Software Engineering Group Project

COMP2043.GRP

Session 04:
Ethics Issues

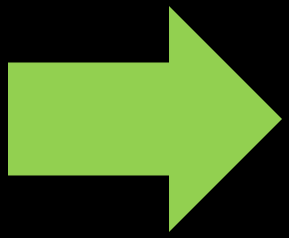
Acknowledgements

- Some of the materials we use may come directly from previous teachers of this module, and other sources …
- Thank you to (amongst others):
  - Paul Dempster

Overview

- Ethical issues and requirements for (team) projects

When do you need to obtain ethics permission?



For any research which involves humans or vertebrate animals

e.g. anything involving questionnaires, interviews, monitoring human behaviours/activities or the use of data sets which contain information about humans.

When do you not need to obtain ethics permission?

Research which does not involve humans or vertebrate animals

e.g. surveying trees or litter distribution, monitoring air or water quality and testing soil or metal strength.

If you are in any doubt, please approach your supervisor or module convenor.

Why do you need to obtain ethics permission?

UNNC requires the highest standards of integrity to be followed in the pursuit of research carried out by the academic and research staff, and students of the University.

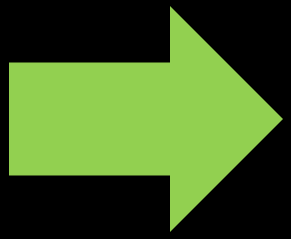
https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/research-and-business/ethics.aspx

Failure to obtain ethics permission is considered to be research misconduct.

Students at University of Nottingham have failed to graduate because they did not obtain ethics permission for their research in advance.

Please note that there will be random ethics checks each year by the Ethics Sub-Committee.

How do you apply for ethics permission?



This will depend on who you are and what you are trying to do...

ACTION: Complete *CS Preliminary Research Ethics Checklist* from the COMP2043.GRP Moodle page and submit to supervisor.
If all answers “No”, no ethics approval required.

(1.1) Application process for UG, PGT and module conveners: UG & PGT students

If your research is for an internal class exercise, assignment, Bachelors or Masters dissertation or project then it can be approved by your module convenor or supervisor.

ACTION: Complete (1) '*CS UG and PGT Research Ethics Checklist*' form, (2) '*Participant Consent Form*', (3) '*Participant Information Sheet*' and (4) any *participant recruitment materials* (eg, flyers, text of emails) and submit them to your module convener or supervisor (see next slide).

(1.2) Application process for UG, PGT and module conveners: Module Conveners & UG/PGT Supervisors

Permissions for individual UG or PGT students

(From previous slide) If a module convener or supervisor receives ethics application forms from individual UG or PGT students, they can approve the study themselves if it is 'minimal risk'. If there is an 'identified risk', submit the forms to a Faculty Ethics Representative for assessment.

STAFF ACTION: If minimal risk, submit the ethics application forms to the Research Ethics Office for official registration (Joanna.HUANG@nottingham.edu.cn). If there is an identified risk, submit the forms to a Faculty Ethics Representative for assessment.

What happens after you submit your documents to a FoSE Ethics Representative?

- Your application will be reviewed by two or more FoSE Ethics Representatives.

- Applications will be classified as either (1) Minimal Risk or (2) Identified Risk

Please note that if anything is unclear (e.g. you have not provided enough information to make an assessment) or if documents are missing, then the representatives will request that you re-write and re-submit your application.

(1) Minimal risk applications

If there are no ethical issues with the application and no shaded boxes ticked in the application form (see right), the FoSE Ethics Panel may either:

(a) approve your application as a minimal risk study and send it to the Research Ethics Office for official registration

(b) ask for minor revisions or clarifications before approval.

SECTION 5: RESEARCH ON PEOPLE

If your research involves the participation of people all questions in Section 5 **must** be answered.

Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box.

	Yes	No
5.1: Does the study involve participants age 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent? (e.g. people with cognitive impairment, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, physical or sensory impairments?	☐	☐
5.2: Does the research involve other vulnerable groups such as children (**aged under 16**) or those in unequal relationships with the researcher? (e.g. your own students)	☐	☐
5.3: Will this research require the cooperation of a gatekeeper* for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited?	☐	☐
5.4: Will this research involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, physical or mental health)?	☐	☐
5.5: Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	☐	☐
5.6: Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	☐	☐
5.7: Will this research involve people taking part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time?	☐	☐
5.8: Does this research involve the internet or other visual/vocal methods where people may be identified?	☐	☐

Examples of questions asked in the '*Research Ethics Approval Form*' with shaded boxes indicating potential risk.

(2) Identified risk applications

If you have ticked any shaded boxes in the ethics application form and/or there are any ethical issues with your application, the FoSE Ethics Panel has three choices:

a) Approve

The FoSE Ethics Panel may decide your application can be approved as it stands without further revision.

b) Request application/study revision

The FoSE Ethics Panel may decide your application or study requires further clarification or revisions. In this situation, your application will be returned to you with advice on what needs to be revised.

c) Submit to full UNNC Research Ethics Sub-Committee

(2) Identified risk applications:

Review by the full UNNC Research Ethics Sub-Committee

In some difficult cases, the FoSE Ethics Panel may decide that the application needs to be considered by the full UNNC Research Ethics Sub-Committee who will decide whether your application can be approved or requires further clarification or revisions.

The full UNNC Research Ethics Sub-Committee is made up of 22 people from all three faculties.

It can take several weeks for us to process your applications!

Please submit your applications as early as possible!

We cannot cope with last minute or incomplete ethics submissions and <u>you cannot start your study</u> until you have permission!

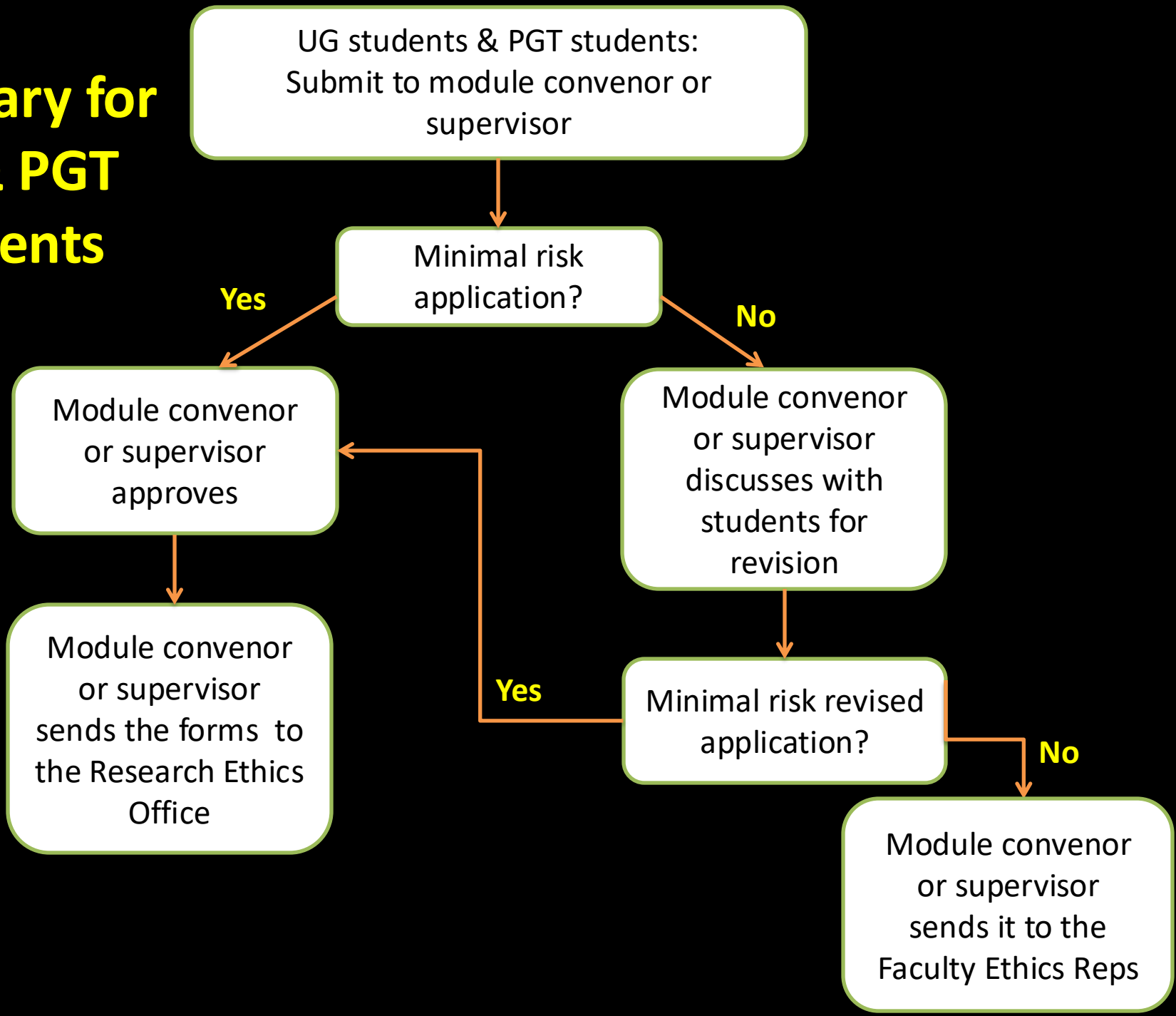
Ethics approval cannot be obtained retrospectively!

Where can you find the application forms and further information?

Our COMP2043.GRP Moodle page

https://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/research-and-business/ethics.aspx

Summary for UG & PGT Students



Common errors to avoid in your application...

- Not providing enough information in the application form.

- Reviewers need to know exactly what you intend to do. Do not be vague.

Common errors to avoid in your application...

Do not make an application without having fully planned your study.

e.g. approximate number of subjects to be interviewed, questionnaire design, obtaining permission to access field sites, duration of the interviews, justifying why and what you will video record and how you are going to process the data.

It is not our job to peer-review your experimental design or the experimental design of your students.

Application Advice

Your application will involve two or three documents:

A. Application Form

B. Participants' Information Sheet

C. Participant's Consent Form

- This is optional but you will need to justify why you are not using it and how you will obtain participants' consent in the Application Form (Section 2)

Application Advice

A. Application Form: Section 1

	Yes	No
1.10: I have read the University of Nottingham Ningbo *Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics*: http://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/research/researchethics/unnc-research-code-of-conduct.aspx	☐	☐
1.11: (If applicable)I have read the University of Nottingham's *e-Ethics@Nottingham: Ethical Issues in Digitally Based Research* (2012) and agree to abide by it http://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/research/documents/e-ethics-at-the-university-of-nottingham.pdf	☐	☐
1.12: When conducting research on people (Section 5) I will prepare both a *participant consent form* as well as an *information sheet*. I am aware that the following templates are available on the Ethics webpage: http://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/research/researchethics/ethics-approval-process.aspx - Participant consent form 1 - Participant Information Sheet English and Chinese	☐	☐

Will participants need to sign a consent form?
If not, you will need to justify why you are not using it and how you will obtain participants' consent in the Application Form (Section 2)

A. Application Form: Section 2

Pay particular attention to Sections 2.3 and 2.5 of the application form.

SECTION 2: THE RESEARCH

Please provide brief details (50-150 words) about your proposed research, as indicated in each section

2.1: Title of project:

2.2: Research question(s) or aim(s)

2.3: Summary of Method(s) of data collection

2.4: Proposed site(s) of data collection

2.5: How will access to participants and/or sites be gained?

If you tick any of the shaded boxes in Sections 1, 3, 4 or 5 of the application form, you will need to explain how you intend to deal with any arising ethical issues in Section 2.

A. Application Form: Section 2.3

Questionnaires & Interviews

Include a copy of the questionnaire and a list of your main interview questions with your application.

SECTION 2: THE RESEARCH

Please provide brief details (50-150 words) about your proposed research, as indicated in each section

2.1: Title of project:

2.2: Research question(s) or aim(s)

2.3: Summary of Method(s) of data collection

2.4: Proposed site(s) of data collection

2.5: How will access to participants and/or sites be gained?

A. Application Form: Section 4

Field sites may include shopping centres, factories and office buildings! They are not just fields...

You will need to gain some kind of permission from the owners / managers if you are conducting research on their property.

SECTION 4: RESEARCH INVOLVING ACCESS TO FIELD SITES AND ANIMALS

If your research involves access to field sites and/or animals all questions in Section 4 **must** be answered. If it does not, please tick the 'not relevant' box and go to Section 5.

NOT RELEVANT	☐

Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box.

	Yes	No
4.1: Has access been granted to the site?	☐	☐
4.2: Does the site have an official protective designation of any kind?	☐	☐
If yes, have the user guidelines of the body managing the site a) been accessed?	☐	☐
b) been integrated into the research methodology?	☐	☐
4.3: Will this research place the site, its associated wildlife and other people using the site at any greater physical risks than are experienced during normal site usage?	☐	☐
4.4: Will this research involve the collection of any materials from the site?	☐	☐
4.5: Will this research expose the researcher(s) to any significant risk of physical or emotional harm?	☐	☐

SECTION 5: RESEARCH ON PEOPLE

If your research involves the participation of people all questions in Section 5 **must** be answered.

Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box.

	Yes	No
5.1: Does the study involve participants age 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent? (e.g. people with cognitive impairment, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, physical or sensory impairments?	☐	☐
5.2: Does the research involve other vulnerable groups such as children (**aged under 16**) or those in unequal relationships with the researcher? (e.g. your own students)	☐	☐
5.3: Will this research require the cooperation of a gatekeeper* for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited?	☐	☐
5.4: Will this research involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, physical or mental health)?	☐	☐
5.5: Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	☐	☐
5.6: Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	☐	☐
5.7: Will this research involve people taking part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time?	☐	☐
5.8: Does this research involve the internet or other visual/vocal methods where people may be identified?	☐	☐
5.9: Will this research involve access to personal information about identifiable individuals without their knowledge or consent?	☐	☐
5.10: Does the research involve recruiting members of the public as researchers (participant research)?	☐	☐
5.11: Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?	☐	☐
5.12: Is there a possibility that the safety of **the researcher** may be in question?	☐	☐
5.13: Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	☐	☐

A. Application Form: Section 5

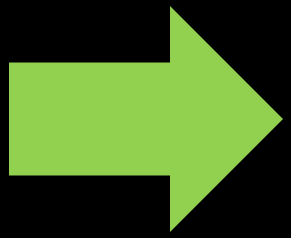
Unequal relationships
e.g. teacher – student

Gatekeeper: a person who controls or facilitates access to participants

Visual/Vocal Recording: What will you be video recording and why? Will you protect the participants' anonymity?

Financial inducements?

B. Participants' Information Sheet



Informed consent

Potential participants must fully understand what is it you are asking them to do and what the implications are for their involvement before they consent to being involved in your study.

Participant Information Sheet *Project Title/Topic*

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this questionnaire survey in connection with my <*Undergraduate coursework/Master degree/ PhD dissertation/research*> (*delete where appropriate*) at the University of Nottingham Ningbo. The project is a study of <*insert brief description of project*>.

Your participation in the survey is voluntary. You are able to withdraw from the survey at any time and to request that the information you have provided is not used in the project. Any information provided will be confidential. Your identity will not be disclosed in any use of the information you have supplied during the survey.

The research project has been reviewed according to the ethical review processes in place in the University of Nottingham Ningbo. These processes are governed by the University's Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics. Should you have any question now or in the future, please contact me or my supervisor. Should you have concerns related to my conduct of the survey or research ethics, please contact my supervisor or the University's Ethics Committee.

Yours truly,

<insert name>

B. Participants' Information Sheet

A draft of the participants' information sheet is available on the Research Ethics website.

You MUST edit it.

Information should include (as a minimum): (1) an outline of your study, (2) what you expect participants to do and how long it will take them, (3) how you will store any data and (4) your contact details.

Please use clear, plain language for the Participants' Information Sheet.

Do not use scientific/technical vocabulary unless your participants are specialists in the area and will understand the terminology and concepts.

C. Participants' Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Project title .....

Researcher's name .....

Supervisor's name .....

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that the interview/data collection [*omit as appropriate*]. will be recorded/filmed [*omit as appropriate*].
- I understand that data will be stored in accordance with data protection laws.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require more information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Sub-Committee of the University of Nottingham, Ningbo if I wish to make a complaint related to my involvement in the research.

Signed ..... (participant)

Print name ..... **Date** .....

This form is optional but you will need to justify why you are not using it and how you will obtain participants' consent in the Application Form (Section 2)

Please edit as appropriate

Other issues to consider...

- How are you going to gain access to your participants?

If you are using your students or your supervisor's students as participants, you will need to make it clear that their involvement in your study will not affect their grades.

Other issues to consider...

- Are you going to preserve the anonymity of participants? How are you going to achieve this?

You will need to describe this in the Participants' Information Sheet and in Section 2.3 of the Application Form.
Also, take care when describing your study site when you publish, e.g. 'Interviews were conducted at a Sino-foreign university in Zhejiang'.

Other issues to consider...

- You will need to justify why you are making visual recordings. What will you be filming and why?

What specific data are you collecting that requires you to film participants? What part of their bodies are you going to be filming and why? If you say that you will preserve the anonymity of participants, how are you going to achieve this?

Other issues to consider...

- How are you going to store the data?

You will need to describe the your data storage facilities and their security in the Participants' Information Sheet.

How secure are your electronic devices? Can you make them more secure? Encryption? Temporary copies?

Any questions?

Follow up

- Go through the Ethics Checklists as a team
- Submit to your supervisor for confirmation
- Once confirmed by supervisor, submit completed form through Moodle

DO NOT BEGIN ANY WORK INVOLVING PEOPLE, ANIMALS, OR DATASETS UNTIL YOU RECEIVE APPROVAL FROM THE CONVENOR!

- Deadline (for final forms!): **October 31, 3 pm**