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GBS Code of Practice for the Ethical Conduct of Research

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GBS Code of Practice for the Ethical Conduct of Research

1. I

considering the ethical dilemmas that may arise, managing such dilemmas is an on-going process that requires attention throughout the course of a project.

2. General Principles

2.1. The integrity of any research depends not only on its intellectual rigour but also on its ethical adequacy. The following general principles are applicable across all areas of research activity. Further principles relating to the ethical conduct of research involving human and non-human animal subjects are detailed in parts 2 and 3, respectively.

2.2. Non-falsification of data :

Researchers have an ethical obligation to

Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that no samples are obtained from unethical sources: (*inter alia*) illegal databases; unregistered suppliers of samples. Research based on existing data that was obtained unethically may itself be considered unethical.

2.5. Authorship credit :

Only those researchers who are significant contributors to a research project should be given authorship credit. A *significant contributor* might be described as a person

2.10. Storage and Disposal of Data :

Researchers must make sure that data management is built into their planning. At the same time as ensuring that personal and other confidential data is kept secure, researchers have an obligation, so far as is possible, to make the data upon which their research outputs are based, available to other researchers in the future. Meeting both objectives requires careful planning.

Data must at all times be maintained or destroyed in accordance with existing data protection

observation and interviews *can* be potentially intrusive and provoke anxiety in participants or, worse, involve psychological risk.

Certain groups, such as children and vulnerable adults, are particularly susceptible to

In certain situations, the affiliation of participants to particular organisations or special groups, such as educational institutions or hospitals, may necessitate their granting of permission to

- 3.11. Researchers need to consider carefully the quality of consent of participants in a potentially dependent or pre-existing relationship with him/her (for example, patients, school pupils, students or employees) as willingness to volunteer may be unduly influenced by the expectation of benefits for compliance or fear of repercussions for refusal.
- 3.12. Be very careful about taking photographs of research subjects. Photographs of children should only be taken when explicit and written consent has been obtained from the parent or legal guardian. The storage of all such photographs must be secure and the parent/legal guardian advised in detail about the storage of any photographs. Researchers are advised not to publish photographs (in hard copy or electronically) with children in them. Subjects in any published photograph must not be identifiable in any way.

4. Confidentiality and anonymity

- 4.1. Researchers should maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Researchers should not reveal the identity of any participant, nor any information which may lead to the identification of any participant, without obtaining adequate prior consent.
- 4.2. The researcher and any collaborators should manage all data obtained through the project so as not to compromise the dignity of participants or infringe upon their rights to privacy.
- 4.3. Guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity given to research participants must be honoured, unless there are clear and over-riding reasons to do otherwise, for example, in relation to the abuse of children. In research with children, researchers should have regard for issues of child protection and make provision for the potential disclosure of abuse. Specialist advice should be sought where relevant.
- 4.4. When personal identifiers are used in a study, the researcher should explain why this is necessary and how confidentiality will be protected.
- 4.5. Researchers should follow procedures for protecting the confidentiality of participants, such as:

Securing statements of commitment to confidentiality from individual research personnel.

Using pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants.

Storing data with identifying information in a locked file or password protected/encrypted area on your computer. Access to these files must be restricted to the researcher or (in agreed cases) the designated members of a research team.

Using codes for identifying participants when transcribing tapes, deleting the tapes on completion of transcription.

Disposing of information that could reveal participants carefully, for example by shredding or burning or in confidential wastebaskets.

- 4.6. Researchers should take special care when carrying out research via the Internet. Ethical standards for Internet research are not well developed. Eliciting informed

Appendix 1

Research Ethics Committee (RE C) Terms of Reference

1. Membership

1.1. Chair: Dean of Education

1.2. One member from each Faculty Research Ethics Group (FREG).

1.3. Secretary in attendance: Member of ASQO staff appointed by the Director of Academic Standards and Quality.

2. Terms of reference

2.1.