About You and Your Study

Informatics Ethics Application Form

Please note that you can only work on one application at a time.

The "Save and Continue" option uses cookies to store the current progress of your application, so in order to return to a form, you must be using the same browser.

In addition, you cannot go back and correct mistakes you made in earlier parts of the form after the survey has branched. If you do notice a mistake in your form, just email ethics-query@inf.ed.ac.uk with your reference number ${e://Field/ID} and we will assess your application based on the correction.

All of these shortcomings will be addressed in a new, University wide system for filing Ethics applications. Until this system is in place, this is the preferred form.

Project Title

Principal Investigator Name and Affiliation (for students/visiting researchers: this is your supervisor)

Principal Investigator email

Additional non-student investigators

Email of additional non-student investigators (separate emails by commas)

Project Type (tick all that apply).

- [ ] Undergraduate/MInf final year project
- [ ] MSc final year project
- [ ] Study conducted as part of a PhD
- [ ] Study conducted as part of research visit / internship
- [ ] Grant-funded research
- [ ] Unfunded research
- [ ] Research Grant
- [ ] Other

Students involved (list names AND student IDs, using their official Edinburgh student ID, e.g. Abel Student s1234567. Separate multiple students with commas).

Is there a sponsor or a funding body?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, their name(s) is / are:

What is the relevant code of conduct for your research?

- ○ Informatics Ethics Code of Conduct
- ○ _____ Other

Are other institutions or Ethics Committees involved?

- ○ No
- ○ _____ Yes, their name(s) is/are:

Has the other institution / Ethics committee granted Ethical approval?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

Please send the letter granting Ethical Approval and the supporting documents that were submitted to obtain Ethical Approval to ethics-query@inf.ed.ac.uk, citing reference number 2022/${e://Field/ID}.

Do You Need Ethics?

Level 0 Check

These questions help determine whether you need to submit a full Level 1 or Level 2 Ethics application, and whether the School of Informatics is the appropriate institution for granting permission.

We cannot process studies that involve collecting data from live animals (the only exception being Homo sapiens sapiens), but members of the wider Ethics Panel can help you with applying for such approval from appropriate sources.

Does your work involve human participants?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Does your work involve animals?

- ○ Yes, and we will collect new data from animals
- ○ Yes, but only secondary data
- ○ No

Does your work involve military applications?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Does your work involve personal data? This includes, for example, names, student numbers, social media user names, or IP addresses, or any other data from which an individual can be identified. For more information, please consult the ICO web page.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Does your work involve sensitive personal data? This includes information about physical and mental health, race, ethnicity, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sexual orientation, genetic data, and biometric data. For more information, please consult the ICO web page.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Does your work involve developing countries? (List: PDF of ODA recipients Note that India also counts as a developing country).

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Does your research concern terrorist or extremist groups, or groups that are regarded as terrorist or extremist in the countries where they operate?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Will you need to use tools or services that do not comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 to collect data from human participants or to collect secondary data (e.g., from Social Media)?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Provide a high-level description of what your research involves. You can assume that the reviewer is familiar with standard computer science concepts, but may not be an expert in your area.

This is a level 0 application, so we only need a short summary to double check that assessment.

You fit the criteria for Level 0 Approval - no more form filling required.

For your records, your ethics number is: ${e://Field/ID}

You may still benefit from writing a Data Management Plan.

Please obtain Ethical Approval through one of the collaborating organisations with specialist expertise in the ethics of animal research. The School of Informatics Ethics Panel does not have that expertise at present, but can advise on your application. Please contact the panel at Inf-ethics@inf.ed.ac.uk for more information.

You need Level 1 or Level 2 Ethical Approval.

Make sure that you prepare a study plan, a participant information sheet, a plan for collecting consent, and a plan for managing the data collected in your study before you work through the rest of the questionnaire. Templates for all of these can be accessed from the Informatics Ethics webpage.

Please also ensure that you consult the frequency asked questions (FAQ) on our web page if anything is unclear.

If you don't have your documents ready, we recommend that you save the form at this point and return to it once you've prepared the information.

Research Summary

About Your Research

Much of the work in Informatics is iterative. This can mean different versions of studies that follow the same pattern, a set of experiments that are part of a bigger study, or the iterative development of a product.

We encourage you, if you can, to submit an Ethics Application that covers all of your work, and phrase your Participant Information Sheet and Consent Forms accordingly. It is also possible to submit multiple information sheets and consent forms at the same time.

Example 1: Student Kim Doe makes a spaced repetition app. They want to test

several versions of the app with participants. Kim should write a generic participant information sheet that covers several iterations, and submit it - this will cover the entire project.

Example 2: Dr Sandy Doe wants to run a perception experiment, but first needs to collect and validate stimuli. If Sandy provides sufficient documentation for the validation step and for the actual experiment, both can be approved in one go.

Please provide a brief summary of the goal and methods of your research. You should cover the following:

- What is the goal of the study?
- If you have human participants, what will you ask them to do?
- If you perform data analyses, what methods will you use?
- To what extent will the design of later parts of your study be affected by the findings of earlier parts?

It's enough to give high level descriptions of tasks and analysis methods. It helps if you can provide references.

Recommended length: 100 words. Required length: at least 200 characters

Are you using secondary data (e.g., social media data, corpora, data sets from repositories, ...)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Are you working with partners that are not from the School of Informatics? Tick all that apply.

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes, academic partners
- [ ] Yes, non-academic partners

Who will directly benefit from your research?

Direct benefits include compensation for participation that is used to advertise the study, e.g., money, chance to win an Amazon voucher, or free pizza.

Think about academic partners, non-academic partners, participants, participants' local communities, and other potential beneficiaries (recommended length: 50 words)

Permissions for research outside of the UK (tick all that apply)

- [ ] All research will take place within the UK. This also covers crowdsourced work where all the participants are from the UK / resident in the UK.
- [ ] Some research will take place in other countries, and we will obtain in-country Ethical Approval before starting the work there.
- [ ] Some research will take place in other countries where it is not possible to obtain in-country Ethical Approval. This covers crowdsourced research where not all participants are from the UK.

Will you disseminate your findings, publications, and data to the country/countries where the research took place?

- ○ Yes, country-specific dissemination will be used to ensure outputs are provided to the country/countries where research took place
- ○ Yes, public websites will be used to make outputs available to all internet users, but no targeted dissemination will happen
- ○ No (give reason)

Explain why it is not possible to obtain in-country Ethical Approval, and how you will protect the rights of your in-country participants. Good examples include crowdsourced research with participants from outside the UK, or crowdsourced research that uses country-specific platforms, such as wjx.cn. Recommended length: 50 words

Explain why you need to use tools and services that do not comply with GDPR, and how you will safeguard participants' data. Recommended length: 50-100 words.

Working with Human Participants

Working with Human Participants

This section applies to you if your research involves working with people or actively observing people (e.g., ethnography).

Note that you need consent so that you can collect data ethically form participants. However, consent is no longer the legal basis for processing data - this is Article 6(1)(e), the public task of the University.

Consent can be withdrawn - the University's public task remains.

Are all participants aged 15 and over?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No, but we will seek consent from both children and parents/guardians for those who are under age
- ○ No, and we will not seek consent from parents/guardians

Are all participants able to understand their rights and provide informed consent to data collection?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

The School of Informatics Ethics Committee is unable to deal with research on people who are under age, where parental consent is not sought, and with research on people who are unable to provide informed consent. Please apply for Ethical Approval to an appropriate committee, e.g., NHS Ethics.

Will you recruit participants through organisations that require specific permissions, such as schools or the NHS (both patients and NHS employees)?

- ○ Yes, and we have already secured permission
- ○ Yes, but we still need to secure permission and approval
- ○ No

Note that we cannot provide full approval of an application until the organization you are recruiting through has granted their approval. However, if you need an approval from Informatics Ethics to apply to the other organization, we can grant a temporary general ethics approval based on your application contents. Please note though that we would still expect you to amend your application with the other organization's approval before starting the research.

How do you ensure confidentiality? Describe your procedures for anonymisation / pseudonymisation, ensuring participants cannot be reidentified, and other relevant procedures. Recommended length: 50 words.

How do you obtain informed consent? This also involves telling your participants about your obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation Act (GDPR, 2018). Tick all that apply.

- [ ] Participants will complete a paper consent form
- [ ] Participants will consent using an electronic form
- [ ] Participants will provide verbal consent. Please explain why this is necessary and sufficient.

  _____
- [ ] No need for informed consent; we will observe people as part of an ethnographic study
- [ ] _____ Other, please explain

Will you deceive participants as part of your research? (e.g., Wizard of Oz Study)

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, and they will be debriefed at the end of the study (please say how)

  _____
- ○ Yes, and they will not be debriefed at the end of the study (please explain why)

  _____

Is there clear potential for significant psychological harm or stress for anyone who is involved in the research (including the researchers themselves?)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Is there clear potential for significant physical harm or discomfort for anyone who is involved in the research (including the researchers themselves)?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Is there clear potential that you will violate the social or cultural norms or practices of anyone who is involved in the research (including the researchers themselves)?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Is there clear potential for negative consequences, conflict, or other discomfort for those people on whom your research will impact?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

How will you minimise harm, discomfort, stress, and/or distress caused? Recommended length: 50 words. Minimum length: 200 characters.

Do you have a moral responsibility to provide feedback or results to research participants? (Examples: administering validated diagnostic tests)

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, but none of the research team is professionally qualified to interpret the results and communicate them to participants.
- ○ Yes, and a member of the research team is professionally qualified to interpret the results and communicate them to participants.

Will you disseminate your findings to the study participants?

- ○ Yes -- We will directly disseminate to participants or organisations
- ○ Yes -- Publications resulting from our work will be made available via Pure or another public website
- ○ No -- Findings will be in a project report which may not be published
- ○ No (explain why)

Secondary data

Secondary Data Analysis

This includes corpora, image repositories, social media platforms, and other archives, repositories, and data sources.

Do you require access to data repositories or archives?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, and I will need Ethical Approval before I can arrange access
- ○ Yes, I already have access

We confirm that the intended handling, processing, and usage of the data will adhere to the terms and conditions of the source (e.g., researcher, agency, archive, social media platform).

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Working together

Working with Partners

These questions cover your working relationship with any research partners. We strongly recommend that, where applicable, you have well-defined authorship rules and intellectual property agreements in place.

Who are your academic partners?

Who are your non-academic partners?

Do you have formal agreements in place that regulate your working relationship with your partners?

- ○ Not needed for the following partners:
- ○ They are needed, but not yet in place for the following partners:
- ○ Yes, and they are in place for the following partners.

We confirm that we will take care to ensure that all individuals involved in implementing the research adhere to the ethical and research integrity standards set by the University of Edinburgh.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Explain why it is not possible to ensure that all individuals involved in implementing the research adhere to the University's ethical and research integrity standards.

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Data Protection Impact Assessment

This assessment is required for all studies that involve data. Before you answer these questions, make sure that you have a data management plan that minimises transfer of data outside of the UK, EU, and EEA, and that you have completed basic training in data protection that is available via LEARN (go to the Self-Enrol tab and search the page for "dp training research" - alternatively, check out the University's Data Protection Training web page.) .

The questions are based on the standard University Template. They will be difficult to interpret unless you have done the training - the wording is a compromise between being understandable and fitting in with the legal requirements.

As a reminder:

- The legal basis for all academic research using personal data is Article 6(1)(e) - the public task of the University.
- The legal basis for using special categories of personal data is Article 9(2)(j) - that processing is necessary for research purposes.

If you collect or use NHS data, please refer to the ACCORD website for further information. You are highly likely to need special permissions (e.g., Caldicott Guardian approval).

Research data can be stored indefinitely as long as it is stored securely - more information can be found at the Research Data Service website.

Please give the reasons why your research is in the public interest. Tick all that apply.

- [ ] Public interest will be confirmed by the School of Informatics Ethics Panel
- [ ] Research Ethics Committee approval (not involving School of Informatics Ethics Panel)
- [ ] Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG) recommendation for support in England and Wales
- [ ] Favourable opinion from Public Benefit and Privacy Panel for Health and Social Care in Scotland
- [ ] Other, please explain

We confirm that all researchers from the University of Edinburgh have completed data protection training (available on P&M for staff and here for non-staff e.g. students). Learn more about this training on the University's web pages on data protection.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

How have you trained all researchers who have access to the data on their responsibilities for safe data handling and storage? Listing training programmes and certificates is enough.

Will you collect or use NHS data?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, it is an audit that only requires minimal approvals.
- ○ Yes, and I have all necessary approvals.
- ○ Yes, but I do not yet have all necessary approvals

The School of Informatics Ethics Panel cannot confirm self-certification for studies that involve NHS data without all relevant NHS / Caldicott approvals and Sponsorship in place.

What information about participants or data subjects will you collect or use?

What safeguards do you have in place that ensure that you will

only use the absolute minimum of personal data required, anonymise personal data where possible, pseudonymise where anonymisation is not possible?

How will you store data securely?

Risk of participant identification

Please identify and list all risks to the privacy of research participants, consider how likely it is that these risks will manifest, and what the harm to participants could be when the risks do manifest. Consult with your collaborators if necessary. The statements below represent possible causes. If you are not sure about what those risks are, start your research by consulting the University's materials on handling sensitive data.

	Likelihood of Risk			Severity of I	
	Remote	Possible	Probable	Minimal	Significa
Data linkage	○	○	○	○	○
Low participant numbers	○	○	○	○	○
Geographical location	○	○	○	○	○
Transfer of data	○	○	○	○	○
Access of data	○	○	○	○	○
Other (please explain)					
	○	○	○	○	○

Thank you - Success

You are nearly done, make sure to click next below!

Your reference number is **${e://Field/ID}**. Please mention this in any correspondence with infkm+ethics@inf.ed.ac.uk. We will do our best to send you feedback within ten working days. Please do not start data collection or analysis before we have confirmed successful self-certification. Your response has been recorded by the Qualtrics system and in the Ethics Panel RT system.

Here is a list of the documents you have to send to ethics-query@inf.ed.ac.uk, Header: "Supporting documents for application ${e://Field/ID}". Tick them off to tell us that you have prepared them. Even if no supporting documents are listed on this page, we still strongly encourage you to send us your data management plan. Templates for participant information sheets and consent forms can be found on the Informatics Ethics webpage.

- [ ] Participant Information Sheet / Consent Form
- [ ] Documentation of Ethical Approval in partner countries
- [ ] Permissions for Participant Recruitment / Sponsorship

Any other ethics-related issues or aspects you would like to state? (Optional)

You have applied for approval for a Research Grant. Any approval is sufficient for completing the Worktribe form, but it does not provide blanket coverage of all research activities under the grant. In particular, if you plan on working with human participants, or if the types of data / secondary data change, or if there are any significant changes in the regulatory landscape, you will need to seek approval for these studies after the grant has been funded.

We are aware that research grant applications are often time sensitive, and will do our best to give you timely feedback. If you need to contact us about the grant, don't forget your reference number ${e://Field/ID}.

Please contact the Ethics Panel at inf-ethics@inf.ed.ac.uk with any further questions.