School of Computing Sciences

# Research Ethics Check

Name …….….. UG / PGT / PGR / (S)RA / Faculty / Other

Title of project (80 chars. max.) ……..……...

Name of Supervisor / PI / Lab leader:……

**A. Does the research use an interview or questionnaire survey?** **Yes No**

If so, does it:

- Ask for any personal information? **Yes No**
- Ask personal questions other than those from published surveys/questionnaires? **Yes No**
- Use questions on age, gender or ethnicity other than those in widespread use? **Yes No**
- Ask other personal or sensitive questions? **Yes No**

**B. Does the research offer advice or guidance to people?** **Yes No**

- Are you using a validated knowledge base? **Yes No**
- Are you (or your collaborators) formally qualified to give the advice or guidance? **Yes No**

**C. Does the research involve children, vulnerable adults or their carers?** **Yes No**

- If so, have you obtained the relevant VBA checks? **Yes No**

**D. Does the research record or observe people's behaviour?** **Yes No**

- Does it replicate other published studies? **Yes No**
- Are these recent and culturally compatible? **Yes No**

**E. Has this research been previously considered by another REC?** **Yes No**

If so, please provide full details in the research protocol.

**F. Does the research involve the analysis of personal data collected by others?** **Yes No**

If so, please describe the arrangements made to ensure confidentiality, security, … in the research protocol.

**G. Will the researcher carry out fieldwork alone while away from UEA?** **Yes No**

If so, please describe the arrangements made to ensure the researcher's safety in the research protocol.

**H. Will participants be paid or offered a reward for participating?** **Yes No**

If so, please describe, in the research protocol, the arrangements made to record the names and addresses of everybody receiving a payment.

**I. Data management**

- Does the research collect or use sensitive data? (e.g. commercially confidential, military, …) **Yes No**
- Does the research use existing confidential data? (e.g. medical records) **Yes No**
- Is the research covered by the consent given when the data were collected? **Yes No**
- Are special arrangements needed for the storage (10 years) of the data? **Yes No**

**J. Attachments**

☐ Project synopsis ☐ Research protocol ☐ Questionnaire ☐ Other forms

**Approval (Chair of CMP-REC)**

Approved **Yes No** Signature **……..** Date……..……

*Please return completed form to CMP Office, S2.45*

# Notes for guidance

Any research, dissertation or project carried out at UEA that involves working with people or animals - either directly or indirectly - must obtain ethics approval before work starts. Failure to do so is a Research Misconduct matter.

Many applications can be processed quickly, but work that falls outside the scope of CMP-REC (a sub-committee of the UEA REC) will be referred elsewhere. Work that involves medical patients, or NHS staff issues that may affect health and well-being, must be approved by a NHS REC and Research Governance Committee. Work with NHS staff on non-sensitive matters (e.g. use of IT) needs CMP-REC ethics approval and NHS Research Governance approval. Plenty of time must be allowed for these processes.

The most important issues in considering the ethical dimensions of a project are:

- **Appropriateness of methods**. Are the methods proposed appropriate (e.g. not unduly intrusive, or time-consuming) for the gains in knowledge and understanding expected,
- **Experimental subjects and consent**. These are *indicative* topics to be addressed in the research protocol:
  How will you recruit subjects?
  How many will be recruited? (justified in relation to the aims of the survey and the analysis methods)
  How will you obtain the informed consent of your subjects?
  How will they be informed of their options to withdraw and of any risks or benefits from participating?

## Attachments

**Project synopsis**. The committee needs to have an understanding of the scope and aims of the project; these should be provided in the project synopsis. The project synopsis is usually no more than two paragraphs long.

**Research protocol.** This describes the experimental or survey methods and procedures to be used; it should be written in sufficient detail to (in principle) allow a reasonably competent researcher to complete the experimental or survey work with no additional information or guidance.

**Questionnaire**. Copies of all questionnaires, interview forms etc. must be attached. The questionnaire should provide participants with sufficient information about the project and questionnaire to allow them to decide whether or not to participate, what will happen to the information they provide, what will happen if they withdraw part way through, contact details of the investigator and supervisor (or Head of School)

**Other documents**. Any other participant information sheets, consent forms, etc. that will be used in the research

## Sections

**A. Interview or questionnaire survey**. This covers all face-to-face or web-based surveys, systematic programmes of interviews, comparison tasks, etc. You do not need to complete this form if you are **only** carrying out a requirements gathering interview with a single stakeholder for whom you are designing a system.

**B. Advice and guidance.** Answer Yes to this if your work will produce advice for people on matters that may directly affect their health or well-being, e.g. exercise or diet. Answer No to this question if one of the outcomes of your work will be some suggestions about how a website or business process might be improved, etc.

**C. Work with children or vulnerable adults or their carers**. If you answer Yes to this question (see https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview), you must explain fully in the research protocol how this work will be carried out. You will also need to be aware of the University's policies on research with children and with people who may fall within the scope of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

**D. Recording or observing behaviour.** This covers thinking aloud, speech, lip-reading experiments, etc.

**E. Previous applications.** A copy of the submission, the REC applied to, the date and outcome.

**F. Analysis of personal data.** The research protocol should explain the nature of the data, how anonymity will be ensured (if appropriate), any contracts, non-disclosure agreements or limitations on the use of the data, …

**G. Safety of researcher(s).** Does the work involve exposure to risks beyond those involved in everyday life in the UK? (e.g. unwanted attention from overseas police authorities for work which would be unremarkable in the UK) If so, appropriate arrangements must be made to reduce the risks where this is practicable and to ensure that there is a system for positively reporting the safe completion of each research session or activity.

**H. Payment.** UK tax regulations require that the University keeps details of all payments made. The list of payees' details should be kept securely, and it should be designed so that research subjects' confidentiality is preserved.

**I. Data.** These are indicative questions, covering topics that need to be addressed in the research protocol.
(See also https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/ren/Research+Data+Management)

What observational or behavioural data will be collected? How?
Will the data be made available to other studies? How?
How will experimental subjects be informed of these issues?
For secondary analyses, is the work covered by the consent obtained when the data were collected?
What is the data storage plan?