

**UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE  
SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
ETHICAL APPROVAL FORM**

The School is required to ensure that all undergraduate and taught masters research projects including dissertations comply with legal regulations for ethical approval outlined in the University Non Clinical Ethics Committee's **Code of Practice for Research on Human Participants** and in the **University of Dundee Ethics and Research Governance Policy**. Any undergraduate or taught masters student considering research should fill this form and get it approved by Dr. A.D. Reeves (School of the Environment Ethical Approval Representative).

In complex cases involving particular methodologies, contact with vulnerable populations or research in vulnerable environments, your research plan may be referred to the University Ethical Approval Committee or the University's Non Clinical Ethics Committee before approval is given.

Please note that carrying out research without obtaining ethical approval may result in disciplinary action. Further, if you receive any complaints concerning ethical issues in your research (e.g. a participant feels they have been in anyway mislead or mistreated) these **must** be referred to the University Research Ethics Committee. If a participant tells you they wish to complain, they must be informed about this complaints procedure.

Key ethical issues include:

1. Obtaining informed consent from participants in writing.
2. Treating participants with respect at all times.
3. Ensuring confidentiality to participants.
4. Compliance with the Data Protection Act when collecting and storing confidential data.

Further details about these key ethical issues can be found in the Code of Practice for Research on Human Participants, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

**RECOMMENDED READING**

Nash, D. J. (2000) Doing Independent Overseas Fieldwork: practicalities and pitfalls in *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*. Vol. 24. No. 1. Pp139-149 (available electronically).

Cloke, P (2002), Deliver us from evil? Prospects for living ethically and acting politically in human geography. *Progress in Human Geography*, 26 2002 (available electronically).

Proctor, J.D and Smith, D.M (1999) *Geography and Ethics: journeys in a moral terrain*. Routledge. London (available electronically).

Hay, I (2003) Ethical practice in geographical research in Clifford, N and Valentine, G (eds) *Key Methods in Geography*. London: Sage.

Smith, F. M (2003) Working in Different Cultures in Clifford, N and Valentine, G (eds) *Key Methods in Geography*. London: Sage.

**DELETE AS APPROPRIATE:**                      UNDERGRADUATE                      TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE

Title of project \_\_\_\_\_

Name of researcher(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of supervisor (for student research) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

		YES	NO	N/A
1	Will you describe the main experimental procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?			
2	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?			
3	Will you obtain informed written consent for participation?			
4	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?			
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?			
6	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?			
7	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?			
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)?			
9	Will you inform participants about what you intend to do with the data you collect and give them a chance to object?			

If you have ticked **No** to any of Q1-9, but have **ticked box A** beneath, please give an explanation on a separate sheet. [Note: N/A = not applicable]

		YES	NO	N/A
10	Will your project involved deliberately misleading participants in any way or withholding information about the nature and purpose of your research?			
11	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort? If <b>Yes</b> , give details on a separate sheet and state what you will tell them to do if they should experience any problems (e.g. who they can contact for help).			

If you have ticked **Yes** to 10 or 11 you should normally **tick box B** overleaf; if not, please give a full explanation on a separate sheet

		YES	NO	N/A
12	Does your project involve work with animals? If yes, please <b>tick box B</b> beneath.			
13	Will you be working in vulnerable or legally protected environments? If yes, please <b>tick box B</b> beneath.			
14	Do participants fall into any of the following special groups? If they do, <b>tick box B</b> overleaf.  <b>Note that your proposal will usually be forwarded to the University Ethical Approval Committee/Non Clinical Ethics Committee before approval is granted in these cases</b>	Schoolchildren (under 18 years of age)		
		Young children (under 5 years of age)		
		People with learning difficulties or communication difficulties		
		People who speak a different language		
		Patients or clinical populations and/or their carers		
		Pregnant women or research on conception or contraception		
		People in custody or any form of detention		
		People engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug-taking)		

