# Video 4 transcript: Applying ethics principles

## Preparing an information sheet and consent form

When conducting research, it is important that you bear the aforementioned principles in mind throughout the process of working on your research project.

But you may be wondering, what does this mean in practice for you and your research project?

Well, whenever you want to collect data for your research projects, you will need to create an information sheet and a consent form for your participants to read.
[0:33] [Add link to information sheet]

**Transparency** is the bedrock of research ethics. This means that you need to communicate to your participants as fairly, honestly and openly.

Tell them what exactly the purpose behind the project is, who the project leaders are, how the participants will be involved should they opt to take part in your project. This will help them decide whether they are willing and fully comfortable to take part in your research. It also allows them to come back to you and ask any questions they may have before they commit. Ultimately this will lead to trust between yourself as the researcher, and your participants.

A common way to provide this information to prospective participants is through an information sheet.

**If you have human participants, you must have an information sheet.** [1:33]

The purpose of the information sheet is to give your prospective participants an opportunity to understand more about the research project, what it means for them, the risks and benefits, as well as what will be done with the data collected.

Typically, an information sheet must include: [1:49]

- One, the nature and purpose of your research,
- Two, who your academic supervisor is and their contact details,
- Three, what the participants are being asked to do,
- Four, whether there is any incentive to participate,
- Five, what the benefits are to the participants and/or their community,
- Six, how long their involvement is likely to take,
- Seven, whether or when they are able to withdraw,
- Eight, the deadlines for withdrawal,
- Nine, the proposed use of the material collected,
- Ten, who will have access to it, and,
- Eleven, whether the data will be kept confidential to you, and how anonymity or confidentiality is to be guaranteed.

Transparency, in this phase of your research, is key. You need to communicate to your prospective participants key information relating to your project as transparently as possible.

## Informed consent [2:54]

Once your prospective participants have read your information sheet, they need to provide consent. Informed consent is one of the founding principles of research ethics.

If you are collecting data from human or animal participants, you ***must*** obtain informed consent. This means that consent may only be sought after your participants become informed about what the project is and what it will mean for them.

The minimum requirements for consent to be informed are that the participant understands what the research is and what they are consenting to.

By obtaining consent we ensure that human participants have joined the research voluntarily, and with full information about what it means for them to take part.

It is important to note that consent should be obtained prospectively, that is, before the participant enters the research, and there must be no undue influence on participants to consent.

The consent form can be attached to the end of the information sheet. Participants must agree that they have read the information sheet and are happy to take part.

## Do you need ethics approval? [4:08]

Finally, as I mentioned near the start of this video [*i.e., in the first video* add hyperlink], sometimes you will need to think about whether your research requires ethics approval at all.

Some research projects carry little to no risk as the data is not collected from people or animal species. This occurs if you are collecting data that is publicly available, such as texts and images from newspapers or websites. In such instances, you are not required to obtain informed consent.