

Research Ethics: Ethical Practice

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Research ethics in practice

Third in series; follows ethical theories and ethical principles

- Every researcher's responsibility
- Responsibility also of funders, commissioners, RECs/IRBs
- Time is crucial
- Ethical practice varies between countries and cultures
- Not just about filling in forms
- Applies to both quantitative and qualitative researchers, at all stages of the research process – and afterwards too

Ethical practice: planning research, literature review

- Is your research question a good one?
- Are you thinking through methodology and method?
- Need to think through possible ethical implications at every stage
- Important to read widely, including those you disagree with
- Take the time to understand what you read
- Cite carefully and locate your own work within the conversation

Ethical practice: data gathering, data analysis

- Confidentiality/anonymity/privacy – when appropriate and possible
- Respect for, and understanding of, participants
- Researcher safety and well-being important too
- Meticulous, laborious work; essential to do it thoroughly
- Often unsupervised, temptation can be fierce
- Integrity essential during analysis

Ethical practice: writing

- Choice of words
- Choice of structure
- Represent participants fairly and accurately
- Direct quotes from social media?
- Direct quotes when participants use a different language from you
- Represent your findings fairly and accurately

Ethical practice: presentation and dissemination

- Engage your audience
- Use more than one method
- Represent your work as fairly as you can
- Present and/or disseminate to participants
- Disseminate as widely as your resources allow
- Try for knowledge exchange where possible

Ethical practice: when research is done

- Ethical difficulties can arise even after you are 'finished' – be aware, be prepared
- Aftercare may be important for participants
- Aftercare may be important for you
- Where possible, accept opportunities to build on your research
- Also: celebrate!

For more information visit
www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/online

