Research Ethics Policy & Procedures

Policy no:	2.5
Version no.	V24.11
Next review due:	September 2025
Last Review date:	November 2024
Responsible Board:	Academic Board
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 and documents:	Data Privacy Notice and Consent Policy Data Protection Policy Safeguarding and Prevent Policy Academic Misconduct Policy
Audience:	Students, Tutors, Researchers

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

This Policy sets out the function of the Research Ethics Panel (EP) 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.

4.1 To safeguard the interests of all participants, researchers, and anyone who may be involved in or affected by research.

4.2 To bring attention of all researchers the BERA guidelines for ethical research

4.3 To ensure that all proposed research is adequate vetted before being approved.

4.4 To ensure that all research is transparent, reliable, valid, credible, trustworthy, and conducted with integrity.

4.5 All research is conducted with an ethical of respect for people, knowledge, democratic values, academic quality, and academic freedom.

4.6 To ensure that the College EP is cognisant of their responsibilities to participants, sponsors, clients and stakeholders and the community of educational researchers.

To ensure that the College EP is cognisant of their responsibilities for publication and dissemination of research as well as researchers' wellbeing and development.

5 Ethics Panel Membership

Permanent members of the research ethics committee:

5.1 Chief Academic Officer (Chair)

5.2 Head of Research

5.3 Programme Leader

5.4 Module Leader

5.5 Research coordinator

5.6 Research Associate(s)

6 Ethics Panel Responsibilities

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

The EP 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 EP and discuss any issues related to primary research at the College.

7 Ethics Review Process

7.1 Submission: Researchers must submit a comprehensive ethics application detailing research title, objectives, methodology, potential risks, and benefits, along with strategies to address ethical concerns.

7.2 Review by Ethics Panel: The Ethics Committee (EP) reviews each application, assessing adherence to ethical standards, evaluating risks, and proposing modifications where necessary.

7.3 Approval and Compliance: Approval is granted when the EP is satisfied that the project meets ethical requirements. Approved projects must comply with the institution's ongoing monitoring and reporting requirements.

7.4 Appeals: If an application is denied, researchers can appeal, providing additional information or modifications.

8 Additional ethical considerations

The following groups represent categories that require additional ethical considerations and protections in research, due to factors that may increase their vulnerability, limit their autonomy, or subject them to potential risks

8.1 children (those under 18)

8.2 those unable to give informed consent.

8.3 minority groups

8.4 vulnerable categories

8.5 pregnant women or women in labour

8.6 persons with a physical or mental disability

9 Responsibilities of Researcher(s)

9.1 Compliance: Researcher(s) must comply with institutional, legal, and professional ethical standards and report any potential ethical concerns to the EP.

9.2 Conflict of Interest: Researcher(s) must disclose any conflicts of interest that may impact the integrity of the research.

9.3 Training and Development: Researchers are encouraged to undertake training in ethical research practices to ensure their skills and knowledge are up to date.

10 Consequences of Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with the Research Ethics Policy can result in disciplinary actions, withdrawal of funding, or disqualification of research findings. This ensures that ethical standards are rigorously maintained.

Oxford Business College Research Ethics 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 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 documentes) ☐ 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 Sheets

Signed _____ Date _____