Higher Education
Research Ethics Policy

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

Middlesbrough College is committed to maintaining standards of professional conduct in all research activities. Central to the principles that guide research is that research must be conducted in accordance with the highest contemporary ethics standards. This Policy provides information on research ethics at Middlesbrough College. The Policy covers research involving the collection of data and/or biological samples from human participants. It also provides links to internal and external advice, and full details of the Middlesbrough College Research Ethics Committee (REC).

The research ethics review process is part of the REC remit to scrutinise and advise on ethical considerations relating to any research carried out by, and for, Middlesbrough College, which involves investigations with humans or human materials.

This Policy also contains procedures staff or students must follow when completing research at Middlesbrough College.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Definition of Research

'Research' for the purposes of this Policy is to be understood as:

- original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding;
- work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors;
- scholarship;
- the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights;
- the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction.

2.2 Definition of 'research activity'

Research activity is defined as Middlesbrough College research activity where:

- Middlesbrough College takes on ultimate responsibility for the research, and/or, the activity is being undertaken in fulfilment (or part-fulfilment) of a Middlesbrough College programme of study/academic award,

and/or,

- A member of Middlesbrough College staff, or a student enrolled at Middlesbrough College is:

- the Chief Investigator (CI) or Academic Supervisor,

and/or,

- holds the research funding.

3.0 Research on Human Participants

It is essential that Middlesbrough College research involving collecting data or biological samples from human participants is assessed, or reviewed, for ethical issues **before** any potential participants are contacted. To do this, the REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist (see Appendix 1) should be completed and returned to heoffice@mbro.ac.uk. The REC Chair will then assess whether an ethics review will be required (a response will be received within 7 working days). Research that has been deemed to contain ethics-related implications should go through the full research ethics review process, achieved by fully completing the REC Proforma (see Appendix 2) and returning it to heoffice@mbro.ac.uk.

Any research involving Middlesbrough College students may require agreement from the Safeguarding Team. Any research involving Middlesbrough College staff may require agreement from Human Resources.

Research consisting *entirely* of literature review, desk or library-based research may not require ethics review and, if unsure, the Human Research Authority (HRA) decision tool should be used to determine if the proposed study would be categorised as research.

3.1 Ethics Principles for Research Involving Human Participants

There are six principles[1] that must be adhered to when conducting Middlesbrough College research:

Principle 1: Compliance with protocol

Research with humans conducted by Middlesbrough College employees and their agents and assignees should be aware of the range of research ethics, and in particular comply with an explicit protocol*, defining how valid consent to participate is sought, gained and recorded, how data are collected, stored and accessed, and how participants are informed of their rights within the study.

A favourable opinion on the protocol should be gained from the Middlesbrough College Research Ethics Committee (REC) before data collection commences, and from other bodies such the Safeguarding Team, Human Resources and UK National Health Service Research Ethics Committee(s) as appropriate. The only exception to this requirement shall be where any reasonable judgement would suggest that no harm could possibly arise to any person, living or dead, in connection with the proposed research.

Principle 2: Valid consent

Potential participants should always be informed in advance, and in understandable terms, of any potential benefits, risks, inconvenience or obligations associated with the research that might reasonably be expected to influence their willingness to participate.
Consent should always be gained in a consistent manner, as specified in the research project's ethics protocol. This should normally involve the use of an information sheet about the research and what participation will involve, and a signed consent form. Sufficient time shall be allowed for a potential participant to consider their decision between the giving of the information sheet and the gaining of consent.

1 In these Principles, the term 'protocol' refers to a filed document which specifies the procedures for recruiting participants and gathering and managing data, with which all research staff agree to comply.

Except in exceptional circumstances, where the nature of the research design requires it, no research shall be conducted without the opt-in valid consent of participants. In the case of children (individuals under 16 years of age) no research shall be conducted without a specified means of gaining their valid consent (or, in the case of young children, their assent) and the valid consent of their parents or guardians, or persons who are legally responsible or appointed to give consent on their behalf.

Where participants are involved in longer-term data collection, the use of procedures for the renewal of consent at appropriate times should be considered.

No inducement to participate should be offered prior to seeking consent, either in the form of payments or of gifts. Reasonable recompense for inconvenience and time contributed to the research and reimbursement of travelling expenses can be offered (subject to approved financial support being available).

Participants should be informed clearly that they have a right to withdraw their consent at any time up to a specified date, that any data that they have provided will be destroyed if they so request up to a specified date, and that there will be no adverse consequences for participants if they choose to withdraw or request data destruction. However, it must be clear that withdrawal after a specified date may not be possible as it would unduly affect the study.

Principle 3: Openness and integrity

Researchers should be open and honest about the purpose and content of their research and behave in a professional manner at all times.
Researchers should comply with the College's principles for integrity in the general conduct of research.

Where an essential element of the research design would be compromised by full disclosure to participants prior to their involvement, such withholding of information should be specified in the project protocol and explicit procedures stated to obviate any potential harm arising from such withholding.

Deception or covert collection of data should only take place where it is essential to achieve the research results required, where the research objective has strong scientific merit and where there is an appropriate risk management and harm alleviation strategy.

Participants should be given opportunities to access the outcomes of research in which they have participated and debriefed if appropriate after they have provided data.

Principle 4: Maximising benefit and protection from harm

Researchers should make every effort to maximise the benefits of research while minimising the risks of any harm, either physical or psychological, arising for any participant, researcher, institution, funding body or other person or community.

Every project should include a risk analysis and, where significant risks are identified, should specify a risk management and harm alleviation strategy in the protocol.
Researchers should comply with the requirements of the UK Data Protection Act 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any other relevant legal frameworks governing the

management of personal information in the UK or in any other country where the research may be conducted.

Where research involves children or other vulnerable groups, an appropriate level of disclosure should be obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service for all researchers in contact with participants.

Where harm does nevertheless arise in the course of research, researchers should take remedial steps.

Participants should be given information as to whom they may contact in the event of any issues arising in the course of the research that cannot be resolved with members of the project team.

Principle 5: Confidentiality

Except where explicit written consent is given to reveal identities, researchers should respect and preserve the confidentiality[2] of participants' identities and data. The procedures by which this is to be achieved should be specified in the protocol.

Principle 6: Professional codes of practice and ethics

Where the subject of a research project falls within the domain of a professional body with a published code of practice and ethical guidelines, researchers should explicitly state their intention to comply with the code and guidelines in the project protocol.
Research within the UK NHS should always be conducted in compliance with an ethical protocol approved by an appropriate NHS Research Ethics Committee.

[2] Note that the duty of confidentiality is not absolute in law and may be overridden by more compelling duties such as the duty to protect individuals from harm or in the public interest – such as in research involving public officials. Where a significant risk of such issues arising is identified in the risk assessment, specific procedures to be followed should be specified in the protocol.

4.0 Procedures

A simplified flowchart of the Ethical Clearance procedure is included here in Appendix 4.

4.1 Ethical Clearance

Ethical Clearance is required for *all* Middlesbrough College research activity, except those projects which consist *entirely* of literature review, desk or library-based research. Projects which are entirely literature or desk and/or library-based do not need to receive Ethical Clearance but staff and students undertaking such research should be familiar with the College's policies on use of the internet in research (see Considerations section). Students, in particular, should also be made aware that some areas of literature and library-based research may nevertheless involve sensitive or controversial material which will require a degree of care when accessing and handling. Literature or library-based work which is *primarily* carried out *external* to the College, for instance in an off-site archive, requires ethical Clearance.

Ethical Clearance is obtained by application to the Research Ethics Committee (REC) before research commences:

Application can be made via two routes:

- *REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist (see Appendix 1)* – this form is completed if the staff member and/or student is unsure if ethics related implications exist within the proposed research. The REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist form is submitted to heoffice@mbro.ac.uk for consideration by the REC chair. The REC chair will review the form within 7 days and state via return email if there are ethics related implications within the proposed research. The weekly submission deadline for fully completed REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist forms is **Thursday at 5.00pm**.

- *REC Proforma (see Appendix 2)* – this form is completed once the REC chair has reviewed the REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist form and deemed there to be ethics related implications. If staff and/or student believe their proposed research has ethics related implications, they can complete the REC Proforma without completing the REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist form. The weekly submission deadline for fully completed REC Proforma forms is **Thursday at 5.00pm**, via heoffice@mbro.ac.uk.

4.2 Dissertations and Projects

For the purposes of applying this policy, there are two distinct categories of projects:

1. Those not involving human participants and/or not involving potential physical or psychological risk to the researcher(s) themselves. These projects will usually be **entirely desk and/or library-based** and the same kind of research will be done by an entire group of students. These projects **DO NOT** require ethical Clearance. However, the member of staff responsible for the module in which such work is occurring must keep a **record** that confirms that these projects meet the criteria of

"**entirely desk and/or library-based**" and such a record must be available for audit by REC if requested.

2. Those which do involve human participants, and/or involving potential or psychological risk to the researcher(s) themselves. In these cases, ethical Clearance **WILL** be required.

In some cases, supervisors may choose to certify the propriety of their students' work. In those cases, it is vital that both the member of staff and the student have considered how their proposed work accords with Middlesbrough College Research Ethics Policy and can verify the statements which staff certify by signing the form. Staff are advised to consider that by certifying their students' work they are indicating their agreement to accept full responsibility for the ethical propriety of that work. Staff who work in areas in which ethical issues tend to be more prominent and sensitive will need to be very careful in undertaking such certification.

4.3 Chair's Action or Full REC Referral

Upon review of the REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist form, the Chair of the REC will decide if the proposed research can be approved. If the Chair decides they cannot approve the research, it would be referred to the REC. This decision will be made within 7 days, with the researcher notified via email.

4.4 Case of Doubt

If a member of staff, a supervisor, or student, has concerns about the ethical propriety of a piece of research they should approach the Chair of the REC for advice as early in the project planning stage as is possible, and certainly well before preparing and submitting an application for Clearance.

4.5 Supplementary Documentation

If the research involves data collection from or about human participants, normally the following documentation will be attached to the application for clearance by the Approval route:

- Consent Form
- Participant Information Sheet
- Data collection tools e.g. Questionnaires, Topic Guides for Focus Groups, Semi-structured interview questions (as appropriate)

As stated in the Ethics Principles for Research Involving Human Participants section, the expectation is that research with human participants will be conducted on the basis of **valid informed consent.**

Projects seeking clearance for methods involving variation from this may be approved by the REC, but only in very specific contexts in which the lack of proper information is justified by the value of the research proposed and the College is not exposed to undue risk nor would insurance cover be compromised. The Chair of the REC may need to seek confirmation

regarding Middlesbrough College's insurance status as part of the review process in such projects.

4.6 Contact Details

The personal contact details of researchers should not be used in study documentation - in all cases only College contact details should be used. For undergraduate student research the Academic Supervisor's College contact details should be used.

If telephone contact details are required this should either be the supervisor's college number, the student's business number, or a dedicated number for that study only.

4.7 External (Non-Middlesbrough College) Approvals and Permissions

It is the responsibility of the applicant for Clearance to determine which external approvals and permissions are required for the project they propose and to detail that data in their application. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the Governance standards and requirements of all relevant external bodies or agencies are adhered to in the planning and conduct of the research. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are commonly needed for researchers working in certain areas.

The REC will not accept an applicant's self-verification of such checks. As a result, documentary proof in some form must be included with any applications for Clearance.

5.0 Research Ethics Committee (REC)

The REC will consist of a chair, internal members and external consultants.
The REC will review fully completed REC Proformas and decide if the proposed research project contains ethical concerns.
Once an application has been passed for review, a decision will be made, and a formal response sent via email, within 21 working days; however, some applications can take longer.

5.1 Cases of REC Concern

Where the REC has concerns about the ethical propriety of the proposed research project, these concerns will be sent in writing to the applicant and a response invited. In addition, a member of the REC may be nominated to work with the researcher(s), to assist them in addressing the issues identified during review.

5.2 Referral to Academic Board

When a REC is unable, after dialogue with the researcher(s) concerned, to resolve concerns and assure itself of the ethical propriety of research, it shall refer the matter to the Director of Higher Education for information and the Academic Board for action.

5.3 Appealing REC Decisions

Applicants may appeal a final decision made by an REC, but only after first attempting to resolve any issue by dialogue. Appeals may be made only with regards to *procedural error* by an REC and not on the basis of *ethical judgement and/or disagreement*. Appeals will be made to Academic Board, whose decision on appeal matters is final. Any appeal will be overseen by the Chair of Academic Board.

5.4 Filing of REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist/REC Proforma Forms.

A single copy of the REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist form and REC Proforma must be filed in the HE Office Canvas site upon completion and signature by the Chair of the REC (or following approval upon referral to Academic Board).

As part of post-clearance audit procedures, the Chair of the Academic Board and/or the Associate Director – HE (Teaching & Learning) may request copies of specific ethical release or ethical approval forms at any time whilst a project is ongoing.

5.5 Post Clearance audit of projects

It is a condition of ethical Clearance that a small number of projects will be audited each year to ensure that:

- applicants are using the appropriate route for ethical Clearance;
- that project protocols are being followed, particularly after ethical Approval;
- that any research design changes that may affect the ethical propriety of the research are being reported on;
- that proper checks and balances are being made across the College to ensure legal compliance.

The audit should have taken place by the last meeting of the REC for the academic year in question and will be overseen by the Chair of the REC and the Chair of Academic Board. Projects selected for audit and the results should be reported on as part of the REC's Annual Report. It is expected that the projects audited will be selected from the full diversity of levels, including staff projects.

6.0 Considerations

6.1 Exceptions to REC Process

If after completing the Risk Checklist in Appendix 1 (Section 4), the students and supervisor are satisfied that there are no identifiable risks associated with the research project, then the exemptions identified in a and b below, may be applied.

a. If students are working on studies that include research (or group research) at Levels 4 or 5 that are classroom-based (i.e. students are conducting research on their peers) there is no requirement to follow the Research Ethics registration process, provided the necessary approvals are in place – see Appendix 1 Section 3.

b. If students are working on studies that include research (or group research) at Levels 4 or 5 that based solely in their work or work placement setting, (i.e. students are conducting research on their peers or clients of their work setting) there is no requirement to follow the Research Ethics registration process, provided the necessary approvals are in place – see Appendix 1 Section 3.

6.2 Implications for the Assessment Process

A criterion for submission of level 6/7 dissertations/projects is obtaining of ethical Clearance. *Failure to complete such procedures will invalidate submission for assessment.*

Level 6/7 dissertations/projects which commenced with ethical Clearance, but for which contact between supervisor and student ceased during preparation, *cease to be ethical* and will *invalidate submission for assessment*. Assessment Board regulations must reflect the above.

6.3 Recruitment of participants for research projects

Recruitment of human participants must be completed carefully and with respect, normally ensuring proper and valid consent is obtained from participants.

If inducements of any kind are used, not exclusively but particularly monetary incentives (beyond expenses) to encourage participation, this must be completed with careful consideration of the risk of manipulation and or coercion.

It is expected that members of staff will not normally be approached to be recruited as participants in student dissertations or research work.
Students who use the Middlesbrough College logo for materials designed to recruit participants for research projects must request the use of this logo via their supervisors, who should contact the Associate Director – HE (Teaching and Learning). Staff are free to use the Middlesbrough College logo on their recruitment materials as is.

6.4 Research Ethics Training

In accordance with College policy, members of staff involved in Research may be required to attend Research Ethics Training, which is offered regularly throughout the academic year. Staff who are unfamiliar with the concepts set-out in the Ethics Principles for Research Involving Human Participants (conformity with which is attested to in certifying via ethical Release), they are strongly encouraged to attend training.

6.5 Use of the Internet in Research

In any project using the internet as a search or research tool, the applicant must ensure that the researchers concerned are aware of, and have discussed, the 'Good Conduct in the Use of the Internet for Research' section of this document which can be found in Appendix 3.

6.6 Use of Freedom of Information or Other Legislation to Obtain Data

Researchers may not compel individuals or organisations to supply research data through the use of legislative provisions, for example by using the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations. Applications for specific exceptions to this requirement can be submitted to Academic Board for consideration on a case-by-case basis.

6.7 External researchers access; Staff and/or Students, Premises, Equipment and/or Expertise

Middlesbrough College encourages and assists external researchers wherever possible. Any external researcher who wishes to conduct research –

- employing Middlesbrough College staff and/or enrolled students as participants

and/or

- using Middlesbrough College premises, equipment or expertise in any way,

must seek and receive formal approval for that from the relevant Subject Lead - for single Subject group domain research - or from the Director of Higher Education for multiple or cross Subject domain research, prior to commencement of the research.
To enable accurate record keeping, the person granting approval should notify the Chair of the REC and the Director of Higher Education in writing, both when approval is granted, and when the project is completed.

In all cases, prior to giving a decision to any external researcher, the Director of Higher Education and/or the relevant Subject Leader(s) must consider how the proposed research activity may impact upon students, student activities, course management and any Academic, Technical and/or Support staff that may be involved/affected.

7.0 Summary of Potential Liabilities of Researchers

Summary of potential legal liabilities of researchers

7.1 Harm occurs to participants, property, resulting in claim of negligence:

a) Negligence involves lack of proper process of risk assessment and can be intentional or reckless.
b) Going via institution's REC procedures constitutes protection.
c) Research conducted without proper procedural accountability severs the protection of the institution's indemnity arrangements and leaves the researcher open to personal liability for negligence. In practice, this means that if a researcher chooses not to apply for ethical Clearance, and a claim is made against them by a participant for any reason, then the researcher may be personally liable. This may also apply in cases where a researcher has applied for ethical Clearance but who chooses to ignore requirements placed upon the research protocol by the REC in order for it to proceed; or who subsequently changes the research design previously approved in the protocol submitted to an REC without notification.
d) Lack of valid consent:

Researcher may be exposed for criminal and/or civil assault or battery which may attract a criminal punishment of a fine and/or imprisonment and a civil claim for damages.

e) Breach of confidentiality:

Criminal liability for the institution under Data Protection Act 2018 for serious breaches of the Act which attracts a maximum fine of £500,000 and financial claim for damages by participants for breach of common law duty of confidentiality against the institution or individual researchers. In addition, potential criminal sanctions exist for failure to disclose criminal activity where discovered.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist Form

Research Ethics Committee (REC)
Project Registration and Risk Checklist

If you are planning to carry out any research project involving human participants, including data and/or biological samples, you need to complete and submit this checklist to heoffice@mbro.ac.uk, so the REC Chair can assess the level of ethics review required. Please include anything related to your research proposal e.g. a questionnaire, consent form, participant information sheet, publicity leaflet and/or a draft bid or outline.

The only exception to the requirements outlined in the paragraph above are student research projects at level 4 or level 5 covered by the provision of section 6.1 of this policy.

Once your checklist is submitted, you should receive a response within 7 working days as to whether your research will need a full REC review, so please indicate if you require a more urgent decision. A full review can take up to a month, therefore when planning your research and ethics application you need to build in sufficient time to avoid any delays. Particularly when you are planning overseas travel or interviews with participants.

It is essential that no potential participants should be approached until you have received a response on whether a full REC review will be required, and once this is complete, a formal REC response. Please note that the titles of all research projects considered by the REC (whether by REC checklist or proforma), will be added to the HE Office Canvas site.

Section 1: Project Details

Project Title			
Brief description (100 words maximum)			
Is this a L4/5 student research project restricted to peers in work settings or other students in the class?			
Is your research part of a previous or current application for external funding?		If yes, please provide name of funder and the budget code.	Funding body: Budget code:
Earliest date participants will be contacted:		Research project start/end dates: From: To:	

Principal Investigators have to discuss any project related risks with their department or work setting and will need to ensure that all the appropriate checks and permissions are in place prior to a research project commencing, including:

- Research involving Middlesbrough College students or student data
- Research involving Middlesbrough College staff and/or staff data
- Research involving staff in external work settings. NB – for the purpose of this policy, 'other work settings' is restricted to the place of work or placement setting of the principal investigator.

Section 2: Applicant Details

Name of Primary Investigator (or research student)		Position	
Email		Academic dept.	
Telephone		Other researcher(s)	
Date			

Section 3: For students only

Please note your application cannot be processed without the inclusion of your supervisor's signature or comments below:

Programme title		Supervisor's name	
Supervisor's electronic signature		Supervisor's email	
Work setting authorisation provided by;			
Name		Position	
Please submit evidence of work setting authorisation (e.g. e-mail or letter), with this proposal			

Section 4: For supervisors only

Supervisor's comments to include: 1. confirmation if approval of this project is being requested subject to the provisions as described in paragraph 6.1 of this policy 2. confirmation if this is a tutor set research project that is applicable to an entire cohort (please attach a separate list of the students covered by this application) 3. general comments

Section 4: Risk Checklist

Please assess your research using the following questions and select 'yes' or 'no' as appropriate. If there is any possibility of risk, please tick yes. Even if your list contains all 'no's you should still return your completed checklist to heoffice@mbro.ac.uk to ensure your proposed research is assessed and recorded by the REC.

		Yes	No
1	Does the study involve children (under 16 years old), or those aged 16 and over who are unable to give informed consent? E.g. participants who are potentially vulnerable, such as people with learning disabilities, those with cognitive impairment, or those in unequal relationships, e.g. your own students?	☐	☐
2	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (e.g. students at school, members of a self-help group, residents of a nursing home.)	☐	☐
3	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places)	☐	☐
4	Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, or politics)?	☐	☐
5	Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	☐	☐
6	Will the research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?	☐	☐
7	Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?	☐	☐
8	Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?	☐	☐
9	Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	☐	☐
10	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	☐	☐
11	Will the research take place outside the UK?	☐	☐
12	Does the research involve members of the public in a research capacity (participant research)?	☐	☐
13	Is there a possibility that the safety of the researcher may be in question? (e.g. in international research: locally employed research assistants)	☐	☐
14	Will financial recompense (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	☐	☐
15	Will the research involve participants responding via the internet or other visual/vocal methods where participants may be identified?	☐	☐
16	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS or the use of NHS data?	☐	☐
17	Will tissue samples (including blood) or other human biological samples be obtained from participants or another source?	☐	☐
18	Does your research include consideration of extremism or terrorism related issues?	☐	☐

If you answered ‘yes’ to questions **16** or **17**, you may have to apply to the Health Research Authority (HRA) Research Ethics Service.

Section 5: Supporting documents

Where relevant, please include as attachments or appendices, any documents related to your research proposal e.g. participant information sheets and consent forms. The REC Chair needs as much information as possible in order to make a full assessment of your research proposal.

Please provide a list below, for example:

Item	Confirm
Consent form and information sheet (these can be separate or a combined document)	☐
Questionnaire	☐
Draft bid or project outline	☐
Publicity leaflet	☐

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. In particular, the College's **Research Ethics Policy** should be read and understood.

Appendix 2 – REC Proforma

Research Ethics Committee
(REC) Proforma

All Middlesbrough College research involving human participants or materials is required to be assessed by the REC. Where you have completed the REC Project Registration and Risk Checklist and it has been determined that your research requires a full review, please complete and email this proforma to heoffice@mbro.ac.uk. Attach any related documents for example: a consent form, information sheet, questionnaire, or publicity leaflet to ensure that the REC Review Panel has everything they need to carry out a full review. If there are more than one group of participants, relevant documents for each research group need to be included so as not to delay the review process.

If you have any queries about completing the proforma please speak to your Programme Tutor or Project Supervisor.

The deadline for applications is **every Thursday** by **5.00pm**. Applications are then sent to the REC Review Panel with a minimum response time of 21 working days. However, the process can take up to a month or longer, so when planning your research and ethics application, you need to build in sufficient time for the REC review to avoid any delays to your research. Particularly, when you are planning overseas travel or interviews with participants as it is essential that no potential participants are approached until your research has been fully assessed by the REC.

Please complete all the sections below on the following page.

Project identification and Rationale

1. Title of project

A short, clear and descriptive project title:
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

2. Abstract

A summary of the main points of the research, written in terms easily understandable by a non-specialist and containing no complex technical terms (maximum 200 words).
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

Project personnel and collaborators

3. Investigators

Give names and institutional attachments of all persons involved in the collection and handling of individual data and name one person as Principal Investigator (PI).
Research students should name themselves as PI and include a supervisor's electronic signature and/or comments below as evidence of supervisor support. Without this the application cannot be processed.

Principal Investigator/ (or Research Student):	
Other researcher(s):	

For students only
Please note that this application cannot be processed without your supervisor's signature and or supporting comments

Programme of study:	
Supervisor (preferably primary):	
Email:	
Supervisor's electronic signature:	
Supervisor supporting comments:	

Research Protocol

4. Schedule

Time frame for the research and its data collection phase(s):

From:	To:
Earliest date participants will be contacted:	

5. Methodology

5.1. Approach/Methodology

Outline the methodological approach of the study (for example, qualitative or quantitative) and the study design (for example, randomised control trial, ethnography study, phenomenology study).
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

5.2. Methods

Outline the method(s) that will be employed to collect and analyse data. Any relevant documents, such as interview or survey questions or a participant information sheet, should be sent with the completed proforma. If there is more than one group of participants, please provide separate consent forms and participant information sheets. If, for any reason, any of this is not possible please explain why.
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

6. Participants

Give details of the population targeted or from which you will be sampling and how this sampling will be done. Give information on the diversity of the sample.
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

7. Recruitment procedures

Give details of how potential participants will be identified and approached. Where there is any potential for coercion, include details, also how this will be addressed. For example, where the participants are known to the researcher either personally or professionally.

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

8. Consent

Provide information on how valid consent will be sought from participants and attach copies of information sheet(s) and consent form(s). Consent forms and/or information sheets **have** to include the following or a rationale as to why not:

- An alternative contact as well as the PI
- Clear information on how and when a participant may withdraw from the research, and that after a certain point, e.g. the data gathering phase, it may not be possible, particularly if the data has been anonymised.
- Separate forms for each participant group - where applicable
- Information on how research data will be stored and disseminated/published and destroyed or retained.

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

9. Location(s) of data collection

Give details of where and when data will be collected, with an explanation of why the research needs to be conducted in the chosen setting or location. If it will take place on private, corporate or institutional premises, indicate what approvals are gained/required.

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

10. Literature review

Provide a brief review of the existing literature or previous research. Clarify whether the proposed study replicates prior work and/or duplicates work done elsewhere and/or has an element of originality (maximum 200 words).

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

Key Ethics Considerations

11. Published ethics and legal guidelines to be followed

Detail which guidelines will be followed by the researchers.
For example: BERA, BPS, SRA, MRS.
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

12. Data protection and information security

If your research involves the collection of information about individuals, you will need to register your project with College Data Protection Coordinator - please confirm that this has been done. Please provide the REC with details of the procedures and schedule (including dates) to be followed re: storage and disposal of data to comply with the Data Protection Act. Indicate the earliest and latest date for the destruction of original data, where it is required, or any archiving arrangements that have been agreed/permitted, and ensure this is included in the project schedule.
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

13. Research data management, disseminating and publishing research outcomes

If not covered elsewhere in your application, please give details of how your research data will be managed including publishing and data retention. Any funding body requirements should also be provided, e.g. the Economic Social Research Council (ESRC) requests data is deposited in a repository. It is recommended that all researchers applying to REC write a Data Management Plan (DMP).
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

14. Deception

Give details of the withholding of any information from participants, or misrepresentation or other deception that is an integral part of the research. Any such deception should be fully justified.
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

15. Risk of harm

Detail any foreseen risks to participants or researchers (e.g. home visits) and based on a risk assessment, the steps that will be taken to minimise/counter these. If the proposed study involves contact with children or other vulnerable groups, please confirm that, where necessary, the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service have been met and give the relevant reference number and period covered for each person involved in the research.
N.B. it is accepted that all projects involving human participants carry some form of *low-level risk*, please state how these risk factors will be controlled.
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

16. Debriefing

Give details of how information will be given to participants after data collection to inform them of the outcomes of their participation and the research more broadly.
[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

Project Management

17. Research organisation and funding

Please provide details of the principal funding body (internal or external). If your project is part of a current or successful externally funded bid, enter your Award Management System (AMS) reference number below.

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

18. Other project-related risks

Indicate how research risks are to be limited by anticipating potential problems.

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

19. Benefits and knowledge transfer

State how the research may be of general benefit to participants and society in general (100 words maximum).

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

20. Supporting documents

Include as attachments or appendices, any documents related to your research proposal. Add the REC reference number to each (if already known), and list below, for example:

- Consent form and Participant information sheet – for each participant group
- Questionnaire
- Email or letter from the organisation agreeing that the research can take place
- Draft bid or project outline
- Publicity leaflet

[The box below will expand automatically to accommodate your text.]

21. Declaration

I DECLARE THAT:

- The research will conform to the above protocol and that any significant changes or new ethics issues will be raised with the REC before they are implemented.

- I have read and will adhere to the following Middlesbrough College documents:

    - Code of Practice for Research;
    - Research Ethics Policy;
    - Policy on conducting terrorism and extremism-related research.

To meet internal governance and highlight Middlesbrough College research, the titles of all projects considered by the REC (whether by REC checklist or proforma), will be added to the HE Office Canvas site.

Name:			
Department:			
Telephone:		College E-mail:	
Signature(s) (scanned or electronic):			
Date:			

REC Final report

Once your research has been completed you will need to complete and submit a REC final report form.

Proposed date for final report:	

Appendix 3 - Good Conduct in the Use of the Internet for Research

Purpose

This section provides guidance specifically on the use of the internet for general research purposes in order to minimise risks posed by the internet environment and ensure best practice is observed.

Because of the nature of the internet it is possible that uncontrolled experimentation may result in exposure to and/or encouragement of criminal activities such as:

- Breaches of the Computer Misuse Act
- Breaches of the Data Protection Acts
- IPR violations (e.g. Copyright)
- Disturbing or illegal images (e.g. Paedophile materials, terrorist images)
- Grooming activities
- Fraud (phishing, 419 scams, auctions etc.)

Departments may wish to consider the development of additional guidance that addresses specific discipline-based risks not addressed in these notes of guidance.

This guidance applies to all members of the institution involved in research. This will include staff and students. It also applies to those who are not members of the institution, but who are conducting research on the institution's premises or using the institution's research facilities.

Risk to the College's Computer Network

Any activity which may expose parts of the College computer network to risk of infection or attack must be approved by Helpdesk.

Solicited Data

Collection of data through the internet needs to be carefully managed to avoid unnecessary risks to the reputations of the researcher and/or the College or to the quality of the research results.

Bulk Email

Generally, mass e-mailing should be discouraged as it can be perceived as activity akin to "spamming". Where questionnaires are to be distributed by e-mail, researchers should carefully target their subjects and requests permission from the subjects before the questionnaires are distributed. The precise nature of the study should be clearly explained in the initial contact and parameters such as expected time to complete the questionnaire/interview should be given. Where research supervisors are aware that several such exercises may be conducted, a register of participants should be maintained and used to ensure that no participants are being targeted too regularly or asked to participate to such an extent that they may consider the researchers to be a nuisance.

Newsgroups and Chatrooms
Newsgroups and chatrooms should be considered a form of “bulk e-mail” with the added complication that it is not possible to identify all recipients, or the originators of the messages posted in them. Furthermore, newsgroup users tend to form self-selecting groups with a bias toward particular interests or opinions. Data collected as a result of newsgroup usage is likely to be strongly biased as a result.

Web-Based Questionnaires
Broadcast invitations to participate in an unsecured web-based questionnaire can result in skewed results, as for newsgroup participation. Furthermore, it is difficult to ensure that each respondent is only completing the questionnaire once. If web-based questionnaires are to be used, they should be constructed in such a way that participants can only access the questionnaire after an appropriate invitation and can only complete it once. Provision of such a mechanism introduces issue of Data Protection in that the respondents may become individually identifiable. Care should be taken to dissociate identity verification mechanisms from gathered data unless it is essential to the study.

Observation
In order to monitor illicit activity using electronic communications, the observer must be, albeit to a limited extent, a participant in the activity. That is to say that, at the very least, they are likely to be required to create a user identity which can be used to log in to the communications system under observation.

Use of a ‘User Identity’
Because a user identity can be traceable, it is inappropriate for an observer's “main”, “personal” or “official” user identity (e.g. College issued e-mail address) to be used for this activity. Instead, a disposable identity should be created for the duration of the research.

Use of Computer Equipment
Any computer equipment to be used for observation purposes should be dedicated to this task only, and only be accessible by the observer(s) in question. This avoids issues of accidental deposition of unwanted material on publicly accessible machines. Where the observer believes there is a possibility, no matter how slight, that they may encounter material which others would consider objectionable, steps must be taken to ensure that such material cannot be viewed by those not involved in the research.

Use of Servers
Any servers connected to the College network, and visible to users outside the research team, must be carefully managed and constructed to avoid enticement and/or encouragement to commit criminal acts or acts in violation of acceptable use policies and agreements. Information presented on web pages/file servers etc. must comply with appropriate legislation and be factually correct. It may be necessary to include information about the purposes for which the server is operating and provide further details of the research.

Observation of Criminal Activity

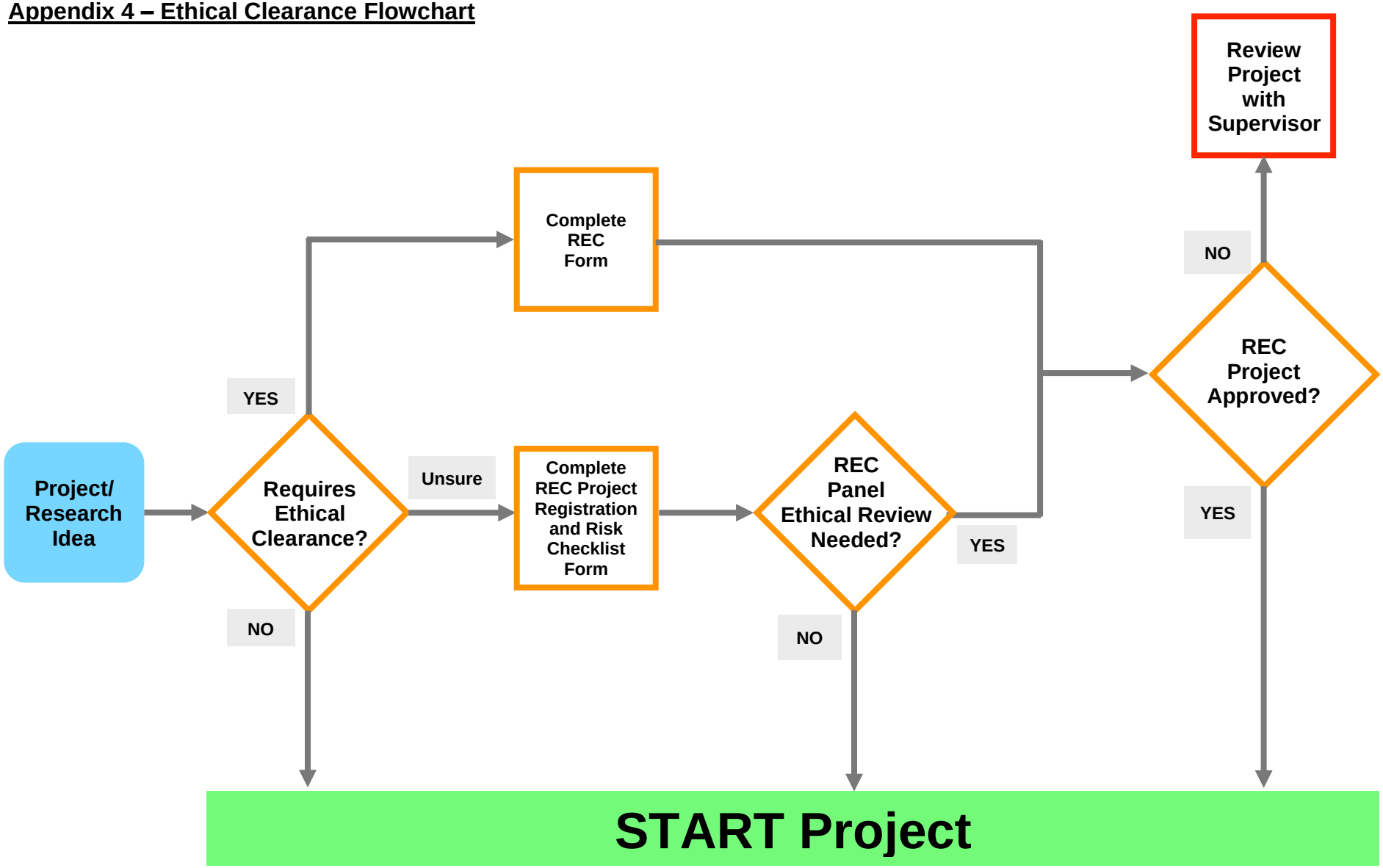
Where the research may require observation of obvious criminal activity (e.g. Paedophile grooming, fraudulent auction sales etc.), risk assessment is essential. Participation and/or authorisation by appropriate law-enforcement bodies may be required, as may psychological assessment of the observer. Observed activities which will cause termination of the study must be clearly defined and adhered to. Observers must not participate in, or encourage subjects to develop criminal activity in any way.

Throughout the observation, an accurate contemporaneous log must be maintained. Appropriate rest periods should be scheduled. The observer must cease observation if he/she becomes concerned by any activity which has been observed.

Internet-Originated References

Use of Internet-originated references should be treated very carefully. It must be remembered that the Internet is a public medium and that anyone with access to the appropriate technology can publish anything they wish without it being subjected to independent verification. Before a reference is accepted as being appropriate for citation, the researcher should take steps to ascertain the reliability of the source material. For example, an online journal or online version of a print journal can usually be considered to be as good as a print journal only when its editorial and review policies are compatible with the usual standards expected of a reliable academic publication. Some Community built information sources may be considered unreliable because of the way in which any user of the service can amend any existing data or contribute new data without independent review or verification.

Appendix 4 – Ethical Clearance Flowchart



Appendix 5 –Code of Practice for Research

1.0 Introduction

This Code of Practice sets out the standards that govern the conduct of research at Middlesbrough College. It covers:

- Principles
- Responsibilities
- Legal and ethical requirements
- Research data and records
- Authorship, publication and access to research outputs
- Collaborative working
- Conflict of interest
- Where to go for advice on the conduct of research
- What to do if malpractice or misconduct is suspected.

Research is defined as original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge and understanding and to make research outcomes widely available. Research at Middlesbrough College is based on the principles of high standards, honesty, openness, accountability, integrity, inclusion and safety. The College expects high standards of personal conduct from all those engaged in research, and its research environment is one where excellence and high ethical standards are promoted.

The College's high standards are applicable to all those who conduct, supervise or support research in the College's name, including staff, students and other individuals working on College premises or using College facilities. It also applies to Middlesbrough College staff working in collaboration with other organisations.
All those to whom the Code is applicable are expected to work in accordance with it.
The following College policy documents should also be consulted in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy
- Staff Computer Acceptable Use Policy
- Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal Procedure of all Staff (excluding Senior Potholders)
- Data Protection Policy (General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Policy)
- Research Ethics Policy
- Health, Safety, Welfare Policy
- Procedure for dealing with allegations of academic malpractice or misconduct.

2.0 Principles for Research Conduct

The principles which govern the conduct of research at Middlesbrough College are based on the Nolan Principles of Public Life. They are:

- *High Standards*: Researchers are expected to strive for excellence and the highest ethical standards when conducting research.

- *Honesty*: At the heart of all research, regardless of discipline, is the need for researchers to be honest in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of other researchers, at every stage in the research process.

- *Openness*: While recognising the need for researchers to protect their own research interest in the process of planning their research and obtaining their results, the College encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work with other researchers within and outside the College and with the public.

- *Accountability*: Researchers are expected to ensure that the work they undertake is consistent with the expectations of the College and any other parties involved in the research, such as funding or regulatory bodies, professional associations, collaborators or participant groups.

- *Integrity*: Researchers are expected to take appropriate actions to address actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest throughout their research.

- *Inclusion*: Middlesbrough College aims to promote and sustain an inclusive research culture, providing equality of opportunity for all who are part of its research community and advancing equality by identifying and removing barriers affecting researchers. Researchers are expected to treat individuals with dignity and respect, to challenge inequalities, and to anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances in carrying out their research.

- *Safety*: Middlesbrough College and its researchers will ensure the dignity, rights, safety and well–being of all involved in its research and avoid unreasonable risk or harm to its research subjects, participants, researchers and others. Research will only be initiated and continued if the anticipated benefits justify the risks involved.

3.0 Responsibilities

Both the University and individual researchers have responsibility for research conduct and standards. The College is responsible for:

- *Leadership*: it is the responsibility of the College, through the Academic Board and the Research Ethics Committee, to foster a climate in which research is conducted in accordance with good research practice.

- *New researchers*: The College has a special responsibility for the well-being and career development of students and early career researchers. Managers must ensure that there are systems for monitoring and mentoring to provide adequate opportunities for career development.

- Keeping this and other governance documents relating to research conduct current, ensuring that they reflect relevant external requirements.

- Monitoring compliance by all researchers with this Code of Practice.

All those conducting research at Middlesbrough College are responsible for:

- Leadership in maintaining best practice standards among all members of their teams.

- Demonstrating good practice in all aspects of their research.

- Maintaining awareness of the College's and relevant external policies and procedures relating to research.

- Ensuring that their research complies with these policies and procedures, seeking guidance if necessary, and reporting any concerns to the proper persons.

- Engaging with opportunities for training and development.

4.0 Legal and Ethical Requirements

Middlesbrough College and its researchers must comply with all legal and ethical requirements relating to their research. Research must be conducted in accordance with the highest contemporary ethics standards, and researchers must obtain the required ethical approvals. In particular, researchers must comply with the following requirements:

- Researchers who are planning to collect data or biological samples from human participants must submit protocols for ethics review by the Research Ethics Committee where appropriate and abide by the outcome of such reviews.

- Researchers collecting or using information about living individuals (personal data) must also comply with the requirements of UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) legislation and register their project with the College's Data Protection Officer.

Research data can also be subject to the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations. Researchers must deal appropriately with any requests for information made under this legislation.

5.0 Research Data and Records

Research data and records must be accurate, and sufficiently detailed and complete in the context of the conventions of the relevant discipline to enable verification of research results and to reflect what was communicated, decided or done.

Data, including electronic data, must be recorded in a durable, secure and retrievable form, be appropriately indexed, and comply with any relevant protocols. Appropriate levels of data security should be applied based on a systematic assessment of sensitivity and risk.

The individual researcher is responsible for the retention and archiving of data and must comply with any external requirements (e.g. funders), and the terms on which ethical approval was granted. Where there are no specific external requirements for retention, the researcher should keep the data as long as is necessary for the purpose of the research, and in line with any data collection agreements, or funder or institutional requirements.

It is the responsibility of each researcher to monitor research outputs and to ensure that the institution complies with its obligations to funders to manage intellectual property arising from research and to disseminate the results of publicly funded research.

Data forming the basis of publications must be available for discussion with other researchers. Where confidentiality provisions apply, the data must be kept in a way that allows reference by third parties without breaching confidentiality. Where data are obtained from limited access databases or via a contractual arrangement, written indication of the location of the original data, or key information regarding the database from which it was obtained, must be retained by the researcher of the unit.

It should be recognised that offering a right of confidentiality to research participants and other persons associated with research cannot be an absolute right. Certain circumstances,

such as a risk of imminent harm to a person or persons, or the disclosure of information such as an undetected serious crime, may require a researcher to act in the public interest or in the interest of protecting a person(s), by passing on the information to an appropriate agency such as the police. Where the nature of the research is such that there is a significant risk of such disclosures arising, any agreement made with participants or other persons associated with the research, such as may be made via an information sheet and consent form, should be clear about the limits of any confidentiality right.

In some circumstances it may be appropriate to mitigate the risk by asking the consenting persons to avoid giving any information that is not directly relevant to the research topic and that might challenge the confidentiality agreement. Where relevant, advice should be sought from the Middlesbrough College Research Ethics Committee (REC) on developing secure protocols to manage risks associated with confidentiality challenges.

For specific guidance relating to the management of records held on Middlesbrough College computing network, or elsewhere (e.g. laptops, portable storage devices and websites not hosted by Middlesbrough College) researchers are advised to consult the College's Computing Acceptable Use Policy.

7.0 Authorship, Publication and Access to Research Outputs

Authorship

- For a person to be recorded as an author of a publication requires that s/he is directly involved in the creation of the publication by:

    - being solely responsible for, or making a significant contribution to, the conception of the project, or collection, analysis and interpretation of the data on which the publication is based;

AND

    - writing or revising the intellectual content.

- The right to authorship is not tied to position or profession; ghost, gift or honorary authorship is unacceptable. Authorship must honestly reflect the contribution to the work being published.

- Any part of an article critical to its main conclusion must be the responsibility of at least one author.

- An author's role in a research output must be sufficient for him/her to take public responsibility for at least that part of the output in their area of expertise.

- No person who fulfils the criteria for authorship should be excluded from the submitted work.

- When there is more than one co-author of a research output, one co-author (by agreement with the other authors) must be nominated as executive author for the purposes of administration and correspondence. When there is more than one co-author of a research output, the authors are required to discuss and reach agreement on the order in which authors shall be listed.

- Other persons who contributed to the work who are not authors must be named in Acknowledgements (where the publisher provides for this, and in a manner consistent with the norms of the research field or discipline). An author must ensure that the work of research students, research assistants and technical officers is recognised in a publication derived from research to which they have made a contribution.

- Researchers must comply with authorship criteria appropriate to their discipline and/or according to the requirements of the journal their work is to be published in.

Publication

- Publication of more than one paper based on the same set(s) or sub-set(s) of data, or material previously published by the same author(s) is not acceptable, except

where each subsequent paper fully cross-references and acknowledges the earlier paper or papers (for example, in a series of closely related work, or where a complete work grew out of a preliminary publication and this is fully acknowledged). It is the researcher's obligation to follow publishers' guidelines. Material may normally be republished only when it is for a different audience, e.g. if an internal work-in-progress report becomes a journal article, or if an article in one language is republished in a different language.

- Submission of substantially similar work to more than one publisher at the same time is not acceptable. Work may be submitted to a second publisher only when the first publisher approached has rejected it.

- Publications must include information on the source of financial support for the research and must include a disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest. Financial sponsorship that carries an embargo on such naming of a sponsor should normally be avoided. Therefore, you must seek advice from a Senior Manager, before entering into such an agreement.

- Intellectual Property in relation to publications is governed within College employee's Contract of Employment.

- The Freedom of Information Co-ordinator should be consulted where confidentiality provisions to protect Intellectual Property rights, which may limit free publication and dissemination, are be being considered.

- Researchers must ensure that their Middlesbrough College affiliation is properly recorded on publications.

Access to Research Outputs

- Middlesbrough College believes that the ideas and knowledge from publicly funded research should be made available and accessible for public use, interrogation and scrutiny, as widely, rapidly and effectively as possible, and should be preserved and remain accessible for future generations. Accordingly, all Middlesbrough College-affiliated research outputs, including journal articles (mandatory), published peer reviewed conference proceedings (mandatory), book chapters and similar material (recommended), either in the form of the author's final peer-reviewed manuscript or the formally-published version, where copyright allows, should be deposited in Canvas upon acceptance for publication or as soon as possible thereafter and no later than three months after the date of acceptance. This version may be replaced or augmented with the final published version of the output, with publisher's type setting and formatting, at a later date if appropriate.

8.0 Collaborative Working

- The College will work with partner organisations to ensure the agreement of, and compliance with, common standards and procedures for the conduct of collaborative research.

- Researchers should be aware of the standards and procedures for the conduct of research followed by any organisations involved in collaborative research that they are undertaking. Being aware the standards is particularly important for international collaborations, where researchers should ensure that they recognise any differences in expectations or requirements. They should also be aware of any contractual requirements involving partner organisations, seeking guidance and assistance where necessary and reporting any concerns or irregularities to the appropriate person as soon as they become aware of it.

9.0 Conflicts of Interest

Definition

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a researcher, or their close family or associates has a private, personal or commercial interest which may influence the objective exercise of any aspect of their College duties. This may include perceived and potential conflicts of interest. A test for whether a conflict of interest exists is whether an external observer, knowing the facts of the situation, would reasonably think that the person might be influenced by the interest.

The basic principles to be applied to cases of conflict of interest are:

- To disclose always.

- To manage the conflict as appropriate, including prohibiting the activity if necessary.

- To protect the interests of the College, other parties who may be affected, and the public interest.

Responsibilities

Researchers are responsible for:

- Disclosing to their line manager, any conflict of interest that may arise.

- Complying with all reasonable actions taken to manage or remove such conflicts of interest.

Line managers are responsible for:

- Consulting with the individual involved to determine areas of concern and identify and agree actions.

- Implementing the appropriate action required to manage or eliminate the conflict of interest.

- Documenting the circumstances and action taken.

10.0 Advice

Researchers who have questions about how the provisions of this Code of Practice apply to their research should seek advice from the Higher Education Office or if a research student, their supervisor.

11.0 Allegations of Research Malpractice or Misconduct

Research misconduct or malpractice is characterised as behaviour or action that falls short of the standards required to ensure that the integrity of research at Middlesbrough College is upheld.

Research misconduct or malpractice, which includes acts of omission as well as acts of commission, means any breach of the College's Code of Practice for Research, including, but not limited to:

- fabrication or falsification, including the creation of false data, imagery of other aspects of research, including documentation and/or participant consent, and the inappropriate manipulation/selection of data, imagery, documentation and/or consents;

- dishonesty in proposing, carrying out or reporting results of research, including suppression of relevant findings or data, and misrepresentation of data and/or interest and/or involvement;

- plagiarism, including the general misappropriation or use of others' ideas, intellectual property or work (written or otherwise) without acknowledgement or permission;

- deliberate, dangerous or negligent deviation from accepted practice in carrying out research;

- failure to follow agreed protocols or accepted procedures, or to exercise due care, including:

    - failure to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for avoiding unreasonable risk or harm to humans, animals used in research or the environment;

    - failure to properly handle privileged or private information on individuals collected during research;

- facilitation of misconduct in research by collusion in or concealment of such actions by others;

- failure to comply with College policies regarding ethics review;

- intentional non-compliance with:

    - the terms and conditions governing the award of external funding for research;

    - the College's policies and procedures relating to research, including accounting requirements, ethics, and health and safety regulations;

    - any other legal or ethical requirements for the conduct of research.

The College believes that staff and students should feel able to raise legitimate concerns without fear of their position within the College being jeopardised. Therefore, a Whistleblowing Policy for staff and a Complaints Procedure have been created for dealing with such allegations. The Associate Director – HE (Teaching & Learning) is responsible for the investigation of such allegations.

Revision History		
Version	Date	Detail
1.0	September 2017	
1.1	August 2018	Document edited for clarity and to homogenise presentation and implement URLs to College website HE Essential Information page.
1.2	March 2020	Guidance added regarding group, classroom/peer-based research at Levels 4 and 5.
1.3	December 2020	Further guidance added regarding group, classroom/peer based, or work setting research at Levels 4 and 5. Incorporates the HE code of practice for research, previously a sperate document.
1.4	January 2022	Checked for accuracy.
1.5	October 2023	Specific references to 'undergraduate' projects removed as policy covers postgraduate projects, too.