

# Ethical Guidelines

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## Guidelines for minimum standards of ethical approval in psychological research

*PREPARED BY THE RESEARCH BOARD  
WORKING PARTY ON ETHICAL PRACTICES  
IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH*



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# 1. Introduction

The following *Guidelines For Minimum Standards of Ethical Approval in Psychological Research* have been approved by the *British Psychological Society's Research Board* and *Ethics Committee* as current best practice for research governance in psychological research. The attached proforma, the *Psychology Department Ethical Approval Form* is an optional resource that provides one way to implement these Guidelines.

The Guidelines have been drafted by the *Research Board Working Party on Ethical Practices in Psychological Research*. The Working Party first convened in October 2002, and met throughout 2003. As a first step it carried out a survey of current practices regarding research governance in UK Psychology Departments and solicited advice from the Departments about issues that the *Guidelines* should address. The *Working Party* also drew on existing Society guidelines, and a number of other guidelines currently in place or under development, for example those resulting from European Legislation, NHS Research Governance, and the Wellcome Trust. The Draft Guidelines were submitted to the Ethics Committee on 23 January, 2004, and the Research Board on 30 January, 2004. After a further period of feedback from the Research Board and BPS Sections, Divisions, and relevant Committees, the *Guidelines* were adopted by the Executive Committee of the Research Board in May 2004.

In formulating these *Guidelines* we are grateful for permission to draw on draft guidelines under development at the University of Strathclyde, and a draft proforma under development at Goldsmiths College, London. We also wish to thank Ethics teams at the Universities of Middlesex, Keele, and Sheffield, members of Research Board Executive Committee, Ethics Committee, Standing Advisory Committee on the Welfare of Animals in Psychology, Society Sections and Divisions, Christina Docchar (PPB Administrator) for advice on the CRB, as well as CRB advisory teams at DoH and DfES for their useful comments.

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## 2. Summary

- 2.1** These guidelines are based on general principles that are applicable to all research contexts. The University Psychology Department is used as an exemplar in what follows, as most of UK psychology research is conducted within such departments. It is hoped that researchers working outside Higher Education will recognise the principles embodied in these examples and be able to adapt them to their own organisational context.
- 2.2** Minimum standards for ethical approval need to take into account the Society's *Code of Ethics, Guidelines for Conducting Research with Human Participants*, and *Guidelines for Conducting Research with Non-Human Animals*. Account also needs to be taken of new directives from the EU such as the *Draft additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine on Biomedical Research*, directives from Charitable Trusts such as the *Wellcome Statement on Ethics Review*, and the NHS Governance Framework. At the same time, procedures for granting ethical approval need to operate efficiently and minimise bureaucracy.

## 3. General Principles

- 3.1** *Ethical approval for all research.* Ethical approval is required for all research carried out by staff and students. This includes research where there is no face-to-face interaction between researcher and participants (for example, postal questionnaires, telephone interviews, and internet surveys). Ethical approval is also required for student practical/laboratory exercises (on a generic basis) and there may be situations in which ethical approval is required for teaching demonstrations involving human participants or non-human animals.
- 3.2** *Protection of participants.* All researchers are obliged to protect their participants from possible harm, to preserve their dignity and rights, and to safeguard their anonymity and confidentiality, as articulated in the Society's *Guidelines for Conducting Research with Human Participants*. All research should be conducted under competent supervision, and supervisors are also obliged to protect their supervisees from possible harm, being mindful of any health, safety and insurance issues that may apply to a given programme of research.
- 3.3** *Informed consent.* Article 17 of the *Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights in Biomedicine or Biomedical Research* states: 'No research on a person may be carried out without the informed, free, express, specific and documented consent of the person'. This places a legal obligation on researchers to obtain and record consent from participants or their guardians, on the basis of information that should be given to them before their participation begins (see Note 1).
- 3.4** *No coercion.* There should be no coercion in the recruitment of participants. It is recognised that when training psychologists in research, there may be an ethical obligation on them to also participate in research. Under these circumstances, participants should be given alternatives so that there is no coercion to participate in any *particular* study (see Note 2).
- 3.5** *The right to withdraw.* There is an obligation on participants to participate in research for which they have volunteered. Nevertheless, participants must be given the right to withdraw from any given research, at any time without penalty and without providing reason. Participants can also require that their data be withdrawn from the study.
- 3.6** *Anonymity and confidentiality.* Participants must be assured that all information they give will be treated

with the utmost confidentiality and that their anonymity will be respected at all times unless otherwise determined by law (for example, in the case of records maintained by the Prison Service). Where relevant, participants should be told about where information about them will be stored, who will have access to it, and what use will be made of it. Procedures for data storage must conform to the Data Protection Act. Express permission must be obtained for any non-confidential use of participant information. Express permission must also be obtained for access to specified information from confidential records, e.g. medical notes, or educational attainment records. Where relevant, any limitations to confidentiality (for example obligations under law, or where there may be a threat to self or others) must be explained.

- 3.7 *Appropriate exclusion criteria.*** Recruitment of participants for a given study should apply exclusion criteria that protect the health and well being of participants (for example, exclusion on the grounds of psychological vulnerability or a pre-existing medical condition).
- 3.8 *Monitoring.*** Researchers are obliged to monitor ongoing research for adverse effects on participants and to stop the research if there is cause for concern about their health and well-being.
- 3.9 *Duty of care.*** There is a duty of care on researchers to ameliorate any adverse effects of their research

on participants (either personally or by referral to an appropriately qualified person). As a general rule, researchers should debrief participants at the end of the research either verbally or in writing.

- 3.10 *Additional safeguards for research with vulnerable populations.*** Special safeguards need to be in place for research with vulnerable populations. Vulnerable populations include schoolchildren under the age of 18, people with learning or communication difficulties, patients in hospital or people under the care of social services, people in custody or on probation, and people engaged in illegal activities, such as drug abuse. For example, research with vulnerable populations may require Criminal Records Bureau clearance; research with schoolchildren under the age of 18 also requires that parents or guardians be informed about the nature of the study and the option to withdraw their child from the study if they so wish (see Notes 1 and 3).
- 3.11 *Ethical treatment of non-human animals.*** Researchers are obliged to follow ethical guidelines for research with non-human animals. Guidelines are appended to the Society's Code of Conduct and are available on the Society website (see Note 4).
- 3.12 *Appropriate supervision.*** Student investigators must be under the supervision of a member of Academic Staff. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the student is aware of relevant Guidelines and of the need to observe them.

# 4. Routes For Ethical Approval

4.1 All research requires ethical approval by one or more of the following:

- (a) *Department Ethics Committee* (DEC): for most routine research (but see Note 5).
- (b) *Institutional Ethics Committee* (IEC): for non-routine research (see the criteria listed under *When to refer to an IEC* below).
- (c) *External Ethics Committee* (EEC): for research that is externally regulated.

4.2 *Departmental Ethics Committee* (DEC):

- (a) A recommended number is a committee of three (or more) that can draw on additional expertise as necessary. The appointment of members of a DEC should be informed by judgements about their suitability. Criteria for suitability might include: research track record, experience of particular methodologies or research areas, and specific knowledge of, or training in ethics (see Note 6).
- (b) All institutional Departments of Psychology engaging in research should set up a DEC. It is not acceptable for ethical approval to be in the hands of one researcher, however experienced.
- (c) In the case of undergraduate and postgraduate student research, there should be pre-screening of research proposals carried out by the supervisor. Supervisors decide whether to refer the research proposal to the DEC or to an Institutional Ethics Committee. All proposals should go to one or the other.
- (d) Researchers envisaging a series of studies using the same research design may seek *generic* approval, to cover all projects using the same methodology. New approval should be obtained, however, if any non-trivial changes in methodology are made.
- (e) DEC's consider research proposals according to their own preferred practice: by email, direct consultation, regular meetings, or any other established means.
- (f) Research proposals submitted for ethics approval should be in written form, either in response to an agreed checklist of information items or on an agreed proforma. Appendix A provides an example of a proforma which covers the essential points that

researchers typically need to address.

- (g) If DEC's are dissatisfied with the information they have received about a project proposal, or if there are ethical questions/concerns about the proposed methodology, then they should refer these concerns back to the researcher and withhold approval until a resolution has been reached.
- (h) *Scientific Merit*: When a DEC judges that scientific merit is relevant to an ethical judgment it is being asked to make, it has an obligation to ensure that any judgment of scientific merit is made by an appropriately competent body or person.
- (i) *Accountability*: The line of accountability for ethical approval within the institution should be clear. For instance, it should be clear if the DEC is accountable to the Head of Department/School, to the Institutional Ethics Committee, or to some other institutional authority (see Note 7).
- (j) *Independence*: members of a DEC should withdraw from consideration of any project in which they have a personal interest. Similarly, a Head of Department/School cannot act as a 'higher authority' on any project in which they have a personal interest.
- (k) DEC's should publicize their time-scale for turning round decisions on project proposals. Decisions should be made as quickly as possible.
- (l) Approved projects should be 'signed off' by the chair/convenor of the DEC. DEC's should record all research conducted within the Department, together with when and by whom ethical approval was given. DEC's should report either to a Departmental Committee or to an Institutional Committee on at least an annual basis.
- (m) *Ongoing monitoring*: DEC's should indicate the length of time for which approval of a project remains in force (a typical figure for a PhD project might be 5 years). DEC's may also be required to monitor certain research projects on an annual basis (see Note 8).

4.3 *Institutional Ethics Committee* (IEC):

An IEC may be at faculty, school, or institutional level, and should include staff with expertise appropriate to the research being assessed, including non-psychologists

and lay representation. IECs should also be able to draw on discipline-specific expertise as required.

#### 4.3.1 *When to refer to an IEC:*

Some research projects involve more than just routine procedures and, for good practice, require ethical and/or governance approval from outside the discipline. This may involve a committee that includes psychologists along with lay members or specialists in other academic subjects. Many institutions may already have such a committee in place and will already have determined the criteria that will be applied to decide whether a research proposal can be dealt with by a DEC or whether it needs to be referred to the IEC. Our recommendation is that psychological research which involves any one or more of the following criteria should be handled by a 'higher' institutional committee and not by a DEC.

#### 4.3.2 *DECs should refer to IECs:*

- (a) When the independence of the DEC to the research is at issue.
- (b) For any matters that lie outside of their competence.
- (c) When the proposal raises ethical questions of concern to the institution as a whole.
- (d) When the proposal raises issues that cannot be resolved satisfactorily by the DEC and requires further advice.
- (e) When the proposal involves potential risk to the participants themselves or to the wider community.
- (f) When the proposal involves the study of individuals who might be deemed to be participating in criminal activities.

4.3.3 DEC may also refer to IECs when the proposal involves staff from 2 or more Departments within the same institution; alternatively, DEC from co-operating Departments may opt to jointly consider the proposal.

4.3.4 Whatever the referral arrangements, it is advisable for DEC and IECs to acquaint themselves with their institutional insurance policies including Employer's

Liability policy (e.g. for clinical trials), Public Liability policy, and Product Liability policy.

#### 4.4 *External Ethics Committees (EECs):*

4.4.1 Research may need to be referred to an EEC as well as a DEC or IEC whenever an institution additional to the home institution is involved. For example, under the new NHS Research Governance Framework (coming into effect in 2004) any research involving clinical trials and any research involving NHS patients, staff, premises and equipment require special arrangements for ethical approval, established by the Central Office for Research Ethics Committees (COREC). COREC has its own approval form that has to be completed and submitted to an accredited Ethics Committee, for example an NHS Local Research Ethics Committee (LREC) or an NHS Multi-centre Research Ethics Committee (MREC). Approval by an EEC does not remove the need for local ethical approval by either a DEC and IEC.

4.4.2 For research involving animals, additional approval may need to be sought from the Home Office (refer to the Society's *Guidelines for Psychologists Working with Animals* for further guidance on this matter).

#### 4.5 *The Relation of a DEC or IEC to an EEC:*

- (a) Lead researchers, Heads of Departments, and Institutions retain a legal responsibility for the research carried out by their staff. Consequently, approval by an EEC does not remove the need for local ethical approval by either a DEC or IEC.
- (b) If feasible, a DEC or IEC should approve projects before submission to an EEC.
- (c) When a project raises concerns for a DEC or IEC about which they require external expert opinion, the DEC or IEC may opt to either accept the judgement of the EEC (if it has the required expertise), or to seek independent expert advice.
- (d) When approval by an EEC is required, that approval should be recorded by the DEC or IEC before any research takes place.

**Note 1. How to obtain informed consent:** In order that consent be 'informed', consent forms may need to be accompanied by an information sheet for participants setting out information about the proposed study (in lay terms) along with details about the investigators and how they can be contacted. If applicable, this sheet may also make reference to any screening procedures, the confidentiality of the data, any risks involved, and any other points which participants might reasonably expect to know in order to make an informed decision about whether they wish to participate, and which are not included on the informed consent form. A checklist of points on the informed consent form that participants are expected to sign might typically include: **(a)** That their participation is voluntary, **(b)** That they are aware of what their participation involves, **(c)** That they are aware of any potential risks (if there are any), **(d)** That all their questions concerning the study have been satisfactorily answered. Documented consent may be signed or initialled (if participants wish to maintain anonymity). In situations where information about the research and participant consent is conveyed verbally, it is recommended that the information be recorded on and read from or cued by a written information sheet; verbal consent should also be taped in order to provide a record. Suggestions on how to implement these guidelines in research involving the Internet are given in Hewson (2003).

Added safeguards may be required to obtain informed consent with vulnerable populations. For example, research with children in schools cannot take place without the permission of the head teacher and teacher responsible for the children. Where they are competent to give it, informed consent should also be obtained from the children themselves. In addition, parents or guardians should be given all relevant details of the study (in a letter) along with an opportunity to withdraw their child from the study if they so wish (passive consent). If the school requires it, parents may also be required to return signed consent forms (active consent).

**Note 2. Undergraduate participation in psychological experiments:** Undergraduate participation in psychological experiments is not required for BPS accreditation. It has

to be recognised however that most psychological research involves human participants and that courses in experimental psychology need to acquaint students with appropriate methods for carrying out such research. Participation by students in psychological research provides them with valuable experience, not just with methodology but also with the ethical problems that can arise when carrying out experiments or other forms of research. Indeed, it can be argued that it is unethical for psychology students or graduates to carry out research with others unless they have been willing to participate, and have had experience of participation in such research themselves. As a consequence, this forms a normal part of undergraduate training. Students taking undergraduate laboratory classes in psychology, for example, typically use each other as participants, as well as recruiting participants other than psychology students for their research.

That said, there should be informed consent and no coercion in the recruitment of student participants. Given the non-invasive nature of most psychological research this generally does not present problems. However, in cases where problems with particular forms of research do arise, it is recommended that participants should be given alternatives so that there is no coercion to participate in any *particular* study. It is also recommended that where research participation is a course requirement, that this be clearly stated in course handbooks or other advertising material, enabling prospective students that do not wish to take part in research to opt for a different course.

**Note 3. Additional safeguards for work with vulnerable populations:**

***Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosures***

Details of the service offered by the CRB are given on their website at [www.disclosure.gov.uk/](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk/)

In brief, the CRB offers organisations a means to check the background of applicants to ensure that they do not have a history that would make them unsuitable for work with children or vulnerable adults. Requests for CRB Disclosures and the level of Disclosure must balance the



need to prevent unsuitable people from working in sensitive posts, against the risk of discrimination against ex-offenders who have become rehabilitated (see The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act). The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975) indicates the professions for which an employer has the right to ask about spent criminal convictions.

In some situations CRB Disclosures are mandatory, for example, if psychologists have regular contact with children at the request or consent of a school or a Local Education Authority. In other situations organisations are entitled to ask for CRB Disclosures although they are not mandatory, for example, if it is part of the normal duties of a psychologist to have occasional contact with children under unsupervised conditions. Where the contact is not part of normal duties, occasional and supervised, CRB Disclosure is not required, and one is not entitled to ask for it. It is not, for example, appropriate to ask undergraduate students for CRB Disclosure simply on the grounds that their final year project will involve occasional contact with children in schools, or with vulnerable adult populations under supervised conditions.

The role of a psychologist, within a health care facility, falls within part 2 section 13 of The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975). This means that the NHS can get a CRB disclosure if the trust employing the psychologist feels that it is necessary. The Criminal Record Bureau disclosure is not a mandatory check for any position in the NHS, although it is commonly done and thought of as good practice. If, however, a psychologist is in a 'regulated position', i.e., 'a position whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children', then a Protection Of Children Act (PoCA) check is a legal requirement. The PoCA check is obtained through a CRB disclosure. Note that for CRB purposes, schoolchildren under 18 are defined as 'children.' The CRB advise that disclosures are not a routine requirement for work with students under 18 in further or higher education, although the decision about whether to make such checks in circumstances that may, on occasion, warrant them, remains with the responsible institution.

CRB Disclosures may be Enhanced or Standard, depending on the degree of responsibility involved. For example, Enhanced Disclosures should be applied for if the applicant will be regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children, or vulnerable adults. Standard Disclosures will provide details of a person's criminal record including current and spent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC). If the position involves working with children in a regulated position, disclosures will also contain details from lists held by Department of Education and Skills (DfES) of those considered unsuitable for this type of work. The request to check these lists will need to be indicated on the disclosure form; this check can be performed with an enhanced or standard disclosure. Enhanced Disclosures might also contain relevant information held by local police forces, including information relating to current investigations or proceedings that cannot be disclosed to the applicants.

*The responsibility for ensuring that applicants are suitable people to work with children or vulnerable adults ultimately rests with individual employers who are best placed to make that decision. Consequently, psychologists who wish to carry out research with such populations are advised to discuss this issue with the person most directly responsible (for example, with the Head Teacher) to discover whether they would expect that Disclosures have been carried out.*

Where Disclosures are requested by a DEC or IEC, the employing Institution must have procedures in place for the receipt of Disclosure information. For example, Enhanced or Standard Disclosures are sent both to the applicant and to a Countersignatory from the employing Institution, who must be registered with the CRB to receive such information, and who is bound by The Code of Practice for Registered Persons concerning the use, protection, and destruction of Disclosure information (in accordance with the Data Protection Act).

**For more detailed guidance see:**

DfES/0278/2002 – *Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working With Children and Young Persons in the Education Service.*

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=2172](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=2172)

DfES/0780/2002 – *Criminal Records Bureau: Managing the Demand for Disclosures.*

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?ID=3334](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?ID=3334)

*The Department of Health Criminal Records Bureau Guidance on CRB Disclosures.* [www.doh.gov.uk/crb/](http://www.doh.gov.uk/crb/)

**Note 4. Additional safeguards for work with non-human animals:**

Non-human animals should be treated with care and respect. The Society's Standing Advisory Committee on the Welfare of Animals in Psychology has produced advice for psychologists working in this area (*Guidelines for Psychologists Working with Animals*) and the Chair of the Committee will be happy to offer further advice or guidance on request. Any scientific procedure carried out in the UK that involves the use or participation of a vertebrate species (other than humans) is also likely to be regulated under the *Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (1986)*. Carrying out such procedures without holding the appropriate licenses is a criminal offence that can incur very substantial penalties.

**Note 5. An alternative arrangement for approving routine research:**

In some Universities, routine undergraduate and postgraduate student research is referred to a DEC and, to guarantee independence, all staff research is referred to an IEC (note that the Wellcome Trust advises that research submitted to them for funding should be approved by a committee that is 'multidisciplinary and independent of the researchers' – see the *Wellcome Trust Guidance for Institutions and Applicants:*

Appropriate Ethics Review Committees, paragraph 1).

In organisations other than Universities (e.g. schools, FE colleges or research consultancies), it is assumed that there will be a group or committee equivalent to a DEC or IEC).

**Note 6. Training and development.** Departments and Institutions should be mindful of the need to equip members of ethical committees with appropriate training, and should make resources available to support such training.

**Note 7. Line of Accountability.** The line of accountability becomes particularly important if the judgment of a DEC is contested, on procedural or substantive grounds. It must be made clear who is the 'higher authority' for potential appeals.

**Note 8. Monitoring.** The *Wellcome Trust Guidance for Institutions and Applicants* states that, 'The host institution and the principal investigator are responsible for ensuring that suitable arrangements are in place for **monitoring the research**, and for **continued ethics scrutiny**. This should ensure that the research is carried out in accordance with the conditions agreed during the ethics review; and that any adverse events are detected and dealt with as early as possible. The host institution must liaise with any other institutions involved in the research to ensure that responsibilities have been clearly agreed and that suitable monitoring arrangements are in place.'

Where adverse effects arise as a consequence of the research, or where the research protocol is substantially altered, feedback should be given to the Ethics Committee that initially approved the research.

# 5. References and Additional Resources

Hewson, C. (2003). Conducting research on the internet.  
*The Psychologist*, 16(6), 290–293.

The NHS Central Office for Research Ethics Committees  
(COREC): [www.corec.org.uk](http://www.corec.org.uk)

Procedures for Data Protection:

[www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

# 6. Psychology Department Ethical Approval Form

The Proforma that follows is intended to be an optional resource that provides one effective way to implement the *Guidelines*. The proforma is constructed in such a way that it can be filled in by **(a)** the researchers involved, or **(b)** students, countersigned by the supervisor, after discussion. It will be available on the BPS website and with appropriate fonts, is designed to fit onto two sides of A4. In recognition of the fact that much routine psychological research can easily be made to conform to the *Guidelines*, while other research requires more careful scrutiny and thought, the proforma allows for a two-track procedure.

**Track A** (fast-track) is for research that presents no ethical problems (where answers to Questions 1 to 8 are 'yes' or 'non-applicable' and answers to Questions 9 to 12 are 'no' or 'non-applicable'). In such instances, a brief description of the research (up to 150 words) in box A, page 2, provides sufficient information for consideration by an Ethics Committee or its Chair (for Chair's action). If

any of the answers to questions 1 to 8 is 'no', but the researcher does not consider this to present an ethical problem, an additional explanation is required (on a supplementary sheet) for consideration by the Ethics committee or its Chair (for Chair's action). If the answer to any of questions 9 to 12 is 'yes' or there are any other aspects of the research that might present ethical problems, **Track B** (slow-track) must be followed, with full details of the research specified in Box B, page 2, supplied to the Ethics committee for approval.

Such a two-track procedure is intended to provide adequate research governance without excessive paperwork. However, some departments may prefer to follow a **Track B** procedure for all research, for example, where it is judged that requiring full research documentation for consideration by an Ethics committee provides useful training for students.

## PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT ETHICAL APPROVAL FORM

Tick one box:  **STAFF project**     **POSTGRADUATE project**     **UNDERGRADUATE project**

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 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)?			

If you have ticked **No** to any of Q1-8, but have ticked **box A** overleaf, please give an explanation on a separate sheet.  
 [Note: N/A = not applicable]

		YES	NO	N/A
9	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?			
10	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 9 or 10 you should normally **tick box B** overleaf; if not, please give a full explanation on a separate sheet

		YES	NO	N/A
11	Does your project involve work with animals? If yes, please <b>tick box B</b> overleaf.			
12	Do participants fall into any of the following special groups? If they do, please refer to BPS guidelines, and <b>tick box B</b> overleaf.  <b>Note that you may also need to obtain satisfactory CRB clearance (or equivalent for overseas students).</b>	Schoolchildren (under 18 years of age)		
		People with learning or communication difficulties		
		Patients		
		People in custody		
		People engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug-taking)		

**There is an obligation on the lead researcher to bring to the attention of the Departmental Ethics Committee any issues with ethical implications not clearly covered by the above checklist.**

PLEASE TICK **EITHER** BOX A OR BOX B BELOW AND **PROVIDE THE DETAILS REQUIRED IN SUPPORT OF YOUR APPLICATION. THEN SIGN THE FORM.**

**Please tick**

<p><b>A.</b> I consider that this project has <b>no</b> significant ethical implications to be brought before the Departmental Ethics Committee.</p>	
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**Give a brief description of participants and procedure (methods, tests used etc) in up to 150 words.**

This form (and any attachments) should be submitted to the Departmental Ethics committee where it will be considered by the Chair before it can be approved.

<p><b>B.</b> I consider that this project <b>may</b> have ethical implications that should be brought before the Departmental Ethics Committee, and/or it will be carried out with children or other vulnerable populations.</p>	
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**Please provide all the further information listed below in a separate attachment.**

1. Title of project.
2. Purpose of project and its academic rationale.
3. Brief description of methods and measurements.
4. Participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria.
5. Consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing.

**Please attach intended information and consent forms.**

6. A clear but concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them.
7. Estimated start date and duration of project.

This form should be submitted to the Departmental Ethics Committee for consideration.  
**If any of the above information is missing, your application will be returned to you.**

I am familiar with the BPS Guidelines for ethical practices in psychological research (and have discussed them with the other researchers involved in the project).

Signed..... Print Name..... Date.....  
 (UG or PG Researcher(s), if applicable)

Signed..... Print Name..... Date.....  
 (Lead Researcher or Supervisor)

**STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL**

This project has been considered using agreed Departmental procedures and is now approved.

Signed..... Print Name..... Date.....  
 (Chair, Departmental Ethics Committee)

# THE SOCIETY

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The British Psychological Society was founded in 1901 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965.

*Its principal object is to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge.*

**The Society has more than 39,000 members and:**

- has offices in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales;
- accredits around 800 undergraduate degrees;
- accredits over 150 postgraduate professional training courses;
- confers Fellowships for distinguished achievements;
- confers Chartered Status for professionally qualified psychologists;
- awards grants to support research and scholarship;
- publishes 10 scientific journals, and also jointly publishes *Evidence Based Mental Health* with the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Psychiatrists;
- publishes books in partnership with Blackwells;
- publishes *The Psychologist* each month;
- provides a free 'Research Digest' service by e-mail;
- publishes newsletters for its constituent groups;
- maintains a website ([www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk));
- has international links with psychological societies and associations throughout the world;
- provides a service for the news media and the public;

- has an Ethics Committee and provides service to the Professional Conduct Board;
- maintains a Register of more than 11,100 Chartered Psychologists;
- prepares policy statements and responses to government consultations;
- holds conferences, workshops, continuing professional development and training events;
- recognises distinguished contributions to psychological science and practice through individual awards and honours.

**The Society continues to work to enhance:**

- recruitment – the target is 50,000 members by 2006;
- services – the Society has offices in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales;
- public understanding of psychology – addressed by regular media activity and outreach events;
- influence on public policy – through the work of its Boards and Parliamentary Officer;
- membership activities – to fully utilise the strengths and diversity of the Society membership.

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