Level 3 Extended Project H856

Ethical Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to accompany the OCR Level 3 Extended Project centre handbook/specification.

ocr.org.uk/extendedproject

Ethical Guidelines for the Extended Project

There is an increased emphasis on ethical considerations in the workplace and research communities as a result of public concern and issues of accountability.

Ethical issues should be considered at the planning stage of the project and teachers should advise appropriately using a "common sense" approach. It is good practice for students to consider ethical implications, and discussion of these and potential impact on individuals, environment and/or society could form part of the evaluative process eg when comparing government policies or considering new scientific development.

Centres should consider issuing their students with appropriate guidance during the planning stage of the project. Some of the considerations below may apply more specifically to certain types of research eg social/scientific studies.

Students should
- be encouraged to consider ethical implications if work is investigative, involves observation or touches on socially sensitive issues.

- consider the ethics of conducting objective research and any issues that may result from making personal judgements or approaching research from a personal bias.

- be encouraged to observe the considerations and limitations that would cover potential research at higher levels of learning. This may be achieved by referring to ethical guidelines pertinent to their chosen subject, eg The British Psychological Society, Social Research Association, food associations, scientific organisations, religious groups.

- be advised to conduct investigations only within their range of experience and expertise, eg they should not do a project comparing the success of nicotine patches vs nicotine gum in smokers even if adults have volunteered for the task.

- not subject their participants to any harm, either physical or emotional.

- avoid deceiving or embarrassing their participants and allow them to withdraw themselves or their data from the project if they wish to do so at any stage.

- maintain confidentiality of their participants.

- where possible and appropriate, gain consent of any participants in their research, although it is acceptable to observe human behaviour in public areas without having to gain consent. If using film/recording, obtain consent of the people involved.

- be aware of copyright issues if considering using music/film made by others in a commercial capacity, but this does not always apply if they are analysing publicly available material eg tv advertisements.

- not place themselves or their participants in a position of undue or greater risk than they would be a part of in their everyday lives (eg it is possible to study mountaineers, skaters or scuba divers if that is their hobby or occupation- *adapted from the guidelines issued by the British Psychological Society*). Students should be advised against collecting primary data if it involves being in potentially dangerous situations, eg studying gang culture, homelessness.

- consider outlining safety procedures/guidance for use/risk assessments when using potentially dangerous equipment, especially where they are unfamiliar with its usage.

- adhere to advice concerning the protection of under 16s

  o Do not use minors unless written parental consent is given. If in a school environment, headteacher consent should also be obtained.

  o Do not use photographs unless written parental consent is given.

  o Do observe confidentiality. Do not use full names, or alternatively, change them to preserve anonymity.

  o Do avoid asking questions either via questionnaire or interview about private information regarding illegal or underage activities eg alcohol intake, sexual activity, recreational drug use. Students should be advised to use secondary sources for data of this kind.

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