

Example ethics checklist

1. Will you collect or analyse data in the course of your research project?

Data include interview and survey responses, observations, registrations, social media content, and visual images.

2. Is the data you use collected in the public or in the private domain?

Public domain data includes a.o.: observations made during a public event, observations of public figures, or data extracted from public online sources (including publicly accessible social media data). Private domain data includes a.o.: observations made using (online) questionnaires, experiments, interviews, and focus groups as well as data extracted from private digital sources.

3. Do the data you use contain personal or sensitive information?

Personal data contains information that may identify a specific person, e.g. name, address, phone number, IP address, bank account number, social security number (BSN).

Sensitive data contains information such as race, religion, sexual orientation, criminal record, and political preference.

() Note that personal or sensitive data should be protected and not be distributed to others. Data should be stored at a secure location (i.e., your home-drive at the VU; not a portable hard drive or USB stick). Access should be limited by use of encryption software (i.e. Bitlocker, 7-Zip). Also, particular attention should be given to the design of your research data management plan.*

4. Does the research you plan to conduct pose potential risks to the participants during or after the research?

Risks may include physical and psychological harm or discomfort.

5. Does the research you plan to conduct pose potential risks to a population or group from which your participants are drawn?

Risks may include stigmatization, or reputational or economical damage.

6. Are your participants individuals who are vulnerable?

Participants may be vulnerable when they depend on others for assistance in daily life, or when they experience threats or physical danger.

7. Will participants be exposed to material, social, or psychological recruitment incentives that are stronger than usual?

E.g., are payments made that are higher than the minimum wage? Are individuals exposed to strong social or psychological pressure to participate?

8. Will participants be exposed to research stimuli (e.g., pictures, video, text) that may be distressing, offensive, or age-inappropriate?

For minors, age guidelines for media content (e.g., de Kijkwijzer) apply. For participants over 18, research stimuli may be considered distressing or offensive if they are stronger than what participants would normally be exposed to in daily life.

9. Does the research you plan to conduct pose potential risks to the researchers?

Risks may include physical and psychological harm or discomfort.

10. Will you deceive participants in the research?

Deception means that you deliberately give participants information that is false.

11. Do you guarantee anonymity or confidentiality to your participants?

Anonymity means that the identity of participants will remain unknown, also to you.

Confidentiality means that you know the identity of participants, but it will be unknown to others.

*(**) Note that in this case particular attention should be given to the design of your research data management plan.*