**LOW RISK PROJECTS**

**How to complete the Low Risk Research Ethics form:**

This form should be completed in consultation with the SALC ethics policy guidelines (see SALC Research Ethics Policy on the SALC ethics intranet), by students (and their supervisors), where a project is designated low risk. For research conducted off-campus, a separate **Fieldwork Risk Assessment form** must be completed, in order to plan how safety issues will be responded to during fieldwork visits. Sample Fieldwork Risk Assessment forms are available on the SALC ethics intranet under Quick Links.

The Low Risk Research Ethics form should be **completed electronically** and collated with electronic versions of supporting documentation, ideally as a single PDF. The only pages which are required in hard copy are the signature pages, unless scanned signatures can be inserted into the document (typed names are not considered sufficient).

Please note that the Low Risk Research Ethics form will not be assessed by the Ethics Committee. You will receive a ‘receipt’ email so please keep this for your records.

The Low Risk Research Ethics form should be submitted to the following:

***Postgraduate taught students to the PGT office (***[***salc-pgt@manchester.ac.uk***](mailto:salc-pgt@manchester.ac.uk)***)***

***PhD students to the PGR office (***[***phdethics-salc@manchester.ac.uk***](mailto:phdethics-salc@manchester.ac.uk)***)***

There are four main sections to this document, with additional sections for UG/PGT/PGR students seeking ethical approval for LOW risk studies from a supervisor/tutor:

* Section A –Summary of Research Proposal
* Section B – Description of Research
* Section C – Criteria for LOW risk research
* Section D – LOW risk Fieldwork Declaration

**LOW Risk UG/PGT/PGR/ declaration**

* Section E.1 – Criteria for LOW risk ethical approval

**Supervisors and tutor approvals of LOW risk student research**

* Section E.2 – Supervisor confirmation that research matches LOW risk criteria
* Section E.3 – Minor Amendments to LOW risk study and supervisor approval

It is necessary for supervisors and students to review and discuss responses to these questions together.

|  |
| --- |
| **Research Ethics Assessment**  **LOW RISK research project**  **SALC, University of Manchester** |

*To be completed by the relevant SALC Office administrator (PGT, PGR) or held by supervisor in the case of UG research projects.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Name/office*** |  | | |
| ***Date received*** |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SECTION A – SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL**  This section should be completed by the **person undertaking the research** (in consultation with the supervisor/tutor). | | | | |
|  | | | |
| A1. Name: |  | | | |
| A2. Email Address: |  | | | |
| ***A3.*** Student ID (quoted on library/ swipe card): |  | | | |
| ***A4. Name of Supervisor:*** |  | | | |
| ***A5. Supervisor email address:*** |  | | | |
| ***A6. Programme (PhD, ProfDoc, MA, BA etc):*** |  | | | |
| A7. Year of Study |  | ***A8.*** ***Full/Part-time*** |  | |
| A9. Module Code (if related to a specific course project) |  | | | |
| A10. Title of Project: |  | | | |
| A11. Participant RecruitmentStart Date: | *On confirmation of ethical approval* | ***A12. Project Submission Date:*** |  | |
| A13. Proposed Research Start Date: |  | | | |
| A14. Location(s) where the project will be carried out: |  | | | |
| A15. Signature: |  | | | |

**The following section to be completed by the** **SUPERVISOR**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***A16. Confirmation of assessment as a low risk level research project*** |  |  | |
| ***A17. Supervisor/staff Signature*** |  | |
| ***A18. Date*** |  | |

**SECTION B – DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH**

This section should be completed by **the person undertaking the research** (in consultation with the supervisor/tutor).

**B1.** Provide an outline description of the planned research (250 words max)

|  |
| --- |
| **Principal Research Question(s)**:  **Academic justification of the research**: |

**B2.** Provide a description of the research methods and methodologies (250 words max)

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Design**:  **Data Collection Methods**:  **Sampling Strategy (if applicable)**:  **Method(s) of Analysis**: |

**NB: If your research methods include collection of image or video data, you must complete the SALC Medium Risk form instead of this and submit it for review (unless this is an undergraduate project with an accompanying justification for low risk video/photography supplied by the supervisor).**

**B3.** Please confirm that **none** of the following groups will be participating in this research:

* Children under 16, unless in an accredited setting such as a cultural institution, school or youth club and accompanied by a carer or professional with a duty of care
* Adults with learning difficulties
* Adults who are unable to self-consent
* Adults with mental illness/terminal illness/dementia/in a residential care home
* Adults or children in emergency situations
* Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the researcher
* Prisoners
* NHS patients
* Young Offenders
* Other vulnerable groups

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | None of the above groups are involved in this study |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **B4.** Number of expected research participants. |  |

**B5.** Will you conduct fieldwork visits off-campus?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  | Complete **either** the high or low risk  Risk Assessment documentation | No |  | Complete the Declaration in Section D2 |

**B6.** The research will take place (tick all that apply):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | within the UK |
|  | within the researcher’s home[[1]](#footnote-1) country if outside the UK\* |
|  | wholly or partly outside the UK and not in the home country of the researcher**\*** |

**\* Please ensure that these projects still comply with low risk status after completion of the risk assessment documentation.**

**SECTION C – Criteria for research classified as LOW RISK**

This section should be completed by **the person undertaking the research** (in consultation with the supervisor/tutor).

**C1.** **Human participants** I/we confirm that this research (tick as appropriate):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **is not of high nor medium risk to the researcher, or participants, in accordance with the criteria provided in the Research Ethics Assessment documentation.** |
|  | **a reasonable person would agree that the study addresses issues of legitimate interest without being in any way likely to inflame opinion or cause distress.**[[2]](#footnote-2) |
|  | is Practice review (i.e. the research involves data collection from participants on issues relating to the researcher’s professional role, in a setting where the researcher is employed or on a professional placement). |
|  | is Practice evaluation (i.e. the research involves data collection on a student’s professional role, in a setting where the researcher is employed or on a professional placement. The data collected will be used for comparison against national or other targets or standards). |
|  | is Primaryresearch on professional practice with participants in professional roles conducted in their work setting. |
|  | is Market research (i.e. the research may involve data collection from the general public approached or observed in public locations for the purposes of market investigation). |
|  | is Primaryresearch using a questionnaire completed and returned by participants with no direct contact with the researcher. |
|  | is limited to participant groups of peers, colleagues, family members and friends. |
|  | the researcher will not give out personal telephone information to participants, in relation to the research project, and only university contact details (email, postal address) or dedicated project mobile phone numbers will be used. |

**C2.** **Research context** I/we confirm that (tick as appropriate):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **the location(s) of the research are not listed on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office warning lists.[[3]](#footnote-3)** |
|  | **the researcher is not in a position to coerce potential participants/secondary data owners.** |
|  | the research involves no vulnerable group (as indicated in question B3). |
|  | primary or practice research will be conducted in a public space or building (e.g. the high street, the University campus, a school building, etc.). |

**SECTION D – LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration (D1 or D2)**

This section should be completed by **the person undertaking the research.**

**D1. Fieldwork visits** I/we confirm that:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | all research activity complies with the low risk fieldwork risk assessment and that documentation has been completed and appended to this application. |

**D2. No Fieldwork visits** I/we confirm that:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | this research does not involve fieldwork visits of any kind. |

**SECTION E – UG/PGT/PGR/ Ethical Approval for LOW risk research**

Section E1 to be completed by the **researcher** (in consultation with the supervisor). Sections E2 and E3 to be completed by **supervisors/tutors** in the case of student applications.

**E1. Research ethics criteria**

**Tick as appropriate and/or indicate N/A against items where they do not apply to this research.**

I/we confirm that:

**Codes of Practice**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **I/we have read and understood the SALC Ethics and Policy Guidelines** |
|  | **the researcher will abide by the SALC ethics risk guidelines detailed herein** |
|  | **the researcher is aware of and will abide by any organisation’s codes of conduct relevant to this research** |

**Researcher skills/checks**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **all necessary training procedures for this research have been completed** |
|  | all relevant enhanced DBS or other checks have been completed |
|  | I will inform SALC (and my supervisor if relevant) if my DBS (or related) status changes |
|  | written permission to be on site to conduct primary research has been received |

**Rights of participants**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **participant information sheets (PIS), consent forms, questionnaires, and all other documentation relevant to this research have been discussed with the supervisor/tutor named in A.4.** |
|  | **PIS and consent forms have been confirmed by the supervisor/tutor named in A4, as covering required headings illustrated in the Participant Information and consent templates, AND as accessible to the proposed participant groups.** |
|  | **the researcher understands the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy and all data will be handled confidentially and securely, including storage on encrypted devices.** |
|  | **data will be: fairly and lawfully processed; processed for the purposes detailed in the information sheet only, which clearly states the limits of anonymity and confidentiality afforded to research participants; not be shared with any researcher or organisation other than in ways detailed on the information sheet.** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Researcher Declaration:** | | |
| **By signing this completed document, I declare that the information in it is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I will complete any actions that I have indicated I will complete.** | |
| Signature: | Date |
| Name (in capitals): | Student ID: |

**E2. Research integrity and output**

**Research Integrity**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **No data will be collected before approval of the study by the supervisor/tutor.** |
|  | **The student researcher will immediately report any issues arising during the course of the study that conflict with low risk categorisation declared here, to the supervisor who has signed the ethics approval and suspend data collection pending advice from that supervisor/tutor.** |
|  | **The researcher will report any proposed deviation from the research specification outlined in this assessment to the supervisor/tutor to update the current assessment or clarify any need for further approvals BEFORE such changes are made.** |

**Research output**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **The only publication/output from this research will be the assignment or dissertation unless consent has been obtained from participants for further dissemination.** |

When satisfied that the assessment is correct, the **supervisors/tutor** should complete this section.

For ‘low risk’ research approval, relevant **items in bold must be ticked or marked as N/A if not applicable to this research** and one or more of the specific research criteria must be ticked as appropriate.

**The supervisor/tutor confirms that:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **The submission has been discussed and agreed with the person(s) undertaking the research.** |
|  | **The student has had appropriate training and has the skills to undertake this study.** |
|  | **The research activities outlined in the proposal involve no substantive risks to the student researcher or potential participants.** |

**AND** one or more of the following as appropriate:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | The research will not address issues of public or social objection or of a sensitive nature. |
|  | Information giving and consent taking processes follow SALC templates. |
|  | The risk assessment completed by the student complies with the LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration. |
|  | They will act as custodian for data used for any study that results in a publication (Masters dissertation or otherwise) and will arrange for archiving of data within the Manchester Institute for a minimum period of 5 years. |

Please sign next section.

I confirm that the proposed research matches low risk criteria and that the documents supplied are complete and correct. I submit the items below in support of this Low Risk Ethical Approval:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Submitted** | **N/A** | **Document** |
|  |  | Completed **Research Ethics Assessment form** |
|  |  | Completed **Fieldwork Risk Assessment** form where indicated |
|  |  | Student research **proposal, or equivalent**, on which the assessment is based[[4]](#footnote-4) |
|  |  | **Supporting documents** including: |
|  |  | Draft questionnaire/interview topic guide/other data collection tool |
|  |  | Recruitment email/advertisement |
|  |  | Information sheet for each participant group |
|  |  | Consent form (or alternative) for each participant group |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Supervisor’s/Tutor’s signature:*** |  | ***Date:*** |  |

**Documents should be submitted electronically for archiving and audit purposes, to the relevant SALC office** **by the supervisor/tutor**. Copies of all documents should be retained by the supervisor/tutor.

**E3. Amendments to proposed research design for LOW risk research or justification for permission to grant undergraduate students dispensation for medium risk aspects to their research projects.**

Any minor amendment to low risk approved research submissions should be recorded and signed-off by the supervisor/tutor as necessary below. Substantial changes to research will require a reassessment and revised ethical approvals. A revised copy of the REA showing the approved amendments, and any amended supporting documents, should be forwarded electronically to the relevant office (UG, PGT, PGR) and the administrator will provide formal acknowledgement of approval of the change by email. For undergraduate projects a copy should be retained by the supervisor.

**To be completed if/when applicable:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Minor[[5]](#footnote-5) amendment to assessed research agreed (1):*** | | | |
| ***Details of amendment/justification***  *This section will record any applications made during the lifetime of the Project regarding minor changes from approved research projects.* | | | |
| ***Supervisor’s/Tutor’s signature:*** |  | ***Date:*** |  |

1. The researcher’s ‘home country’ is defined as one in which (1) the researcher holds a current passport through birthright or foreign birth registration, (2) a country where the researcher has resident status, or (3) where the researcher holds a permit or visa to work, has a contract of employment, and is not a UK tax-payer. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A reasonable person would agree that the study includes no issues of public or private objection, or of a sensitive nature. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For audit purposes, a person unfamiliar with the research outlined in Section B must be able to ascertain the full details of the student project from this REA form and/or supporting documents appended. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Minor deviations from previously approved research submissions are defined as those that neither change the nature of the study nor deviate from any participatory research groups previously identified. Supervisors/tutors should contact a member of the MIE Research Integrity Committee for advice if in doubt. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)