

0. Welcome

Q0.1. Your Self-check Number is: \${e://Field/id}

Q0.2.



Welcome to the ethics and knowledge security self-check provided by the FSW Research Ethics Review Committee (RERC).

In this self-check you will be asked a series of questions to test whether your research complies to the guidelines in the FSW's research code of conduct.

If your research is "standard" and conforms to these guidelines, you will receive a confirmation message and further review by the RERC is not required.

In "standard" research:

- No harm is envisaged for the participants or the population from which participants have been drawn
- Participants receive complete and accurate information about the goals of the research before they participate
- Participants give active consent for participation in the research
- Participants are not deceived without being thoroughly debriefed
- Participants are healthy adults who are not in a vulnerable position
- Personal and sensitive data are kept confidential and are stored in a secure environment.

If your research deviates from these standards, further ethics review may be required. Proceed to the self-check to determine whether this is the case. If you already know your research is non-standard, you may proceed to the full ethics review form below.

If your research is of a medical nature, poses a medical risk, or includes invasive procedures, ethics review is **always** required. In this case, your research should be

evaluated by the [medical-ethical review committee \(METC\)](#).

This self-check also includes a set of knowledge security questions. Based on your answers to these questions, the self-check will provide guidance on required next steps, if applicable, regarding knowledge security. Background on the VU knowledge security framework is available [here](#).

Proceed with the self-check (and click ">>" below)

1. Researcher

Q1.1. Your name:

First name

Family name

Q1.2. Your email address:

Q1.3. Your VU net ID:

Q1.4. Your position:

Q1.5. Name of (primary) supervisor:

Q1.6. Department:

Q1.7. Other department:

Q1.8. Name of your research project:

2. Knowledge security

Q2.0. The questions on this page focus on knowledge security. If you are having any difficulty understanding or interpreting the questions, please email merc.fsw@vu.nl for assistance.

Q2.1.

Does your project include a potential collaboration with a person, company, organization or country on the [UN sanctions](#) or [EU sanctions](#) list?

- No
 Yes

Q2.2. Does the research involve technology and/or knowledge as described in the [Dual Use regulation](#)?

Please note: [Annex 1](#) to the Dual-use Regulation provides a non-exhaustive list of dual-use goods (products, software or technology).

- No
- Yes

Q2.3. Is the partner associated with a foreign military organisation outside the EU (over the past 4 years)?

- No
- Yes

Q2.4. Does the collaboration involve sensitive research from a knowledge security perspective?

- No
- Yes

Q2.5. Does the research involve a collaboration with a partner from a country with a score below 0.4 on the [Academic Freedom index](#) and involve practices or issues that could potentially be ethically questionable?

- No
- Yes

Q2.6. Does the project involve collaboration funded solely by the partner and/or does it involve an incoming employee that is unilaterally externally funded?

- No
- Yes

. Result of the knowledge security component of the self-check:

. No issues identified with respect to knowledge security.

. You have indicated that your project includes a potential collaboration with a person, company, organization or country on the UN sanctions or EU sanctions list. Such collaborations are prohibited. Please send an email to merc.fsw@vu.nl if you would like to discuss your case and obtain further guidance.

. You have indicated that your project involves technology and/or knowledge described in the Dual Use regulation. Under certain circumstances, a permit is required. Please send an email to merc.fsw@vu.nl to discuss your project and potential next steps.

. Your research project requires further consideration by the RERC from a knowledge security perspective. Please email merc.fsw@vu.nl to obtain the required questionnaire. Reason(s) that additional consideration is needed:

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- You have indicated that you intend to work with a partner associated with a foreign military organisation outside the EU.

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- You have indicated that your project involves sensitive research from a knowledge security perspective.

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- You have indicated that your research involves collaboration with a partner from a country with a score below 0.4 on the Academic Freedom index and involves

practices or issues that could potentially be ethically questionable.

. You have indicated that the project involves collaboration funded solely by a partner and/or involves incoming employees that are unilaterally externally funded. For countries with a score below 0.4 on the Academic Freedom index, the following criteria apply:

- No scholarship PhD students who come to the university for less than two years and who are supervised from their home country.
- No research involving dual-use items or sensitive research areas.
- No researchers from a partner who falls under the preconditions for Very High Risk of question 3.

Scholarship students selected by the university to do doctoral research on a subject proposed by the university – and who intend to graduate at the VU – may be appointed. If you have questions about these criteria or would like to discuss your case, please email rec.fsw@vu.nl.

3. Third party

Q3.0. The rest of the questionnaire is about the ethical nature of your research.

Q3.1. Is an ethics review for the present research project required by a **third party**? (*)

A third party may be a funder (e.g., NWO, ERC), a journal, or another party outside VU Amsterdam.

No

Yes

Q3.2. (*) *This question helps us to determine whether you will need a written statement by the Research Ethics Review Committee, or whether an automated e-mail suffices.*

4. Data

Q4.1. Will you analyze **data on individuals** in the course of your research project? Data include interview and survey responses, observations, registrations, social media content, and visual images.

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

- No
- Yes (**)

Q4.1a. *** If yes: please ensure that you respect the duty of care towards your respondents, as laid out in the [GDPR](#). Particular attention to this should be given in your Data Management Plan.*

4.2. Your research project does not involve the analysis of data on individuals. Ethics review is not needed.

- I have completed this form truthfully.

Q4.3.

Click below to receive a confirmation message on the following screen, displaying your responses. Click on the pdf icon in the top right corner to save your confirmation for future reference.

Note that at the moment, the confirmation message is merely a electronic receipt showing your responses. We aim to provide a more concise confirmation message with a beter lay-out at a later stage.

- Proceed

Q4.4.

Will you, or a partner in your research project, collect this data from the individuals themselves, e.g. through interviews, (online) questionnaires, experiments or

observations? Or will you make use of existing data, e.g. scraped social media data, data from previous studies or census data?

Note: you can select both options

- I will collect data from individuals themselves
- I will make use of existing data

Q4.5. Is the data you use 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, and interviews, as well as data extracted from private digital sources.

- Public domain
- Private domain
- Both

Q4.6. Do the data you use contain sensitive information?

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

- No
- Yes (**)

Q4.6b. (**) *Note that personal and 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 or your Research Drive; and 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.*

Q4.7.

Will the research project involve combining personal data from multiple sources? E.g. merging data from two separate surveys, merging data from a survey with administrative data etc.

- No
- Yes (**)

*4.7b. (**) Your use of the data may present privacy concerns. If needed, consult the [libguides on privacy](#), or your [privacy champion](#), and make sure to address any issues in your Data Management Plan.*

5. Consent

Q5.1. For the data you will collect from individuals themselves, will you ask those individuals for **informed consent**?

Note that in the case of minors (participants below the age of 16), informed consent should be obtained from a parent or legal caregiver, as well as from the minor. In the case of participants between the ages of 16 and 18, consent should be obtained from the participant, and the parents/legal caregivers should be informed.

- No (*)
- Yes

Q5.1b. () Full ethics review will be required to determine whether in your study informed consent procedures may be skipped*

Q5.2.

For the existing data, was consent given for the original collection of this data, and does your use of the data conform with this original consent procedure?

- No consent was given, or my use of the data does not conform to the consent procedure (**)
- It is impossible to retrieve the original consent procedure (**)

Yes, consent was given and my use of the data conforms to the consent procedure

Q5.2b. (**) Your use of the data may present privacy concerns. Consult the [libguides on privacy](#) or your [privacy champion](#), and make sure to address any issues in your Data Management Plan.

6. Risk

Q6.0. The questions below are about potential risks envisioned for your research participants. Note that the term "participant" refers to any human subject about whom observations are being made, regardless of whether this happens in the public or private domain.

Q6.1. 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.

No

Yes (*)

Q6.1b. (*) Further ethics review will be required. If you are not sure whether your research poses potential risks to participants, please contact rerc.fsw@vu.nl by email for advice

Q6.2. 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, reputation or economic damage.

No

Yes (*)

Q6.2b. (*) Further ethics review will be required.

Q6.3. 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.

- No
- Yes (*)

Q6.3b. (*) Further ethics review will be required.

Q6.4. 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?

- No
- Yes (*)

Q6.4b. (*) Further ethics review will be required.

Q6.5. 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.

- No
- Yes (*)

Q6.5b. (*) Further ethics review will be required.

Q6.6. Does the research you plan to conduct pose potential risks to the **researchers**?
Risks may include physical and psychological harm or discomfort.

- No
- Yes (*)

Q6.6b. (*) Further ethics review will be required. If you are not sure whether your research poses potential risks to the researchers, please contact rec.fsw@vu.nl by email for advice

7. Deception

Q7.1. Will you **deceive** participants in the research?
Deception means that you deliberately give participants information that is false.

- No
- Yes, but they will be thoroughly debriefed afterwards
- Yes, and they will not be debriefed (*)

Q7.1b. (*) Further ethics review will be required

8. Confidentiality

Q8.1. 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.

- No (*)
- Yes, participants will be anonymous
- Yes, participant data will be kept confidential (**)

Q8.1b. (*) Further ethics review will be required

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

9. Research abroad

Q9.1. Will you conduct your research, or collect data, outside of the Netherlands ?

- No
- Yes (+)

Q9.1b. (+) Note that in this case you should make sure that you are aware of, and comply to, local guidelines for research ethics.

10. Result

Q10.1.

Result of the research ethics self-check:

Your research project **requires further evaluation** by the ethics review board. Below you find a summary of reasons why further evaluation is required, on the next page you will find a summary of the next steps you can take.

Reason(s):

Q10.2.

- You have indicated that you do not ask participants to give consent for the research.

Q10.5.

- You have indicated that the research you plan to conduct poses potential risks to participants.

Q10.6.

- You have indicated that the research you plan to conduct poses potential risks to the population or group from which the participants were drawn.

Q10.7.

- You have indicated that you will work with participants who are vulnerable.

Q10.8.

- You have indicated that your participants will be exposed to material, social or psychological recruitment incentives that are stronger than usual.

Q10.9.

- You indicated that your participants will be exposed to research stimuli that are distressing, offensive, or age-inappropriate.

Q10.10.

- You have indicated that the research you plan to conduct poses potential risks to the researchers.

Q10.11.

- You have indicated that you will deceive research participants without properly debriefing them afterwards.

Q10.12.

- You have indicated that there is a risk that the identity of participants is revealed.

Q10.14.

Result of the research ethics self-check:

Your research project **does not require further evaluation** by the Research Ethics Review Committee. Below you find a summary of reasons why no further evaluation is required, on the next page you will find a summary of the next steps you should take.

Reason(s):

Q10.15.

- You have indicated that your data is in the public domain.

Q10.16.

- You have indicated that your research participants will give consent to be in your study.

Q10.19.

- You have indicated that your research poses no risks to participants.

Q10.20.

- You have indicated that you will not work with participants who are vulnerable.

Q10.21.

- You have indicated that your participants are not exposed to material, social or psychological recruitment incentives that are stronger than usual

Q10.22.

- You indicated that your participants will not be exposed to research material that is distressing, offensive, or age-inappropriate.

Q10.23.

- You have indicated that your research poses no risks to the researchers.

Q10.24.

- You have indicated that you will not deceive research participants.

Q10.25.

- You have indicated that you will thoroughly debrief participants.

Q10.26.

- You have indicated that respondents in your research will be fully anonymous.

Q10.27.

- You have indicated that participant data will be kept confidential.

11. Next steps

Q11.1.

Next steps:

Q142.

Check your results

If you think these results are mistaken, please go back in the form and change your entries accordingly.

Q11.2.

Discuss the risks

It is important to consider whether identified risks can be avoided by adapting your research plan. Discuss your research plan with your supervisor and [your department's RERC member](#). Revise your research plan to reduce and tackle risks, and re-do the self-check for your updated plan.

Q148.

Prepare for full review

If your department's RERC member advises you to request full review, please go to the [RERC website](#) to review the full procedure. The website includes information on all the documents you need to provide during the course of full review, which will be helpful while filling out the application form.

While filling out the application form, particular attention to the issue(s) mentioned above. Upon reception of the form, the RERC will inform you about the further procedures.

Q149.

Ask your supervisor to prepare for full review

If your department's RERC member advises that full review is needed, you should consult with your supervisor, as they are responsible for requesting full review.

With your supervisor, please go to the [RERC website](#) to review the full procedure. The website includes information on all the documents you need to provide during the course of full review, which will be helpful while filling out the application form.

While filling out the application form, particular attention to the issue(s) mentioned above. Upon reception of the form, the RERC will inform you about the further procedures.

Q11.3.

Prepare a Data Management Plan

Researchers at the Faculty of Social Sciences are expected to draw up a Data Management Plan (DMP). The best place to do this is using the online tool [dmponline.vu.nl](#). For more information on how to draft your DMP, please visit the [Faculty's page on VUNet about data management](#) or contact the Faculty's Data Steward.

In your DMP you should pay special attention to:

Q11.4.

- You are using personal data, so you should ensure your research complies with [GDPR](#).

Q11.5.

- You are using sensitive data, so you should consider using additional means of securing your data, such as encryption.

Q11.6.

- You are combining personal data from multiple sources, this may present privacy issues, especially when sharing or publishing your data.

Q11.7.

- You indicated your use of the data does not conform with the original consent procedure. Contact your [privacy champion](#) to see how to ensure your research complies with [GDPR](#).

Q11.7.

- You indicated you are not sure about the consent procedure used when collecting your data. Consider contacting the people responsible for the data collection to get more clarity, or contact your [privacy champion](#) to see how to ensure your research complies with [GDPR](#).

Q144.

- You indicated you will keep respondent data confidential. Your Data Steward can help you create strategies to ensure this, for example by pseudonymizing your data.

Q143.

Store your results

On the next page, we ask you to confirm your results, after which they will be stored in our repository. You will also get a receipt, displaying all answers you provided, for future reference.

Please also make sure to store your self-check number: `#{e://Field/id}`, and use it to communicate with the RERC in the future.

12. Closing

Q12.1. You have completed the ethics review self-check.

I have completed this form truthfully.

Q12.2.

Your Self-check Number is: \${e://Field/id}. Please save this number for when you communicate with the Research Ethics Review Committee.

Click below to receive a confirmation message on the following screen, displaying your responses. Click on the pdf icon in the top right corner to save your confirmation for future reference. You will also received a mail with your responses.

Proceed (and click ">>" below)

