



University of St Andrews

Ethics Application Form

Introduction

Ethics Application

What type of form do you wish to complete?

New ethics application - select this for any new application for ethics review of research involving humans. This includes applications to renew a favourable opinion which is due to expire and ethics applications which will be accompanied by an SSER. Please check the [guidance on what projects require ethics review](#).

Ethics amendment application – select this only after using the 'request amendment' function. Do not use this for newly created projects.

Ratification of an external ethics favourable opinion/approval - select this if you already have an ethics favourable opinion or approval from an external organisation. This will prompt you to upload your external documents and route you past parts of the form. Please check the [guidance on projects already reviewed by another organisation](#).

None of the above – select this if you are completing another form with no ethics application, for example a standalone SSER with no ethics review application.

(SSER – Security-sensitive and extremism-related research declaration, see the [guidance on 'additional documents'](#))

- New application (including renewals)
- Amendment application
- Ratification
- None of the above

Is this application for research which has already started i.e. a retrospective application. For example, if you have already:

- completed the research
- started collecting human participant data or samples
- begun recruiting participants.

Please select 'no' to this question if you already have an ethics favourable opinion for the research which is due to expire and are seeking a renewal.

Yes

No

Security Sensitive Research Declaration

Are you completing a Security Sensitive Research Declaration?

Yes

No

Applicant Type

Applicant Details

Title

Prof

First Name

Graham

Surname

Kirby

Email

gnck@st-andrews.ac.uk

Select applicant type (for the lead applicant)

- Undergraduate
- Staff
- PGR
- PGT
- Module Co-ordinator (for teaching module applications)
- Autonomous / non-affiliated project

Select the School ethics committee (SEC) which will be reviewing your application. This is usually the School of the lead applicant but, if you are a student, may be the School of your supervisor (check with your supervisor if you are unsure).

Computer Science

You have selected this School/ethics committee:

Computer Science

Please ensure this is correct before proceeding. An incorrect response may delay review of your application.

Research Type

Does the research involve fieldwork and travel?

- Yes
- No

Does the project involve research intended to investigate, prevent or treat any disease, physiological or psychological condition or function?

[Click here for more information if needed.](#)

- Yes
- No

Does the research fit into either of these categories?

- Studies terrorism, extremism, terrorist or extremist organisations for groups, extremist ideologies, radicalisation/de-radicalisation
- Involves visits to websites that might be associated with radicalisation or terrorist/extremist organisations, groups or individuals

Yes

No

Does this project already have external ethics approval from another institution or organisation?

Yes

No

Is this application to renew an existing University ethics favourable opinion or approval i.e. one which is due to expire?

Yes

No

Application reference or approval code

CS15727

Is this application for a multi-phase/linked project i.e. related to another application

Yes

No

Data Type

What type of data/samples will you be using for this research?

For the avoidance of doubt, collection of data from individuals' social media accounts are considered primary data.

- Primary – data or samples collected or collated by the researcher for their research purpose
- Secondary - data or samples already collected or collated in a completed research project or accessed via a published research dataset/ repository / tissue bank
- Library, archival, or official media data – formally published or recorded material, such as articles, books, press releases, historical records.

Does the research involve use of human tissue or samples?

- Yes
- No

Participants

Please complete the filter questions - these determine whether your application will undergo standard review or proportionate review by your School ethics committee. If you are unsure which responses to select, please contact your [School ethics committee](#). For more information on the review process, visit the [Ethical review application](#) webpage.

Will your research involve the data or samples of children

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the data or samples of protected adults?

'Protected adult', in Scotland, means a person 16 years of age or older who, as a result of their particular needs (arising from a physical or mental illness, or a disability, which may disadvantage them), is in need of a registered care service, health service, community care service, or welfare service.

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the data or samples of NHS patients or staff?

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the data or samples of individuals engaged in criminal activity?

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the data or samples of individuals in custody, care homes, or other residential institutions?

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the data or samples of individuals impacted by a traumatic event such as war, displacement, acts of terrorism, abuse, discrimination, crime, disasters, life-changing illness or injury, bereavement?

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the data or samples of individuals where there is any doubt over their capacity for freely given consent such as through cognitive impairment, language barriers, legal status, terminal illness?

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the data or samples of any other individuals where the researcher or SEC identifies a vulnerability that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated?

- Yes
- No

Do you need PVG or DBS approval?

You may need this if your research involves unsupervised contact with children or protected adults whether in the UK or not. You can get advice on PVG and DBS, including how to apply, from:

- Students - Advice and Support Centre (ASC)
- Staff - HR

- Yes
- No

Sensitive Topics

Will your research involve sensitive topics such as:

- Criminal activity
- Traumatic experiences like those detailed above
- Self-identity i.e. gender, national, ethnic or racial identity
- Body image
- Mood or mental health conditions

- Yes
- No

Risks

Is there any significant risk (inc. physical/psychological harm or distress) to the researcher and / or any participants, field assistants, students, collaborators involved in the project?

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve the use of deception, the withholding of any information about the aims of the research or anything other than total transparency over your role as a researcher or what is involved in the research?

- Yes
- No

Data Risks

You may wish to read the guidance on [confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions, before completing the next questions.

Will your research involve collection, creation, inference, or processing of **personal data**?

Personal data is information relating to natural living persons who can be identified directly from the information in question or who can be identified indirectly from that information in combination with other information.

If you are unsure if the data will be personal data, seek advice from Data Protection - dataprot@st-andrews.ac.uk

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve collection, creation, inference or processing of **special category data**?

Special category data is personal data relating to race, ethnic origin, politics, religion or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetics, biometrics (where used for identification purposes), health, sex life or sexual orientation.

If you are unsure if the data will be special category data, seek advice from Data Protection - dataprot@st-andrews.ac.uk

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve audio-visual recordings or photographs of participants or members of the public?

- Yes
- No

Will your research involve collection, creation or inference of any other personal, confidential or sensitive data where you feel this might cause distress or that could cause harm should this data be intercepted?

- Yes
- No

Your responses to the filter questions indicate your application meets the criteria for proportionate review. Please click 'ok' to continue.

If you feel this review route is not appropriate, please review your answers to the filter questions or contact your School ethics committee for advice.

- Ok

Project Outline

Project title

Evaluation of Artifacts Produced in Computer Science Student Projects

Project description (summary) (maximum 900 characters).

Give a concise narrative description without technical terminology of what you are proposing to do; who your participants are (e.g. age, organisation) and how they will be approached/ recruited; where the research will take place (e.g. site, country); what methods you will use, (e.g. survey, interview). (see [exemplars](#))

Note: the information you provide in this section will be reviewed by UTREC as part of ongoing monitoring activities. Your summary should therefore capture the key details of your application without requiring the reader to refer to or read other parts of the form.

Credit-bearing student projects involve the production of software artifacts, and a critical evaluation of the artifact is an expected component of the project report. Examples (not exhaustive) of such artifacts are computer applications, games, and web site development. Students may wish to collect opinions concerning the quality of their artifact as part of their critical evaluation. This application covers the use of anonymous online questionnaires by students to gather such opinions in projects that do not involve collaboration with other researchers, schools, units and organisations internal or external to the University. No personal participant data will be collected, stored or disseminated.

Ethical considerations (summary) (maximum 900 characters)

Give an overview of both the **ethical issues raised** by your research and **how you will address** them (see [exemplars](#)). This could include: the risks and benefits, how you will ensure consent is voluntary and informed; confidentiality and how your data will be managed to protect this; potential risks to participants such as distress or reputational harm.

This should not substantially duplicate the information given in 'Project description' above.

Note: the information you provide in this section will be reviewed by UTREC as part of ongoing monitoring activities. Your summary should therefore capture the key details of your application without requiring the reader to refer to or read other parts of the form.

The main risks are the collection and accidental dissemination of personal participant data, and participants spending an excessive amount of time on providing feedback. The former risk will be mitigated by requiring questionnaires to be anonymous and not collecting any personal data, and the latter by placing a limit of 60 minutes on each participant's interaction with the student's project. The questions are limited to the artifact and opinions of the artifact. The participants are restricted to students and staff of the University. The questionnaires are hosted on Qualtrics or MS Forms, and the survey data will be stored on OneDrive or Teams, accessible only to the student and the supervisor. All data will be deleted at the end of the project. To ensure appropriate ethics procedures, we will require and review the description of the ethical aspects at the very start of each project.

Estimated start date

01/09/2026

Estimated end date

31/08/2031

Research Funding

Is the research funded?

Is the research funded?

- Yes
- No

Internal Collaboration

Does the research involve collaboration with other researchers, Schools or Units, internal to the University?

- Yes
- No

External Collaboration

Does the research involve collaboration with researchers from other institutions or organisations, external to the University?

- Yes
- No

Research Setting

What is the geographic location(s) of the research - if you are conducting research remotely please indicate both your location and that of your participants or samples? If the location of participants will not be known, select 'no specific location'

- UK (exclusively)
- Other or multiple locations
- No specific location

If the research is being conducted in the UK please select relevant the devolved nations

- All
- Scotland
- England
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

Describe the setting of the research (this may be a physical context such as a type of place or a non-physical context such as an online environment).

You can repeat this question if you have multiple settings.

Participants will be asked to complete an anonymous online questionnaire. Beforehand, the student will provide an initial briefing and (optionally) a demonstration of the artifact. This may take place online, or if in person, on University premises.

Have you permission to access the site of the research?

- Yes
- No
- Not Required

Research Aims and Design

Summarise the aims of the research (max 6000 characters)

Artifact evaluation questionnaires help project students evaluate the quality of their artifacts and may give them a chance to improve them based on user feedback. These are low-risk activities for participants, and so the risk–benefit balance is positive.

Summarise the research design and methodology (max 6000 characters)

It is expected that students produce a software and/or hardware artifact as part of their Computer Science project. Examples (not exhaustive) of such artifacts are computer applications, games, and web site development. Students may wish to collect opinions concerning the quality of their artifact as part of their critical evaluation. This collection of opinions would be in the form of an online questionnaire which comprises only of questions relating to the artifact, and has no questions about the participant. It is not considered proportionate to require written consent nor participant debriefing for such short and non-personal questionnaires. Only data gathered from questionnaires will be presented in the project report – no personal participant data will be collected, stored or disseminated. Where a potential participant is a student, their participation or non-participation in the questionnaire will not affect their academic assessment in any way. This application does not cover any project that involves any interaction with humans other than a simple set of questions about an artifact that does not require personal participant data.

The students will use template texts from <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/research/integrity-ethics/humans/ethical-guidance/online-surveys-or-questionnaires/> for the initial and final pages of the questionnaire, and will have to provide a downloadable participant information sheet using the template from <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/research/integrity-ethics/humans/applications/ethical-review/templates/>.

The text should mention the following mandatory points:

- the project is covered by the ethics application for "Evaluation of Artifacts Produced in Computer Science Student Projects" at the University of St Andrews
- state the reference number of the application
- explain that the participation in this project is completely voluntary and one can withdraw from the study at any time without giving an explanation and with no disbenefit
- state that no personal data will be collected
- data collected in the project will be anonymous and the raw data will be deleted after the completion of the project
- while retained, raw data will be only accessible to the named researchers on the project
- results derived from analysis of the data may be published in the project report or dissertation, and may be further disseminated in academic publications.

When interacting with a participant who has agreed to take part, the student may explain and demonstrate the artifact to the participant. The participant may also have the opportunity to try using or interacting with the artifact themselves. Following this, the student will ask the participant to complete the anonymous questionnaire.

Participants

This section asks about your research participants.

Use 'add another' to repeat this section if you have more than one participant group or set.

Give this participant group a name or label, for example 'Sample 1', 'Fife group', 'Qualitative dataset'

Students and/or staff of the University of St Andrews

Lower Age Limit (years)

18

Upper Age Limit (years)

100

Inclusion Criteria

Students and/or staff of the University of St Andrews

Exclusion Criteria

N/A

How many participants do you intend to recruit or expect to participate?

If you're not sure, please provide an estimate. If you have more than one group, please provide the number for this group rather than the total.

1000

Summary (optional)

Use this space if you wish to give a summary or overview of your participants or provide any additional information not already included. (max 6000 characters)

The number given above is an estimate of the plausible maximum total number of participants over the five years, based on a cohort of 100 UG and 100 PGT students per year. In practice it is expected that the number will be much lower, since many students will not undertake an artifact evaluation.

Informed Consent

This section asks questions related to recruitment and participation, including around informed consent and factors which can impact this.

Describe how you will identify and approach potential participants (max 10000 characters)

This will be at the discretion of the individual students. It is expected that in most cases the participants will be other Computer Science students, or staff in the School of Computer Science.

Upload any materials you will be using to recruit participants such as adverts, letters to schools / parents/ guardians

Will you be giving participants information about the research so they can make an informed decision whether to participate?

- Yes
- No

Upload any participant information materials you will be using, such as participant information sheets

Documents

Type	Document Name	File Name	Version Date	Version	Size
PIS Document	artifact-evaluation-participant-information-sheet	artifact-evaluation-participant-information-sheet.docx	02/05/2026	1	47.1 KB

Will you be obtaining explicit consent from individual participants?

- Yes
- No

Describe how you will ensure the rights, wellbeing and dignity of participants are maintained (max 6000 characters)

Information will be provided within the online questionnaire with a link to a downloadable participant information sheet, which should be prepared using the template above, based in its turn on the University template for the PIS with anonymous participants: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/assets/university/research/documents/integrity-and-ethics/research-involving-humans/anon-participant-information-sheet.docx>. Explicit consent will be obtained via the online questionnaire created by each student, rather than a separate form. The questionnaire will include information about the project and indicate that participants indicate their consent by completing the questionnaire.

During the recruitment, information, or consent process will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary and that they can decline to participate with no disbenefit?

- Yes
- No

During the recruitment, information, or consent process will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research within the time specified in the PIS and for any reason, without having to give an explanation, and with no disbenefit?

- Yes
- No

During the recruitment, information, or consent process will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality?

- Yes
- No

During the recruitment, information, or consent process will you tell participants that if published or shared, the data will not be identifiable as theirs?

- Yes
- No

During the recruitment, information, or consent process will you tell participants how their data will be stored, who will have access to it, and when the data will be destroyed?

- Yes
- No

Will participants be able to continue to participate if they reject or omit parts of the study? For example, declining to be recorded, omitting survey questions, declining to give a certain sample

- Yes
- No

Will any financial inducement be offered?

- Yes
- No

Are any of the participants in a dependent relationship with the investigator?

- Yes
- No

Will you be debriefing or giving 'end of study' information to participants?

- Yes
- No

Use the upload function to attach any written debrief document or protocol. Otherwise, describe any debrief protocol or process you will be using (max 6000 characters)

Students will offer participants the opportunity to receive a copy of their report/dissertation at the end of the project.

Upload your debrief document or protocol (optional)

Will you be using a distress protocol? This is optional but you may wish to consider this if your research is likely to touch on distressing topics.

- Yes
- No

Research Activities

This section asks about any research activities participants will be undertaking. This helps reviewers understand the potential impact or burden on participants.

Will participants be asked to undertake an activity for the purposes of the research?

'By 'activity' we mean any active engagement with the research. For example, this could include participating in an interview, completing a questionnaire, partaking in tests or measurements, or undertaking a task.'

- Yes
- No

Activity Details

What will participants be asked to do? (max 6000 characters)

To view or interact with the project artifact, and then to complete an online questionnaire.

Estimate duration per participant (use an appropriate metric such as minutes or hours)

Up to one hour.

Estimated number of occurrences per participant

1



Time between occurrences (use an appropriate metric such as minutes, hours or days)

N/A

List any measures, instruments, or equipment you will be using. (max 10000 characters)

N/A

Upload copies of questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group guide, experiment protocols etc.

Will you be collecting data any other way i.e. observation, passive data collection

Yes

No

Data Collection

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions. You should aim to collect the minimum amount of data necessary for your research (see 'data minimisation').

If you need help to think through or plan how you will manage your research data then contact the University's [Research Data Management](#) team (research-data@st-andrews) for advice or to develop a Data Management Plan.

For advice on personal data or GDPR, contact [Data Protection](#) (data-prot@st-andrews.ac.uk).

For help with IT equipment, technology or processes, contact [IT Services](#) (itservicedesk@st-andrews.ac.uk)

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

How will you collect data? (this means the technology/software/hardware/paper etc. rather than specific questionnaires or measures)

- Qualtrics, MS Forms
- IT-approved encrypted recording device
- Other (describe below)
- Not applicable

In what form will the data be collected?

- Anonymous
- Pseudonymous
- Identifiable
- Mix (Please describe below)

Data Transfer

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

Will you need to transfer the data?

- Yes
- No

In what form will the data be transferred?

- Anonymous
- Pseudonymous
- Identifiable
- Mix (Please describe below)

How will you securely transfer the data? (max 6000 characters)

Students will download responses from Qualtrics or MS Forms and store the data securely on the OneDrive/Teams or any other device "officially" provided by the University.

Data Storage

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

How will you store the data?

- University network drive or OneDrive/Teams
- Other (describe)

In what form will the data be stored?

- Anonymous
- Pseudonymous
- Identifiable
- Mix (Please describe below)

Data Access

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

Who will have access to the data during the study?

- Researcher and supervisor
- Others (describe)

Will there be any access controls?

- University Network Drive or OneDrive/Teams controls – specified users, accessed via SSO
- None
- Other (describe)

Data Form Changes

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

Do you plan to pseudonymise or anonymise the data at some point during the study? For example, converting the data from identifiable to anonymised by removing identifiers or from pseudonymised to anonymised by deleting a pseudonymisation key.

- Yes
- No

Describe your approach and any key time points (max 6000 characters)

The data will be anonymous at the point of capture, i.e. participants completing the online questionnaire will not indicate their identity.

Data Sharing

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

Will you be sharing the data?

- Yes
- No

Contact [research data management](#) for advice on funder policies and institutional requirements for sharing data.

Prompt to contact research data management for advice re funder policies and institutional requirements i.e. data underpinning theses

Data Publication

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

Will you be publishing the data?

- Yes
- No

In what form will the data be published?

- Anonymous
- Pseudonymous
- Identifiable
- Mix (Please describe)

Where will the data be published?

- Dissertation or thesis
- Scholarly outputs such as academic journal articles or conference presentations
- Other (describe)

Will you share the results with participants?

- Yes
- No

Describe how you will share your results with participants (max 6000 characters)

Students will offer participants the opportunity to receive a copy of the report/dissertation at the end of the project.

Data Retention

You may find the guidance on [Confidentiality and data protection](#), which includes definitions and relevant University contacts, useful to answer these questions.

This section asks questions about retention of **locally held** data beyond the end of the study i.e. data which is held by the research team, such as on a network drive, and not any data which has been formally shared, deposited or archived.

Will you be retaining any locally held data beyond the end of the study?

- Yes
- No

Data Destruction

Will the data be securely destroyed following the study and/or the retention period?

- Yes
- No

Data Management Plan

Do you have a Data Management Plan you wish to include with this application?

- Yes
- No

Data - Participant info

Does the information you have provided in the preceding data management questions reflect that which will be given to participants, for example in participant information or consent forms?

- Yes
- No

Risk-Benefit Balance

Please provide a clear, concise description of the anticipated benefits of the research. This could be to the participant, the participant's community, the academic community, wider society, or in developing your own research skills. (max 10000 characters)

These questionnaires help project students evaluate the quality of their artifacts and may give them a chance to improve them based on user feedback. The information also provides a basis for evaluation within the report/dissertation.

Considering any residual risks indicate why you believe there is a favourable risk-benefit balance. (max 10000 characters)

These are low-risk activities for participants, and so the risk-benefit balance is positive.

Ethical Issues

Please provide a clear, concise description of the ethical issues raised and how you will address them (see exemplars). (max 10000 characters)

The only ethical issues relate to the fact that information will be collected from participants in the form of their opinions on the project artifact. No personal participant data will be collected, stored or disseminated. Where a potential participant is a student, their participation or non-participation in the questionnaire will not affect their academic assessment in any way. This application does not cover any project that involves any interaction with humans other than a simple set of questions about an artifact that does not require personal participant data.

The participant-facing materials should mention the following mandatory points:

- the project is covered by the ethics application for "Evaluation of Artifacts Produced in Computer Science Student Projects" at the University of St Andrews
- state the reference number of the application
- explain that the participation in this project is completely voluntary and one can withdraw from the study at any time without giving an explanation and with no disbenefit
- state that no personal data will be collected
- data collected in the project will be anonymous and the raw data will be deleted after the completion of the project
- while retained, raw data will be only accessible to the named researchers on the project
- results derived from analysis of the data may be published in the project report or dissertation, and may be further disseminated in academic publications.

End Questions

Describe here anything you would like to include that has not been covered so far (max 6000 characters)

This application is submitted in the role of student projects coordinator.

Are there any other documents you wish to upload with your application?

- Yes
- No

At the start of this form you were asked to give a brief project description and summary of ethical considerations. You may wish to check you are happy with these now you have completed the rest of the form. Use the 'Navigate' function.

Declarations

I am aware of, understand and will enact my responsibilities as a researcher as detailed in:

The University's [Principles of Good Research Conduct policy](#) and [ethical guidelines](#)

I confirm

Any relevant professional guidelines (e.g. BPS, MRC, ASA)

I confirm

The University's Policy and guidance on [Data Management and Protection](#)

I confirm

I am aware of the conditions of any funding associated with my work and will ensure that information given to my research participants is in line with those conditions.

I confirm

I understand that I must store the final completed copy of this form as part of my research project paperwork.

I confirm

Authorisation

Applicant authorisation (signature)

Signed: This form was signed by Prof Graham Kirby (gnck@st-andrews.ac.uk) on 27/05/2026 16:13

Involves children?

Involves children?

No