



ETHICS COMMITTEE Minutes

31 March 2020 9:30 – 11:00

Blackboard Collaborate (virtual session)

Attendees: Peggy Seriés (Chair), Chris Lucas, Arno Onken, Janet Ball, Victoria Lindström, Vicky Chondrogianni (PPLS), Sumin Zhao (PPLS), Jennifer Culbertson (PPLS), Sam Bishop (secretary)

Apologies: Kami Vaniea, Lexi Birch-Mayne

No.	Item	Paper
1.	Approval of Previous Minutes Minutes from previous meeting were approved as a true representation of the meeting.	
2.	Matters Arising from previous meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advice on group applications – pending (KV) Action: VL to send reminder to KV.• Qualtrics PDF functionality – partially completed by CS from computing support but will need access to the form submission project in Qualtrics. Action: CL to grant CS access to Qualtrics• Wording on prior REC approval in Qualtrics – pending (KV) Action: VL to send reminder to KV.• Ethics guiding principles - Qualtrics update to “code” pending (KV/CL) Action: VL to send reminder to KV/CL• PIS for children/young adults – samples located, templates to be completed for review at next committee meeting (VL). Defer to next meeting. Action: VL to draft templates for next meeting• Timings of Ethics applications with regards to funded research – on agenda• Feedback on Infonetica question set – none received. Due to the current Coronavirus central Infonetica project has gone quiet. Remove from actions until central project restarts.• Ethics procedure training – JB has located some appropriate sources but these have been quiet recently due to current Coronavirus outbreak. Action: JB to collate updated on possible Ethics training and distribute to the committee.• Train@ED fellowship application advice – completed (PS).	VL/KV CL VL/KV VL/KV/CL VL JB
3.	Application review No matters arising	



<p>4.</p>	<p>COVID-19 update to researchers</p> <p>Vicky Chondrogianni from PPLS gave a brief overview of CAHSS guidance on ethical considerations when rethinking research projects in light of the circumstances surrounding COVID-19. VC provided presentation slides and a guidance document but some of the main points of the presentation were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research applications involving COVID-19 should be prioritised• Any research projects that involve vulnerable groups or key workers should re-assessed and treated as a new application• Any changes to existing research projects with non-vulnerable participants can go ahead with revised methodology as necessary. An updated PIS and summary of changes (especially with regards to GDPR implications) should be submitted to EC via the original application. <p>It was noted that the guidance document provided by VC had been passed onto the CSE ethics contact for review. Guidance should be drafted for Informatics researchers but not released until CSE give guidance to ensure there is college wide consistency. In the meantime a message should be sent to Informatics researchers to notify the EC of any updates to research projects due to COVID-19.</p> <p>Action: Draft guidance pages for ethical considerations to changes to research due to COVID-19 to be produced.</p> <p>Action: Request that Informatics researchers inform EC of any changes to research projects due to COVID-19</p>	<p>PS/VL</p> <p>PS</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Social media data in Ethics – input from PPLS</p> <p>Representatives from the PPLS ethics committee had been invited to give guidance on the ethical considerations of research conducted on data from social media. Links were given to the PPLS guidance webpages:</p> <p>http://resource.ppls.ed.ac.uk/lelethics/index.php/frequently-asked-questions/web-based-studies/#how-to-conduct-your-study</p> <p>http://resource.ppls.ed.ac.uk/lelethics/index.php/frequently-asked-questions/research-with-social-media-data/</p> <p>One of the main points of the discussion concerned data gathered from open social media. While it might be legal to gather such data it might not be ethical to do so. In such cases the group subject and research question are key; for instance if the research is conducted on a group considered vulnerable (e.g. a forum on mental health) the ethical considerations are much more complex than research conducted on less vulnerable groups (e.g. football fans).</p> <p>Permission was given by the PPLS EC for their resources to be used as a template for Informatics specific guidance. It was noted that it would also be really useful for researchers if case studies are made available. Informatics EC to share any new insights with PPLS EC to foster cross-UoE best practice.</p> <p>Action: Guidance webpages on research involving social media and use of secondary data to be created for Informatics researchers.</p>	<p>PS/VL</p>



6.	School Ethics workflow It was agreed that no adjustments need to be currently made to the Ethics workflow with regards to grant applications. Under current systems everything is working as it should but a reassessment of the workflow will be needed once the Infonetica system has been developed.	
7.	AOB The ethical considerations of data storage were raised in relation to remote data collection. It is important for researchers to consider where and how data is stored when using remote data collection services, which will be increasingly used during restrictions related to COVID-19. Where there are concerns relating to GDPR compliance of services, researchers should be explicit in how to mitigate risk. It was noted that this is heavily related to data management plans and while there is guidance online already links and pages should be created with regards to ethics applications. ACTION: Guidance pages/links on the ethical considerations of data storage to be developed.	PS/VL
8.	Date of next meeting: 05 May 2020 9:30 – 11:00	