ADH Faculty Guidance on LOW RISK research for UG and PGT students

Undergraduate and Taught Post Graduate (UG/PGT) research approved at a programme level should be low risk. In exceptional circumstances, medium risk research can be approved after consultation with the Faculty Head of Research. The University recommends that UG/PGT students should not undertake high risk research.

Please refer to this guide alongside the [DMU Research Ethics Code of Practice (Appendix 2: Framework for Identifying Research Ethics Risk)](#)

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1. Research Study Topic
- LOW RISK studies for UG/PGT should NOT be about sensitive topics such as sexual behaviour, illegal behaviour, experience of violence, abuse or exploitation, mental health, gender or ethnic status, or illness

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2. Interaction with Human Participants
- LOW RISK UG/PGT studies involve living adults who are 18 years and over without physical, cognitive or mental disability/issues, without pregnancy or breastfeeding, who can give consent to the researcher by themselves.
LOW RISK studies for UG/PGT should NOT involve:
- potentially vulnerable groups of people such as children, young people under 18 years old, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers or people with a learning disability or cognitive impairment
- participants who lack capacity physically, cognitively, or mentally
- studies where permission of a gatekeeper is required (e.g. gatekeepers such as adult professionals working with children or the elderly)
- deceased persons, body parts or other human tissues including bodily fluids

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3. Research Activity
- LOW RISK UG/PGT studies should involve straightforward, controlled procedures happening in the UK that are normally experienced in everyday life without causing any damage/harm to the researcher, participants and/or environment
LOW RISK studies for UG/PGT should NOT involve:
- inducing any psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation
- causing more than minimal pain
- intrusive interventions such as administration of substances, vigorous physical exercise, or hypnosis
- causing any health and safety issues for the researcher by, for example, international travel
- causing any environmental damage or harm
- deception
- research happening outside of the UK
- community-based participatory research (commonly led and undertaken by members of community groups/organisations themselves working alongside or in partnership with professional researchers)

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4. Research Data

- LOW RISK UG/PGT studies should involve anonymous or anonymised/pseudonymised data (non-sensitive and non-confidential information) that do not identify either participants or non-participants. Data should be used for the study only, and not shared further (data deletion after the end of the project)

LOW RISK studies for UG/PGT should NOT involve:
- capturing visual or vocal data from which participants can be identified
- utilising personal data, personal quotes, or personal visual images from social media accounts or other internet sites that are not public (e.g. Facebook, Instagram). Use of publicly available data/quotes/images must comply with the terms and conditions of the site and with copyright.
- access to records of personal or sensitive confidential information such as genetic or other biological information
- any data sharing of confidential information beyond the initial consent given
- administrative/secure data from which participants can be identified

5. Suggested Research Methods for LOW RISK UG/PGT Studies
Could involve:
- Anonymous online questionnaire (no collection of personal information from which respondents could potentially be identified)
- Non-participant observation (taking photos of places, products, etc. without people)
- Interviews/focus groups/workshops with fellow students within the university without involving external participants User testing with fellow students within the school without involving external participants (taking photos of the place/product/etc. and interaction between place/product and people without showing people's faces or identifiable body parts)