



Dublin City University
School of Computing

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROJECT INVOLVING **HUMAN PARTICIPANTS**

Please read the following information carefully before completing and submitting your application.

- ❑ **Applications must be submitted via the project dashboard**
- ❑ **Student applicants must include their supervisor as the Principal Investigator (PI).** The form should be checked, approved and signed in digital form by the supervisor in advance of submission.
- ❑ **The application should consist of one electronic file only, in PDF format,** with an electronic signature from the PI (the project supervisor) and yourselves, the students. The completed application must incorporate all supplementary documentation, especially those being given to the proposed participants.
- ❑ **All sections of the application form must be answered as instructed and within the word limits given.**

Applications must be completed on the form; answers in the form of attachments will not be accepted, except where indicated. No hardcopy applications will be accepted. **The project must not commence until approval has been received from the School Research Ethics Committee.**

PROJECT TITLE	Student Network
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S) <i>The Principal Investigator is the project supervisor and s/he has primary responsibility for the project.</i>	Gareth Jones
START AND END DATE	October 2020 to May 2021
STUDENT NAME(S), COURSE AND YEAR (E.G. EC4)	Michael Walsh, EC4 Karl Hannigan, EC4,
LEVEL OF RISK <i>Please confirm that this project requires notification only</i>	Notification only: YES

1. ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

1.1 WILL THE PROJECT BE UNDERTAKEN ON-SITE AT DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY?

YES or NO

YES

If NO, state details of the off-campus location – provide details of the approval to gain access to that location in section 2.7.

DECLARATION BY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR / SUPERVISOR

The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with the form guidelines, the REC guidelines (<https://www.dcu.ie/researchsupport/researchethics.shtml>), the University's policy on Conflict of Interest, Code of Good Research Practice and any other condition laid down by the Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee. I have attempted to identify all risks related to the project that may arise in conducting this project and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

If there exists any affiliation or financial interest for researcher(s) in this project or its outcomes or any other circumstances which might represent a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest this should be declared in accordance with Dublin City University policy on Conflicts of Interest.

I and my co-investigators and/or supporting staff have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the project set out in the attached application and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies related to the project that may arise. Supervisor(s) signature(s) are required as evidence that they have read and approve the submission.

Please note:

1. Any amendments to the original approved proposal must receive prior School Ethics Committee approval.
2. As a condition of approval investigators are required to document and report immediately to the School of Computing Ethics Committee any adverse events, any issues which might negatively impact on the conduct of the project and/or any complaint from a participant relating to their participation in the study

Electronic Signature(s):

Principal investigator / Supervisor: Gareth Jones

Print Name(s) here: GARETH JONES

Date: 23/11/2020

I/We, the students on this proposal, have read and approve this submission

Student(s) signature(s): Michael Walsh, Karl Hannigan

Print Name(s) here: MICHAEL WALSH, KARL HANNIGAN

Date: 23/11/2020

2. PROJECT OUTLINE

2.1 LAY DESCRIPTION, AIMS & JUSTIFICATION, METHODOLOGY (up to 100 words)

Please outline, in terms that any non-expert would understand, what your project is about, including what participants will be required to do. Please explain any technical terms or discipline-specific phrases. State the aims and significance of the project.

We are aiming to develop a student networking platform where students will have access to valuable student resources such as tutoring services, a secondhand books marketplace, and a student discussion forum. Our main users of the platform will be students and tutors. We intend to conduct interviews with both students and tutors to define their interest in the platform. Both will be expected to answer questions related to their potential use of the site. We also intend to distribute a questionnaire with similar questions to students.

2.2 PARTICIPANT PROFILE

List and very briefly describe each participant group where applicable. For instance, participant group 1 will consist of..., participant group 2 will consist of... etc. Provide the number, age range and source of participants. Please provide a justification of your proposed sample size.

Participant Group 1: Students in colleges and universities across Ireland, ages ranging from 18+. We expect to interview 5 students from a range of different universities. We want to yield qualitative data from this so we are only interviewing a small number.

Participant Group 2: Tutors across Ireland, ages ranging from 18+. We expect to interview 5 tutors from different areas in Ireland. We would also like to yield qualitative data here so again we have chosen this small number.

Participant Group 3: A small number of DCU staff members (Lecturers / DCUSU / DCU ISS), ages ranging from 18+. We have chosen these in order to gain insights into the potential use of our platform.

2.3 PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

Please provide specific details as to how you will be recruiting participants. How will people be informed that you are doing this research? How will they be approached and asked if they are willing to participate? If you are mailing or phoning people, please explain how you have obtained their names and contact details. If a recruitment advertisement is to be used, please ensure you attach a copy to this application (Approx. 100 words).

Participant Group 1: We intend to message students on facebook asking them if they would be interested in taking part in a research interview. We intend to find these by messaging group members of university facebook groups e.g "DCU Freshers 2020/21", "UCD Freshers 2020/21"

Participant Group 2: We intend to email Monica Ward with the hopes of getting her to distribute a few possible questions to some DCU tutors. We may not be allowed to contact these ourselves directly. We also intend to email possible tutors that we can find on other tutoring websites and ask them questions.

Participant Group 3: We intend to send emails to chosen DCU staff members asking them if they would be willing to participate in our research. We will be getting the emails from the DCU website.

2.4I IS IT LIKELY THAT ANY PARTICIPANTS COULD BE CONSIDERED POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE?

Are some or all participants vulnerable in any way? (e.g by virtue of the group they belong to, people who have undergone traumatic or adverse emotional events, people with diminished cognitive ability, power relations between students and participants etc.)?

YES or NO

NO

If Yes, please state and describe what this vulnerability (or vulnerabilities) is and justify why this research is being done with such participants

2.5 WILL THE IDENTITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS BE PROTECTED?

YES or NO

NO

If NO, please explain why

The questionnaire answers will be completely anonymous. Student and tutor interviews will also be completely anonymous. We may include the names of DCU staff members unless specifically asked not to. We will ensure that we inform of this beforehand so they can decide this themselves.

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO 2.5, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

2.6 HOW WILL THE ANONYMITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS BE RESPECTED?

Please bear in mind that where the sample size is very small, it may be impossible to guarantee anonymity/confidentiality of participant identity. Participants involved in such projects need to be advised of this limitation in the Plain Language Statement/Information Sheet. If you intend to fully anonymize the data, please provide details

When doing the questionnaire students will not have to provide their name allowing them to stay totally anonymous. The names of students and tutors interviewed will not be used throughout the entirety of the project.

2.7 LEGAL LIMITATIONS TO DATA CONFIDENTIALITY

Participants need to be made aware that confidentiality of information provided cannot always be guaranteed by researchers and can only be protected within the limitations of the law - i.e., it is possible for data to be subject to subpoena, freedom of information claim or mandated reporting by some professions. This information should be included in your Plain Language Statement and Informed Consent Form. Depending on the project proposal and academic discipline, you may need to state additional specific limitations.

State how and where participants will be informed of these limitations

Participants will be informed of any possible limitations regarding this in the Plain Language Statement and in the Informed Consent Forms.

2.8(a) EXPLAIN HOW PARTICIPANTS ARE TO BE RECRUITED

Please provide specific details as to how you will be recruiting participants. How will people be informed that you are doing this research? How will they be approached and asked if they are willing to participate? If you are e-mailing, mailing or phoning people, please explain how you have obtained their names and contact details. If a recruitment advertisement is to be used, please ensure you attach a copy to this application.

Participant Group 1: We intend to message students on facebook asking them if they would be interested in taking part in a research interview. We intend to find these by messaging group members of university facebook groups e.g "DCU Freshers 2020/21" , "UCD Freshers 2020/21"

Participant Group 2: We intend to email Monica Ward with the hopes of getting her to distribute a few possible questions to some DCU tutors. We may not be allowed to contact these ourselves directly. We also intend to email possible tutors that we can find on other tutoring websites and ask them questions.

Participant Group 3: We intend to send emails to chosen DCU staff members asking them if they would be willing to participate in our research. We will be getting the emails from the DCU website.

2.8(b) CHILD PARTICIPANTS (anyone under 18 years old)

If your participants include children, you must confirm that you are in compliance with the research specific guidelines as detailed in "Keeping Children Safe - Policies and Procedures supporting Child Protection at DCU" - available at: https://www4.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/policy/157%20-%20child_protection_handbook_rev1%282%29%281%29.pdf

Please indicate your compliance with the following guidelines:

Mark here

We confirm that we have read and agree to act in accordance with the DCU Child Protection policy and procedures	N/A
We confirm that we have put in place safeguards for the children participating in the project	N/A
We confirm that we have supports in place for children who may disclose current or historical abuse (whether or not this is the focus of the project)	N/A

2.9 PLEASE EXPLAIN WHEN, HOW, WHERE, AND TO WHOM RESULTS WILL BE DISSEMINATED, INCLUDING WHETHER PARTICIPANTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH ANY INFORMATION AS TO THE FINDINGS OR OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT?

We intend to perform all of our research in order to help validate our potential market. The results of the findings will not be published in relation to this. Participants will not be provided with any information regarding findings / outcomes of the project.

2.10 ARE OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED TO GAIN ACCESS TO ANOTHER LOCATION, ORGANISATION, SCHOOL ETC.?

YES or NO

NO

If YES, please specify from whom and attach a copy of the approval documentation. If this is not yet available, please explain when this will be obtained.

3. RISK AND RISK MANAGEMENT

3.1 EXPLAIN AND JUSTIFY THE STATED LEVEL OF RISK TO PARTICIPANTS

You must provide a justification that the stated level of risk and its corresponding level of review is notification only and not Full Committee or Expedited, as indicated on the cover page of your application. Note that the level of risk may be influenced by the vulnerability of the research group, the methods employed and the nature of the project itself. For further information on risk levels, please refer to the Levels of Review information on the website: <https://www.dcu.ie/researchsupport/researchethics.shtml>

Notification

3.2 POTENTIAL RISKS TO PARTICIPANTS AND RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Identify, as far as possible, all potential risks to participants (physical, psychological, social, legal, economic, etc.), associated with the proposed project. Will your project involve deception, investigation of participants involved in illegal activities, performance of any acts which might diminish the self-esteem of participants or cause them to experience embarrassment, regret or depression? Please explain what risk management procedures will be put in place to minimise these risks.

There are no noticeable risks involved in the research we are planning to undertake. All participants will be asked very basic questions about the potential use of the platform so we do not believe there are any physical, psychological, social, legal or economic risks involved.

3.3 ARE THERE LIKELY TO BE ANY BENEFITS (DIRECT OR INDIRECT) TO PARTICIPANTS FROM THIS RESEARCH?

YES or NO

NO

If YES, provide details

3.4 ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC RISKS TO YOURSELVES IN CARRYING OUT THIS PROJECT?

Examples include use of dangerous materials, asking certain types of questions, The project being undertaken in certain locations, researchers working alone in isolated areas, etc.

YES or NO

NO

If YES, please describe and explain what risk management procedures will be put in place to minimise these risks

3.5 DEALING WITH ADVERSE/UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES

Please describe what measures/protocols you have put in place in the event that there are any unexpected outcomes or adverse effects to participants arising from involvement in the project.

We do not believe that there will be any unexpected outcomes or adverse effects to the participants involved but all participants will be given contact information for both of ourselves and will be able to contact us if an issue arises in relation to this.

3.6 SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Depending on risks to participants you may need to consider having additional support for participants during/after the study. Consider whether your project would require additional support, e.g., external counselling available to participants. Please advise what support will be available.

We do not believe that any additional support will be needed due to the very low risk involved in the research. Participants will be given contact information for both of us if any issues are to arise in relation to this.

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3.7 HOW WILL THE CONDUCT OF THE PROJECT BE MONITORED?

Please explain how the principal investigator will monitor the conduct of the project (especially where several people are involved in recruiting or interviewing, administering procedures, etc.) to ensure that it conforms with the procedures set out in this application. In the case of student projects please give details of how the supervisor(s) will monitor the conduct of the project.

Our supervisor Gareth Jones will be consulting with us throughout the project and we will keep him consistently informed on all updates in relation to any research in order to conform with all procedures.
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3.8 DO YOU PROPOSE TO OFFER PAYMENTS OR INCENTIVES TO PARTICIPANTS?

YES or NO
NO

If YES, please provide further details

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3.9 DO ANY OF THE RESEARCHERS ON THIS PROJECT HAVE A PERSONAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, FINANCIAL, POLITICAL, IDEOLOGICAL, OR COMMERCIAL INTEREST IN ITS OUTCOME THAT MIGHT INFLUENCE THE INTEGRITY OF THE PROJECT OR BIAS THE CONDUCT OR REPORTING OF THE PROJECT, OR UNDULY DELAY OR OTHERWISE AFFECT THEIR PUBLICATION?

YES or NO
NO

If YES, please specify how this conflict of interest will be addressed

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4. PERSONAL DATA - COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

Applicant declaration:

0	I understand that the proposed project, as set out in this form, is to be carried out by me in my capacity as a student of Dublin City University.	YES or NO	YES
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What does “Personal Data” mean?

Personal data is any information about a living person, where that person is identified or could be identified, either from the data itself or when it is combined with other data.

Personal Data is defined in [Article 4\(1\) of the GDPR](#) and can include, but is not limited to the following: hard-copy information (e.g. files, records); electronic information (e.g. databases, online survey returns); written information; consent declarations, interview notes, still or moving images; audio & visual recordings; IP addresses; an individual's handwriting; clinical or medical data; diagnostic or other clinical imaging; etc.

Further information is available from the [DCU Data Protection Unit](#)

4.1 ASSESSING DATA PROTECTION RISKS & REQUIREMENTS

Note 1: What does ‘Minor’ and ‘Vulnerable Individual’ mean?

A **minor** is defined as an individual below 18 years of age. Where the processing relates to ‘electronic marketing’ the age limit is reduced to 16 years. A **vulnerable individual** may be anyone who is unable to consent to, or oppose, the processing of his or her personal data for any reason. Both of these are of particular importance if the project compels the provision of data from individuals.

Note 2: What does ‘large scale processing’ mean?

The GDPR does not define what constitutes large-scale. EU guidance recommends that the following factors, in particular, be considered when determining whether the processing is carried out on a large scale:

- the number of data subjects (either as a specific number or proportion of the relevant population);
- the volume of data and/or the range of different data items being processed;
- the duration, or permanence, of the data processing activity; &
- the geographical extent of the processing activity.

Examples of large-scale processing include, but are not limited to:

- processing of patient data in the regular course of business by a hospital;
- processing of travel data of individuals using a public transport system (e.g. tracking via travel cards);
- processing of real time geo-location data of customers of an international fast food chain for statistical purposes by a processor specialised in these activities;
- processing of customer data in the regular course of business by an insurance company or a bank;
- processing of personal data for behavioural advertising by a search engine; &
- processing of data (content, traffic, location) by telephone or internet service providers.

Examples that do **not** constitute large-scale processing include, but are not limited to:

- processing of patient data by an individual physician; and
- processing of personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences by an individual lawyer.

A. Applicant Data Protection Assessment Questionnaire – Part I

1	Does your project include living human subjects?	YES or NO	YES
2	Does your project include the use of any information (i.e. ‘Personal Data’) relating to an identified, or identifiable, person?	YES or NO	NO

3	Does your project include the use of identifiers such as: a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier, or other similar identifiers?	YES or NO	NO
4	Does your project include the use of Personal Data specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of any living individual?	YES or NO	NO

If you answered 'Yes' to one or more of Questions 1-4 above, please continue to Part II below (otherwise proceed to the next section of this form). You should also consult with your Supervisor / Principal Investigator to ensure adequate Data Protection compliance measures are in place.

B. Applicant Data Protection Assessment Questionnaire – Part II			
5(a)	Does your project include the use of Personal Data of individuals which reveals any of the attributes or characteristics below? If 'Yes,' please indicate which will be used in your project (tick all that apply):	YES or NO	NO
	<i>racial or ethnic origin</i>	YES or NO
	<i>political opinions</i>	YES or NO
	<i>religious or philosophical beliefs</i>	YES or NO
	<i>trade union membership</i>	YES or NO
	<i>genetic data</i>	YES or NO
	<i>biometric data</i>	YES or NO
	<i>data concerning health</i>	YES or NO
	<i>data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation</i>	YES or NO
5(b)	Does your project include the use of Personal Data relating to minors or vulnerable individuals? (<i>See Note 1, below</i>)	YES or NO	NO
6	Does your project include the use of Personal Data of individuals relating to their criminal convictions and/or offences?	YES or NO	NO
7	Does your project include large-scale processing of personal data relating to living individuals? <i>This may include: a wide range or large volume of personal data; processing which takes place over a large geographical area; or where a large number of people are affected (e.g. over 100 individuals); or where the processing is extensive or has long-lasting effects. (See Note 2, below)</i>	YES or NO	NO
8	Does your project include any form of automated processing of personal data, used to evaluate certain personal aspects relating to a living individual? <i>In particular, to analyse or predict aspects concerning that person's performance at work, economic situation, health, personal preferences, interests, reliability, behaviour, location or movements</i>	YES or NO	NO
9	Does your project include any partners which are third parties outside of DCU? <i>e.g. Research partners, third party software providers or other providers such as translation or transcription services, etc.</i>	YES or NO	NO

10 (a)	Does your project involve the sharing or processing of Personal Data outside the EU or the EEA? <i>i.e. the EEA is the European Economic Area (the EU plus Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland)</i>	YES or NO	NO
10 (b)	If 'Yes', please state which non-EU or EEA country is involved:		
11	Does the project require the matching or combining of separate datasets of information on individuals in a way that would exceed their reasonable expectations of privacy? <i>An example would be combining mobile phone location data along with any other dataset to identify individuals.</i>	YES or NO	NO

If you answered 'Yes' to one or more of these questions, you should make sure that you have strong and secure data privacy risk mitigation safeguards in place, discuss these with your supervisor.

4.2 WILL ANONYMISATION OR PSEUDONYMISATION OF THE PERSONAL DATA, WHERE APPLICABLE, BE UNDERTAKEN?

Anonymisation is the process of removing personal identifiers, both direct and indirect, that may lead to an individual being identified. **Pseudonymisation** is the processing of personal data in such a manner that the personal data can no longer be attributed to a specific living individual without the use of additional information, provided that such additional information is kept separately and is subject to technical and organisational measures to ensure its security.

YES or NO
YES

If YES, please explain below the methods by which you intend to anonymise/pseudonymise the personal data:

Students and Tutors interviewed will be completely anonymous. No information which could allow them to be personally identified will be used throughout the project. We will not be mentioning any of the names of the participants anywhere in our project. Responses to questions will only be known by the project team members and will not be included anywhere as part of the project. No questions will be asked in the interview that will allow any participants to be made personally identifiable.

5. DATA/SAMPLE STORAGE, SECURITY AND DISPOSAL

For the purpose of this section the term 'Data' includes personal data that is in a raw or a processed state (e.g. interview audiotape, transcript or analysis, etc.). The term 'Samples' include body fluids and/or tissue samples.

5.1 HOW AND WHERE WILL THE DATA/SAMPLES BE STORED?

DCU recommends that any data stored electronically offsite should utilise the DCU Google Drive. Alternative offsite storage will need to be justified and must meet data protection and GDPR compliance requirements.

DCU Google Drive.

5.2 WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO DATA/SAMPLES?

If people other than the main researchers have access, please name who they are and explain for what purpose.

Only the main researchers and our project supervisor will have access to the data collected.

5.3 HOW LONG IS THE DATA TO BE HELD OR RETAINED?

Note that, with very few exceptions, **Personal Data** may not be retained indefinitely. It is up to the project team to establish an upper retention limit for each category of Personal Data used within the project and to ensure it is applied at the expiry of that limit. The School of Computing Research Ethics Committee recommends that Personal Data is retained until after the resit Pab for the current academic year.

We intend to keep all results from the research undertaken until the completion of the project, i.e. May 2021

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- 5.4 IF YOUR PROJECT DOES INVOLVE THE USE OF PERSONAL DATA THEN WILL THIS BE USED AT A LATER DATE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PUBLICATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE PROJECT?

YES or NO
NO

Where it is intended that the personal data used in the project will be used at a later date for the purposes of publication please explain how consent to do so will be obtained.

- 5.5 IF THE DATA/SAMPLES ARE TO BE DISPOSED OF AT THE END OF THE PROJECT PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW, WHEN AND BY WHOM THIS WILL BE DONE?

*Note that simply deleting files is not sufficiently secure. The additional steps to be taken to maintain data security should be given. **Personal data** must be disposed of in a safe and secure manner at the end of its retention period. If the data is stored in (a) a paper-based format, then shredding or disposal via a secure bin is recommended; or (b) in an electronic-based format, then deletion of the record or the full anonymization of the data is recommended. If data/samples are **not** being disposed of, please justify that intention.*

How will the data/samples be disposed of? Please describe the means by which the personal data will be deleted or destroyed. This includes personal data held in hard copy and digital formats.	All data will be in digital format and will be fully deleted off our DCU Google Drive.
By whom will the data/samples be disposed? Please indicate the designated team member(s) with responsibility for deletion and/or destruction of the research project's personal data.	We will both be taking responsibility for this and our supervisor will also be informed: Michael Walsh - michael.walsh232@mail.dcu.ie Karl Hannigan - karl.hannigan3@mail.dcu.ie

6. PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT (Attach to this document. Up to a max of 400 words)

A Plain Language Statement (PLS) should be used in all cases. This is written information in plain language that you will be providing to participants, outlining the nature of their involvement in the project and inviting their participation. The PLS should specifically describe what will be expected of participants, the risks and inconveniences for them, and other information relevant to their involvement. Please note that the language used must reflect the participant age group and corresponding comprehension level – if your participants have different comprehension levels (e.g. both adults and children) then separate forms should be prepared for each group. The PLS can be embedded in an email to which an online survey is attached, or handed/sent to individuals in advance of their consent being sought. See link to sample templates on the website: <https://www.dcu.ie/researchsupport/ethicsapproval.shtml>

PLEASE CONFIRM WHETHER THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED IN YOUR PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT/ INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS:

Note that this list is a check-list of all of the things that you should include in your plain language statement, if they are relevant (they are in most cases). In the earlier sections of this form you have already written the text that can be used to create your plain language statement. References to the relevant sections are provided on each line.

	YES or NO
Introductory Statement (Student(s) and supervisor names, school, title of the project) [Table, p 1]	YES
What is this project about? [section 2.1]	YES
Why is this project being conducted? [section 2.1]	YES
What will the participant be expected to do/have to do if they decide to participate in the study?[section 2.1]	YES
How will their privacy be protected? [section 2.5, section 2.6]	YES
How will the data be used and subsequently disposed of? [section 5.3]	YES
What are the legal limitations to data confidentiality? [section 2.7]	YES
Are there any benefits of taking part in the study? [section 3.3]	YES
Are there any risks of taking part in the study? [section 3.2]	YES
Confirmation that participants can change their mind at any stage and withdraw from the study [see plain language statement template, appendix 1]	YES
How will participants find out what happens with the project? [section 2.9]	YES
Contact details for further information [see plain language statement template, appendix 1]	YES

If any of these issues are marked NO, please justify their exclusion:

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7. INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Attach to this document. Approx. 300 words, see appendices 2 and 3 for templates.)

In most cases where interviews or focus groups are taking place, an Informed Consent Form is required. This is an important document requiring participants to indicate their consent to participate in the study and give their signature. In cases where an anonymous questionnaire is being used, it is not enough to include a tick box in the questionnaire. Participants should indicate their consent to each aspect of the research in a staged manner by checking mandatory checkboxes.

See link to sample templates on the website: <https://www.dcu.ie/researchsupport/ethicsapproval.shtml>

NB – IF AN INFORMED CONSENT FORM IS NOT BEING USED, THE REASON FOR THIS MUST BE JUSTIFIED HERE.

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8. ASSENT FORM & PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR CHILDREN (Attach to this document.)

A child specific Plain Language Statement (PLS) should be used in project where children will be involved. The PLS must be written in a way that is understandable for children within your targeted age group. It also must state, in plain language, the nature of their involvement in the project and inviting their participation. The PLS should specifically describe what will be expected of participants, the risks and inconveniences for them, and other information relevant to their involvement. In addition, child participants should also be provided with an Assent Form. Parents/guardians will be provided with the Informed Consent Form, but each child should provide assent before taking part in the project. The Assent Form needs to be understandable to the age-group you are targeting. See link to sample templates on the website: <https://www.dcu.ie/researchsupport/researchethics.shtml>

NB – IF AN ASSENT FORM IS NOT BEING USED, THE REASON FOR THIS MUST BE JUSTIFIED HERE.

N/A

9. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST *(Attach to this document)*

Please confirm that all supplementary information is included in your application (in electronic copy). If questionnaire or interview questions are submitted in draft form, please indicate this by putting (draft) after YES. A copy of the final documentation must be submitted for final approval when available.

My application has been collated as one electronic PDF file which includes the following documentation:	INCLUDED (mark as YES)	NOT APPLICABLE (mark as N/A)
Recruitment advertisement [consistent with section 2.3]		N/A
Plain language statement/Information Statement [see section 6 and appendix 1]	YES	
Informed Consent form [see appendices 2 and 3]	YES	
Informed Assent form (children only)		N/A
Evidence of external approvals related to the research [see sections 1.1 and 2.10]		N/A
Questionnaire/Survey	YES	
Interview/Focus Group Questions	YES	

Appendix 1

DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

Student Network - Plain Language Statement

Student Network- Plain Language Statement

DCU School – School of Computing

Course – EC4

Investigators: Michael Walsh – michael.walsh232@mail.dcu.ie

Karl Hannigan – karl.hannigan3@mail.dcu.ie

Supervisor: Gareth Jones – gareth.jones@dcu.ie

Personal Data

Data Controller – Michael Walsh, Karl Hannigan

Emails – michael.walsh232@mail.dcu.ie , karl.hannigan3@mail.dcu.ie

DCU Data Protection Officer – Mr. Martin Ward

Email – data.protection@dcu.ie

Phone Number: +353 01 700 8257 or +353 01 700 5118

Project Outline

- Data is being collected in order to gain insights and ideas into the potential use of a new student social networking and student resources platform that we intend to develop. We are aiming to develop a student networking platform where students will have access to valuable student resources such as tutoring services, a secondhand books marketplace, and a student discussion forum. Our main users of the platform will be students and tutors.
- The questionnaire will be anonymous. The types of personal data for our interviews would only include occupation.
- The data will not be shared with anyone outside of the project.
- The data will only be held until the end of the project.
- The study will be fully compliant with all regulations. Participants data rights can be found here: <https://www.dataprotection.ie/sites/default/files/uploads/2018-12/Rights-of-Individuals-under-the-General-Data-Protection-Regulation-04-2018.pdf>
- Participants can withdraw from the study at any time and all personal data collected up until that point will be deleted.

Details of Involvement in the Study

- Students will be asked to complete a questionnaire.
 - The questionnaire should take no longer than 5 minutes where they will answer questions related to the study.
- Students and Tutors will be interviewed over zoom.
 - The interviews will take no longer than 15 – 30 minutes where they will answer questions related to the study.
- There should be no risks to participants involved in the study.
- There will be no benefits for participants other than the opportunity to help provide ideas and insights into the development of a new student social networking and student resources platform.
- Involvement in the study is completely voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time.
- If participants would like to contact us with regard to the outcome of the study they may contact us directly at the emails marked at the top of this form.

Confidentiality of Data

- All participant data will be protected as best as we can within the limitations of the law.
- The data will be destroyed when the project is complete i.e. May 2021
- The Data Controllers will ensure that the data stays within the project and that nobody outside of the project has access to participant data. Questionnaire answers will be anonymised and interview answers will be kept within the project team.

If participants have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact:

Address: The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9.

Phone: 01-7008000

Email: rec@dcu.ie

Appendix 2

DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

Student Networking Site - Informed Consent Form

DCU School – School of Computing

Course – EC4

Investigators: Michael Walsh – michael.walsh232@mail.dcu.ie

Karl Hannigan – karl.hannigan3@mail.dcu.ie

Supervisor: Gareth Jones – gareth.jones@dcu.ie

This research is being carried out in order to gain ideas and insights into the potential use of a new student networking and resource platform we intend to develop. We need participants to partake in the study as we would like to conduct interviews and a questionnaire which will be included in our final EC4 end of year project. The name and occupation of participants interviewed may be used so this consent form must be filled in to conform with data protection guidelines.

Data Controller – Michael Walsh, Karl Hannigan

Our Data Controllers, Michael Walsh & Karl Hannigan, control all of the data recorded throughout the study and any issues or questions about data processing or storage can be dealt with by contacting us at the email listed above.

Participant – Please complete the following (Circle Yes or No for each question)

<i>I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand the information provided</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study</i>	Yes/No
<i>I am aware my interview answers will be documented</i>	Yes/No
<i>I am aware that my questionnaire answers will be documented</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have read and understand the arrangements in place to protect my data</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand that these arrangements are subject to legal limitations</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand the arrangements regarding retention/disposal of data</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions</i>	Yes/No

Signature:

I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researchers, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project.

Participants Signature: _____

Name in Block Capitals: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3

DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

Student Networking Site - Anonymous Online Consent Form

DCU School – School of Computing

Course – EC4

Investigators: Michael Walsh – michael.walsh232@mail.dcu.ie

Karl Hannigan – karl.hannigan3@mail.dcu.ie

Supervisor: Gareth Jones – gareth.jones@dcu.ie

This research is being carried out in order to gain ideas and insights into the potential use of a new student networking and resource platform we intend to develop. We need participants to partake in the study as we would like to conduct an online questionnaire which will have results included in our final EC4 end of year project.

The following questions are included at the start of the questionnaire:

Participant – please complete the following (by clicking Yes/No for each question)

I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me) *

☒ Yes

☐ No

I understand the information provided *

☐ Yes

☐ No

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study *

☐ Yes

☐ No

I understand the information provided in relation to data protection *

☐ Yes

☐ No

I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions *

☐ Yes

☐ No

I understand I may withdraw from the Research Study at any point *

☐ Yes

☐ No

I have read and understand the arrangements to be made to protect confidentiality of data, including that confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations *

☐ Yes

☐ No

I have read and understand confirmations relating to any other relevant information as indicated in the PLS *

☐ Yes

☐ No

I consent to participate in this research study *


☐ Yes

☐ No

Appendix 4

DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

Student Questionnaire (DRAFT)

<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Student Networking and Tutoring Platform <small>Form description</small></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"><small>Image title</small> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"><p>Would you be interested in a social networking platform solely for students? *</p><p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p><p><input type="radio"/> No</p><p><input type="radio"/> Maybe</p></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"><p>Have you ever taken grinds or used tutoring services during your time in college? *</p><p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p><p><input type="radio"/> No</p></div>
<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"><p>If you have used these before, would you use these services again?</p><p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p><p><input type="radio"/> No</p><p><input type="radio"/> Maybe</p><p><input type="radio"/> I have not used either of these services before</p></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"><p>Do you think you will ever need grinds or tutoring services during your time in college? *</p><p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p><p><input type="radio"/> No</p><p><input type="radio"/> Maybe</p><p><input type="radio"/> I have used these services before</p></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"><p>Do you have any second hand college books that you would like to sell now or in the future? *</p><p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p><p><input type="radio"/> No</p></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"><p>What features would you like to see on a Student Networking Platform? *</p><p><small>Long answer text</small></p></div>

Appendix 5

DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

Student & Tutor Interview Questions (DRAFT)

Student Interview Questions:

Students will have the concept of the project and reasons for the research explained to them before being asked these questions. We will ensure that students will have the Plain Language Statement read to them and that we keep a copy of their Informed Consent Form in relation to this.

- Would you consider using a social media platform solely for students?
- Would you be interested in a platform where you can directly connect with other students in your college and actually have the chance to meet them in person?
- Have you ever used tutoring / grinds services before?
- Do you have college books that you would like to sell?

Tutor Interview Questions:

Tutors / grinds teachers will have the concept of the project and reasons for the research explained to them before being asked these questions. We will ensure that tutors / grinds teachers will have the Plain Language Statement read to them and that we keep a copy of their Informed Consent Form in relation to this.

- Could you please identify your occupation (tutor / grinds teacher)?
- Would you be interested in doing online tutoring on a newly developed platform?
- Where do you currently offer your tutoring services?
- Do you struggle with advertising your services to potential customers?
- Do you think the platform taking 15% commission on your grinds would be a reasonable percentage?

* Both of these sets of questions are DRAFTS and subject to change *