When does a research project need ethical approval?
If Faculty or students wish to do any research that involves other people, including via computers, it is necessary to apply for ethical approval from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. In doing so, you should:

- anticipate ethical dilemmas likely to be encountered in the research (such as informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, expertise of the researcher, protecting the rights of those involved) and indicate how they will be surmounted;
- anticipate safety issues likely to be encountered by the researchers in the course of their fieldwork;
- anticipate the project's data storage needs.

Where can I apply?
You can get the application form via the AHSS website:

www.artsoc.ul.ie/research-ethics.php

What do I need to fill out in the form?
The checklist must be completed on all applications. If you answer ‘no’ to all checklist questions, please proceed to Section 1. If you answer ‘yes’ to some checklist questions, please proceed to Section 2. All applicants must fill out both Information letters and consent forms (Appendices A&B)

When will the meeting take place? What is the deadline for submission of applications?
The meeting takes place on the first Wednesday (unless otherwise indicated) of every month during term. The deadline for submissions is the previous Thursday at 1 pm. Precise dates are available on the AHSS website. Note this changes each semester depending on the availability of the committee.

During the summer months, proposals are dealt with on an ad hoc basis. The committee takes annual leave in the month of August.

**How should my application be submitted?**

Your application should be submitted (typed) in hard and soft copy format, one copy of each. If you are a student, your paper copy should be signed by both you and your supervisor and submitted to Jess Beeley (C1078). Soft copies should be sent to fahssethics@ul.ie. Please note that the application form will be returned without consideration if it is not completed correctly.

**When will I receive feedback on my application?**

You should hear from the Committee chair within 2 weeks of the meeting taking place, giving direct approval or asking for further information or clarification.

**When can I start my research?**

Research with people can only start once ethical approval has been given. It cannot be commenced before this point. If research is commenced prior to this point the matter has to be referred to the Course Board, via the candidate’s supervisor. Approval cannot be granted retrospectively.

**What is the process?**

Obtain AHSS Ethics application form from the AHSS website www.artsoc.ul.ie/research-ethics.php

- Read the instructions and all questions carefully
- Fill in the form in its entirety and in its proper order.
- Please ensure that your application is seen by and discussed in full with your supervisor prior to submission
- Please ensure that all annotations are deleted from the form prior to submission.
The Ethics committee meets once a month. Please ensure that all fully completed proposals are submitted (both hard and soft copies) on time. No late applications will be accepted. The dates for this semester are on the AHSS website.

Applications must be typed and submitted in hard and soft copy format. The hard copy must be signed by the applicant and the supervisor.

You can expect a response from the committee chair within 2 weeks of the meeting taking place. Any further necessary implementations are sent directly to the committee chair, cc‘ing fahsethics@ul.ie

Once approval is sanctioned you will be informed directly by the committee chair and your proposal will be assigned a number eg: 2013_01_01_AHSS. Only then can you start your research with your interviewees, survey participants etc.

Research involving participants under the age of 18

- Applicants must have Garda clearance and sign the child protection declaration
- For research done in schools, the school must give informed consent for the research being carried out.
- For this type of research, an ‘opt-out’ letter should be sent to parents.
- If the subject matter is particularly sensitive or contentious it is necessary to get the express permission of parents to conduct the research. In this case, an ‘opt-in’ letter should be sent to parents.

Points to note when filling out the form:

- Make sure you read all the instructions carefully
- Handwritten forms will not be accepted. Please submit one typed hard copy and one typed soft copy.
- Please highlight the checklist answers or put in bold, so they are clear.
- Please fill out all sections of the form, checklist, application form (relevant section) and appendix A and B. Once this is done, please delete the Appendix A and B headers
- Please ensure you have the correct Arts, Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee contact details in your information letter:

Chairperson Arts, Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee

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• The information letter should directly address the prospective research participants. Please do not use bullet points.

- In the consent form where you see ‘Name of Research Project’ – please put the actual name of the project you are researching
- Read the consent form carefully and adapt form to fit requirements of research
- Please make sure that the official UL crest is not deleted from any of the AHSS documentation.
- Please keep the form in its original format and layout and its sections in their proper order.
- Please proofread your application carefully, ensuring that the grammar and syntax are correct.
- Make sure all email addresses for correspondence are ul email addresses. No gmail/hotmail/yahoomail addresses will be accepted.
- If there are any questionnaires or other supplementary information that is relevant, please ensure that it is included with your application.
- Please ensure that your application is seen by and discussed in full with your supervisor prior to submission
- Please ensure that all annotations are deleted from the form prior to submission.

**What about anonymity and confidentiality?**

The following could be included on the Information letter/Consent Form:

- “You will be identified by name in this research project.”
- “You will be not identified by name in this research project.”
- “Any information given in the course of interviews may be used in the study, but your privacy will be respected in all other matters.”

**What about the storage of recordings of interviews, transcripts of documents and so on?**
- You need to include information about data storage in your completed form and ensure that the way in which data will be handled will comply with your obligations under the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003. See [http://www.ul.ie/dataprotection](http://www.ul.ie/dataprotection).

- Data must be stored in a secure location for a period of seven years following completion of research and securely destroyed after that time. With regards anonymous data, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that coding lists, consent forms, and raw data are stored in a separate secure location for a period of seven years following completion of the research.

- Data in hard copy (paper) format must be stored in a secure location (e.g. a locked filing cabinet) for a period of seven years following completion of the research, after which time, it should be disposed of securely and confidentially. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that hard copy data is only accessible to authorised people at all times.

- Data in soft copy (electronic) format, including video, audio, and photographic material, must be password protected or encrypted and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Acts. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that soft copy data is only accessible to authorised people at all times. After the seven year period following completion, the soft copy data should be disposed of or deleted securely and confidentially.

- For detailed information on the University’s Records Management Policy, please see: [www.ul.ie/recordsmanagement](http://www.ul.ie/recordsmanagement).

**Who are the committee Members?**

Dr. Orla McDonnell (Chair) – Department of Sociology  
Dr. Carmen Kuhling – Department of Sociology  
Dr. Brid Quinn – Department of Politics and Public Admin  
Dr. Niall Keegan – Irish World Academy of Music and Dance  
Dr. Ruan O’Donnell – Department of History.  
Dr. Andrea Ryan – School of Law  
Dr. Ann Marcus-Quinn – School of Languages, Literature, Culture and Communication  
Aoife Neary – Postgraduate representative  

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