

# Research Ethics Approval



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Research Ethics Manager

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Background

# Principles of Research Ethics

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Weighing risk versus benefit

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Protecting anonymity and confidentiality

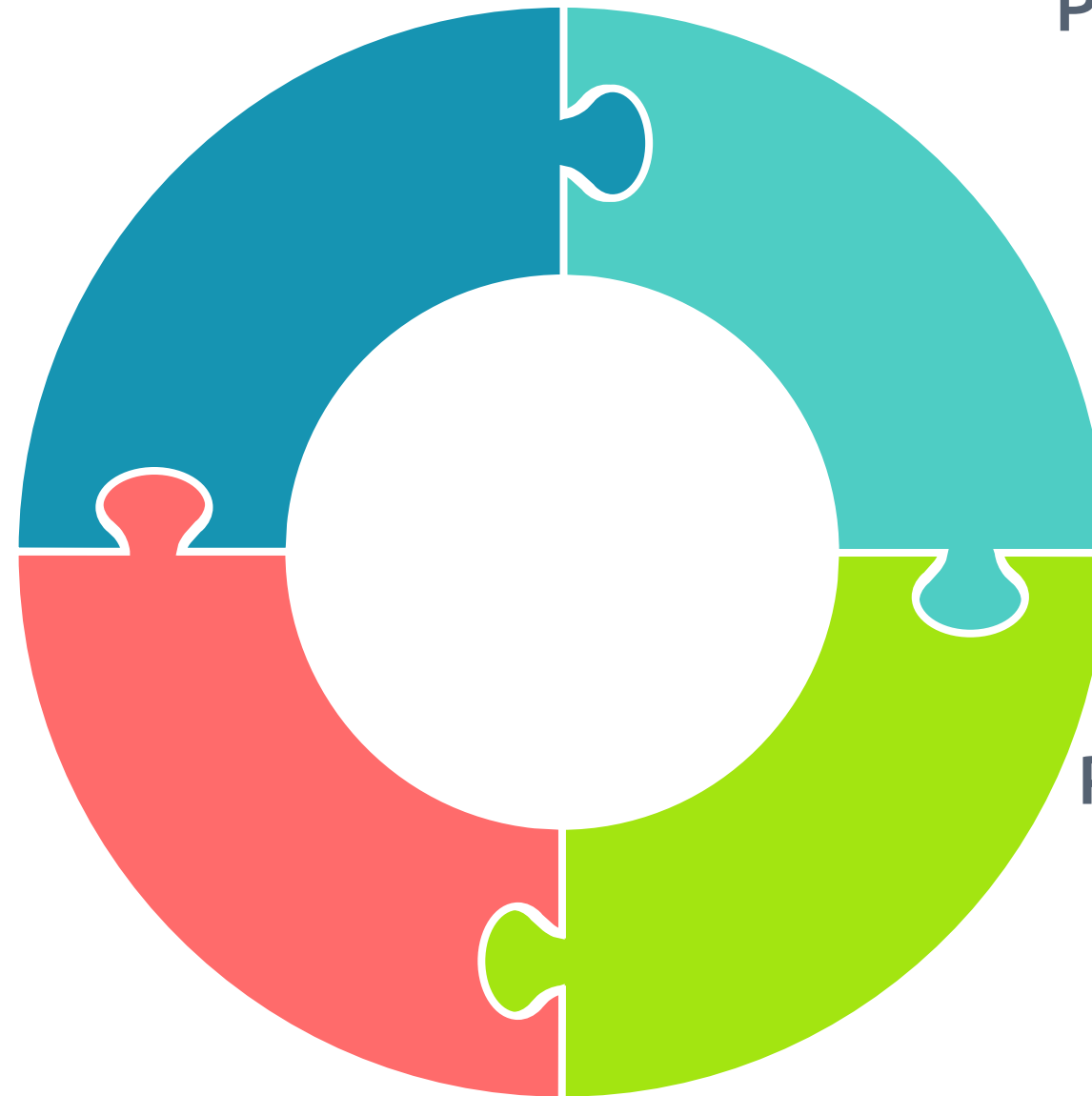
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Obtaining informed consent

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Providing a right to withdraw at any time

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# Why is ethics important?

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**Compliance: GDPR**

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**Funders**

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**Journals**

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**Data controller**

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**IMPORTANT:** Ethics approval **CANNOT** be granted retrospectively

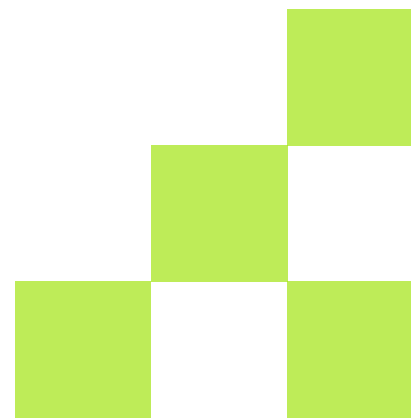
# Consequences of NOT obtaining ethical approval if it is required



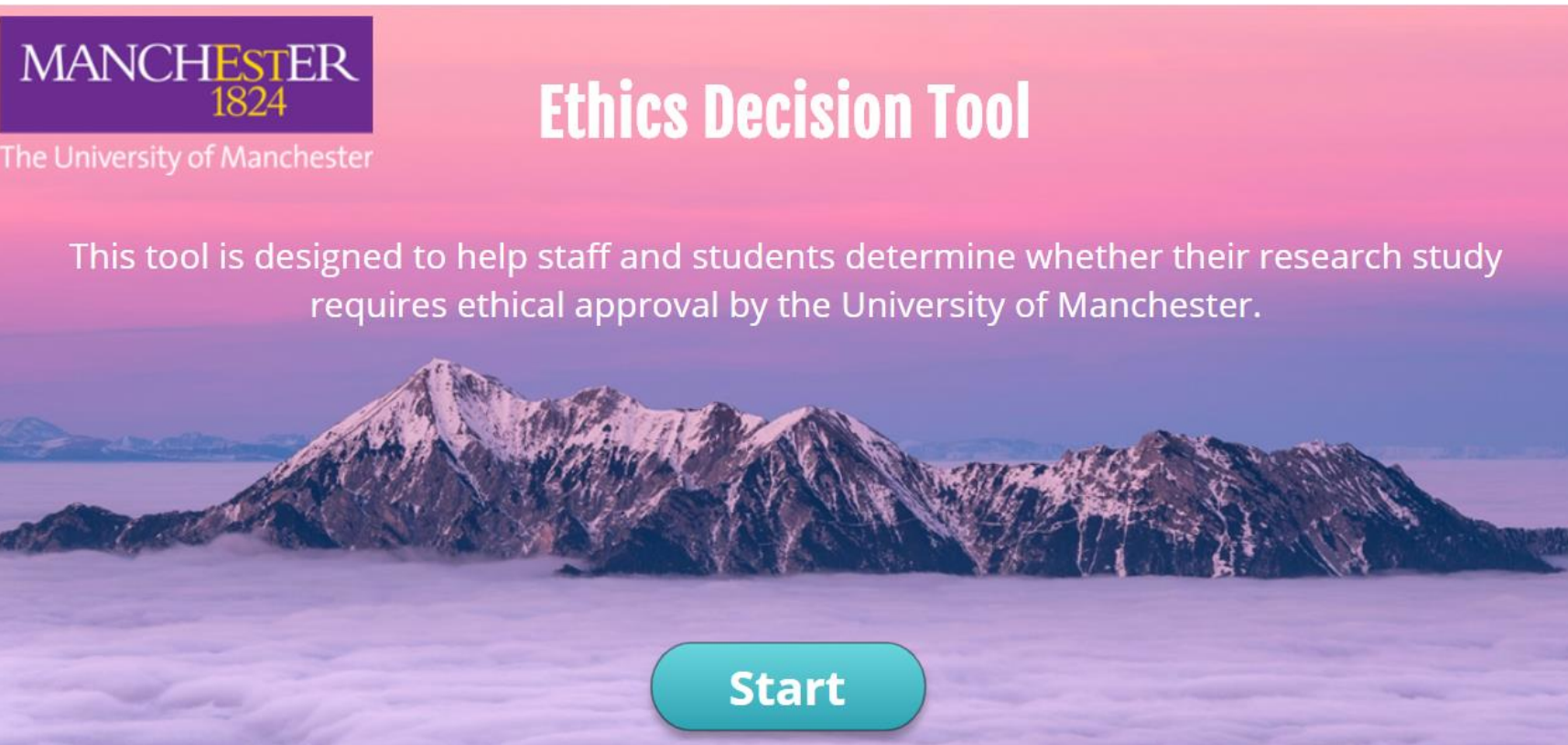
-  Data may need to be deleted and participants informed
  -  Your degree may be affected
  -  You and your supervisor may be charged with academic malpractice and face disciplinary action
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# 2

Ethical approval



# What projects need ethical approval?



## University's Ethics Decision Tool

- Features easy to answer yes or no questions
- Interactive decision tree to guide users through the questions
- Final outcome slide with a summary of all answers and advice regarding next steps

# Ethical approval CANNOT be granted retrospectively



## Important Notes about the Tool

- The tool DOES NOT work in Google Chrome. Please use Firefox, Safari or Internet Explorer.
  - If outcome is yes: you must decide what type of ethical approval is needed
    - If outcome is no: this MUST be verified by the supervisor
  - Queries? Contact the Ethics Signatory



# Examples\* of Studies That May Require Ethical Approval

## Type of Data/Topic

- Personal identifiable data or special category
  - Medical conditions, ethnic origin, political affiliations, religion, sexual orientation and more
- Publically available data from social media in relation to a sensitive topic
  - Sexual harassment in the workplace
- Photographs, videos, audio recordings

## International Research

- Consumers and fashion, marketing, social media influence
- Fracking, environmental damage, global warming
- Nuclear decommissioning and remediation
- Safety practices/cultural differences

## Healthy Volunteer Testing

- Human tissue samples
  - Blood, urine, hair, saliva, skin swabs
- Health related equipment
  - Diabetic equipment, shoe inserts, walking aids
- 3D body scanning
- X-ray computed tomography

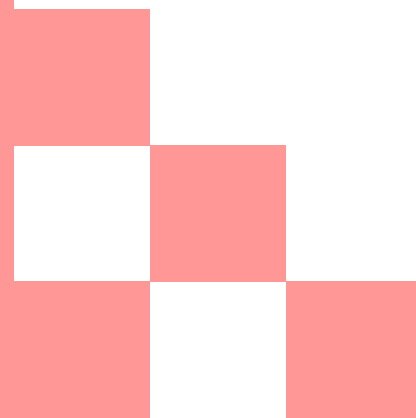
## Other examples

- Educational research in schools, nurseries or other organisations with children or young people
- Research in collaboration with Chester Zoo
- Sustainable energy
  - Solar power, hydrogen, water

**\*Note: this list is not exhaustive**





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## Ethical Exemptions







# Ethical Exemptions: Evaluations, Market Research or Work with Professionals\*

ALL of the following criteria **MUST** be met

-  **No personal information** will be collected apart from:
  - Their name, publically available contact details, a record of consent and if applicable, an audio recording of the discussion.
-  **No sensitive/confidential information** will be collected
  - Including special category data
-  **No vulnerable or dependant groups** will be included
-  **There is no risk of possible disclosures, poor practice, reporting obligations or whistleblowing**

\*Students are **NOT** classed as professionals

# Ethical Exemption Requirements

-  Participant information sheets and consent forms/scripts **MUST** be GDPR complaint. Ethical consent **MUST** be obtained in all cases.
-  Any audio transcripts **MUST** be anonymised and the original recordings **deleted**.
-  All data protection expectations regarding storage, confidentiality and retention **MUST** be followed.
-  Keep a copy of the outcome of the Ethics Decision Tool and if in doubt, verify the result with your Ethics Signatory.

# Secondary data analysis

- ☐ Is the data fully anonymised?
- ☐ Does the researcher have explicit, written permission from the data controller?
- ☐ Does the proposed analysis fall within the consent arrangements of data subjects?

# Secondary Data Analysis

## Human Data

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- If data is **not** from humans or animals, it does not need research ethics approval.
- However, Information Governance issues **may still apply** if it is commercially sensitive or confidential.

## Consent Arrangements

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- Researcher must prove that the data can be used for research purposes.
- Data controller can confirm this or researcher can consult the relevant privacy notice.

## Company Data

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- If data is company level only (and not person specific) it does not need research ethics approval **unless the project is about personally held companies.**

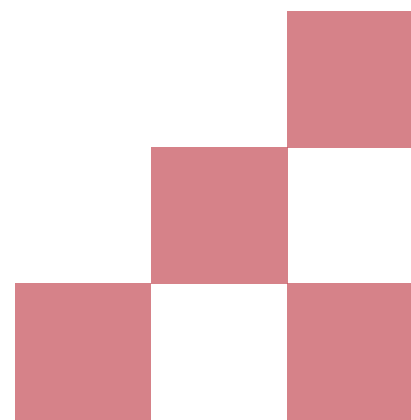
## Anonymisation

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- To qualify for an exemption, data must be fully anonymised.
- This refers to the raw data provided to the researcher and **NOT** the dissemination of the project.

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## Types of Ethical Review



# Types of Ethical Review at UoM



School Review
<b>Low risk</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student projects only</li><li>• Must adhere to criteria as appropriate</li><li>• 6-8 weeks from submission to approval</li></ul>

Full UREC
<b>High risk</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff or student projects</li><li>• Projects that do not meet criteria for other routes</li><li>• 10-12 weeks from submission to approval</li></ul>

Ensure you plan these timescales into your research plan and begin the application as soon as possible.





# School Criteria



Low risk vs. medium risk: read the guidance notes

## Participants



- Adults able to provide informed consent
- Children in an educational setting who are able to provide assent and a parental/guardian consent procedure has been established
- **NO** vulnerable or dependent groups

## Location



### Low Risk

- Public, semi-public or domestic environments familiar to the researcher
- Within the EU or EEA
- Within normal working hours/time convenient to participants

### Medium Risk

- Public or private locations where safety of researchers and privacy of participants is protected
- Not on the FCO's red list
- Within normal working hours/time convenient to participants


## Topics






### Low Risk

- **NOT** contentious, sensitive, distressing or confidential
- **NO** risk of physical, emotional or psychological harm
- Ethical issues do **NOT** include safeguarding, disclosures or coercion

### Medium Risk

- **NOT** highly contentious or personally sensitive
  - **NO** risk of **significant** distress or physical, emotional or psychological harm with any possible distress/harm being minor and temporary
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# School Exclusions

-  **Vulnerable groups:** those unable to provide informed consent, those with mental health difficulties, those with a dependant relationship to the researcher, prisoners or young offenders, etc
-  **High risk topics:** highly contentious, sensitive, distressing or confidential;  
Those will pose a significant risk of physical, psychological or emotional harm
-  **Location:** private locations, participant's residences, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises 'all or all but essential' travel to

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Support & Guidance



# Frequently Asked Questions/Resources

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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

[Frequently Asked Questions Document](#)

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# Need help or advice?

## Research Ethics Website/Help bubble guidance 01

### Website

- PDF training guides
- Videos
- Guidance documents
- Templates and examples
- Frequently asked questions

### Help Bubbles

- Question by question help
- Includes links to examples and guidance information

## Your Supervisor 02

- Should be your first point of contact for queries **after reading the guidance**

## Ethics Signatories 03

- Expert ethics advice per [Division/School](#)

## Research ethics office 04

- Technical queries, bugs or glitches with ERM
- Additional ethics support for **supervisors or Ethics Signatories**
- [Research.ethics@Manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Research.ethics@Manchester.ac.uk)

# Thank you!



Any questions?