

## Department of Media Studies, Maynooth University

### Guidelines Regarding Ethical Standards in Undergraduate and MA Research

#### Before undertaking human subject research:

- All students should familiarise themselves with Maynooth University's guidelines for ethical research, which can be found here: [Maynooth University Research Ethics Policy](#), with particular emphasis on Section 3, "Ethics policy for social research carried out involving human participants" (pages 8-11).
- Students should be conscious to do no harm – physical or emotional – in the questioning, observation and recruitment of research subjects. This requires reflexivity about your own social, ideological and cultural position.
- Students are advised not to carry out research directly with people under 18 years old. Any such contact requires garda vetting.
- Students wishing to carry out research with vulnerable groups or on sensitive topics must consult with the lecturer supervising the project to discuss the feasibility or advisability of same.
- Students should gain the consent of interview subjects by providing them with an information sheet about the project and having them complete a consent form. Adapt the attached proforma for your project and get approval from the module coordinator or other designated person. Have participants sign two copies of the same document. A copy must be given to your research subjects and a copy must be submitted with your assignment.

#### After undertaking human subject research:

- You must anonymise your data, where possible removing all information that can identify your subjects (e.g. real names, workplace, geographical information, etc). Ascribe false names and keep any identifying information secure (i.e. not on your laptop or mobile device) and in a separate place from your research data. Consent forms must also be secured in this way.
- Where possible keep your data, recordings and transcriptions on an encrypted device. Do **not** keep your data on a portable drive that can be easily lost.
- In the essay based upon your research, you should make reference to the ethical guidelines of Maynooth University and discuss the ways they have informed your research design and process. You are also expected to explicitly discuss the ethical issues specific to the topic of your research.
- Data must be securely deleted upon successful completion of the module. Hard copy data must be shredded before disposal.