UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Research Ethics Policy

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Research Ethics Policy

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Research Ethics Policy

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose

1.1 The aim of this University policy is to promote and ensure that academic conduct of research conforms to the highest possible standards.

1.2 The University of Hull wishes to promote a quality research culture, where excellence is promoted and key elements such as effective leadership, openness, accountability and honesty, are maintained and enhanced. All research at the University of Hull is governed by a set of fundamental ethical principles based on those laid out in the Declaration of Helsinki and those that underlie the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 to ensure the protection of all participants and to clarify the conditions under which research is acceptable.

1.3 The Research Ethics Policy is intended to:

- Provide standards to safeguard the rights of individuals and groups with whom researchers interact, including the University and its staff;
- Educate staff, students and any interested parties, including the public, of ethical points of consideration that may arise from research activity;
- Direct researchers to adhere to best practices relating to the ethical development, implementation and dissemination of research.

1.4 For the purpose of this document:

The University of Hull will be referred to as “The University”; and **must** means mandatory; **may** means desirable; **should** means advisable.

2. Scope

2.1 The University has a duty of care toward members of its community and also toward members of the general community where the University's activities impact upon them. As an academic community, the University has a responsibility to encourage the highest possible standards of care, consideration and integrity within all research. Research integrity extends to accountability for the ethical basis for all aspects of the research; for the safety of both the participants and the researchers; for the probity of the financial management of the project; for the reliability of results and for making every effort to provide value for public or private funds invested in the project. This Policy is of direct relevance to all those who host, conduct, participate, manage, professionally support or disseminate the results of research conducted on behalf of the University. All commercial and contract research conducted on University premises or by University staff or students is subject to the principles and ethical standards described in this policy.

3. Academic Freedom

3.1 When academic tenure was abolished by the Education Reform Act 1988, it enabled universities to dismiss academics. To ensure academic freedom was not compromised section 202 of the Education Reform Act 1988 required charters and statutes to include

provisions to ensure that academic staff had freedom within the law

"to question and test received wisdom and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have."

3.2 The University actively supports these principles of academic freedom, which it articulates in Article 19 of its Charter. The University considers academic freedom to be essential for the institution's recognisable contribution to the common good. Understanding and developing the common good is dependent on the free search of knowledge and its exposition.

3.3 The University takes this to mean in practice that academics have the right to:

- freedom in teaching and discussion
- freedom to disseminate and publish one's research findings;
- freedom from institutional censorship, including the right to express one's opinion publicly about institutional or the education system in which one works; and
- freedom to participate in professional and representative academic bodies including trade unions.

UCU Statement of Academic Freedom, 2016

3.4 Academic freedom carries with it though duties and responsibilities. While the University endorses that all academics and academic students should have the freedom to discuss ideas and knowledge within the confines of the law, one must be aware of the effects on the academic community and the University, in both reputation and physical risk. It is therefore paramount that ethical consideration is given to the practices and activities that the University and its members participate in. This includes all research, teaching and business activities. The University tolerates a wide range of views including the unpopular, controversial and provocative as reflected in the University Regulation of Freedom of Speech.

3.5 Ethical consideration by individuals and appropriate peer groups is where the decisions for the common good is made. This is how academic freedom and ethical practice work hand-in-hand to ensure the exploration and expansion of knowledge without breaching the fundamental principle of the avoidance of harm

4. Related Policies

4.1 This policy must be viewed in the context of *the Procedures for Granting Ethical Approval, Misconduct in Research Policy, Statement of Research Integrity, Data Protection Policy, Freedom of Information Policy, Code of Practice on the Use of Unfair Means, Code of Good Research Practice, Data Management Policy, Freedom of Speech and Financial Regulations and Procedures guidelines.*

SECTION B: RESPONSIBILITIES

5. Researchers

5.1 Researchers must carry out all research to the highest ethical standards possible.

5.2 Researchers must always seek rigorous ethical approval prior to commencing the research when required from the most appropriate ethical review board. Approval cannot be received retrospectively under any circumstances.

5.3 Researchers must seek formal ethical approval from a recognised ethical review committee

for research involving human participants, personal data or animals

5.4 Researchers must comply with all relevant laws including, where appropriate, laws of other countries; appropriate due diligence should be undertaken to minimise risk.

5.5 Researchers must adhere to all policies or codes of good practice relevant to their research discipline.

5.6 In the presentation of their project proposals, researchers must address issues of ethical practice, sensitivity of participants and their information, and provide adequate safeguarding measures in relation to these issues.

5.7 Researchers must satisfy the research ethics committee that the proposed body of work will be performed to the highest level of ethical standards and is of benefit to the participants or for science and the community.

5.8 Researchers must have a clear understanding of research ethics review mechanisms within the University.

5.9 Researchers must abide by the outcome of the ethical review.

Protecting the rights of the participants

5.10 The dignity, rights, safety and well-being of participants must be the primary consideration in any research study.

5.11 The researcher must assess risks against benefits for the participants.

5.12 The researcher must ensure that engagement in research does not cause unnecessary harm to participants, stakeholders, the environment, the economy or other living organisms.

5.13 The researcher must consider the risk of the research on the environment; ethical consideration must be given to the effects on the immediate environment in which research is conducted and any effects the research may have on the environment subsequent to the research.

5.14 Research involving human participants must consider the impact/s of the research on the participants. This includes direct, indirect and broader impacts (for example, impact(s) on their family, society, employers or colleagues). The researcher must recognise these the issues and address them appropriately.

5.15 Researchers must consider the impact of the work on the cultural heritage of an individual participant or a community affected by the research. This may include the material or spiritual connection with ancestors, past and present.

Protecting the rights of fellow researchers

5.16 Researchers should exercise mutual respect for one another and acknowledge the input of each individual appropriately.

5.17 Researchers must also consider the confidentiality of projects/results with commercial sensitivity. Contact Knowledge Exchange at IP@hull.ac.uk for advice prior to disseminating research details to third parties.

5.18 Researchers must consider the reputation of the School, Faculty, University, and the academic community as a whole when planning the research.

6. Faculties

6.1 All Deans of Faculties are responsible for the research that is conducted within their Faculty including ensuring that the highest standards of ethical practice are applied.

6.2 The Dean may delegate to the Associate Dean for Research the responsibility of ensuring that the process of obtaining ethical approval has been appropriately conducted.

6.3 The Dean or delegate must not intervene in the decision of granting approval of the ethical application but may escalate the application or request advice from the Special Advisory Group if determined appropriate with the Faculty Ethics Officer and Faculty Ethics Chair.

6.4 PhD supervisors are required to approve student applications for submission to the Ethics Committee for review.

7. Faculty Ethics Officers

7.1 Faculty Ethics Officers are responsible for providing support to researchers on the current best practice of ethical research.

7.2 Faculty Ethics Officers are responsible for guidance to researchers on the application of ethical principles to proposed research.

7.3 Faculty Ethics Officers are responsible for providing support and guidance to the researchers on the ethical review requirements and expectations of external bodies and organisations involved in the research

8. Faculty Ethics Committee

8.1 Faculty Ethics Committees are responsible for considering research proposals submitted by staff, students and other associated researchers.

8.2 Approval of an ethics application can only be granted by an Ethics Committee or the Committee Chair by Chair's Action when appropriate.

8.3 Faculty Ethics Committee Chairs may grant ethical approval by Chair's Action for proposals already awarded ethical approval from another institution or appropriate organisation for research involving University staff and/or students.

8.4 Faculty Ethics Committees may review research proposals intending to involve animals and procedures that are not protected under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 ('un-licenced animals').

9. Ethics Committee Members

9.1 Committee members are expected to impartially apply the principles described in this policy when reviewing research proposals with the primary consideration being given to welfare and treatment of the participants or subjects.

9.2 Committee members must consider the welfare and safeguarding of participants, subjects and researchers involved in the research independent of the research sponsor.

9.3 Members are not expected to consider or review the scientific principles or application of research methods of the proposed research, this should be conducted by peer researchers during the peer review process of the proposed body of work. However, if a committee member is adequately qualified to comment on the methodology of the project, this is permitted if there are any concerns regarding the design of a project as it is unethical to conduct poorly designed research.

9.4 Ethics committee members must not participate in the review process of a research proposal which they are involved in, including student projects. This is considered a conflict of interest and must be avoided. The Chair may request the committee's Deputy Chair to preside over the review.

9.5 The Reviewer Checklist is located in Appendix 1 for further support and guidance for Committee members.

10. Lay members on ethics committee

10.1 All Faculty Research Ethics Committees must have lay membership.

10.2 Lay members must not be employees of the University and their primary professional interest must not be in the field of the academic discipline of the committee.

10.3 The presence of a lay member at Faculty Research Ethics Committee meetings is required for them to be quorate.

11. Special Advisory Group

11.1 The University Special Advisory Group is responsible for providing specialist guidance and support of more complex or unusual applications as determined by the Faculty Ethics Officer and the Faculty Ethics Committee Chair. These applications may have an element of institutional reputational risk or involve particularly sensitive/contentious subject matter(s).

11.2 In cases where support or guidance is sought from the Special Advisory Group, the ethical review decision of the application resides with the Faculty Ethics Committee.

11.3 Following a request, Research Governance will convene the panel members on a case–by-case basis depending on the need of the identified elements of concern

12. University Ethics Committee

12.1 The University Ethics Committee is a governing body that is responsible for agreeing best practice and providing guidelines with and for the Faculties and Professional Services areas concerning research ethics.

13. Ethical Review Committee

13.1 Researchers conducting research using animals must comply with the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

13.2 The University Ethical Review Committee (ERC) is responsible for considering the ethical implications and the welfare of the animals protected under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 when reviewing the proposed research.

13.3 All research projects that require a Home Office licence under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 must obtain ethical approval the University ERC.

13.4 All Home Office licence applications must be reviewed by the ERC prior to submission to the Home Office.

13.5 The University ERC is responsible for agreeing and implementing current best practice in research involving protected animals and procedures under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 to ensure ethically sound research.

SECTION C: PRINCIPLES

14. Beneficence and non-malfeasance

14.1 Beneficence is any action that is to the benefit of others; non-malfeasance is the “avoidance of harm”. These principles together should form the basis of all ethical considerations of research.

14.2 Researchers have a moral obligation to minimise the risk of physical and/or mental harm to themselves, human and animal participants and the environment which may result from their research.

14.3 Consideration should be given to the impact of research on society.

14.4 Research should normally only be undertaken if the known risks can be reasonably mitigated and approval is obtained from the appropriate ethical review committee.

14.5 Research must only proceed if adequate facilities and procedures are in place to deal with any foreseeable potential hazards.

14.6 Researchers must give consideration to the value of their research. It is essential that existing studies and material within the same area are considered carefully prior to any research being undertaken.

14.7 Research that knowingly duplicates other work unnecessarily may be in itself, unethical. Approved replication studies are excluded from this.

14.8 The strength of academic freedom rests on independence of investigation free from influence of the source of funds on the research design, conduct or interpretation of findings.

14.9 Ethical consideration must continue throughout the lifetime of the research. Should circumstances change in the research activities, new ethical review or approval should be sought immediately from the ethical committee that reviewed the original proposal.

14.10 If in doubt, advice should be sought immediately from the Faculty Ethics Officer in the first instance, referring to the Chair of the University Ethics Committee for more complex or unusual cases.

15. Self-regulation

15.1 It is understood by the University that not all research requires formal ethical review by an ethics review committee. It is expected that all researchers follow any relevant codes of practice to their research and comply with the expectations of relevant external regulatory bodies.

15.2 Procedures that may only require Faculty Ethics Committee Chair's Action ethical approval includes but are not limited to:

- Researchers granted ethical approval by another ethics committee or;
- Research using secondary data analysis, questionnaires, interviews or library studies that do not pertain to confidential, sensitive, personal or controversial information and does not involve vulnerable participants.

Researchers must consult their Faculty Ethics Officer in cases of ambiguity.

15.3 Observational research into public behaviour requires formal ethical review by panel if;

a. the data is recorded in such a manner that the observed individuals are identifiable;

b. the subjects' responses were disclosed outside the published research that could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation; or

c. It involves ethnographical studies.

15.4 Ethical review by an ethics committee does not replace any other procedure or authorisation required to conduct the research such as insurance, sponsorship, contract authorisation or health and safety practices.

16. Conflict of interest

16.1 All individuals involved in research must be declare any potential or existing conflicts of interest throughout the entire lifespan of the research project. Such conflicts should be reported immediately to the line manager and the Faculty Ethics Officer so appropriate actions can be taken.

16.2 Consideration must be given to potential conflicts of interest that may arise given the source of research funding and the nature of the research project. In instances of ambiguity, researchers must consult their line managers or Head of School.

16.3 Conflicts of interest should be considered when researchers engage with peer review processes.

16.4 All funds must be managed in accordance with the University's Financial Regulations and Procedures policy.

SECTION D: RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS

17. Definitions

17.1 **Human subject** means as any living person from which a researcher obtains data through an interaction or is identifiable through private data, either as an experimental subject or as a control, without the person's full knowledge or consent. This includes some covert, deception or observational studies.

17.2 **Participant** means as an individual who has given informed consent as defined in the 'Informed Consent' section of this policy and voluntarily participates in research, either as the recipient of a test article or as a control. This includes living humans, recently deceased and foetuses.

17.3 **Human material** means any material extracted from living or deceased humans including human cadavers, tissue, body parts, bodily fluids, embryos and organs.

17.4 **Research with human** subjects means "any social science, biomedical, behavioural, or epidemiological activity that entails systematic collection or analysis of data with the intent to generate new knowledge, in which human beings:

- are exposed to manipulation, intervention, observation, or other interaction with investigators either directly or through alteration of their environment; or
- become individually identifiable through investigator's collection, preparation, or use of biological material or medical or other records."

(World Health Organisation)

17.5 **Vulnerable adult** means a person who is 18 years old, who does not retain capacity or has potentially impaired capacity under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 to make an informed decision.

18. Consent

Informed Consent

18.1 Informed consent must be acquired before any research is undertaken where required.

18.2 Participants must be fully aware of the aims of the research and the source of funding for the research.

18.3 Participants must understand what participation in the study requires and what benefits may

arise from the research prior to their participation.

18.4 Participants must have a clear understanding of how the data is going to be used and by whom.

18.5 Participants must be made aware of all reasonably foreseeable risks arising from the study prior to their participation in the research.

18.6 Where vulnerable participants are involved within the research, appropriate ethical and legal protocols must be adhered to.

18.7 Where there are legitimate reasons not to acquire consent, prior approval must be sought from the relevant ethics committee. For example, in covert or deception studies.

18.8 Researchers must obtain written consent where it is appropriate. In exceptional cases where it is not appropriate, researchers must adequately justify the omission of this record in their ethics application.

18.9 Consent for foetuses used in research must be obtained from the mother or legal guardian of the mother where the mother is legally incapable of consenting.

18.10 Consent for the use of private correspondence or unpublished literary works as part of the research is required. In the case of the author being deceased, consent is required from owner of the copyright which may be an individual or the administrator of the author's estate.

Voluntary Participation

18.11 All participants must be genuinely willing to take part in the research.

18.12 Participants must not be forced into participating in the research and should not be offered inducements which could reasonably be considered to be prejudicial to their welfare.

18.13 Consideration must be given as to whether legitimate incentives could influence the results of research. The use of payments to participants must consequently be subject to ethical scrutiny

18.14 Reimbursement of participants' expenses, for example travelling, is permitted if the terms of the funding permit this.

18.15 Researchers must seek local consultation for guidance in provision of gifts/payments and other forms of compensation or reciprocity taking into account socio-cultural contexts.

18.16 At the onset of the research, researchers should make it clear to the participants that they are within their rights to withdraw at any time during the data collection.

18.17 Researchers must establish an appropriate time frame after the data/material collection during which the participant can withdraw from the research. This limitation must be made clear to the participant prior to their participation as part of the consenting procedure. Where the data is anonymized, it should be made clear to the participant withdrawal is only possible up until the point of anonymization.

18.18 Potential participants have the right to receive clear and detailed information about what the research entails in advance with the exception of deception or covert studies. This should be explained on an information sheet set out in simple English, or other appropriate language, and participants should be given plenty of time to study this sheet and ask any questions. The researcher(s) are obliged to answer any questions as fully as possible.

18.19 All relevant information should be disclosed to all participants. Deliberately withholding information that may affect a participant's willingness to participate, removes from participant's important means of protecting their own interests and is unethical.

19. Confidentiality and Data Protection

19.1 Participants have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's Data Protection Policy and Guidelines. Therefore, participants' confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

19.2 The identity or any information that collectively might reveal the identity of a participant must not be released without prior consent.

19.3 Procedures should be followed for protecting privacy of participants and may include:

- Only collecting
- the minimum information necessary from the subjects or participants.
- using unique identifiers or pseudonyms instead of names where appropriate
- storing all data in a locked/encrypted file on a University approved data storage media. (Contact the Information, Communication and Technology Department for further support.)
- ensure any removal storage media (e.g. USB drives or laptops) are encrypted
- carefully disposing of all paper documents containing personal information in a fashion that protects the identity of participants. E.g. cross-cut shredding.
- securing confidentiality statements from all researchers
- destroying audio and video tapes on completion of research, or as appropriate to the circumstances; transcripts with anonymised or de-identified participants should be kept.

19.4 All researchers should complete the University's Information Security and Data Protection online training.

19.5 The collection and storage of data by researchers must comply with the Data Protection Act (1998) and any Faculty data management policies.

19.6 Exemptions to ensure confidentiality may apply to temporarily in some projects when demonstrating the authenticity of raw data or results.

19.7 Research data and methods of analysis should be transparent and open to scrutiny without prejudicing participants' rights to confidentiality.

19.8 Researchers do not need to obtain consent from participants for anonymised secondary data being used that is in the public domain, e.g. Standard Assessment Tests.

19.9 In research projects where participant's personal data is collected, researchers must detail in their ethics application the date by which the identifiable personal details of participants will be destroyed. The research data itself is not required to be destroyed.

19.10 Covert or deception studies are permitted by the University, subject to appropriate ethical approval.

20. Research involving children[1]

20.1 For the purpose of this document, a child is defined as any persons under the age of 18 years.

[1] Based on the MRC Ethics Guide: Medical research involving children children and Graham, A et al 2013 Ethical Research Involving Children. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

20.2 Research should only involve children if the relevant data cannot be obtained from adult subjects.

20.3 A child's refusal to participate in research must always to be respected.

20.4 Should a child become distressed during the procedure/research, this must be taken as a valid refusal to participate and the child withdrawn from the research and/or the consent renegotiated.

20.5 Researchers should avoid incentives or pressures to influence a child's participation or to influence carer's consent to volunteer the child, in the expectation of obtaining direct benefit either financially or therapeutically.

20.6 Researchers must give consideration to the cumulative medical, social and psychological consequences of the child's involvement in research.

20.7 Researchers should inform and consent the participating child at each stage of multi-stage research projects.

20.8 Unless point 20.9applies, researchers must obtain consent from the child's legal guardian for research involving children under the age of 16, the child's assent however is also necessary where possible. The only other exception to this is research using anonymous data held previously e.g. by a school or institution.

20.9 Consent is not required from parents/carer's when a child aged under 16 years can demonstrate Gillick competency but the child may be encouraged to involve their parents/carers/guardians in the decision if appropriate. If a child who is Gillick's competent does not want their parents, carers or guardians to be informed of their decision, the child's wishes must be respected.

NB. **Gillick's competency** means a decision as to whether or not a child is capable of giving the necessary consent and depends on the child's maturity and understanding, and the nature of the consent required. If the child is capable of making a reasonable assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the treatment proposed, their consent, if given, can be properly and fairly described as true consent and the child is Gillick competent.

20.10 Children have rights to privacy and confidentiality which must be respected; albeit with precedence given to child safeguarding.

20.11 Researchers must ensure that children are protected from any kind of exploitation from research.

20.12 Researchers must ensure that no child is disadvantaged through their involvement in research.

20.13 Researchers should obtain consent from one parent but both parents is preferable if possible for more invasive research, especially medical. In a disagreement of consent for a child who is not Gillick competent, one parent can apply to the courts to block the child's participation. In cases of such ambiguity, it is recommended that the child not be included in the research.

21. Research involving vulnerable adults

21.1 Researchers should not assume vulnerability based on single characteristics such as age, disability, appearance, behaviour, medical condition (including mental illness), communication impairments or beliefs.

21.2 All research involving vulnerable adults should obtain ethical approval by the appropriate ethics committee before commencing the research.

21.3 When conducting research involving vulnerable adults, researchers should always, without

compromising the rights of the individual, consult with the person with duty of care.

21.4 It should be recognised that the individual's vulnerability may be the interest of the research and the individual should be permitted to participate in the research if the project has obtained appropriate ethical approval and it is in the best interest of the individual.

22. Research using human material

22.1 The use of human tissue or fluids in research must comply with all relevant statutory controls and regulations including the Human Tissue Act (HTA) 2004 and the Human Fertilization and Embryology Act (2008).

22.2 All research projects using human tissue or fluids must be approved by the Health Research Authority (HRA) and undergo rigorous ethical scrutiny by a research ethics committee, this may be an internal or external committee depending on the source of the material. Please consult Research Governance in cases of ambiguity.

22.3 Researchers intending to use material obtained from NHS patients must obtain HRA and NHS Research Ethics Committee approval prior to commencing the research.

22.4 Any regulatory licences, approvals or permissions required to use or store human material must be obtained prior to the work commencing and cannot be retrospective.

22.5 The storage of relevant human material not being used in an active HRA REC approved project must be stored in HTA licenced facility. Researchers must contact the Faculty Ethics Officer in cases of ambiguity for further support.

22.6 All facilities used to store relevant human material must meet the all regulatory expectations of HTA and HRA.

22.7 Self-experimentation is permitted by the University if the researcher can demonstrate the collection of unbiased data. Data collection of this kind is not viewed as any different to the collection of any other human data.

23. Research into illegal activities

23.1 Researchers have the same legal obligations as they would in any other context.

23.2 Research is not covered by any special privilege.

23.3 Confidentiality of information collected in the course of research must respect the boundaries of UK legislation, or the local legislation for projects conducted overseas.

23.4 Researchers are not legally bound in the UK to report illegal activity with the exceptions listed in this section.

23.5 Researchers are obliged to disclose information in relation to child protection offences including physical and sexual abuse of minors, physical abuse to vulnerable adults, money laundering and offences covered by UK anti-terrorism legislation.

23.6 Where applicable, researchers must inform participants as part of the consent process that certain information disclosed during the research that is potentially or actually illegal must be reported to the appropriate authority.

23.7 Researchers must not be seen to either collude with, engage in, or help to facilitate any illegal activity whilst engaged in the research. They should also not act in any way that could be seen as hindering or preventing the actions of the police or other investigating authority.

23.8 Researchers must always be guided by their codes of professional conduct when conducting research into illegal activity and not undertake any activity that could transgress any

elements of those codes of conduct or that may bring their 'Fitness to Practise' into doubt.

23.9 Researchers engaged in research into illegal activity must have robust mechanisms for appropriate supervision and support mechanisms. Students engaged in such research must keep their supervisors updated as to their activities.

23.10 Researchers conducting research into illegal entry activity must seek advice from the University Solicitor prior to undertaking the work and always ensure their line manager is kept appraised of any research of this nature.

23.11 Researchers must not engage in any activity that might be interpreted as encouraging or inciting any illegal actions as part of the research they are conducting.

23.12 Researchers engaged in research into illegal activity must ensure they comply with University processes for the safety of researchers and such research should always have a robust risk assessment undertaken - such risk assessment should include the risks of the issues indicated in the above points.

23.13 Researchers should consider the moral obligation to report information to the appropriate authority should the participant report being a victim of crime or are at serious risk of harm.

23.14 Researchers should give consideration to the potential of encountering information regarding illegal activities and address the management of this risk with details of the procedures to be followed should this occur, within the ethics application.

23.15 Research proposals undertaken under the Official Secrets Act (1989) are not exempt from requiring ethical review. Faculties must consider appropriate arrangements to review projects of this type to comply with the legislation and consult the University Special Advisory Group.

24. Research Using Social Media

24.1 Researchers must consider the privacy rights of the human subjects or participants involved in the research.

24.2 Researchers must understand and comply with the terms and conditions of the social media provider.

24.3 Research using social media websites involving interactions with the posting individual is considered research involving human subjects and requires formal ethical review.

24.4 Researchers intending to access information that is not publicly available must seek permission and obtain consent from the participant prior to doing so. This includes “friending” or “following” an individual with the intention of gaining access to information and collection of data for research.

24.5 Observational research using social media websites should obtain ethical review. Although the data collected in these studies may consist of publicly posted but identifiable information and is not the result of interactions with the individual, it may involve other issues of ethical concern

SECTION E: OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

25. Research involving animal subjects

25.1 All research involving animals is regulated by the Home Office under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (1986) and for any procedure requiring a licence, the licence must be obtained prior to commencing the procedure.

25.2 The University permits research using animals and is committed to the principles of the National Centre for the Reduction, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research that are articulated in the ARRIVE guidelines.

25.3 Researchers must seek ethical review from the University Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body for all research involving protected animals prior to obtaining a Home Office licence. Animals protected under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act are living vertebrates other than man, and living cephalopods such as octopi.

25.4 Research projects involving protected species under the Animals (Scientific procedures) Act but which do not involve scientific procedures (such as for behavioural and observational studies) may require ethical and proportionate review by a University ethics committee.

25.5 Formal ethical review may be required for projects using 'unlicenced animals' due to other project details such as the number of animals used, unusual procedures, invasive characteristics or involving endangered species in the wild. For projects of this nature, researchers should seek advice from the researcher's Faculty Ethics Officer.

25.6 All staff must report any concerns regarding the treatment and welfare of animals involved in research immediately to their line-managers or Head of School/Department, and where required to the appropriate regulatory authority.

26. Research conducted outside the UK

26.1 Researchers (including visiting researchers and affiliated academics) conducting any research outside of the UK are expected to familiarise themselves with the ethical review expectations of the host country or countries where the research is being conducted, as well as obtaining the appropriate University ethics committee approval.

26.2 Researchers are expected to adhere to ethical requirements of the country where the research is being conducted.

26.3 Where a recognised local research ethics committee does not exist in the overseas country, ethical review should be sought from the organisation or location where the research is being conducted.

26.4 When conducting research outside of the UK, consideration should be given to local cultural, social and political sensitivities in the design and conduct of the work.

26.5 For research conducted in countries/regimes with poor human rights or identified as dangerous by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, particular care must be taken in relation to the welfare and safety of all parties involved including the participants and those carrying out the activities.

26.6 Where research is conducted in countries of emerging or developing economies, activities should involve the use of local resources and benefit the local community where appropriate.

26.7 Researchers must not deliberately seek ethical approval or conduct the research in foreign countries where ethical standards are more relaxed in order to avoid what the University considers rigorous ethical review.

27. Multi-funder and multi-performer projects

27.1 Researchers must fully comply with all ethical review expectations of all funders of the research.

27.2 Agreements must be made regarding the most appropriate ethical review board/ committee with all parties involved prior to the research commencing.

27.3 Should the review process of an external ethics committee be deemed inadequate by the University, researchers should seek ethical review by the appropriate University ethics committee.

28. Publication of research findings

28.1 Researchers must share all research findings with appropriate parties, unless major confidentiality issues arise and subject to the guidelines above or contractual provisions.

28.2 When publishing research all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that published reports, statistics and public statements about research activities and performance are complete, accurate and unambiguous. Researchers are responsible and accountable for the accuracy and completeness of their reports.

28.3 The nature of financial support must be acknowledged in all reports of research outcomes, both to acknowledge the support and ensure transparency.

28.4 The University is committed to expanding the boundaries in all areas of research in order to advance human knowledge but, at the same time, to benefit humankind, therefore researchers should be aware of the use, potential misuse and abuse of research data that is published. Consideration must be given to the appropriate forum for data sharing and dissemination.

28.5 Researchers must apply the same principles of research ethics to publication and dissemination of research electronically as they would any other form of dissemination.

28.6 The University is committed to adhering to the expectations of regulatory bodies relating to open access data of publicly funded research and expects all researchers to duly comply.

28.7 All researchers who have contributed to the development of results and dissemination should be appropriately acknowledged in accordance with the particular publication's definition of authorship.

28.8 Where research findings have commercial potential, consideration should be given to appropriate forms of protection prior to publication. Contact Knowledge Exchange on IP@hull.ac.uk for further support.

29. Funding and Finance

29.1 All members of University are obliged to give ethical consideration to their engagement and collaboration with external organisations, national and international. This includes the source of funding for academic or commercial purposes and the types of activities of the external organisation beyond the collaborative project.

29.2 The University will not accept funds from the tobacco industry for research or any other purpose, or permit work to be conducted in close proximity of others that receive funding from the tobacco industry. Contact Research Governance for further guidance.

29.3 For the purpose of this document tobacco industry funding includes:

- funds from a company or group of companies engaged in the manufacture of tobacco goods;
- funds in the name of a tobacco brand whether or not the brand name is used solely for tobacco goods;
- and funds from a body set up by the tobacco industry or by one or more companies engaged in the manufacture of tobacco goods.

29.4 The University does not prohibit research in the defence sector however all research

involving potential or actual defence or security application must seek ethical review from the appropriate University review committee. This includes research with dual application in civil and military sectors. Particular care must be taken to ensure appropriate information security measures are adopted.

30. Training

30.1 The University is committed to providing all researchers with adequate guidance and training on current ethical best research practices

30.2 The University is committed to providing training for ethics committee members and ethics officers to ensure rigorous and proportionate ethical review procedures.

SECTION F: RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

31. Definitions of Research Misconduct

31.1 Non-compliance with the Research Ethics Policy, whether deliberate, reckless or negligent, will usually be deemed as research misconduct. Examples may include:

a. failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research
b. deception in relation to research proposals
c. unethical behaviour in the conduct of research, for example in relation to research participants
d. unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially
e. deviation from good research practice, where this results in unreasonable risk of harm to humans, other animals or the environment
f. fabrication, falsification, corruption or inappropriate disclosure of research data
g. distortion of research outcomes, by distortion or omission of data that do not fit expected results
h. deliberate misinterpretation of results
i. publication of data known or believed to be false or misleading
j. plagiarism, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources
k. misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors
l. inappropriate attribution of authorship
m. fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment
n. attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct
o. inciting others to be involved in research misconduct
p. collusion in or concealment of research misconduct by others.

31.2 For the purpose of this document harm means a physical or psychological negative effect experienced by a living entity, i.e. person, animal or environment.

31.3 For the purpose of this document, risk means a relative potential for harm to occur.

31.4 For the purpose of this document, hazard means a practice or object that can cause potential harm.

32. Breach of the policy

32.1 Cases of gross ethical research misconduct by staff or students of the University will be dealt with under the Misconduct of Research Policy and could lead to dismissal or expulsion.

32.2 All members of staff, students, research students and researchers are encouraged to report any case of ethical misconduct. This should be done directly to the appropriate Head of School/Department orFaculty Associate Dean for Research or his/her line manager following the University's Policy and Procedure on Disclosures in the Public Interest (Whistleblowing).

APPENDIX 1: REVIEWER SUPPORT CHECKLIST

This checklist is designed to assist the Faculty Ethics Committee or their nominees in the process of approving research projects.

It is based on the commonly agreed standards of good practice such as are laid down in the Declaration of Helsinki and the statement of ethical practice produced by the British Sociological Association and the Department of Health.

The checklist covers those considerations which the University expects the Faculty Ethics Committee members or their reviewers to bear in mind when reviewing the ethics underpinning research projects.

If the answer to any of the questions is negative or doubtful, the reviewer should raise this to the Chair. If the reviewer deems that the impact of these ethical considerations could be lessened or mitigated by an amendment to the study they should suggest such an amendment in writing to the Chair. If in any doubt please contact Faculty Ethics Officer for further advice.

It should be borne in mind at all times that the application is being reviewed for its adherence to ethical principles only. The University expects all research applications to have been rigorously peer reviewed for their research design, methodology and scientific robustness prior to being submitted for ethical approval.

The reviewer is asked to recommend one of the following outcomes to the Chair of the Faculty Ethics Committee:

- Approved;
- Approved with amendments;
- Deferred pending further information;
- Rejected; or
- Referred to the University Special Advisory Group for further advice.

Number	Ethical consideration	Yes/No
Research Particpants		
1.	Where subjects are vulnerable because of their social, psychological or medical circumstances, has this been taken into account in obtaining consent?	
2.	If appropriate, where subjects are vulnerable as described in 10 above, has the consent of an independent third party been obtained?	
3.	Does the proposed research involve research on pregnant women or women in labour?	
4.	Does the proposed research involve research on persons under the age of 18?	

5.	Is there a risk that the highly sensitive nature of the research topic might lead to disclosures from the participant concerning their own involvement in illegal activities or other activities that represent a threat to themselves or others (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, or professional misconduct)?	
6.	Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety, or produce humiliation or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	
7.	Is the method of recruitment of research participants appropriate?	
Research Protocol		
8.	Does the design and conduct of the study seem appropriate?	
9.	If the research involves animals, is it to be carried out in accordance with the Home Office 'Code of Practice for the Housing and Care of Animals used in Scientific Procedures'?[2]	
10.	If the research involves animals which do not require a Home Office licence, has the relevant Faculty ethical approval (for unlicensed animals) been sought?	
11.	Does the research proposal pose only minimal and predictable risk to the researcher?	
12.	Does it pose only minimal and predictable risk to the research subject? Human, animal or environment.	
13.	Does the project involve researching illegal activities?	
	If so, do all parties involved in the research understand their legal obligations?	
14.	Are arrangements for the supervision of the project appropriate?	
15.	Do the foreseeable benefits of the research outweigh the foreseeable risks?	
16.	Are the participants fully informed about the purpose of the research and who will have access to their information?	
17.	Does the research require participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and/or consent at the time (e.g. covert observations, emergency research)? If this is the case, does the study demonstrate the necessity for this?	
18.	Does the research involve deception other than withholding information about the aims of the research until the debriefing?	

[2] Where Home Office licence is required the application must be referred to the University's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board.

19.	Will the consent of subjects be appropriately obtained?	
20.	Is it clear to the participant that they may withdraw at any time?	
21.	Will any payment be made to participants as part of the study?	
22.	Are there any community or social considerations both within and externally to the University?	
Data Protection		
23.	Is it clear to the subjects that they may withdraw at any time?	
24.	Will any payment be made to participants as part of the study?	
25.	Are there any community considerations both within and externally to the University?	
26.	Is it clear to the subjects that they may withdraw at any time?	
27.	Will any payment be made to participants as part of the study?	
28.	Are there any community considerations both within and externally to the University?	
Recognised External Review Boards		
29.	Does the study require review by Health Research Authority, NHS Research Ethics Committee, Social Care Research Ethics Committee, or the Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee?	
30.	Does the proposed research involve research on human tissue?	
31.	Does the proposed research involve research on vulnerable categories of people who may include minority groups?	

Version Control

Version	Author	Date approved	Relevant sections
V1.2	Research Governance and Quality Officer	16/01/2023	Typographical and formatting changes, updating roles/titles