**Ethics**

Complete the below questions about the ethical procedures for your research. Use the information covered in the slides about ethical research to guide your answers. After you have answered these questions, there are example participant information, consent, and debriefing forms for you to read and adapt.

**Group members**:.....................................................................................................................

**School name:** ..........................................................................................................................

**Teacher:** ...................................................................................................................................

**Research question**: ......................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

**Who will be collecting the data?** ...................................................................................................................................................

**How will you ensure confidentiality for your participants?** .........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

**Where will you store your questionnaires once they are completed?**

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**Does your research involve any of the below?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Children under the age of 16 | Yes □ | No □ |
| Participants who may be vulnerable for personal, emotional, psychological or other reasons | Yes □ | No □ |
| Participants who may become vulnerable as a result of the conduct of the study (e.g. because it raises sensitive issues) | Yes □ | No □ |
| Participants in unequal power relations (e.g. groups that you teach or work with, in which participants may feel coerced or unable to withdraw) | Yes □ | No □ |

**If you answered YES to any of the above, what will you do to reduce the ethical risk?** ............................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

**Does your study include any of the following?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Is there a risk that participants may be or become identifiable? | Yes □ | No □ |
| Is pain or discomfort likely to result from the study? | Yes □ | No □ |
| Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety, or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life? | Yes □ | No □ |
| Is there a possibility that the researcher could be placed in a vulnerable situation either emotionally or physically (e.g. by being alone with vulnerable, or potentially aggressive participants, by entering an unsafe environment)? | Yes □ | No □ |

**If you answered YES to any of the above, what will you do to reduce the ethical risk?** .........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

**Checklist of things to include in the debrief form:**

□ A message of thanks.

□ A brief description of the research and what the purpose was.

□ Reminder the participant can withdraw their data.

□ Researcher’s formal contact details (e.g. school email address).

□ Brief reminder that all data will be treated as confidential

Now take a look at the example information and informed consent sheets overleaf. After, fill in the blanks in the versions of these forms for your own research. A digital copy of this ethics document is available on your USB so that you can type up this information later. You will also find an example debrief form at the end of this document. Before you collect your data you should use this to create a debrief form for your own research to give to your participants.

**Don’t forget to use these forms for real when you are actually conducting your research!**

**Research information sheet example**

Dear participant,

Our names are Dr Alana James and Dr Eilidh Cage and we are researchers from Royal Holloway and the University of Reading. We would like to invite you to participate in a research project looking at transition to university.

**What is the study?**

This study is looking at the factors which affect a successful transition from school to university. Going to university can be a challenging and exciting time for many people – and we want to know how young people like you can be best supported as they go to university.

**Do you have to take part?**

It is entirely up to you whether you choose to participate. You may also withdraw at any time during the research. You may also withdraw your data afterwards by contacting us using the details below.

**What will happen if I take part?**

If you decide to take part you will complete a short questionnaire all about you. The questionnaire will take around 10 to 20 minutes to complete.

**What are the risks and benefits of taking part?**

The information that we receive will remain confidential and will only be seen by the research team. You will not be identifiable in any published report resulting from the study. Information about individuals will not be shared. Participants in similar studies have found it interesting to take part. It is anticipated that the findings from this study will help us better understand how to support young people going to university.

**What will happen to the data?**

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no names will be used in this study. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you and the study will be included in any potentially published report. You will be referred to by an ID number in all data records. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only the research team will have access to the records.

**What happens if I change my mind?**

Should you wish to withdraw your consent for participation, you are free to do so at any point by contacting us using the details given at the end of this letter. You are free to change your mind at any point during the research if you wish.

**Who has reviewed the study?**

This project has been favourably reviewed following the procedures of the Research Ethics Committee at Royal Holloway, University of London.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact Dr Eilidh Cage, who can be contacted by email (Eilidh.Cage@rhul.ac.uk) or Dr Alana James (A.I.James@reading.ac.uk).

**What should I do next?**

We hope that you will agree to participate in the study. If you are happy to take part, please complete the consent form on the next page. If, however, you do **not** want to take part, please inform the researcher and you are free to leave at any time.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

Alana and Eilidh

**Consent form example**

**If you are happy to take part, please complete this form and hand it back to the researcher.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I have received an information sheet explaining the purpose of the study. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I understand that I can contact Dr Eilidh Cage or Dr Alana James to ask further questions. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I agree to participate in the above research. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I understand my right to privacy and confidentiality will be respected at all times. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any point during the research. If I would not like to take part, my wishes will be respected. | Yes □ | No □ |

Signature: .........…………………………….

Date: ……………………………..................

Please note: This consent form will be stored separately from the anonymous information you provide.

**Your research information sheet**

**Please fill in the blanks. Do NOT copy the information directly from the example information sheet, but write things into your own words.**

Dear participant,

Our names are ......................................................................................................................

We would like to invite you to participate in a research project looking at ...............................................................................................................................................

**What is the study?**

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**Do you have to take part?**

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**What will happen if I take part?**

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**What are the risks and benefits of taking part?**

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**What will happen to the data?**

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**What happens if I change my mind?**

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**Who has reviewed the study?**

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**Where can I get more information?**

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**What should I do next?**

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Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

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**Your consent form**

**If you are happy to take part, please complete this form and hand it back to the researcher.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I have received an information sheet explaining the purpose of the study. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I understand that I can contact .................................................. to ask further questions. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I agree to participate in the above research. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I understand my right to privacy and confidentiality will be respected at all times. | Yes □ | No □ |
| I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any point during the research. If I would not like to take part, my wishes will be respected. | Yes □ | No □ |

Signature: .........…………………………….

Date: ……………………………..................

Please note: This consent form will be stored separately from the anonymous information you provide.

**Example debrief form**

Dear Participant,

Thank you for participating in our research project looking at transitions to university. We really appreciate your time. In the survey, you answered a number of questions about yourself and your experiences. The answers you gave in the survey will help us understand how young people can be best supported as they go to university.

If you have changed your mind and no longer wish to be involved in this research, you can ask us to withdraw your data from the study. If you have any questions about this research, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via email ([Eilidh.Cage@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Eilidh.Cage@rhul.ac.uk)).

If you would like to find out the results of this research once we have seen enough participants and analysed the data, please leave your email address with the researcher. This information will only be used for this purpose and your details will not be associated with any of the answers you gave today.

Thank you again for your time.

Best wishes,

Dr Eilidh Cage and Dr Alana James

**Make sure you create your own version of a debrief form later!**

**Ethics form feedback**

**Name of reviewer:**…………………………………………………………………………………

**Feedback:**

**Signed by reviewer:**………………………………………….

**Date:**…………………………………………………………….