**Imperial College Education Ethics Research Process (EERP) Application Form**

**Section A - Investigator(s)**

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| **Principal Investigator**  *Please name the person performing the research here. If the application is for a student project, please name the supervisor below and add details of all other co-investigators or collaborators as appropriate* | |
| 1. Name: | Please enter your given name followed by your family name |
| 1. Email:   Imperial College not private | This **MUST** be your Imperial College or other professional email address |
| 1. Title of study: | Please enter a concise, descriptive title – this should be clear and concise and communicate what your study is about.  Does it adequately & clearly describe the intended work?  Is it free from unnecessary jargon?  Does it give the required context for the study?  Does it reflect your research question? |
| Summary of skills, experience relevant to the study and in any procedures to be used.  (50 words max) | Please give **brief** details of **relevant** experience &/or qualifications that will indicate to reviewers your experience in relation to the topic of the proposed research.  For example you may give relevant qualifications, professional experience, familiarity with context and experience undertaking research (especially that using similar methods). |
| 1. Is this a student project? | YES  NO if ‘YES’ you must complete 5-8 below (right click – properties – change to checked)  A student project is part of a course for academic credit OR an official project such as UROP or part of a Professor Jenny Higham Collaboration Grant project |
| 1. Supervisor Name; | Please enter your supervisor’s given name followed by their family name |
| 1. Supervisor Email:   Imperial College not private | This **MUST** be your supervisor’s Imperial College or other professional email address |
| 1. Course of study: | Please give the name of your course |
| 1. Please confirm the supervisor has read and agreed to this application? | YES  NO (right click – properties – change to checked)  Please indicate whether your supervisor has read and agreed to this application. Reviewers may verify this with your supervisor. |

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| **Co-investigators**  *If there are more than 3 co-investigators, please use a separate sheet and follow the format below* | |
| 1. Name: | Please enter any co-investigator’s name. A co-investigator is any other researcher with shared responsibility for completing the research project |
| 1. Position: | Please give the co-investigator’s title &/or role |
| 1. Email:   Professional / College not private | This **MUST** be an Imperial College or other professional email address |

If there are more than three co-investigators, please use a separate sheet to add additional details following the format above. The additional sheet should be entitled ‘Additional Co-investigator Details’ and appended to the application.

**Section B – Project Summary**

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| **Project summary** ...  *Please provide brief details about your proposed project using simple* ***LAY*** *terms:* | | |
| 1. What is your Main Research Question? | Your research question should be a clear and answerable question that:  Addresses relevant issue(s)  Is an open question - not answerable by yes or no.  Has possible outcomes with some utility or value | |
| 1. Rationale   Please briefly describe the reason for the study. What do you hope to find? Why may this be important? | Consider & **briefly** describe using simple / ‘lay’ language...  What do you hope to find out?  How is it related to practice?  Why is it useful/relevant/important?  This should normally be no more than around 300 words | |
| 1. Proposed dates | Start Date  Give the date you expect to start advertising & recruiting to the project | End Date  Give the date you expect to the end data collection / analysis |
| 1. Methods:   Please check the box of any/all of the list of methods that you intend to use. If you are intending to use methods that are not in the list please provide brief details in the space to the right. | Questionnaires  Observation (including ethnographic research)  Interviews  Secondary analysis of pre-existing data  Focus Groups  Other (please give details below) | |
| Check (right click – properties – change to checked) as many of the options (above) as apply. If you are intending on using method not listed briefly describe it in the box below the list (in this space on the form).Do not describe the whole method here, simply name what you will do. Eg. ‘linguistic ethnography’ or ‘policy analysis’.  Reviewers will consider whether the methods could be expected to be appropriate to answer the research question. | |
| 1. Location(s):   Where will you do your research? | Clearly and concisely describe where the research will happen.  Locations should be safe, be mutually convenient, allow for appropriate privacy and the recording of data. The location can have other ethical implications, Eg. Influencing power relationships. When significant these should be considered in ‘Section C’. | |
| 1. Participants:   Please clearly state what sort of people you plan to recruit into the project, and describe any inclusion/exclusion criteria | Clearly and concisely describe who your potential participants are and any inclusion or exclusion criteria you have.  You should consider who can provide the data to ‘answer’ your research question and how the participants and their recruitment impact on ethical issues such as power, coercion and your ability to maintain privacy. Also think about sample size and whether your research question demands a ‘representative’ sample or more purposeful sampling to get depth and focus.  The participants and their recruitment can have ethical implications and when significant these should be considered in ‘Section C’. | |
| 1. Recruitment:   Please clearly state how your study population (defined above) will be recruited. | Clearly and concisely describe your recruitment process. This should be realistic, appropriate to your research and desired study population. Consider how you will contact potential participants, and how frequently. This should be reasonable and appropriate to your study.  For example you may say … participants will be recruited using notices on appropriate student notice boards, and an email sent to all students by the student Union. A single invitation email and up to two reminders will be used. If this fails to recruit appropriate numbers direct pleas at large first year undergraduate lectures will be made (subject to SU and the lecturers’ approval).  The recruitment of participants can have ethical implications and these should be considered in ‘Section C’. | |
| 1. Consent:   Please provide brief details in the space to the right of how participants will be consented.  You should explain why if your participants will not give consent &/or if the consent is not fully informed.  You should briefly explain your withdrawal process | Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Will your planned research involve individuals who are not able to give informed consent eg children (<15 yrs) or vulnerable adults?  YES  NO  Will participants be included without explicit consent (e.g. observational studies)?  YES  NO  Will participants get an information sheet with adequate reading time?  YES  NO  N/A  Will participants (except those just completing questionnaires) sign a consent form?  YES  NO  N/A  Will participants have the right to withdraw from the study without ‘cost’?  YES  NO  N/A  Will participants have the right to withdraw and remove ‘their data’?  YES  NO  N/A (right click – properties – change to checked) | |
| Concisely describe your method for obtaining informed consent; consider the information potential participants’ need, when they need it and in what format.  If your method is such that participants will not be explicitly consented (or will be retrospectively consented) for example in observational ethnography. Or if informed consent is managed such that the process of informing does not invalidate the data collected by risking biasing views. You should explain why this is needed and how the process will be managed.  You should also **briefly** explain your withdrawal process and if/how participants can withdraw their data. It is often hard to remove qualitative data after it has been anonymised and integrated so you should set a clear deadline for withdrawal of data.  The consent and managing have ethical implications and these should be considered in ‘Section C’. | |
| 1. Bias and positionality | Please briefly summarise your position and any potential bias in the study.  In this section you should **briefly** explain your positionality and any bias in your chosen method(s). For example, in your study do you take a neutral view and are looking for any changes or affects. Or, are you presenting a positive position on an innovation or intervention that you think improves practice or a critique of one you consider sub-optimal?  Bias in educational research needs to be recognised and considered, it need not be a negative thing. For example, a purposeful sample chosen because of their experience is a bias sample (ie not random) but this may be crucial to the study. Similarly, as a practitioner doing active research your experience and expertise will bias your view but again this may be vital in appropriate interpretation of contextual data.  Pedagogic research typically focusses on social phenomena with complicated associated context, beliefs, desires and interrelationships. As such, the pedagogic researcher can seldom, if ever, be detached enough to provide a completely un-biased view or interpretation. In most pedagogic research researcher positionality with relation to their research and the potential for bias needs to be explicitly acknowledged. | |
| 1. Summary of Method(s):   Please provide brief details of what you will do and what will happen to participants.  There is no need to repeat details from sections 19-27 (above), but describe how they fit together and how participants will experience the study | Please briefly (<500 words) summarise your methods.  In this section you should **briefly** explain what you will do, it is helpful to consider how participants will experience your study and explain what will happen to them and when. There is no need to simply repeat the details from the previous sections (19-27), rather join these details together so that they give an integrated description of the study as participants will experience it. | |

**Section C – Ethical Issues**

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| **Ethical Issues …**  *Please carefully consider these ethical issues and provide the required details using simple* ***LAY*** *terms:* | |
| 1. Confidentiality:   Please clearly state how you will manage the confidentiality of your data and the privacy of your study population. | Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Will all data be anonymised as soon as possible?  YES  NO  N/A  Will identifiers &/or pseudonyms be stored securely & separately from the data?  YES  NO  N/A  Will data & records be held securely and in accordance with Imperial guidelines?  YES  NO (right click – properties – change to checked) |
| Answer the questions above by checking the appropriate boxes.  **Briefly** explain how data will be anonymised/pseudonymised and the rationale for your approach. You should explicitly explain why if you answered ‘no’ to any of these questions.  Be aware that even with anonymisation, with a purposeful sample and specific context it may be possible to identify individuals. For example, while ‘Jane’ a second-year undergraduate student at a research-intensive London University would be almost impossible to identify with reasonable effort, ‘Jane’ the PVC of a research-intensive London University would be identifiable with reasonable certainty and comparative ease. However, removing all information that could possibly identify people also reduces context and depth in the data. Thus, redacting or removing information to protect identity should be considered and proportionate to the likelihood and risks of identification. |
| 1. Incentives / benefits:   If using incentives please concisely explain what these are, why they are appropriate / proportionate and how the process will be managed.  Please briefly (<300 words) summarise any other likely ‘advantages’ or ‘benefits’ that may result from participating in your study. | Will you offer any financial or other incentives for participating?  YES  NO  Answer the question above by checking the appropriate box. (right click – properties – change to checked)  Briefly explain any incentives you will use and justify why these are appropriate and proportionate to the risk / time participants take. Say how the incentivisation will be managed.  Incentives should be enough to encourage participation and thus maximise the potential data collection but NOT disproportionate so as to potentially coerce participation. Incentives should be proportionate to the burden imposed and justified by the benefits. |
| What are the potential ‘advantages’ or ‘benefits’ from participating in the study?  **Briefly** explain any advantages or benefits of participating in your study and justify why these are appropriate and if appropriate how ‘those not able to participate’ are not disadvantaged.  For example, a focus group with a small purposeful sample of a cohort of students that considers the course may allow reflection and benefit students in preparing for an upcoming exam. This could disadvantage students not participating in the focus group. This could be mitigated by changing the timing of the research to after the exam or by offering a reflective revision session as an option for all students. The benefits of participation in pedagogic research are unlikely to be excessive but should be considered. |
| 1. Risk(s) / Disadvantage(s):   Please briefly summarise any likely ‘risks’ or ‘disadvantages’ or ‘costs’ that may result from participating in your study  Briefly explain why these are justified and how they will be mitigated | What are the potential ‘risks’ or ‘disadvantages’ from participating in the study?  **Briefly** explain any risk(s) or disadvantages of participating in your study and justify why these are appropriate and how they are mitigated &/or managed.  The safety of both researcher and participants is of primary importance and care should be taken to not put either at risk for example by arranging interviews in isolated places or at inappropriate times. The intention should always be to minimise or mitigate against any risks or costs, no matter how trivial, and to balance the risk against the potential benefits. |
| 1. Timing:   Please briefly summarise any likely issues relating to timing or critical time points in your study  Briefly explain why these are justified and how they will be mitigated or managed | Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Have you considered and planned for key issues of timing in your study (eg important deadlines, time-critical data collection or times when participants may be busy or unavailable)?  YES  NO  Have you thought about the timing of your study to avoid any particularly stressful or busy times for participants (such as exam times)?  YES  NO  Have you thought about the time required to complete questionnaires, participate in interviews or focus groups etc and done your best to minimise the time inconvenience while not compromising the data collection?  YES  NO  Do you foresee any significant delay in dissemination /publication?  YES  NO  Do you foresee any potentially significant issues with timing?  YES  NO  Answer the questions above by checking the appropriate boxes. (right click – properties – change to checked)  **Briefly** summarise how you have considered issues of timing in your proposed study. Time ‘costs’ of participating should be minimised while balancing the need for adequate time to collect quality data. In general, potentially stressful times such as around examinations should be avoided where this is not possible or desirable this must be clearly justified.  You should also indicate any critical time-points in your design that relate to your method &/or research question, such as the need to collect data in the first term to sample the views of incomers to a course, and **briefly** indicate how you will manage these in order to optimise data collection.  There may also be issues of timing connected to the ‘gate keeping’ of access to sample populations. For example, departments might restrict or constrain access to students at busy times during the academic year or if the same group is being repeatedly surveyed for different purposes.  It is especially important you leave time for ethics review if you have time critical data collection. It is not possible to grant retrospective ethics approval and research that requires ethical approval must only be undertaken after that approval is in place. |
| 1. Power:   Please briefly summarise any likely issues relating to power / influence in your study  Briefly explain why these are justified and how they will be mitigated or managed | Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Is the researcher likely be perceived to be in a position of influence / authority over participants?  YES  NO  Is the researcher likely to be perceived to have influence over participants’ future?  YES  NO  Will the researcher be assessing or evaluating participants?  YES  NO  Will the researcher be teaching participants?  YES  NO  Are there any potential conflicts of interest or what could be perceived as a conflict of interest by a reasonable observer?  YES  NO  Answer the questions above by checking the appropriate boxes. (right click – properties – change to checked)  **Briefly** summarise any issues related to power or influence in your study. There is often a power differential between researcher and participant, and this can influence the research. If the researcher is (or is perceived to be) in a position of power over subjects this can potentially limit the freedom of choice and provide a perceived pressure for the subject to participate and provide data that will ‘please’ the researcher rather than what they really feel/think. Alternatively, when the researcher is interviewing more senior subjects that may feel inhibited or unable to probe when questioning. Thus, for both ethical reasons and to optimise data quality/validity such power differentials need to be considered, justified and managed.  While a power differential can seldom be totally avoided, the expectation is that efforts are made to mitigate the influence of actual or perceived power imbalances, particularly during recruitment and data collection. |
| 1. Coercion:   Please briefly summarise any likely issues relating to potential coercion in your study  Briefly explain why these are justified and how they will be mitigated or managed | Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Have you considered perceived and / or actual coercion?  YES  NO  Are there any likely actual or perceived pressures such that participants may feel pressured or obliged to volunteer for the study?  YES  NO  Answer the questions above by checking the appropriate boxes. (right click – properties – change to checked)  **Briefly** summarise any possible issues related to coercion and explain why they are unavoidable and the efforts you will make to mitigate the influence.  Coercion may be related to both power and incentives, but is not limited to these causes. Please explain any issues in your study, however there is no need to repeat information from previous sections. |
| 1. Sensitive Issues:   Please briefly summarise any potentially sensitive issues directly relating to your study  Briefly explain why these are justified and how they will be mitigated or managed | Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Is there any aspect of the proposed research that would be likely to cause reputational harm to participants, others or College?  YES  NO  Will you be explicitly collecting sensitive or personal (primary or secondary) data such as sexual history, or records of illegal or immoral behaviour?  YES  NO  Will personallysensitive or embarrassing issues be explicitly discussed such that participants may be unwilling to talk about them?  YES  NO  Is it likely participants will disclose any illegal or harmful activity as a direct result of the proposed research?  YES  NO  Will your planned research **focus on** sensitive issues such as bullying, cheating, un-professional practice (anything that may result in a strong emotional response)?  YES  NO  If sensitive issues arise unexpectedly in interviews or similar you should seek appropriate existing professional support available and maintain confidentiality unless you have cause to suspect that the individual is a risk to themselves &/or others. In these circumstances well-being takes precedence over privacy?  Please confirm you will take this approach  YES  NO  Answer the questions above by checking the appropriate boxes. (right click – properties – change to checked)  **Briefly** summarise any possibly sensitive issues: these can be thought of as issues likely to provoke strong feelings or embarrassment when discussed &/or the disclosure of very personal information or preferences or the disclosure of inappropriate, immoral or illegal behaviour. Consider that, especially in a very competitive academic environment, students can be very anxious about issues around academic performance and expected standards of excellence.  If your study focusses on or is likely to include such sensitive issues this has to be clearly justified and the risks managed. You should do this here and expect your ethical approval to be discussed at committee.  With any study, at interview there is always the possibility that such issues may arise unexpectedly. In such cases you should be aware of the relevant support available and use this to manage and support the individual. Generally the individual should be informed and encouraged to use this support, perhaps with your help. You cannot force people to seek help. The exception is when you suspect there is clear risk of harm to the individual &/or others. In this circumstance you can break confidentially and inform the relevant support services. This should be done so as to maintain as much privacy as possible. While such events are unlikely you should be aware and have a clear understanding of what you would do. |
| 1. Harm:   Please briefly summarise any potential for stress or harm to participants in your study  Briefly explain why this is justified and how it will be mitigated or managed | Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Is the study likely to result in undue stress or anxiety for participants?  YES  NO  Does your study have the potential to harm or result in negative consequences for the participants &/or researcher(s)?  YES  NO  Answer the questions above by checking the appropriate boxes. (right click – properties – change to checked)  **Briefly** summarise any possible harm that may result from your study. In general risks are likely to be small in pedagogic research and you should attempt to minimise & mitigate any there are. However, if your study focusses on or is likely to include significant risk/harm this has to be clearly justified and managed.  You should do this here and if risks are significant, expect your ethical approval to be discussed at committee. If there are likely risks you should also complete Imperial’s risk assessment process. |
| 1. Ethical Summary:   Please provide brief details of the ethical issues you have identified in your study, why they are necessary and how you will mitigate against the risks  There is no need to repeat details from sections 29-36 (above), but provide an integrated account of the ethical issues relevant to your proposed study and how you will manage them | Please briefly (500 words max) summarise the main ethical issues you have identified in your proposed study, why they are necessary and how you will mitigate against the risks  In this section you should **briefly** summarise the ethical issues you have identified in your study, why issues are unavoidable or justified and how you mitigate the risks and maximise the benefits.  There is no need to simply repeat the details from the previous sections (29-36), rather join these details together so that they give an integrated description of your ethical considerations of the study. |

**Section D – Documentation and Declaration**

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| **Supporting documents…**  *Please check the boxes for any relevant documentation that you attach to the application.* | |
| Participant information sheet:  Participant Consent Form:  Email & material inviting participation:  Questionnaires:  Interview / Focus Group Questions:  Observation schedule:  Time line or Gantt Chart: | Please attach the following documents to your application as appropriate  You should attach these documents if relevant to your study.  If your method is such you can/should attach indicative  questions indicating the type of questions, their progression  and a **brief** rationale for planned iterative change.  Information on the documents **must** be consistent with each  other **and** with the information on this form.  Documents should be clearly named for easy identification.  (right click – properties – change to checked)  Example templates for some documents are available on the website here <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/support-for-staff/education-ethics/resources/> |

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| **Self-declaration…**  *Please check the boxes as appropriate for your application.* |
| Please answer each of these questions **DO NOT** leave any answers blank  Do you have a collaborative agreement in place?  YES  NO  In process  N/A  Do you have a data access agreement in place?  YES  NO  In process  N/A  Do you have a data sharing agreement in place?  YES  NO  In process  N/A  Have you completed an Imperial College risk assessment?  YES  NO  In process  N/A  Have you considered how you will comply with the General Data Protection Regulations when storing and handling participant data?  YES  NO  In process  N/A  Have you had a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check carried out?  YES  NO  In process  N/A  Have you aligned your research with best practice outlined in the BERA guidelines?  YES  NO  Has this work (or aspects of it) received ethical approval elsewhere?  YES  NO  In process  If ‘YES’ please supply **brief** details below  Answer **all** the questions above by checking the appropriate boxes. (right click – properties – change to checked)  Give **Brief** details if this work or any aspect of it has received or is being considered for ethical approval elsewhere. If you know the outcome of any other approval process, please detail it here. You may be required to show details of any other ethics approval but there is no need to attach documents to this application. |

**Signatures Page - PI Declaration**

I declare that:

* I undertake to abide by the ethical principles underlying the Declaration of Helsinki (1964) and subsequent amendments and good practice guidelines on the proper conduct of research.
* I undertake to abide by the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (Europe) and any applicable local laws.
* I undertake to abide by all local laws and regulations for non-UK research.
* I will report any adverse or unforeseen events which occur to the Ethics and Research Governance Co-ordinator within 24 hours.
* I will provide an annual progress report of the project until the end of the study.
* I will provide notification of the end or early termination of the research project.
* I will provide notification of amendment to EERP / SETREC if there are any changes to the research protocol or personnel which affect the ethical aspects of the project.
* I will assist EERP / SETREC in any continuing review of the project deemed necessary by reviewers or the Committee.
* All information on this form is correct.

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| Name: |  |
| Signature: |  |
| Date: |  |
| If full committee review is required would you be willing to attend the SETREC meeting to answer any questions about your proposal?  YES  NO | |

**Any attendance must be by the PI named in section A of this application form. If this is a student application, the supervisor may also be present. Attendance at the meeting will give you the opportunity to answer any questions concerning ethics raised by the committee.**

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| ***EERP decision*** (please indicate below the decision and the reasons for it) | | |
| Decision: | Approve  Reject  Refer to Committee | |
| Reason: |  | |
| Required Amendments: |  | |
| **Signature:** |  | **Date:** |