



06 July 2021 9:30 – 11:00
MS Teams

Attendees: Peggy Seriès (Chair), Lexi Birch-Mayne, Kami Vaniea, Björn Ross, Victoria Lindström (secretary), Björn Franke.
Apologies: Arno Onken, Sam Bishop.

No.	Item	Paper
1.	Approval of Previous Minutes The minutes of the previous committee were approved as a fair representation of the meeting.	
2.	<p>Matters Arising from previous meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualtrics PDF functionality – Ongoing, action carried forward. Previous Informatics Ethics framework to be updated and, pending Committee approval, published on InfWeb as well as implemented in Qualtrics. - The committee reviewed the framework during the meeting and suggested edits. <p>Action: VL to distribute framework to committee for approval once edits have been finalised. Action completed.</p> <p>Action: VL to send KV list of types of vulnerable participants for inclusion on the Ethics Qualtrics form. Action completed.</p> <p>Action (new): KV to confirm vulnerable participant list added to Qualtrics form.</p> <p>Action: All committee members to source suitable application examples of the different framework levels to be displayed on Infweb and added to an example bank to aid reviewers. Ongoing – KV to provide blurb and PIS (to be anonymised) for a first example (Level 1) and blurb to accompany existing PIS example. VL to add to Ethics webpages once received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics level framework implementation in Qualtrics. – Dependant on actions above, action carried forward. Ongoing. PS to review shared material and confirm with VL when to post examples student ethics applications on InfWeb. Further pedagogical materials to be produced as part of wider strategy for training Ethics to UG/PGT students. 	<p>KV</p> <p>KV</p> <p>KV/VL</p> <p>KV</p>

	<p>Action: PS to invite the Director of Teaching to an Ethics Committee meeting to discuss ethics training for students. Action completed (under item 4).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PS to review current ethics materials for students and then consult the Hours projects' coordinator and IPP/IPR COs on implementing more extensive ethics training. - See agenda item 4 <p>Action: All committee members to send a short blurb about themselves and their experiences of ethics to VL to be added to the Infweb Ethics pages. Action completed.</p> <p>Action: VL/SB to set up a weekly Ethics 'office hour' where a member of the REC will be available to answer any queries on ethics. Initially this will be a MS Teams meeting (Mondays, 4pm-5pm) that people can drop in on but will become a physical office hour once COVID-19 restrictions have eased. Action completed (frequency discussed under AOB).</p> <p>Action: PS to advertise the Ethics office hour to research staff. Action completed.</p> <p>Action: PS to create an overview of ethics for inclusion in new starter's induction packs. Ongoing – PS working with Jane and InfHR to review current induction packs and to provide material related to Ethics. PS will circulate draft to REC members before confirming final copy for InfHR to use.</p> <p>Action: VL to liaise with VD to find a suitable time to complete the AMT DPIA and ask CS whether they need to be involved. Action completed (details discussed under AOB).</p>	PS/All REC members
3.	<p>Application review – standing item</p> <p>REC members agreed no specific applications required committee discussion, but raised an example of PIs completing a pilot study with colleagues prior to ethics application to test forms, which was agreed as unproblematic.</p>	
4.	<p>Ethics workshops – standing item</p> <p>BF invited to discuss workshops/Ethics teaching for taught students. There is a broader question whether all students should be taught some Ethics – either process or Ethics as a concept, and whether it should be assessed (e.g. as online Learn course). PS also raised question of how the School should evaluate the lack of an Ethics application, for projects which have ethical issues.</p>	



<p>BF outlined that some ethics training is relevant for both UG and PGT (MSc) courses, and that (for PGT students) this has in the past been provided informally by Maria Wolters as former REC (previously Ethics panel) lead. BF noted that any assessment should be lightweight, e.g. via online quiz.</p> <p>BF and REC members agreed that identifying whether or not a student project requires ethical approval should occur at the project proposal stage, as the supervisor completes the relevant form in DPMT. Action required to increase engagement with question related to Ethics. This applies to self-proposed student projects also, as the form is reviewed by an assigned supervisor.</p> <p>Action: PS to send BF relevant text to include in project proposal form, to guide students and supervisors to accurately indicate whether ethical review is required for any given project. BF to incorporate in DPMT in liaison with relevant contact (Tom Spink).</p> <p>BF and REC members agreed that students can best demonstrate whether project has considered Ethics by adding an appendix to their dissertation submission (UG and PGT). The appendix template should be formatted so that students will remove parts which are not applicable, rather than including parts which <i>are</i> applicable. This will help bring ethics as a process to students' attention. REC proposes appendix includes RT and/or Qualtrics reference number, any PIS forms where relevant, and possibly the approval date. Noted that all relevant and any additional information (e.g. DMPs) can be retrieved from RT via the RT/Qualtrics reference.</p> <p>Action: PS to send UG appendix template to Iain Murray as owner of the UG dissertation template (BF introduction completed).</p> <p>Action: PS to send PGT appendix template to BF for inclusion in the PGT dissertation template (BF to identify template owner).</p> <p>BF and REC members agreed that training delivery needs to be considered separately for UG and PGT students.</p> <p>For PGT students, it is suitable to incorporate training as a 1-hour session in IPP, and with an accompanying light-touch quiz in the relevant Learn module.</p> <p>Action: PS to liaise with Aurora Constantin and Don Sanella to implement IPP Ethics module for next academic year (BF introduction completed). Suggested students given 10 attempts for Learn quiz, after which they are referred to the course organiser.</p> <p>Action: PS to liaise with MW re previously used material in IPP Ethics presentation.</p> <p>The challenge in distributing training to UG students is that there isn't one compulsory course which captures all UG students (cf. IPP for PGT students). It was agreed that the Professional Issues course is not suitable as it is already a full course. BF suggested that School incorporates requirement to discuss</p>	<p>PS/BF</p> <p>PS</p> <p>PS/BF</p> <p>PS</p> <p>PS</p>
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	<p>any Ethics issues for UG project at project group presentations that all students have to give.</p> <p>Action: PS to liaise with UG organiser (Barbara Webb) to confirm that UG presentations are due to come back in 21/22, and how Ethics component can be incorporated. (BF introduction completed). This may include sharing a video recording of training delivered to PGT students via IPP, and a similar online quiz. The training should only be mandatory for UG students who have identified ethical issues with their project as part of the group presentations.</p> <p>No firm decision was reached on how the ethics appendix would impact marking, but BF and REC members agreed that the marking scheme should not be numerical as some projects do not require ethics approval. Instead, the evaluation is binary (ethics present/not present) with some penalty for students who have failed to follow ethics procedure when they should have done so.</p>	PS
5.	<p>Report on survey of research active staff (continued from June meeting).</p> <p>REC members discussed the recommendations from paper 5.1. On recommendations around a checklist for PIs to follow to determine whether they need to complete an ethics application, and on a process of tracking/enforcing ethics, the committee agreed that colleagues are better placed to enquire necessity of ethics approval via inf-ethics@inf.ed.ac.uk or by attending the office hour. The REC also noted that updated Levels pages – giving additional information on different kinds of ethics applications – should help inform colleagues on what kinds of research requires ethics.</p> <p>It was agreed that it's more important to train and enable colleagues/students to do Ethics in the right way, rather than penalise them. If they do not, then they are breaking either conditions with the funder, or the University charter (violation of safety). For students with high-risk projects, the 'policing' should be completed by the supervisor, who (for such projects) likely works in an area where Ethics is important.</p> <p>Action: PS to promote inf-ethics@inf.ed.ac.uk and office hour as means for colleagues to contact REC, should they have questions around whether the ethics process is required for their proposed research.</p> <p>The REC agreed it would be advantageous for colleagues to be able to complete a 'practice-run' of the ethics form, as an additional resource alongside the PDF summary of the ethics form. This will also allow student applicants to test the form before completing the 'real' application in collaboration with their supervisor.</p> <p>Action: KV to set up practice Qualtrics ethics form, and share with VL/SB to add to Ethics pages.</p>	<p>5.1, 5.2</p> <p>PS</p> <p>KV/VL/SB</p>

	<p>Recommendations related to workshops and provision of example applications have been addressed by previously identified actions, but it was agreed that structuring workshops around good/bad examples of e.g. PIS/consent works could work well.</p> <p>Action: PS to include good and bad examples of elements in supporting documents in future workshops for staff, including a list of things ‘not to do’.</p> <p>On recommendation related to advice on GDPR and Copyright related to Ethics, the REC emphasised they are an advisory committee and again that the office hour can be used to raise specific questions.</p> <p>REC agrees with recommendation to make clear that ‘pre-approval’ of ethics can be granted, e.g. to run pilot study prior to submitting funding application, or to demonstrate to funder that ethics approval has been sought. If methodology changes (with or without funding awarded), applicants should amend application as set out on the Ethics webpages.</p> <p>Action: VL to add FAQ on Ethics pages making clear that REC happy to review and advise on high-level applications.</p> <p>REC accepts recommendation to share workflow chart (paper 5.2) of Ethics process on Ethics pages, to make process transparent to staff and students (alongside new information on turnaround times as indicated in Levels tab of Ethics pages).</p> <p>Action: VL to add workflow to Ethics pages, with reference to Levels pages for turnaround times.</p>	<p>PS</p> <p>VL</p> <p>VL</p>
6.	<p>AOB</p> <p>- DPIA Amazon Mechanical Turk</p> <p>VL shared Victoria Dishon’s plan for processing the DPIA for AMT over the summer – some delays are expected due to annual leave of key staff. VD has requested Informatics consider other widely used relevant tools (e.g. Prolific) that may also need a DPIA, and that requests are submitted for this work if required. REC members offered advice on possible common tools (e.g. Clockwork, Figure Eight/Appen)</p> <p>Action: VL to follow up on recommended contacts in School to identify commonly used tools and confirm whether full DPIA required.</p> <p>VD also requested if there are any contacts for Amazon via Informatics colleagues. REC members suggested that while PIs may have contacts, these are in research departments of Amazon, and unlikely to have legal understanding. Suggested Keith Edwards may have more suitable Amazon contact(s).</p> <p>Action: VL to contact KE re any suitable contact(s) to share with VD.</p>	<p>VL</p> <p>VL</p>



	<p>- Office hour frequency</p> <p>REC members noted that the office hour has not been attended since implemented. It will move from weekly to monthly slots over the summer (first Monday of the month), and frequency will be reviewed again once the next academic year starts.</p> <p>Action: VL to change REC member invites to monthly frequency Action: VL to change Ethics webpage blurb from 'weekly' to 'monthly' Action: PS to send email to School advising change to monthly frequency due to low take-up over summer, and advising frequency will be reviewed again at start of new academic year.</p>	VL VL PS
7.	Date of next meeting: Tue 07 September, 9:30 – 11:00.	