



Research Services

Block Ethics Approval for UG and PGT Level Guidance

This guidance introduces the Block Ethics Approval process for ethics review of student research at undergraduate and taught postgraduate levels. It should be read alongside the University's [Research Ethics Code of Practice](#)

All research involving human participants, their data, requires ethics review. Whilst normally this review is done on a project-by-project basis, it is recognised that for UG/PGT level there are occasions where students may complete very similar or identical projects that are very low risk. In such cases it may be proportionate to approve research at a module level, rather than individually for each student

Please note Applications for dissertation module at UG or PGT level are NOT suitable for the Block Ethics Approval process.

Block Ethics Approval applies when basic research is undertaken by students as part of a taught module on a routine basis or as part of a programme of work that is extremely low risk. Such cases will be typified by, for the most part, a consistency in practice and approach in terms of the research process, and where the research is assessed to be low risk. This will include projects where pedagogic research might be involved, and where students are engaged as producers of knowledge through the undertaking of research in their capacity as consultants.

Criteria for determining if the Block Ethics Approval process is appropriate:

1. The projects do not involve high or medium risk research topics as defined by the [Research Ethics Code of Practice](#) where the ethical risks are static and well understood
2. The project design and methodologies are static (or subject to only minor change)
3. The risk of any unexpected ethics concerns arising is minimal, e.g. multisite, collaborative projects are at a higher risk of developing complications.
4. There is no requirement for the student to complete ethics applications as part of their academic development or professional body requirements.
5. The relevant supervisor (multiple projects over the approval

to fail to highlight the methodologies and potential risks
the mechanisms to ensure that research taking place under the
block approval adheres to the scope of the approval as defined in

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be obtained from participants?

10. Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the research?
11. Could the research induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life either a participant or the research themselves?
12. Will the research involve prolonged or repetitive testing?
13. Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?
14. Does the research fall under the definition of medium or high risk as defined in Appendix 2 of the Research Ethics Code of Practice?

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the questions in Section I the module is unsuited for block ethics approval, and you should look to utilise individual ethical approval for student research.

If you have answered 'no' to all questions, please continue to Section II.

Section II: Screening Questions

1. Do all students undertake common research tasks (e.g. do research on the same topic, using the same research methods, asking the same questions of participants)?
- YES NO

If Yes, proceed to Section III, if No continue below:

2. Do students undertake research tasks from a set range (e.g. do they select their research topic from a preset range of options; do they employ one of a set range of research methodologies; do they ask questions of a preset range of issues)?
- YES NO

If Yes, please proceed to Section III and provide details of the range of research tasks they undertake within your Worktribe application.

If No to both questions 8 and 9: It appears unlikely that the module is suited for 'Block Approval' and you should be looking to utilise individual ethical approval.



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Appendix 2:

Block Ethics Approval – Annual Reporting Form	
Level of Study (UG/PGT):	
Course	
Module Title:	
Ethics Lead	
Worktribe Approval Reference No.	
Year of Study (i.e. 2025):	
Student Name	