Application Number	RIC0005

Application for Cross-University Ethical Approval

1. Research Details

Name of Researcher(s):	Errol Rivera, Laurence Patterson
School or Professional service department:	Department of Learning and Teaching Enhancement
Email:	e.rivera@napier.ac.uk
Contact number:	6002
Project Title:	The University as Publisher: Student and Teacher e-textbook engagement
Start Date:	11/01/2016
Duration of Project:	09/07/2018
Is anybody funding this research? (Amount and Source)	JISC is contributing 70,000£
Type of Research: UG/Taught PG/Masters/Doctoral Student/ Staff	

2. Screening Questions

Please answer the following questions to identify the level of risk in the proposed project:
If you answer 'No' to all questions, please complete Section 3a only.
If you have answered 'Yes' to any of the questions 6-16 please complete Section 3a and 3b.
If you have answered 'Yes to any of the questions 1-5, complete all of Section 3.

	You Must Answer All Questions	**Yes**	**No**
1.	Is the research clinical in nature?	☐	☒
2.	Is the research in a health care setting?	☐	☒
3.	Is the research investigating socially or culturally 'controversial' topics (for example pornography, extremist politics, or illegal activities)?	☐	☒
4.	Will any covert research method be used?	☐	☒
5.	Will the research involve deliberately misleading participants (deception) in any way?	☐	☒
6.	Does the Research involve staff or students within the University?	☒	☐
7.	Does the Research involve vulnerable people? (For example people under 18 or over 70 years of age, disabled (either physically or mentally), those with learning difficulties, people in custody, migrants etc).	☐	☒
8.	Is the information gathered from participants of a sensitive or personal nature?	☐	☒
9.	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?	☐	☒
10.	Have you identified any potential risks to the researcher in carrying out the research? (for example physical/emotional/social/economic risks?)	☐	☒
11.	Is there a possible conflict of interest between researcher and participant that would affect the voluntary nature of the participation, e.g. managerial influence, Research using current students as participants?	☐	☒
12.	Will the research require the use of assumed consent rather than informed consent? (For example when it may be impossible to obtain informed consent due to the setting for the research – e.g. observational studies/videoing/photography within a public space)	☐	☒
13.	Is there any risk to respondents' anonymity in any report/thesis/publication from the research, even if real names are not used?	☐	☒

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14.	Will any payment or reward be made to participants, beyond reimbursement or out-of-pocket expenses?	☐	☒
15.	Does the research require external ethics clearance? (For example from the NHS or another institution)	☒	☒
16.	Does the research involve the use of secondary data?	☐	☒

3A. Details of Project

In this section please provide details of your project and outline data collection methods, how participant consent will be given as well as details of storage and dissemination.

Please give a 300 word overview of the research project

JISC has engaged Edinburgh Napier University as third party evaluators in the production process of an e-textbook produced by UHI on the subject of research and dissertation writing. UHI's e-textbook is being produced using an innovative method which may have the potential to drastically effect the publishing practices of HEI's. This research will supplement our evaluation by providing a level of academic rigour an accountability at the forefront of this potential shift. We also intend to disseminate this data in academic publications and conferences.

Data collection will take the form of two-stage surveys for staff and students in research/dissertaion modules at UHI and Edinburgh Napier University. One online survey provided to staff, and two online surveys for the students. We seek to better understand the current state of student and staff engagement with electronic textbooks.

Between 11-26/01/2016 Teachers running research or dissertation modules will be contacted via email with information sheets, and face-to-face or phone meetings will be arranged to answer any questions, with hard copes of consent forms to be obtained. We will also ask for permission to speak to their class in person to distribute information sheets and answer questions and obtain consent forms. Online surveys for teachers and class visits will occur between 19/01/16 - 05/02/16.

The first student survey will be open between 25/01/16 - 12/02/16. We'll be employing mixed methods to analyse the data - trends in the quantitative data, and thematic coding of the qualitative data to establish a baseline of e-textbook engagement levels for each individual participant, by attempting to understand the source and means students typically used to acquire e-textbooks, as well as their typical experience with using these texts in their learning and academic performance. Additionally we will seek to understand university staff's usage of e-texts, and what factors influence their choice of e-text. The analysis will occur between 15/02/16 - 08/04/16

The second student survey will be open between 11-39/04/2016, where we will discover whether students have acquired the UHI e-text, why or why not, their levels of engagement with it, and its effects on their learning. Data analysis will compare student experience of UHI's text to their previous experiences of e-texts, looking for impacts on engagement and learning that may be a result UHI's innovative production methods. We are also preforming this same study with students and staff at Edinburgh Napier, and similar ethical procedures are currently being followed. A step by step action list with dates is copied below

1. 11th-26th January 2016
    a. Begin Stage 1
    b. Contacting Teachers
    c. Obtaining consent forms

2. 19th January - 5th of February
    a. Teachers' NOVI survey will be open
    b. Contacting Students
    c. Obtaining Consent forms
3. 25th of January 12th of February
    a. Students' NOVI survey will be open
4. 15th February – 8th April
    a. Data analysis of stage 1 includes
        i. Looking for emerging trends or correlations in quantifiable data such as
            1. Sources of textbooks
            2. Format of textbooks
            3. Availability of textbooks
            4. Price ranges of textbooks
        ii. Thematic Coding will be performed on qualitative data including
            1. Prospective textbooks
            2. Prospective content
            3. Reasons for choosing certain textbooks
            4. Usefulness of texts
        iii. Looking for any significant correlations between quantitative and qualitative data, for example
            1. Text price/Usefulness
            2. Text format/Usefulness
        iv. Write up data for dissemination in JISC annual report
5. 11th-29th of April
    a. Begin Stage 2
    b. Email reminders are sent to participating students
    c. Student Survey 2 is open, covering topics such as
        i. Appropriateness of format
        ii. Usefulness
        iii. Use of web tools and forums
        iv. Quantity of use
6. May 2nd – May 27th
    a. Collect and evaluate data
    b. Write up data for academic publications and conferences

Data Collection	
1.	**Who will be the participants in the research?**
	Students and Module Leaders
2.	**How will you collect and analyse the research data? (please outline all methods e.g. questionnaires/focus groups/internet searches/literature searches/interviews/observation)**
	Online questionnaire - Novi Survey
3.	**Where will the data will be gathered (e.g. in the classroom/on the street/telephone/on-line)**
	Online
4.	**Please describe your selection criteria for inclusion of participants in the study**

	Students and staff of dissertation and research modules at UHI and Edinburgh Napier University
5.	**If your research is based on secondary data, please outline the source, validity and reliability of the data set**
	n/a
Consent and Participant Information	
7.	**How will you invite research participants to take part in the study? (e.g letter/email/asked in lecture)**
	We will be contacting module leaders by email between the 11th and the 26th of January. Inviting them to receive the information sheet in person or electronically. Once the module leaders receive the information sheet, we'll then request permission to speak to each of their research/dissertation classes in person to take place between 19th of January and the 5th of February. When visiting classes of students, we'll make sure that a lecturer or module leaders are present for information distribution and Q&A, however, we'll be asking that students sign and turn in consent form out of view of their lecturers, in order to avoid any sense of obligation on the student's part. This will be our only face-to-face contact with the students
8.	**How will you explain the nature and purpose of the research to participants?**
	Info sheet provided to the module leader and students, with an opportunity to answer any questions – in person or via phone for lecturers, and in person in class for students.
9.	**How will you record obtaining informed consent from your participants?**
	Informed consent sheets provided by us to module leaders and students, and collected via hard copy.
Data storage and Dissemination	
10.	**How and in what format will data be stored? And what steps will be taken to ensure data is stored securely?**
	Scans of informed consent, as well as word documents and spreadsheets will be kept on a secure sharepoint server. And data from surveys will be kept secure in Novi
11.	**Who will have access to the data?**
	Errol Rivera and Laurence Patterson
12.	**Will the data be anonymised so that files contain no information that could be linked to any participant?**
	yes
13.	**How long will the data be kept?**
	Length of project plus two years
14.	**What will be done with the data at the end of the project?**
	Kept for two years, then destroyed
15.	**How will the findings be disseminated?**

	End of Year report to JISC, Edinburgh Napier, and UHI. We will also be seeking dissemination via conferences and academic publications
16.	**Will any individual be identifiable in the findings?**
	no

3B. Identification and Mitigation of Potential risks

This section is designed to identify any realistic risks to the participants and how you propose to deal with it.

1. **Does this research project involve working with potentially vulnerable individuals?**

Group	Yes	NO	Details (for example programme student enrolled on, or details of children's age/care situation, disability)
Students at Napier	☒	☐	Programme students enrolled in research or dissertation modules
Staff at ENU	☒	☐	Staff who lead research or dissertation modules
Children under 18	☐	☒	
Elderly (over 70)	☐	☒	
Disabled	☐	☒	
Migrant workers	☐	☒	
Prisoners / people in custody	☐	☒	
Learning difficulties	☐	☒	

2. **If you are recruiting children (under 18 years) or people who are otherwise unable to give informed consent, please give full details of how you will obtain consent from parents, guardians, carers etc.**

n/a

3. **Please describe any identified risks to participants or the researcher as a result of this research being carried out.**

Aside from initial face to face contact with classes of students for the purposes of informing and obtaining consent, all data is collected online. Therefore no risk has been identified

4. **Please describe what steps have been taken to reduce these identified risks? (for example providing contact details for appropriate support services (e.g. University Counselling, Samaritans), reminding participants of their right to withdraw and/or not answering questions, or providing a full debriefing to participants and understanding the responsibility of the researcher when dealing with confidential and sensitive information).**

n/a

5. **If you plan to use assumed consent rather than informed consent please outline why this is necessary.**

n/a

6. **If payment or reward will be made to participants please justify that the amount and type are appropriate (for example the amount should not be so high that participants would be financially coerced into taking part, or that the type of reward is appropriate to the research topic).**

n/a

3C. Justification of High Risk Projects

If you answered 'Yes' to the screening questions 1-5 this section asks for justification on the choice of research topic and methodology. The Reviewers have the right to refer high risk applications to the Research Integrity Committee for approval.

1. **If you have answered yes to question 1, please give a full description of all medical procedures to be used within the research and provide evidence that the project has obtained NHS ethical approval.**

n/a

2. **If you have answered yes to question 2, please give a full description of the health care setting and what steps have been taken to reduce any potential risks and describe how you have gained permission from the Health Care Organisation.**

n/a

3. **If you have answered yes to questions 3 (research into a controversial topic), please provide a justification for your choice of research topic, and describe how you would deal with any potential issues arising from researching that topic.**

n/a

4. **If you have answered yes to questions 4 or 5 (use of deception or covert research methods) please provide a justification for your choice of methodology, and state how you will mitigate the risks associated with these approaches**.

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n/a

Declaration		
☒	I confirm that I have considered the ethical risks arising from this project and have provided accurate information and the research will be conducted in the manner described.	
AND		
☒	I consider that this project has no significant ethical implications that requires the attention of the Research Integrity Committee.	
OR		
☐	I consider that this project may have significant ethical implications that requires the attention of the Research Integrity Committee.	
Researcher Signature:		**Date:**
Director of Studies/Supervisor/Principal Investigator Signature:		**Date:**

Checklist

All applications require the following to be submitted with the application form

Participant Information Sheet	☒
Informed Consent Form	☒
Interview/Survey Questions	☒