**Checklist to establish level of review required (for doctoral students and their supervisors)**

**Introduction:**

All researchers at LU must take personal responsibility for the conduct of their research. If you are undertaking a project that involves human participation or personal data, ethical review is required and you must not begin your research until you have obtained ethics approval for your project. If your project involves the use of secondary data only, ethics review is also required.

This checklist will help you and your supervisor decide which level of ethics review your study requires.

You and your supervisor need to go through the checklist together, complete it and then follow the required ethics review process, i.e. minimal risk, low risk or significant/major risk (see below).

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| **ALL DOCTORAL STUDENTS WHOSE RESEARCH INVOLVES WORKING WITH HUMAN PARTICIPANTS AND/OR PERSONAL DATA (REGARDLESS OF THE LEVEL OF REVIEW REQUIRED) HAVE TO COMPLETE THE FASS LUMS RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM. The form can be downloaded from the Faculty’s research ethics pages:**[**http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/arts-and-social-sciences/research/ethics-guidance-and-ethics-review-process/**](http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/arts-and-social-sciences/research/ethics-guidance-and-ethics-review-process/) |

All completed checklists and application forms together with a note informing about the outcome of the review have to be sent to the relevant PG programme administrator.

**General information**

Student name………………………………………………………………………

PhD programme…………………………………………………………………….

First supervisor……………………………………………………………………..

Second supervisor……………………………………………………………………

**PLEASE NOTE**: **If your project involves the use of secondary data only, the relevant sections of the FASS LUMS REC application form need to be completed and unless other ethical issues apply, the project will be reviewed by your supervisor.**

**Part 1: Level of review required. Please answer the following questions.**

**Section A: The nature of your study**

Is your research of the following kind? Please delete as appropriate.

1. Research with adults in private interactions (such as an interview, questionnaire or focus group). You will have provided the participants with substantive information about the research (usually in form of a participant information sheet) and they will have consented, in writing based on that information.

**YES/NO**

2. Observational research taking place in a public venue, either physical (e.g. a town square, conference, or meeting open to the public) or virtual (e.g. a public chat room) where adult participants might reasonably expect that their behaviour would be observed by third parties and without the researcher interacting directly with the participants. If the observations include asking questions and/or seeking information about a participants, then an information sheet should be given to the participant and consent should be sought in the same way as in a.

**YES/NO**

3. Research with completely anonymous adult participants, with no contact details or other uniquely identifying information (e.g. date of birth) being recorded. An example would be a study that uses an anonymous questionnaire as the only data collection tool.

**YES/NO**

**Section B: The topics/s of your study**

4. Does your research involve discussion of a personally sensitive subject that the participant might not be willing to otherwise talk about in public and that they may find difficult to talk about with a researcher (e.g. medical conditions; income and money; religious or political views that may be sensitive and/or controversial)?

**YES/NO**

5. Does your study include topics that the participants may find distressing? For example, does your study invite participants to remember difficult moments in their lives or to talk about things they currently struggle with? Note that participants may very well agree to talk about these issues or experiences but that this could involve them becoming distressed (for example during an interview); in other words: is there a risk of the participants experiencing psychological stress or anxiety when taking part in your project?

**YES/NO**

6. Is there a risk that the nature of the research topic might lead to disclosures from the participants concerning their involvement in illegal activities or other activities that represent a threat to themselves or others?

**YES/NO**

**Section C: The research participants**

7. Does your project involve participants who are unable to give informed consent, or in a dependent position (e.g. children, people with learning difficulties, people with mental health problems, young offenders, people in care facilities or prisons)?

**YES/NO**

**Section D: Your relationship to the potential participants**

8. Do you have a current or prior relationship with potential participants? Please note that if you are directly involved in the teaching or assessing of participants this is considered a perceived pressure to participate.

**YES/NO**

**Section E: Deception**

9. Will deception of any kind be involved in your research?

**YES/NO**

**Section F: Use of gatekeepers & the possibility of coercion**

10. Will you use a gatekeeper to help you gain access to research participants (a gatekeeper is somebody who facilitates/grants access to or contact potential participants for you?

**YES/NO**

10a.If you have responded ‘yes’ to question 10, is the gatekeeper in a position of authority or influence over potential participants (for example the gatekeeper may be the participants’ teacher or head teacher or they may be the participants’ line manager or employer) and may they be able to exert pressure on the participants to take part in your research?

**YES/NO**

11. Will the participants be subjected to any undue incentives to participate? (Receipt of a project report or a reasonable reimbursement such as travel/lunch costs or a voucher would not be considered undue incentives.)

**YES/NO**

**Section G: Use of visual images**

12. As part of your study, will you create and/or use and disseminate visual images (still or moving) of the research participants?

**YES/NO**

**Section H: Risks to you (the researcher) or to the participants**

13. Does taking part in the project expose the participants to any risks other than considered every day risks? For example, are there any risks to their physical wellbeing? Is there a risk to their reputation?

**YES/NO**

14. Does conducting this research expose you to any unusual risks? For example, does your study involve lone working, travelling long distances and/or working in foreign countries that might not be considered safe?

**YES/NO**

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**Part II: Which application process and which level of review is required for your study?**

As a PhD student in the Department of Educational Research, your application for ethics review will follow one of three possible processes.

If you have answered **YES** to questions 1, 2 or 3 (section A), and **NO** to questions 4-14, your study is eligible for the minimal risk process and will be reviewed by your supervisor only.

If you have answered **NO** to questions 1-3 and **YES** to any of the questions 4, 8, 10, 10a and 12, your study is likely to be low risk. It will initially be reviewed by your supervisor and second supervisor (who may, however, seek advice from the ED Res REC and/or may request the Ed Res REC to review this study).

If you have answered **YES** to one or more of questions 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 14 your study is likely to carry with it ethical risks that are significant and it will be reviewed by the FASS LUMS Research Ethics Committee.