Research Ethics Approval Process 2025-28

LCCA Governance

London College of Contemporary Arts

ID: ASA-007

Contents

Introduction

1.1 All students who are wishing to complete primary research at any stage of their degree should seek guidance as to whether ethical approval is needed before any research is completed. This is to ensure that students are compliant with rules and regulations related to ethical, legal, and professional frameworks, data protection and ensures that any participants understand their involvement in the research.

1.2 LCCA ensures that it complies with the ethical policies and procedures set out by UCA, details of which can be found here.

1.3 Not all research being undertaken will require ethical approval (Appendix B). Student should complete the Tier 1 checklist (Appendix C) and have this confirmed by their relevant Subject Leader. If ethical approval is required the student will need to complete the Research Ethics Approval Form (Appendix D) and submit to a Subject Research Ethics Committee.

Subject Research Ethics Committee

2.1 Each Subject area – Business and Creative - will have a Research Ethics Committee. This will be made up of One Course Director (Chair), 3 x Subject Leads, and a Quality Assurance (QA) representative (Secretary). Normally the members would have experience in research ethics and the ethical approval process.

2.2 The remit of the committee will be the following:

- To consider student applications for ethical approval for primary research,
- To approve or refer for further work any applications received,
- Allocate and confirm supervisors where needed,
- Monitor the research processes including confirmation that policies, regulations, and frameworks are being followed, including that of UCA.
- Report to Academic Board on any research related issues within that area.

2.3 The Committee will be held once a term, additional meetings can be scheduled as required. The QA Office will act a Secretariat and keep a record of the outcome of applications that required ethical approval.

Ethical Approval Responsibility

3.1 When completing primary research, all students must determine whether ethical approval is required. Subject Leads and the students are responsible for ensuring that ethical approval has been checked and confirmed before any research commences. Completing primary research that required ethical approval that has not had committee approval would be considered as academic misconduct and could results in the assessment being failed.

3.2 Course Directors and Subject Leads should ensure that any assignment briefs that could require students to complete primary research include the Tier 1 checklist (appendix C) and details for ethical approval. The approval should be sought and confirmed before the student commences any research. It is recommended that a deadline for submission of the Tier 1 form and Research Ethics Approval Form (Appendix D) are set in the assignment brief.

Process

4.1 Once a student decides that they will be completing primary research, the Tier 1 checklist should be completed as soon as possible and submitted to the Subject Leader for approval. If ethical approval is not required, the student can commence the research. If ethical approval is required, the student will need to complete the Research Ethics Approval Form (Appendix D)

4.2 The student should complete the form and attach the required documentation before the deadline set by the Research Ethics Committee for that area. The form should be checked and confirmed by the Subject Leader before submission to the committee. The completed and checked forms should be sent to quality@lcca.ac.uk.

4.3 Once collated, the assigned QA Officer will distribute the applications to the committee members for consideration before the meeting. The meeting will take place where the Committee will confirm whether approval has been granted or further work is required. The QA Office will inform the students of the outcome within 48 hours of the meetings.

4.4 For students who are required to complete further work on their application, they should resubmit the form with changes before the set deadline. The revised application will then be considered by the QA Officer and the Chair, confirming whether approval has been granted. Where approval is not granted the student may be required to resubmit a new application with support from the Subject Leader.

4.5 The QA Office will keep a record of all ethics approval applications; this will be checked before the Internal Boards to ensure that where required the approval has been granted. Student should include a note of the approval date on their assessment submission to confirm this with the marking tutor.

4.6 All queries related to ethical approval should be submitted to quality@lcca.ac.uk and reference should be made to the UCA Ethical Framework and Regulations when completing any research that required ethical approval.

Data Management and Storage

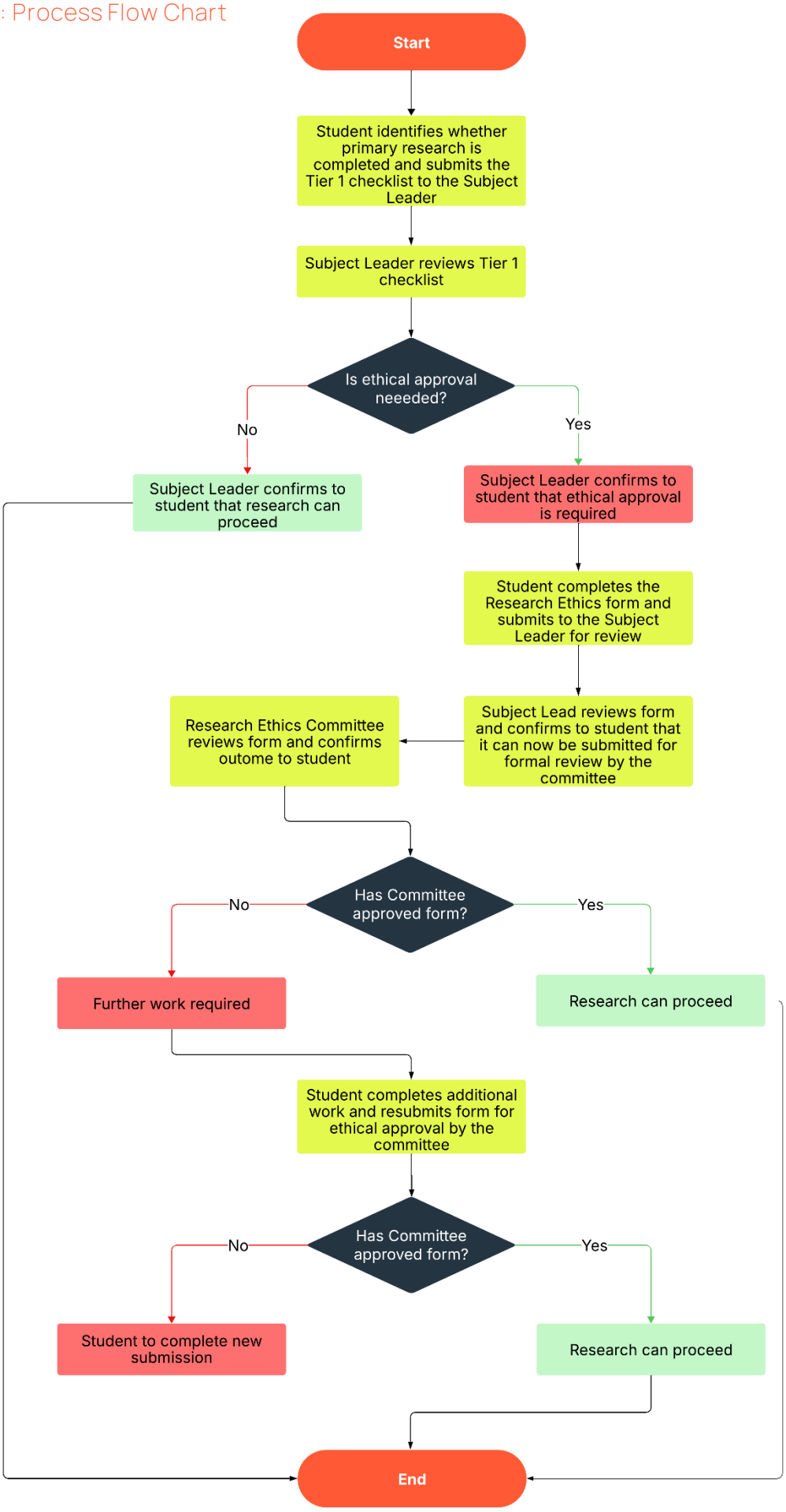
5.1 All paper forms involving personal data (such as consent forms) should be scanned as electronic forms and stored ONLY on your LCCA OneDrive. You should not give permission for anyone to view the files except for your supervisor. The paper copies should be securely destroyed and (e.g. using a shredder). Data should not be stored on a USB or any hard drives. Losing this would breach GDPR and ethical guidelines.

5.2 Participants should be allocated a Unique Identifier (ID) code prior to any data collection and only this ID should be recorded as part of the research (not any personal data) on interview forms, questionnaires etc.

5.3 If focus group data is going to be transcribed then it should be done so as soon as possible, and the original recording deleted. You must inform the participants of any records and give them the opportunity to decline. If the data is not going to be transcribed, then the data should be pseudo-anonymised, and recording destroyed as soon as the analysis completed.

5.4 All digital materials relating to the research, including data, recordings, and any signed forms must be stored on your LCCA OneDrive only. They will be stored for a period of 3 months after your graduation and then will be destroyed. No data should be stored on personal laptops/hard drives or cloud storage.

Appendix A: Process Flow Chart



Appendix B: Does your Research need Ethical Approval?

Before you perform any research activity, you must complete and submit a Tier 1 checklist

This page is intended to help student researchers identify whether their research project will require ethical review from the Research Committee.
The advice below will help you to establish if your project constitutes research, and if the type of research you are conducting requires ethical clearance from LCCA, UCA or an external review body.

Is my project research?

Research in this context is defined as 'a process of investigation leading to new insights effectively shared'. Scholarship refers to the maintenance and advancement of one's own personal knowledge and skills to maintain up-to-date professional expertise. Research in the Creative Arts incorporates modes of inquiry through practice including processes of making that enhance knowledge and understanding.

What types of research require ethical clearance?

As a matter of principle, all research is subject to ethical considerations and risk assessment, considering professional codes of practice/standards where these exist, and subject specificity.

All research involving human participants, whether in a direct or virtual or any other way, must consider the following issues from the inception of the research project.

Basic Ethical Issues:

1. The value of the research
2. Informed consent
3. Openness and honesty
4. Right to withdraw without penalty
5. Confidentiality and anonymity
6. Protection from harm
7. Briefing and debriefing
8. Reimbursements, payments and rewards
9. Experience of the researcher and suitability of methods employed
10. Ethics standards of external bodies and institutions
11. Research for clients/consultants
12. Research data management

Does my project require ethical review by an external body?

Where external bodies and institutions (either those funding the research, such as AHRC, or professional bodies to which the researcher belongs) have their own ethical codes or professional standards, these must be followed.

Appendix C: Tier 1 Check List

Part 1

Does the study involve human participants? If yes please continue to Question 1. If no please continue to question 12

Issues that may indicate that mitigation measures and/or ethical approval by Research Committee are necessary			
1	Does the study involve participants who are unable to give informed consent?	Yes ☐	No ☐
2	Does the research involve sensitive topics?	Yes ☐	No ☐
3	Does the research involve groups where the permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial access?	Yes ☐	No ☐
4	Is the research to be conducted without the full and informed consent of the participant?	Yes ☐	No ☐
5	Does the research involve access to records of personal or confidential information concerning identifiable individuals?	Yes ☐	No ☐
6	Does the research induce, or have the potential to induce, psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or to cause more than minimal pain?	Yes ☐	No ☐
7	Does the research involve, or have the potential to involve, intrusive interventions that participants would not normally encounter, or which may cause them to reveal information that could cause concern in the course of their everyday life?	Yes ☐	No ☐
8	Will the research take place outside the UK?	Yes ☐	No ☐
9	Will the research involve respondents to the internet or other visual/vocal methods where respondents may be identified?	Yes ☐	No ☐
10	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	Yes ☐	No ☐
11	Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?	Yes ☐	No ☐

If you have answered Yes to any of these questions, you should submit further details of measures to mitigate ethical risks and a formal application for ethics approval using the Research Ethics Approval Form (Appendix D).

If you answered No to all the above questions, then you need not submit your project for formal ethics approval.

Part 2

Further issues that require consideration in research good practice				
12	Have the topic and any ethical implications been addressed with your supervisor/line manager?	Yes ☐		No ☐
13	Does the topic merit further research of the kind being proposed and is it appropriate to the level of study?	Yes ☐		No ☐
14	Do you, as the researcher, have the skills to carry out this research?	Yes ☐		No ☐
15	Are the participant information sheet or leaflet and consent forms appropriate?	Yes ☐	NA ☐	No ☐
16	Are the procedures for recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent appropriate?	Yes ☐	NA ☐	No ☐
17	Are the procedures for ensuring confidentiality/anonymity of respondent data appropriate?	Yes ☐	NA ☐	No ☐
18	Has a risk assessment been carried out and the form completed, where necessary?	Yes ☐	NA ☐	No ☐
19	An ethical consideration of any work that involves more than one participant, or a public facing research practice (e.g., a participant performance in a public place, work with vulnerable groups) Including a detailed work and contingency plan, according to regional and national variations on health conditions as advised by the UK Govt.	Yes ☐	NA ☐	No ☐

If you have answered Yes to any of these questions, you should submit further details of measures to mitigate ethical risks and a formal application for ethics approval using the Research Ethics Approval Form (Appendix D).

If you answered No to all the above questions, then you need not submit your project for formal ethics approval.

Appendix D: Research Ethics Approval Form (Students)

This form should be completed by all students looking to complete primary research. All sections and attachments in this form should be completed. You must append all the materials for your research to this document (e.g. Consent Form, Questionnaires and Advertising/Marketing Materials). The staff member reviewing this form needs to review full details of what your participants will experience. You should refer to the UCA ethical guidelines before completing this form.

This form should be submitted to your nominated supervisor BEFORE any research takes place.

Part A: Summary

A1	Course Title	
A2	Project Title	
A3	Student Name	
A4	LCCA Email Address	
A5	Nominated Supervisor name	

A6: Proposed Summary, what are you intending to do? (100-150 words) Be as explicit and concise as possible about the project rationale and content, include your aims, methods, and details of intended procedures. At the end of the form, you must attach all measures, tests, inventories, questionnaires, interview questions, and other stimuli you intend to use.

Part B: Risk Assessment

Does your proposed research study involve any of the following? Place an x in the relevant box		Yes	No
B1	Research involving vulnerable groups (i.e. children under 16, those who are dependents or individuals who lack capacity)	☐	☐
B2	Research involving sensitive topics (such as a participant's sexual behaviour, political preferences etc.)	☐	☐
B3	Research involving a significant element of deception (i.e. withholding the research hypothesis)	☐	☐
B4	Research involving access to records of personal or confidential information.	☐	☐
B5	Research involving access to potentially sensitive data through third parties (i.e. organisational employee data)	☐	☐
B6	Research that could induce psychological stress, anxiety, humiliation or cause more than minimal pain.	☐	☐
B7	Research that may place the researcher at risk of psychological or physical harm	☐	☐
B8	Research that is conducted off campus (e.g. in a library, community, business etc.)	☐	☐
B9	Research involving invasive intentions that would not be encountered in everyday life (i.e. administering drugs, exercise etc.)	☐	☐
B10	Research that may have an adverse impact on the employment or social standing of the participant.	☐	☐
B11	Research that may lead to 'labelling' either by the research or participants (categorisation).	☐	☐
B12	Research that requires permissions from another source (e.g. school, business, copyright holder etc.)	☐	☐
B13	Research that requires consent from a gatekeeper (e.g. manager, business owner etc.)	☐	☐
B13b	If you answered yes to question 13, have you gained written consent?	☐	☐

B14: If you answered 'Yes' to any of the above (Section B), please ensure how you will ensure the ethical conduct of your research. 100-150 words.

Part C: Data Management and Storage

During Data Collection

All paper forms involving personal data (such as consent forms) should be scanned as electronic forms and stored ONLY on your LCCA OneDrive. You should not give permission for anyone to view the files except for your supervisor. The paper copies should be securely destroyed and (e.g. using a shredder). Data should not be stored on a USB or any hard drives. Losing this would breach GDPR and ethical guidelines.

Participants should be allocated a Unique Identifier (ID) code prior to any data collection and only this ID should be recorded as part of the research (not any personal data) on interview forms, questionnaires etc.

If focus group data is going to be transcribed then it should be done so as soon as possible, and the original recording deleted. You must inform the participants of any records and give them the opportunity to decline. If the data is not going to be transcribed, then the data should be pseudo-anonymised, and recording destroyed as soon as the analysis completed.

Data Storage and Collection

All digital materials relating to the research, including data, recordings, and any signed forms must be stored on your LCCA OneDrive only. They will be stored for a period of 3 months after your graduation and then will be destroyed. No data should be stored on personal laptops/hard drives or cloud storage.

C1: By Ticking this box, you are confirming that you understand and agree to the data collection and storage guidelines of the LCCA and UCA.	☐

Part D: Final Checklist and Student Declaration

Please tick the relevant box		Yes	No	N/A
D1	In completing this form, you confirm that you have read and have followed the guidance provided by LCCA and UCA?	☐	☐	☐
D2	Have you included any adverts or letters by which you meant to recruit participants?	☐	☐	☐
D3	Have you detailed mechanisms and timescales for withdrawing from the study (including their data) clear to the participants?	☐	☐	☐
D4	Have you included your consent form?	☐	☐	☐
D5	Have you included how you will make it clear to participants that the research is being completed under the supervision of a LCCA tutor?	☐	☐	☐
D6	Have you include how you will provide participants with the supervisor's name and contact details?	☐	☐	☐
D7	Have you included how you will provide participants with your name and LCCA email address?	☐	☐	☐
D8	Have you included all measures (tests, questionnaires etc.) you intend to use?	☐	☐	☐
D9	Have you included details of data storage that will be provided to participants?	☐	☐	☐
D10	Have you included details as to who will have access to the raw and un-summarised data?	☐	☐	☐
D11	Have you included details on any potential publication following the research completion?	☐	☐	☐
D12	I can confirm that participants will not be subject to any undue or disproportionate incentives to participate in the study.	☐	☐	☐

To be completed by student:

D13: Declaration

By submitting the form, you are agreeing to comply with the UCA and LCCA ethical guidelines, rules, and regulations. You are also agreeing to comply with the following procedures, failure to do so will result in an ethical breach and may result in failure of the module:

- Only you and your supervisor will have access to the data
- You must show your supervisor all raw data saved on your OneDrive before any analysis is completed
- Once analysis is completed, you must give you supervisor all raw data and this will be stored as outlined in Section C

- Course Directors are responsible for ensuring the data management of all student research meets ethical and GDPR guidelines.

- No data collection will be completed prior to ethical approval.

Full Name	Signature	Date

Part E: Supervisors Review and Declaration

To be completed by the nominated supervisor:		
E1: Supervisors Confirmation I can confirm that I have discussed the research with the student, and I have reviewed the form and related materials. I agree that in addition to general ethical issues, the matters listed above have been specifically addressed and mitigated against.		
Name	Signature	Date

Part F: Ethical Approval and Outcome

Review Date	
Panel Names and Title	
Supervisor Confirmed	Yes ☐ No ☐ Include name of confirmed supervisor

Outcome	
The proposed research project is APPROVED. You may commence data collection (Note if any changes are made, the form will need to be resubmitted).	☐
The proposal is APPROVED SUBJECT TO MINOR CONDITIONS. Before commencing data collection, you must make the required amendments and resubmit the form.	☐
The proposal is NOT APPROVED. You must address the issues listed below and make a new submission.	☐

Panel Feedback

Key Information	
Version	1.1
Approved By	QA RRP
Author(s)	Head of Quality
Owner	Quality Assurance
QA Matrix	UCA Research Governance and Ethics QAA Quality Code Advice and Guidance: Research Degrees
Date Approved	01 Mar 2023
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Readership	All

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Summary of Changes
V 1.0	Head of Quality	01-03-2023	First version published
V 1.1	QA Manager	30-09-2025	Document formatting and publishing