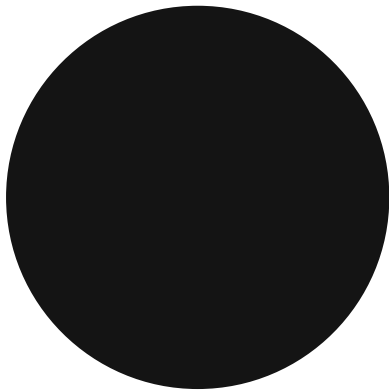


Ethics Guidelines



This document contains a set of ethical guidelines you should follow when conducting research as a design student at university.

As a student researcher your focus will be on learning the processes of research rather than contributing to new knowledge in the way you would as an experienced researcher.

Ethics Guidelines

The UTS Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has outlined the following requirements for research involving human participants.

General requirements for research involving human participants

When undertaking research involving human participants, the University requires researchers to:

- a. adhere to UTS and relevant national policy and guidelines
- b. conform to the principles of natural justice: fairness, transparency, equality before the law, freedom from bias, and the right to be heard
- c. plan the research carefully so as not to waste participants time (for example, ensure the information sought is relevant and necessary for the research) and to minimise any adverse consequences for the subjects/participants (for example, minimise disruption, intrusion, risk, discomfort)
- d. identify themselves as either staff or student of UTS
- e. provide sufficient information to participants so that they are informed about all relevant aspects of the research
- f. obtain appropriate informed consent
- g. accept any participants' right to withdraw from research projects at any time during the course of the project and along with any implications of withdrawal, and whether it will be possible to withdraw data
- h. ensure that any information/data is recorded in accordance with the Privacy Principles as outlined in the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- i. ensure that confidentiality is maintained (that is, any information obtained through the research is not divulged without permission of the subjects/participants)
- j. reveal any financial or funding interest (such as commercial sponsorship) arising from the research to the HREC (if submitted for approval) and to participants/subjects
- k. reveal any potential conflict of interest arising from the research to the HREC (if submitted for approval) and to participants/subjects.

Note: For research conducted outside of NSW researchers must comply with the governing principles of this directive and the responsible conduct of research policy, provided that such compliance does not breach relevant local legislation.

Research should not be conducted in other countries as a mechanism of avoiding compliance with this policy and local legislation.

www.gsu.uts.edu.au/policies/research-ethical-conduct-humans.html (2014)

This has implications for designers and design researchers seeking to understand users through interview and observation techniques. Your research plans need to develop in relation to a set of ethical guidelines.

Ethics Guidelines

In order to simplify the ethical dilemmas and problems faced when learning the research techniques employed 'in the field', it is important to first make use of existing social and familial networks to find willing participants for your research. Normally, the people you know personally are not the best subjects for research as their relationship to you may bring into question the validity of your findings. However, for the purposes of developing your research skills the people whom you already know are a good place to start. In student projects you should primarily interview family, relations, friends or classmates. These are people with whom you already have an existing relationship and so are easy to access and talk to. They might also give some valuable feedback on your research techniques. Even though you know these family and friends well it is still important to adhere to an appropriate set of ethical procedures.

It is important to respect the privacy and dignity of those you interview by not asking personal or provocative questions which may embarrass or offend.

Attached is an information sheet about your research project. You should give this sheet to the potential participant, or the participant's parent or guardian, making sure to explain each point within the sheet verbally. This means they will be fully informed about the nature of your research, your intentions, research objectives, and the methods you will use, as well as what will happen to the information you gather. They can then make an informed decision as to whether they wish to participate.

Also attached is a consent form. This ensures that the participant, or the participant's parent or guardian, has given their informed consent to take part in the research process. You must keep this form safe and secure.

Information sheet

My name is _____ and I am a student of Design at UTS, Sydney.

I am conducting research for an assignment as part of the subject:

The coordinator of this subject is _____

If you require any confirmation or further information about this research please contact them on _____

The purpose of this research project is to _____

e.g. help me acquire the skills to gather and interpret research data about people and their relationship to technologies. The research will involve an interview of not longer than 20 minutes / 40 minutes (circle appropriate selection) about your experience of current and past technologies and your ideas of what might happen in the future. The questions will not be intrusive. If at any time you feel uncomfortable about your participation you are free to withdraw at any stage. The data will be analysed to identify key themes and ideas. It will be only be published as a part of a student project, as part of an online wordpress blog and

Note: This study has been designed in accordance with the guidelines and policies of the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher or Faculty contact person for student research projects, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: 02 9514 9615, Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Consent Form for Interview Participation

I _____ (insert name of participant or participant's parent or guardian) agree that I _____ (insert name of participant authorised by parent or guardian) will participate in the research project _____ being conducted by _____ from subject _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I understand that the purpose of this study is to _____

I agree that the student researcher _____ has answered my questions fully and clearly.

I agree that the interview material gathered for this project will be only published as a part of a student project and is not to be used for any other reason nor reproduced in any other context.

I would prefer my real name not to be used _____

..... date/...../.....

Note: This study has been designed in accordance with the guidelines and policies of the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher or Faculty contact person for student research projects, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: 02 9514 9615, Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.