

BSMS Risk Rating Filter Checklist

The following questions appear in the online ethical review application system in Sussex Direct for applying for ethical review to the BSMS Research Governance and Ethics Committee (RGEC), or BSMS School Research Ethics Officer. The questions form an in-built risk assessment checklist designed to identify Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught student projects which are judged to pose minimal risks and are eligible for 'standard' risk review.

In completing the Checklist, student applicants are asked to reflect on the common types of ethical issues that can increase risk levels in research. Students should work through the questions, and discuss any areas that they are unsure of with their Supervisor, prior to completing the online ethics application form in Sussex Direct.

1	Will your study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent or in a dependent position (e.g. young people under 18, individuals with learning difficulties, or people with conditions associated with social stigma including mental health concerns, people in care facilities, including prisons, or over-researched groups)?	Y/N
2	Will participants be required to take part in the study without their consent or knowledge at the time (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places, mining of data from social media sources), and/or will deception of any sort be used? Will access to non-anonymised personal data previously taken for another purpose be utilised?	Y/N
3	Will the study include groups where permission is normally required for access to its members, for e.g. non-NHS support groups and organisations supporting public health based in the community, traditional communities (at home and overseas), school pupils, or an overused population such as Medical Students?	Y/N
4	Will it be impossible to ensure that identities or information cannot be linked back to individual participants in any way (including after anonymisation) in the final writing up of the research?	Y/N
5	Might the study induce psychological stress or anxiety, or produce humiliation or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in the everyday life of participants? Will the study involve psychological interventions or processes outside of standard practice and will any invasive, significantly burdensome, or potentially harmful procedures or activities of any kind be undertaken?	Y/N
6	Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. health status, sexual activity, drug use, ethnicity, political behavior, potentially illegal activities), or those where researchers may have a duty to report (e.g. safeguarding concerns; possible fraud; terrorisms; money laundering)?	Y/N
7	Will your study involve staff or students of the University of Sussex travelling to any country with a current Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) warning against travel?	Y/N
8	Will your study involve visiting participants in their home, public spaces or a similarly uncontrolled environment, unaccompanied?	Y/N
9	Will your study involve the use of chemicals which could expose members of the University to carcinogens, mutagens, sensitizers, toxins, flammables/explosives, risk of asphyxiation? Or, any Chemical Weapon Precursors or Schedule 5 toxins?	Y/N
10	Will your study involve the use of radioactive materials, X-rays (i.e. CT scanner or similar imaging equipment), Class 3 or 4 lasers, or strong magnetic fields?	Y/N
11	Will your study involve the use of any scheduled drug/s, drug precursors or the synthesis of novel psychoactive substances? Are alcoholic drinks, drugs, placebos or other substances (such as food substances or vitamins) to be administered to the study participants?	Y/N
12	Will your study involve work with: An identifiable risk of contracting a communicable disease from study participants? Biological agents in group 2, 3 or 4? Creation/use of genetically modified organisms? Storage and/or analysis of human biological tissue whether or not this will be carried out under the University of Sussex HTA license?	Y/N
13	Is there a possibility that research activity might uncover unexpected and possibly clinically relevant findings? For e.g. MRI scanning projects, taking bloods, cheek swabs that may or may not have ethical consequences.	Y/N
14	Does your study pose any other ethical, safety, regulatory or reputational risk not covered above?	Y/N
15.	TAUGHT STUDENTS ONLY If you have answered Yes to ANY of the above questions, your application may be considered as HIGH risk. If, however, you wish to make a case that your application should be considered as STANDARD risk please enter the reasons here. Researchers should note that the SREO or RGEC may decide NOT to agree with the case that you have made.	Y/N