

ETHICS REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESEARCHERS

Researchers should consider the following questions when devising research proposals involving human participants, personal, medical or otherwise sensitive data or methodologically controversial approaches. N.B. not all of these questions will be relevant to every study. These questions provide pointers to direct researchers' thinking about the ethical dimensions of their research. It is expected that researchers will already have addressed the academic justification for the project in their proposal; the guidance questions set out below aim to help researchers address specific ethical issues in so far as they relate to participants or data.

In particular, consideration of risks to the research participants versus benefits need to be weighed up by researchers. It is important to think through carefully the likely impact on participants or vulnerable groups of any data collection methods. Certain groups are particularly vulnerable, or will be placed in a vulnerable position in relation to research, and may succumb to pressure; for example children or people with learning disability, or students when they are participating in research as students. Some participants will have diminished capacity to give consent and are therefore less able to protect themselves and require specific consideration (see further guidance given on the RPDD web pages regarding informed consent). The Research Ethics Committee (REC) recognizes that it is not only research with human participants that raises relevant ethical concerns. Researchers may be assessing sensitive information, the publication or analysis of which may have direct impact on agencies, communities or individuals. For example, collection and use of archive, historical, legal, online or visual materials may raise ethical issues (e.g for families and friends of people deceased), and research on provision of social or human services may impact user provision. Similarly, use of other people's primary data may need clearance or raise concerns about its interpretation. The Research Ethics Committee will assess whether the relevant questions have been adequately addressed when it scrutinises proposals. Please ensure that each answer provides the Committee with enough information to make an informed decision on the ethical dimensions of the proposal.

The LSE Research Ethics Policy and guidance will be reviewed annually and may be subject to further development.

The completed questionnaire should only be returned to Michael Nelson in the Research Division where specific issues have been identified and the supervisor/researcher would like the Research Ethics Committee to consider the application. Where you have considered questions to be irrelevant please indicate this on the form.

I. Project Details

Project Title: EU Kids Online III: WP4 Exploring children's understanding of risk

II. Applicant Details

Name:	Sonia Livingstone
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III. Research Aims

Please provide *brief* details of the research aims and the scientific background of the research. A full copy of the proposal should be attached to this document.

EU Kids Online III is a thematic network to stimulate and coordinate investigation into the use of new media by children. It is funded by the EC's Safer Internet Programme and co-ordinated by the LSE. The general aim of this *third phase (2011-14)* of the *EU Kids Online* network is to provide a focal point for timely findings and critical analyses of new media uses and associated risks among children across Europe, drawing on these to sustain an active dialogue with stakeholders about priority areas of concern for child online safety. In its *second phase EU Kids Online II* successfully conducted a survey of children in 25 countries, with the approval of the LSE Research Ethics Committee. One of the specific aims of this *third phase* is to conduct equivalent and nationally comparable qualitative research. Hence this research ethics proposal is focused on Work Package 4 of *EU Kids Online III*, which is entitled 'exploring children's understanding of risk'.

In a research field faced with considerable methodological, technical and ethical challenges, a nuanced account of children's own understandings of risk online has yet to emerge, particularly in a manner that permits comparisons across countries. While

ONLY COMPLETE THE RELEVANT PARTS OF THIS DOCUMENT. THESE WILL HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AFTER COMPLETION OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS CHECKLIST.

1. Informed consent.

1.1

Association, UK) and Maria José Cantarino (Telefonica, Spain).

As explained in section 1.1, national researchers will discuss the study carefully with all those participating in the research.

1.3. Has information (written and oral) about the study been prepared in an appropriate form and language for potential participants? (see Informed Consent guidance which lists questions to be considered). At what point in the study will this information be offered?

As described in section 1.1, information about the study has been prepared in an appropriate form and language for potential participants (children, parents and teachers).

Information about the study will be provided orally and in written form for all children (and in written form for parents if national ethical guidelines require this). The national research teams across the 15 participating countries will ensure the translation of materials into their local languages.

As explained in section 1.1, we will first contact the school director (head of school), and then approach teachers, parents if appropriate and child participants.

persons, such as school counsellors, school psychologists, clinical psychologists – the appropriate choice of contact may vary for different countries and researchers from national teams have sufficient expe

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such cases, the researcher will also tell the child that they are concerned and talk to them about the action that they will be taking.

After each interview, the researcher will thank the respondent and provide debriefing to them. Contacts for possible school psychologists, help lines or school counsellors who may help to solve potential problems will be provided as appropriate.

3.2. How has the methodology addressed how sensitive information, data or sources will be handled?

All participants will be advised during the introductory stages that data will be held securely and kept confidential, and that the final data will stored, analysed and reported in a completely anonymised format.

Researchers will not collect any information identifying children (e.g. home address) because the data will only be collected in schools. After the completion of the fieldwork, all other personal identifiers will be removed. The details of each interview case/ focus group will be fully anonymised so that anyone analysing that data will not be able to trace the participants.

3.3. Have you been able to devise a timetable of research?

The project timetable is set out below:

November - December 2012: each country participating in the research will conduct the pilot study consisting of 1 focus group, and 2 interviews in every country.

November 2012 – January 2013: coding of the pilot study and producing a first draft of the code book.

January 2013: Network meeting to include thorough discussion and revision of the research design and code book.

February - June 2013: fieldwork in all participating countries – at minimum 6 focus groups and 12 interviews per country, transcription, analysis of data.

July 2013 –April 2013: work on analysis, academic articles and a report to the EC Safer Internet Programme for EU Kids Online III.

4. Ethical questions arising from financial support/the provision of incentives

4.1 Are there any real or perceived conflicts of interest which could compromise the integrity and/or independence of the research due to the nature of the funding body?

No, none

4.2 Have any incentives to the investigator been declared?

No, none

4.3 Are there any restrictions on the freedom of the investigator(s) to publish the results of the research?

No, none

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As stated above, several actions will be taken to ensure confidentiality, namely:

- All data will be kept private, both from other participants and when reporting findings, the only exception to confidentiality being if a child is at risk or participating in an illegal activity.
- The project will adhere to the requirements of data protection rules in terms of data labelling, storage and security relevant for each country.
- Notes from the research session and accompa