Research Ethics Policy & Procedures

Policy no:	8.11
Version no. & date:	V23.4
Next review due:	September 2024
Responsible Committee:	SMT
Approved by & date:	BoG September 2021
External references	British Educational Research Association [BERA] (2018) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*, fourth edition, London. UK Quality Code UKSCQA/02 [May 2018] Expectations for Standards Core Practice 1 & 2 Related QAA Advice and Guidance: Theme 3: Assessment, Guiding Principles 3.1.1 *Strategic oversight ensures that course design, development and approval processes and outcomes remain consistent and transparent.*
Linked policies:	Data Privacy Notice and Consent Policy Data Protection Policy

	Safeguarding Policy Academic Misconduct Policy Non-Academic Disciplinary Policy & Procedure
Audience:	Students, Tutors, Researchers

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1. Introduction

This Policy sets out the function of the Research Ethics Panel (REP) and explains how it grants formal approval for any primary research conducted by a student or staff member (including research associates internal and external) under the auspices of the College.

2. Purpose

This policy is required to ensure that all research conducted by staff or students under the auspices of the College ensures the rights and safety of research participants and researchers.

3. Scope

Anyone wishing to undertake research involving human participants, identifiable personal data and/or animals is responsible must consider the ethical implications of their research and must obtain the appropriate and required ethical approval *before* they begin their research.

Failure to do so may result in disciplinary procedures being instigated and students or staff may not be covered by the College indemnity if they do not have approval in place. It may also result in qualifications not being awarded or the data not being eligible for publication in a peer reviewed journal.

4. Aims and Objectives

This 'Research Ethics Policy and Procedure' aims to outline the standards for research and the responsibilities of those involved.

- To ensure that all research conducted complies with the BERA code of conduct for ethical practices.
- To provide a framework within which flexible ethical decisions can be taken.
- To safeguard the interests of all participants and researchers and anyone who may be involved in or affected by research.
- To bring attention of all researchers the BERA guidelines for ethical research
- To ensure that all proposed research is adequate vetted before being approved.
- To ensure that all research is transparent, reliable, valid, credible, trustworthy and conducted with integrity.
- All research is conducted with an ethical of respect for people, knowledge, democratic values, academic quality and academic freedom.

- To ensure that the College REP is cognisant of their responsibilities to participants, sponsors, clients and stakeholders and the community of educational researchers.
- To ensure that the College REP is cognisant of their responsibilities for publication and dissemination of research as well as researchers' wellbeing and development.

5. REP Membership

Permanent members of the research ethics committee:

- Director of Research (Chair)
- Head of Academics
- Head of Programmes
- Research coordinator

6. REP Responsibilities

The chief role of the REP is to monitor and approve of any proposed primary research to be carried out by a student or member of staff at the College or to raise alarm if needed.

The REP will schedule a meeting to align with the need to sign off cohort research projects as required. To discuss all ongoing research, approve or make recommendations for any research requests submitted to the REP and discuss any issues related to primary research at the College.

7. Granting Approval

Two members of the REP are needed to grant approval for research to go ahead using the Chair's action. However, all members should be sent a copy or link to every research proposal, consent form and/or ethics approval form for their reference and can raise concerns about any research being conducted if they wish.

7.1 Chair's action cannot be taken on any research involving:

- children (those under 18)
- those unable to give informed consent.
- minority groups
- vulnerable categories
- pregnant women or women in labour

- persons with a physical or mental disability

8. Procedures

- A student or staff member (researcher) decides to carry out some primary research.
- The researcher must complete the Research Ethics Approval Form
- If required, the researcher must provide a sample of the consent form(s) they will use in order to obtain permission from participants or participating organisations for the research they wish to carry out. Consent forms may be provided for individuals or for organisations. The researcher must also provide a short summary of their research proposal (one paragraph only).
- Once the research proposal and any required consent form has been submitted, the REP will consider the proposal. A minimum of two members of the REP may approve the proposal.
- If the proposal is rejected, there may be recommendations proposed that the research would need to implement if they wish to gain approval for their proposal from the REP.
- Once the research proposal has been approved, the researcher must get any required consent from participants or participating organisations using the required form(s).
- Evidence of consent must be sent to the REP.
- Once evidence for consent for approved research has been received by the REP, the REP will provide signed approval for the research to proceed using the Research Ethics Approval Form.
- The research may proceed.
- Participants may report any concerns they have about the conduct of the research and the use of their data to the REP at any time. If the REP should find any unethical practices
- occurring at any time
- Research may be suspended or cancelled. Participants will have the right to withdraw themselves from the research for any or no reason, and at any time, and participants should be informed of this right.
- All data of participants is stored securely in compliance with the College Data Protection Policy and as agreed with participants beforehand. All data on participants is treated anonymously and confidentially where possible unless individual participants agree to waive their right to confidentiality and anonymity. Participants will have the right to be identified in any publication if they wish.

Oxford Business College Ethical Approval Form.

Name	
Courses	
Title of Proposed Research	
Address	
E-mail address	
Supervisor/Project Director	

1. In 500 -700 words describe the rationale for and state the value of the research you wish to undertake. This should include information of the following paragraphs: • Introduction to the research idea • Definitions of the key elements of the project • Background to areas of the project • A summary of previous research related to the project area.

2. What are the aims of the research?

3. Describe the overall design of the project & explain how your methods are going to be both valid & reliable (consider equipment used and specific testing protocols).

4. Briefly describe the Dependant Variable that you will use to collect your data. Your description should include an overview of how to carry out your data collection.

5. Describe the independent variable that you intend to manipulate in your experiment. Your description you include a procedure of how to administer the variable to the participants.

6. State how many participants you will need. 7. How will the participants be selected and recruited?

8. Describe the participants: give the age range, gender and any particular characteristics pertinent to the research project. *For experimental studies, state the inclusion and exclusion criteria*.	
Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria

9. What potential risks to the participants do you foresee?

10. How do you propose to deal with potential risks to participants?

11. What potential risks to the interests of the researchers do you foresee?

12. How will you ameliorate/deal with potential risks to the interests of researchers?

13. How will you brief and debrief participants? *(Attach copy of information to be given to participants)*

14. Will informed consent be sought from participants?	Yes *(Please attach a copy of the consent form)*	☐
	No	☐
If no, please describe below:		

15. How will consent be recorded?

16. Will participants be informed of the right to withdraw without penalty?	Yes ☐
	No ☐
If no, please detail the reasons for this:	

17. How do you propose to ensure participants' confidentiality and anonymity?

18. Please describe which of the following will be involved in your arrangements for storing data:
☐ Manual files (e.g., paper documents) ☐ Home or other personal computer ☐ College computer ☐ Private company or work-based computer ☐ Laptop computer ☐ Other (please define)

Please indicate that you are enclosing with this form the following completed documents:

☐ Participant consent form ☐ Participant Information Sheet

Signed _____ Date _____