

**UNIVERSITY OF WALES,**  
**LAMPETER**

**Procedures for the Consideration of Research Projects with  
Ethical Dimensions**



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## UNIVERSITY OF WALES, LAMPETER

### Procedures for the Consideration of Research Projects with Ethical Dimensions

#### Students

1. The application forms for admission to the degrees of **M.Phil/Ph.D.** will contain the following additional question:
  - *Do you foresee any ethical issues arising from your proposed research? Examples may include: use of Internet; work involving minors (under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults or other groups at risk; excavation of sacred sites. If so, you must attach to the application form a brief description of the nature of the ethical issues and explain how they will be addressed. Answer Yes or No*
2. A similar procedure will apply to other **postgraduate** students undertaking a dissertation or project as part of their degree. The proposal must identify and address any ethical issues.
3. Where appropriate, this procedure will also apply to **undergraduate** students who are submitting a dissertation or extended project as part of their degree, although the number of such cases is unlikely to be frequent.
4. Where, in accordance with paragraphs 1 – 3 above, a student project does appear to have ethical considerations, the application or proposal must be submitted to the Head of School for approval. The Head of School may consult as he or she considers appropriate. Where the Head of School considers that the nature of the ethical issues merits it, or if there are doubts that cannot be resolved, then he must refer the matter to the Ethics Committee (see paragraph 7 below).
5. Where significant ethical issues which have not been anticipated at the proposal stage of a research project arise, they must, without delay, be identified and addressed as described above. Members of staff supervising students (undergraduate and postgraduate) should also be alert to any ethical considerations. They should draw students' attention to this and also notify the Head of School if necessary.

#### Staff

6. Members of staff who wish to pursue research which may have ethical considerations (such as the examples given in paragraph 1 above) must consult their Head of School at an early stage. The Head of School may consult as he or she considers appropriate. If the Head of School has any doubts, he may refer the case back to the member of staff concerned for clarification or amendment.

Where the Head of School considers that the significance of the ethical issues merits it, or if there are still doubts which have not been resolved, the Head of School must refer the matter to the Ethics Committee (see paragraph 7 below).

### **Ethics Committee**

7. The Ethics Committee, whose membership and terms of reference are given in **APPENDIX A**, will meet as appropriate to consider any applications submitted to it in accordance with paragraphs 1 – 5 above. If the Chairman of the Committee considers it appropriate, the Registrar and Secretary may be authorised to consult the members of the Committee by correspondence. The decision of the Ethics Committee in an individual case will be final.

### **Check list**

8. In assessing the ethical issues of a research proposal, members of staff, students, Heads of Schools and the Ethics Committee must take account of the checklist of guidance points set out in **APPENDIX B**.

### **General advice**

9. Members of staff and students may consult the **Registrar and Secretary** at any time if they have any questions about the procedures or if they require advice in the interpretation of the procedures.

### **Publication**

10. These procedures will be made available on paper in the Staff Handbook and in the University's Postgraduate Student Handbook. They will also be placed on the University's web site and on the Intranet.

**UNIVERSITY OF WALES, LAMPETER****ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH PROCEDURES****1. Membership**

<b><u>Chair</u></b>	A senior member of staff appointed by the Senate
<b><u>Ex-officio</u></b>	Deputy Heads of Schools
<b><u>Senate representative</u></b>	Two members of the academic staff appointed by the Senate, of whom at least one shall be a member of the Senate
<b><u>Council representative</u></b>	A lay member of the Council (preferably with medical, health, legal or social work qualifications and/or experience) appointed by the Council
<b><u>Secretary</u></b>	The Registrar and Secretary

With power to co-opt or seek advice from any other person (within or without the University of Wales, Lampeter) for a specific item of business or a particular meeting.

**2. Terms of Reference**

- (a) To consider, in accordance with the agreed procedures, research proposals which have ethical considerations and to have regard to the following:
- The purpose of the research
  - The methods and procedures to be used in the research
  - The procedures for ensuring compliance with legal requirements
  - The procedures for the care and protection of any participants in the research
  - The procedures for confidentiality
  - The procedures for gaining informed consent and for providing participants with information about the research
  - The availability of suitable resources
  - The participants to be involved in the research
  - The personnel involved
- (b) To ensure that the research complies with the law.
- (c) To approve (with or without conditions), or refer back or reject proposals.

- (d) Where required, as part of any conditions laid down, to monitor and receive reports about ethical issues during the progress of approved research.
- (e) To present an annual report to the Senate regarding the discharge of the Committee's responsibilities and duties.
- (f) To consider any other relevant matters and to report to the Senate as necessary.



**UNIVERSITY OF WALES, LAMPETER**

**Ethics Committee for Research Procedures:  
Checklist of guidance points**

This checklist is an *aide de memoire* to assist in the process of deciding whether a proposal, at undergraduate or taught postgraduate or research level, takes sufficient account of ethical considerations. It must accompany any research proposal from a student or member of staff which is referred to a Head of School and the Research Committee in accordance with the procedures laid down.

Ethical consideration may include (these are but examples) : use of the Internet, work involving minors (i.e. under 18 years of age) or vulnerable adults or other groups potentially at risk; excavation or similar work in sacred sites or locations.

Number	Question	Yes/No
1	Is the research proposal of good design?	
2	Does it pose only minimal and predictable risk to the researcher?	
3	Does it pose only minimal and predictable risk to the research subject?	
4	Are arrangements for the supervision of the project appropriate?	
5	Is the research carried out or supervised by competent researchers?	
6	Do the foreseeable benefits of the research outweigh the foreseeable risks?	
7	Are the subjects fully informed about procedures to be used?	
8	Are the subjects fully informed about the purpose of the research?	
9	Will the consent of subjects be obtained?	
10	Is it clear to the subjects that they may withdraw at any time?	
11	Where subjects are vulnerable because of their social, psychological or medical circumstances, has this been taken into account in obtaining consent?	
12	If appropriate, where subjects are vulnerable as described in 11 above, has the consent of an independent third party been obtained?	
13	Have arrangements been made to ensure that material obtained from or about a subject remains confidential?	
14	Does the proposal satisfy legal requirements?	
15	Is the research likely to cause offence or distress to other individuals or groups? If so, what measures do you propose to take in response?	
16	Has advice been sought from other individuals (either in the University of Wales, Lampeter or elsewhere) with expertise in the area? If so, give the names and status of the people consulted and the nature of their advice.	