* [*here*](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/Prevent_Researchers_Guidance.pdf) *for an explanation of the obligations of the researcher and the university under the Prevent duty.* |  |  |
| **26** | Are there any contractual conditions attached to working with or storing the data? (E.g., an HSCIC data sharing agreement.) |  |  |
| **27** | Could working with this data damage the University’s reputation? (E.g., bad press coverage, public protest.) |  |  |
| **28** | Could working with this data cause an increased risk of attack (cyber- or otherwise) against the University? (E.g., from pressure groups.) |  |  |

*For further advice on Data Protection and GDPR, please refer to* [www.abdn.ac.uk/dataprotection](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/dataprotection)**.**

*If you answered ‘****Yes’****, to any of the above questions, please provide further details. Explain how you intend to ensure that data is stored securely and in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and funding bodies (if applicable). Give specific consideration to whether any non-anonymised and/or personal data will be generated and/or stored and what precautions you will put in place regarding access.*

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**Section 3: Research involving possible harm to the environment**

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|  |  | **Yes** | **No** |
| **29** | Does the project have the potential to cause environmental damage or harm?  *This includes the natural environment but also buildings and structures created by people, especially ones of historical or archaeological importance.* |  |  |

*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to the above question, please provide further details. Explain how this risk was assessed and how you propose to manage it. Say whether relevant guidelines exist in your discipline, and whether you intend to follow them.*

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**Section 4: Research which may have an adverse impact on national security**

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|  |  | **Yes** | **No** |
| **30** | Does your project give rise to a realistic risk to the national security of any country? |  |  |

*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to the above question, please provide further details. Explain**how this risk was assessed and how you propose to manage it.*

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**Section 5: Funding and conflict of interest**

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|  |  | **Yes** | **No** |
| **31** | Is your project funded by the university or an outside organisation, or have you applied for funding? |  |  |
| **32** | Is there any potential conflict of interest between research funder and researchers or participants and researchers which may potentially affect the research outcome or the dissemination of research findings? |  |  |
| **33** | Might the project lead to financial gain to funders, investigators or participants? |  |  |

*If you answered ‘****Yes’*** *to any of the above questions, please provide further details****.***  *Explain any potential conflict of interest and how you propose to manage it.*

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For any contractual or intellectual property questions, please contact the Research Development team in Research & Innovation ([june.middleton@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:june.middleton@abdn.ac.uk)).

**Incomplete or incorrectly completed forms will be returned to the applicant, delaying the process of obtaining ethics approval. Make sure you have completed the checklist on page 2.**

**Please refer to the ethical review procedures outlined in your Project Guidelines or contact your Course / Programme Coordinator for further advice.**

1. It is University policy that children under the age of 16 should also have parental consent to participate in research projects, in addition to consent obtained from the child. Research participants aged 16 and over in Scotland are not required to have parental consent to participate in research projects. However in most countries it is 18 years and in these circumstances, parental consent will also be required for participants aged 17 or under. If you are working with research participants between the ages of 16 – 18 it is essential that you check the local requirements regarding parental consent. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Sensitive data includes data that relates to racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexual life, actual and alleged offences. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)