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## Important Deadlines

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<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Proposal</td>
<td>12(^{th}) October 2015*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Decisions / allocation of supervisors</td>
<td>Before 30(^{th}) October 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft of Introduction</td>
<td>25(^{th}) January 2016*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project Dissertation</td>
<td>1(^{st}) April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
<td>Week of 4(^{th}) April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI Student Congress, University of Ulster</td>
<td>April 2016 (Date TBC)</td>
</tr>
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*Copies must be submitted before 9.30am on Monday morning.

For the final dissertation you are required to submit one hard bound copy and two soft bound copies.
1. Introduction

The final year project is a 20 credit module which gives you the opportunity to conduct a small scale independent piece of research in psychology. The project is the capstone of your degree. It aims to integrate and extend upon previous modules and research studied. This will entail the systematic design, execution and analysis of an empirical psychological study, which will be written up as an 8,000-10,000 word dissertation. By carrying out an independent project you will be able to demonstrate your ability to conceive of, plan, and carry out a sustained piece of empirical research. The module gives you the opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills in identifying, carrying out and writing up a discrete piece of research using academic concepts, theoretical insights and practical abilities acquired throughout the course.

This Handbook is intended to provide you with the information required to complete the Final Year Project. It contains material that will help you in carrying out your research, writing and structuring your dissertation, and advice on how to organise your work schedule.

Learning Outcomes for the Module

The Final Project is the capstone of your psychology degree and has a number of learning outcomes which will be assessed via three components. The learning outcomes are as follows:

- **LO 1.** Develop a research proposal based on a literature review
- **LO 2.** Carry out an empirical study by integrating and extending concepts learnt in other modules
- **LO 3.** Collect, analyse, and interpret data
- **LO 4.** Undertake sustained, independent research work
- **LO 5.** Document and present research findings

Assessment

There are several deliverable components to the Project module which are explained in greater detail throughout this handbook. These are:

1. Detailed research proposal (10% of final mark).
2. Research Report (80% of final mark).
3. Presentation at the NCI student research conference (10% of final mark). You will present your research study findings in an oral-presentation format at a special conference organised in NCI in April.

In addition to this you are required to submit a draft introduction (literature review) to your thesis before commencing semester 2. This serves as a formative piece of assessment where you will be given feedback from your supervisor.

In completing these components, you should be able to draw upon knowledge and skills learnt in previous modules, specifically those acquired within the research methods and statistics modules, and practical work (including lab reports) completed in other modules. You should also be able to draw
upon previously assigned readings in your chosen topic area; however you will be expected to extend upon this reading significantly.

**Repeat Arrangements**
All module components must be attempted. Students who fail the project have to repeat it over the summer. If the proposal element was passed on first attempt, students may reuse or revise this proposal. Any empirical work commenced during the year may continue as deemed feasible and appropriate by the supervisor.

**2. Project Workshops**
A number of weekly semi-structured project workshops are provided to support you in the research process. These will involve a mixture of seminars and practical sessions to assist you in your research design (semester 1) and data analysis (semester 2). Many of these concepts would have been introduced to you in the Research Methods and Statistics modules, so, rather than provide explicit instruction in this material again, these workshops serve to assist you in applying the principles of research methods and design to successfully manage your own project.

**Lecturer:** Dr Rebecca Maguire (rebecca.maguire@ncirl.ie)

**Semester 1 Workshops**
These workshops will include instruction and discussion on:

- Developing research ideas
- Research-related resources available at NCI
- Sourcing appropriate measures
- Writing the research proposal
- The ethics committee at NCI and the project approval process
- The student-supervisor relationship
- Managing the research project
- Completing a literature review

**Semester 2 Workshops**
These workshops will be based in computer laboratories and will primarily involve SPSS support, including:

- Entering data appropriately
- Review of key descriptive and inferential statistics
- Choosing appropriate tests for various research hypotheses
- Structuring the results section of the dissertation
- Presenting research
3. Preparing and Planning for your Project
Completing a final year project requires a great deal of independent work, planning, and forethought. Before you embark on this you should consider the following issues:

Selecting a General Topic
The completion of your thesis will require a good deal of time and effort so you should ideally pick a subject matter that interests you. You could think back to previous modules completed during your degree that you enjoyed. You may also wish to consult with staff members and/or focus on an area of close to their own field of expertise. Alternatively you could think about what area of psychology you might wish to focus on at postgraduate level. You may have a research interest in an area not covered during your degree; this is fine, but bear in mind that you will need to do an extensive amount of independent reading to familiarise yourself with this. It is also recommended that you read exemplars of other psychology projects that are available on-line to give you an idea of how material should be structured.

Developing Research Questions and Hypotheses
Once you have settled on a general area of interest, you need to develop a more specific research question or hypothesis. This may be driven by a variety factors but most crucially will be grounded in previous literature.

The feasibility of your research is very important to keep in mind when formulating your research idea and research questions:

- The research topic you choose to explore must be one that you are able to conduct on your own – avoid studying populations that would be difficult to sample from, or techniques you cannot easily learn to use. For example it is best to avoid proposing a genetic screening study that requires an entire lab of professionals!
- Be aware of the equipment and resources that are available for your use – don’t plan on using fMRI scanners to look inside the brains of your lecturers!
- You need to consider how long the research will take and whether your intended research will be ethically acceptable – for example it is not a good idea to design a five-year longitudinal study on the effects of continual cocaine use on the brain!

Identifying Measures
Prior to completing your research proposal, you need to decide on the measurement tools that you will use, such as the questionnaires in the case of a survey design, or lab equipment in the case of an experimental design. In order to decide what measurement tools to use in your study, read some major empirical articles in your research area. Pay close attention to what measures/materials were outlined and described in the Method section of relevant papers and investigate whether those tools are available to you (see section 7 below for a summary of the research tools available at NCI). You will be given the opportunity to have an individual meeting with the psychology technician, Nigel Vahey, early on in semester 1 to discuss the options available.
Obtaining a Sample

Your final year project must be an empirical piece of research and should utilise a primary data collection method (i.e. original data that is collected by you the student). A major component of this is gaining access to a suitable population in order to obtain a sample of participants for use in your research. In order for your study to be methodologically sound you must select a sample that is appropriate for your research (if you are interested in studying criminal thinking styles a sample of pre-school children probably isn’t the best choice!). Be aware that obtaining access to a sample can be a difficult and time consuming process. Students often underestimate how long it can take to collect sufficient material – remember that you will be conducting your research according to what suits your participants’ individual schedules. Appropriate sample sizes may depend on the nature of your study and your particular population of interest but in the case of quantitative research, aim for a minimum of 100 participants as a general guideline (however this may be less in the case of some types of experimental work). If you are planning on using a sample of vulnerable participants you must first document consent from this sample when submitting your proposal (e.g. if proposing a study using school children, consent from the participating school should be obtained in writing).

Developing your Research Proposal and Ethical Approval Form

At the end of this booklet you will find a sample ethical application form (which includes the research proposal). This is based on the standardised NCI ethics document, which all students and staff proposing to use human participants in research must complete. You will be required to complete and submit a printed and electronic copy of this (via Turnitin) by 9.30am on Monday 12th October 2015.

The submitted proposal and ethics form are central in attaining ethical approval for your final year thesis - you cannot proceed with data collection until you formally receive ethical approval to do so. Therefore, from the point of view of giving yourself enough time to complete data collection it is essential that you are very careful when completing your research project proposal. Please ensure that your aims/hypotheses are well thought out and are based on sound reasoning. Likewise, ensure that your independent (predictor) and dependent (criterion) variables are correctly assigned, and that your proposed methods of analysis are correct.

It is also important for you to remember that your research proposal is worth 10% of your overall mark so you should give this aspect of your thesis due attention. Failure to pass this element will require a resubmission to the ethics committee which will delay all other stages of the project. Further information on completing this process is given in section 4.

Timeline for Project Process

Please see the next page for an overview of expected timeline and milestones for the project process. However note that better prepared students will hit these milestones earlier than indicated here. Further detail as to what is required for each of these components is detailed later in the document.
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4. Reading Lists and Other Resources
Each student will pursue their own individual literature review depending on their project topic. However there are also general readings suggested to help with structuring and presenting research in psychology. This should be consulted in conjunction with the information provided in this handbook.

Required Reading


Supplementary Reading


5. Project Supervisors
To help you in your research you will be assigned to a member of staff who will supervise your project and advise you on relevant literature, research design and writing-up of your thesis. Please note that supervisors will only be assigned after your proposal has been submitted. Also be aware that not all of the below listed members may be available, or will have a limit on the number of students they can take on. There is no guarantee that the supervisor you would prefer will be available, however every effort will be made to assign students to supervisors who have expertise in the area of their chosen topic.
Once assigned, you are encouraged to maintain regular contact with your supervisor as well as the psychology technician, Nigel Vahey, who can advise you about equipment resources and experimental design (see section 7 below for further information on this). However it should be emphasised that you will be carrying out an independent piece of research so therefore should not rely too heavily on your supervisor or other support staff.

Before developing your proposal it is recommended that you meet with one or more of the below staff members to consult with them on your project idea well in advance of any relevant submission deadlines.

**Contact Details of Potential Supervisors for 2015/2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr April Hargreaves</td>
<td><a href="mailto:April.hargreaves@ncirl.ie">April.hargreaves@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Room 3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Philip Hyland</td>
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<td>Room 2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Kehoe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michele.kehoe@ncirl.ie">michele.kehoe@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Room 2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Rebecca Maguire</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Rebecca.maguire@ncirl.ie">Rebecca.maguire@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Room 2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Joanna McHugh</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Joanna.mchugh@ncirl.ie">Joanna.mchugh@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Room 2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Sinead McNally</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sinead.mcnelly@ncirl.ie">Sinead.mcnelly@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Room 2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace O'Malley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Gomalley@ncirl.ie">Gomalley@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Room 2.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Supervisors Research Areas of Interest**

Below is a brief description of each supervisor’s area of interest:

**Dr April Hargreaves**
Neuropsychology, cognitive genomics, psychosis, cognition, social cognition, cognitive remediation therapy

**Dr Philip Hyland**
Mental health, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy models of psychopathology, cognitive behavioural therapy theories of mental health, trauma- or stressor-related disorders (PTSD and ASD), positive psychology, criminal psychology, criminal thinking styles, psychopathy, development and validation of psychometric scales.

**Michelle Kehoe**
Organisational behaviour, personality and the impact of styles on behaviour, socialisation of employees and students.

**Dr Rebecca Maguire**
Cognitive and experimental psychology, surprise, expectation, creativity, discourse, language, conceptual representation, reasoning, decision-making, learning and education, quality of life.

**Dr Joanna McHugh**
Neuropsychology, Cognitive psychology, Psychology of Ageing, impact of health behaviours (diet, physical activity, sleep), statistical modelling, qualitative research methods, mental health (loneliness and social isolation)
Dr Sinead McNally
Developmental psychology and psychopathology, psychology of language, Autism Spectrum Disorder, early childhood care and education, social psychology, health psychology.

Grace O’Malley

Support Staff:
In addition to the above staff members, Nigel Vahey is the Psychology Technician who can advise you on various aspects of research design and in particular about how to use the research tools made available to you by NCI (see section 7 below). Jonathan Lambert can offer maths and statistical support, specifically in the area of statistical analysis. Dr Michael Goldrick is head of learning support and can offer assistance in academic writing. In addition, Keith Brittle is the library support and information project officer who can offer guidance in sourcing material both in the library and online.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr Mike Goldrick</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michael.goldrick@ncirl.ie">michael.goldrick@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Room 2.28</td>
<td>01 6599245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigel Vahey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Nigel.vahey@ncirl.ie">Nigel.vahey@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Exec 6</td>
<td>01 6599275</td>
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<td>Jonathan Lambert</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jonathan.lambert@ncirl.ie">jonathan.lambert@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Student services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keith Brittle</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Keith.brittle@ncirl.ie">Keith.brittle@ncirl.ie</a></td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>01 4498645</td>
</tr>
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Guidelines for Project Supervision
Your final year project supervisor is there to help you with your project and with any other issues you encounter. If you have concerns about any aspect of your final year project then discuss these with your project supervisor who will help you.

The supervisor’s job is to advise and assist you, and s/he should be consulted on:
- the refinement of your research aims and objectives
- planning of data collection
- the suitability of research practices, including all ethical issues
- methodology concerns
- statistical analysis
- the writing up of the report
- appropriate presentation of the study

Individual meetings
You are allowed up to five hours of individual meetings with your supervisor. The timing and content of these will vary between supervisors and students. It is important to discuss this with your supervisor at the beginning of the year so you both understand what the other expects. Remember tuition might involve sending and responding to email, telephone calls, or face-to-face meetings. You should give appropriate notice if you wish to discuss any issues with your supervisor because they may have limited availability.
In addition to individual meetings with your supervisor, you will also be supported in your project by means of group workshops, weekly classes and seminars with the Final Year Project coordinator and meetings with the Psychology Technician.

**Having Problems?**
Remember that your supervisor is an experienced researcher and can help you with your planning and in responding to any issues that arise. Don’t suffer alone, talk to your supervisor and get help. Additionally your supervisor should be consulted *immediately* if a change of plan is made. The module leaders may also be consulted by supervisor and student.

If problems arise in the supervision relationship these should, in the first instance, be discussed between you and your supervisor. If this is not possible or the problems do not resolve themselves you should contact the programme director.
6. Research Proposal

Your research proposal application needs to show that you have considered the main practical and theoretical issues within your chosen topic and the way you plan to investigate it. When anybody carries out research with human participants they first have to submit their proposal to an ethics panel or ethics committee. This panel decides if there are any ethical issues associated with the proposed research. The ethics committee will consider the aims, the method, and how the research might be disseminated in ensuring that ethical guidelines are followed. It is vital that you familiarise yourself with the NCI Ethical Guidelines (included at the end of this document), as well as those of the Psychological Society of Ireland (see http://www.psychologicalsociety.ie/find-a-psychologist/PSI%202011-12%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf).

Project supervisors sit on the psychology ethics committee and all student projects are scrutinised before approval is granted. Those which pose any ethical risk (what constitutes risk is also outlined in the ethical guidelines attached) are subsequently reviewed by the College Ethics Committee. Depending on the outcome of this process your proposal may be: approved, approved with minor revisions, approved with major revisions, or rejected. In the latter two cases you will have to resubmit again.

What follows is a step-by-step guide to submitting your research proposal:

1. Download the ethical review and research proposal form from Moodle (which is also included in the end of this document). Read the form and consider the information you need to complete it.

2. Download and read the Psychological Society of Ireland’s guide to ethical research from Moodle and also the NCI guidelines for ethical research

3. Discuss the research proposal form with the module leader of the Final Year Projects module

4. Identify your research aims and formulate these as early, as clearly, and as precisely as possible.

5. Design your methodology and prepare any research tools that you plan to use (e.g. any experimental tasks, questionnaires, or interview schedules that you will need to explore your research question).

6. Prepare your information sheets, consent forms, and debrief sheets.

7. Complete the research proposal form

8. Submit your research proposal form to Turnitin by the specified date (11th October 2015).

9. Wait for confirmation from the Ethics Committee before you proceed with any data collection. You will be given one of the following decisions:
   - APPROVED
If you need to make amendments, talk to your module leader or proposed supervisor and agree amendments before resubmitting. The deadline for resubmissions of proposals is **Monday 16th November at 9.30am**. Again await confirmation before proceeding with data collection. If the application is rejected, or if you have failed the proposal for some other reason, then you need to meet with the module leader urgently.

**General Advice and Guidance for Ethics**

The ethical guidelines give details of the core principles governing research in NCI, but some general points are outlined below:

- Projects in Psychology entail the gathering of empirical data, and therefore commonly raise ethical issues, relating to access, anonymity, informed consent, and your role as a researcher, among others. These issues must be addressed in your research proposal application under the ethics section, in carrying out your project, and in writing it up. Your project should conform to the professional ethical guidelines of the Psychological Society of Ireland (see [http://www.psihq.ie/](http://www.psihq.ie/)).

- Any major changes to the project that may affect the ethical considerations of the research should be approved by resubmission of the ethics approval request. Your supervisor or the module leader will be able to advise you whether this will be necessary in each case.

- You **MUST** discuss ethical issues with your supervisor/module leaders and FOLLOW the guidance given. All areas of research are likely to raise important ethical issues, which need consideration and approval for research to proceed. The research topic and method you have in mind may not meet ethical criteria, and the Ethics Committee may ask for changes in your research before it can continue past this stage. The Ethics Committee should also be consulted for further advice and guidance when important ethical issues arise.

- **NO** contact should be initiated with participants/organisations by whatever means (e.g. letter, phone, e-mail) unless first approved by your supervisor or module leader. You should ensure informed consent or permission from individuals, groups, and organisations involved in your research. Permission in writing should be obtained from the relevant respondents, person in authority, or committee.

- The issue of deception must be thought about carefully and discussed with your supervisor. No harm should come to participants and the right to privacy should be respected.

- You should submit your questionnaire or other data collection method as part of your research proposal for ethical approval. If the project itself has already received approval from the Ethics...
Committee prior to a final decision on what questionnaires are to be used, you should confirm this with your supervisor. At the time of applying to the Ethics Committee you may not have your research tools (questionnaire, interview schedule etc.) ready, in which case you can just describe it and the process by which you will develop it. Therefore any final form that your methods take must be approved separately by your supervisor in advance of data collection. In addition, your research tools may need to undergo validation processes, and any participants involved in that should be treated ethically.

◆ Pay attention to participant debriefing and the manner of withdrawal from the research setting. Note that you should make it clear to participants that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

◆ Data from participants should be treated as confidential (and participants’ data should remain non-identifiable) unless otherwise agreed in advance.

◆ Consult your supervisor on issues of giving advice to participants and the protection of researchers, in particular regarding the well-being of participants and ensuring the safety of you, the researcher.

◆ If your data collection involves agencies outside the College, you may wish to inform them of the outcomes of your research. The best way to do this is to provide a summary of the findings, not a copy of the whole dissertation, as many aspects of this will be for assessment only. In addition, you must ensure that the final thesis complies with the requirements set out by the Ethics Committee.

The ethics component of the research proposal application addresses the following ISSUES:

➢ Demonstrate a critical understanding of ethical research.
➢ Writing an application for approval by the Ethics Committee.

**The department and the College take ethical research principles very seriously. If you do not properly complete an ethics form or if you do not conduct your research in an ethical manner, it may result in failure of your project.**

Please note that the College’s Ethical guidelines, in addition to the ethical approval form, can be found in the Appendix.

**Marking scheme for proposal**

Before being evaluated for ethics, your proposal will also be graded. The marking scheme is provided below so you should ensure that the proposal pays adequate attention to the following components.

- Concise and up-to-date literature review of research in the relevant field (20%)
- Strong rationale which is logically connected to the literature review (10%)
- Clearly articulated aims and objectives (10%)
- Suitable research design (5%)
- Methods of data collection described appropriately in relation to aims and objectives, with sufficient detail given regarding their implementation (10%)
- Sample and sample size which is appropriate and achievable in the context of project (5%)
- Correct methods of data analysis (10%)
- Ethical implications that are fully considered (25%)
- References (to be included at end of document) are appropriately formatted and presentation is of a high standard (5%)

Note that the proposal marking scheme is separate to the decision of the ethics committee. Proposals must achieve a pass grade and be approved by the ethics committee before supervisors are allocated and data collection can commence.

7. The Project Dissertation
The final project dissertation should be approximately 8,000-10,000 words in length (not including references or appendices) and is worth 80% of the final module mark.

On 1st April 2016 you are required to submit one hard bound copy and two soft bound copies of your dissertation, in addition to submitting an electronic copy via Turnitin.

Report Content
The final report should contain the following sections in the following order:

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<th>Content</th>
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| Title page          | - The title of the project (should provide a clear message of what the project entailed).  
                     - Your name and student number  
                     - The year of submission |
<p>| Declaration         | This is the standard NCI declaration form which declares that the project is your own work and also grants permission to lodge this in the NCI library. |
| Acknowledgements    | It is usual in a dissertation to acknowledge and thank your participants and those people who have helped you in the research. This might include your supervisor, other staff members etc. |
| Abstract            | A concise summary of your research. Normally an abstract includes an initial statement of the overall aims of the research, followed by a summary of the methodology. This is followed by a brief report on the main findings of the study, and finally a short statement about the main implications/importance of the project. Should be no more than 200 words. |
| Contents Page       | Give details of each section and sub-section and the page |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>In this section you set up and justify your research aims/hypotheses. Provide an in-depth, comprehensive and critically evaluative review of the literature in the area. Construct the narrative so that it demonstrates the need for your research.</td>
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</table>
| Rationale and research aims/hypotheses | Summarise in a few sentences the reason for your research and then state your aims or hypotheses clearly and unambiguously. Your rationale should logically follow from the literature reviewed. When developing your research aims/hypotheses try to formulate between 3 and 5 related main aims/hypotheses. This number of research questions will provide you with sufficient material to construct an excellent results section, and provide ample material to include in your discussion section. Under normal circumstances it can be very difficult to complete a thesis based on one single hypothesis/aim. It should be noted, that the optimal number of research questions may depend on the exact nature of your study.  

The Introduction, including the rationale and aims/hypotheses, should be approximately 3,500-4,000 words.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Method                               | How you set out the method will depend on the type of research you do (quantitative or qualitative). Discuss this with your supervisor. But in general you need to cover the following sections:  

- Participants (who took part)  
- Measures/Materials (what questionnaires or experimental equipment was employed)  
- Design (type of research design employed: quantitative, qualitative, cross-sectional, experimental, longitudinal etc., as well as key variables)  
- Procedures (how was the study performed and what ethical considerations were made?)  

The method section of your thesis should normally be approximately 1,000-2,000 words long. A method section should be highly detailed but presented in a clear and concise manner. Your method section should, in principle, provide enough information for another researcher to faithfully replicate your research.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Results                              | This section is driven by the type of research you have done and should be structured in consultation with your supervisor.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
Quantitative reports should present descriptive statistics results first, followed by results from your inferential statistics. Present results in a sequential fashion in line with your research aims/hypotheses. Reporting of all descriptive and inferential statistics (including reporting of results in tables and figures) must follow the APA style. Use tables and figures appropriately to present your results, but do not solely rely on the use of tables. The main findings of your study need to be reported in text and tables/figures should be used as supplementary methods of displaying results.

If you are doing a qualitative study your supervisor will discuss and inform you on how to present results.

The length of your results section will depend on the number of hypotheses/aims you have and the type of statistical analysis chosen. Normally a results section should be between 1,000-2,000 words.

| Discussion | A discussion section should reintroduce your major research aims/hypotheses followed by a detailed discussion on each of your results. Your findings should be summarised and discussed in a clear and straightforward manner (do not repeat what has been included in your results sections – technical reporting of inferential statistics). Make every effort to discuss your findings in relation to the existing literature that you reviewed in the Introduction. Think about how your findings contribute to the existing scientific literature. Are your research findings consistent with the overall literature? Do they challenge the conventional paradigm? Are your findings novel and original? Also consider all of the implications of your findings. Depending on the nature of your study, your findings may have important clinical, theoretical, research, or policy implications. A discussion section must also include a ‘Limitations’ section where you critically appraise your study and highlight the limitations associated with your work. |
| Conclusion | Briefly restate your results and consider what they contribute to the literature and applied settings. Include any constraints, highlight the major strengths of your study, and offer suggestions for further research. The discussion section including the conclusion should normally |
be approximately 3,000 words in length.

| References | References should be constructed in accordance with APA style – see library or APA website for a guide to this.  
TIP: DO YOUR REFERENCES AS YOU GO ALONG, IT CAN BE A NIGHTMARE FINDING THEM IF YOU LEAVE THEM ALL TO THE END.  

List references in alphabetical order. Each listed reference should be cited in text, and each text citation should be listed in the References section.  

Examples of basic reference formats:  

**Journal Article:**  

**Authored Book:**  

**Chapter in an Edited Book:**  

| Appendices | Again the content here depends on your research but should include:  
- Your consent forms, information sheet etc. (do not include signed consent forms as this will break anonymity and make sure any letters are anonymised for people and places)  
- Your research materials – interview schedules, questionnaires, task instructions, visual stimuli etc.  
- Evidence of your data (although again make sure you redact anything that compromises anonymity) – this |
might be interview transcripts, a summary of numerical data – you don’t need to include completed questionnaires or individual responses from quantitative reports.

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<th>Formatting</th>
<th>You should format your report in the following way:</th>
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<td>• Use Times New Roman 12 font</td>
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<td>• Use 1.5 or 2.0 spacing in main text, and for tables, references etc.</td>
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<td>• Use a separate page for each new main section (Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, References, Appendices)</td>
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<td>• Use smaller fonts for appendices and single spacing.</td>
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| Binding             | Please refer to the NCI guidelines regarding binding for thesis as well as more specific information regarding presentation. Note that hard bound copies should in in University Blue with gold lettering. |

**Draft Introduction**

The project is a significant piece of work and contributes 20 credits to your final award in psychology. To assist you in the development of your research study you are required to submit a draft of the Introduction (i.e. literature review) to your supervisor prior to the commencement of semester 2. Your supervisor will read this and give you feedback so you can make any adjustments. The draft will not be marked but will simply provide you the opportunity to consult with your supervisor in order for you to have ample time to focus on the data collection and analysis in Semester 2.

**Oral Presentation**

On completion of the dissertation there will be a one day mini conference held in NCI in early April. Students will be required to give a 15 minute presentation on the background, aims, methodology, results and discussion of their project. Following this, students will also be encouraged to present at the annual psychology students in Ireland conference.

**8. Assessment Regulations**

The assessed components of the project module are subject to the usual assessment regulations, and your attention is directed to the College’s guidance on plagiarism, collusion, cheating and poor scholarship. Please note that, although you can read other students’ work in the library or from other students in your cohort, the use of these is still regulated by the rules of academic misconduct and offences. Also, if you allow someone to look at any of your own work, and they use it with or without your knowledge, you are also committing an assessment offence.
Assessment Criteria
The learning outcomes outlined in the introduction drive the following assessment criteria. Pay close attention to the criteria as they form the basis for marking your project. Examiners will be investigating whether:

- Previous research and theoretical approaches are critically evaluated.
- A comprehensive and critical literature review is presented.
- The selected methods are appropriate to the research questions.
- The methods used in the study are clearly presented in an appropriate format.
- Results are analysed, interpreted, and presented in an appropriate way.
- The findings of the study are critically evaluated and their implications for further research are discussed.

In addition, your report will be marked on its:

- Writing and presentation
- Structure and organisation
- Relevance, clarity and understanding of content
- Critical analysis
- Relevance of sources used
- Referencing

More specific guidelines and the marking scheme for the project are outlined below.

Marking Scheme for Dissertation

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<th>Max. Mark</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Title &amp; Abstract:</strong></td>
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<td>- 200 words or less</td>
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<td>- The abstract should clearly and concisely communicate the main aims, hypotheses or research questions addressed in the study.</td>
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<td>- Should include details of the relevant methods and results.</td>
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<td>- Should also include a brief statement of the major implications of the study.</td>
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<td><strong>Introduction: Previous Research in terms of the current study</strong></td>
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<td>- Is there an in-depth, comprehensive review of relevant literature?</td>
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<td>- Is there evidence of critical evaluation of previous research?</td>
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<td>- Is the literature review up to date including recent research findings?</td>
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- Is the narrative presented in such a way that the necessity for the research is clear in terms of fulfilling gaps in existing literature, or policy implications?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Introduction: Rationale of the current study &amp; aims or hypotheses</th>
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<td>- Is the rationale of the study logically connected to the literature review?</td>
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<td>- Are variables in the study operationally defined?</td>
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<td>- Are the research aims and hypotheses well formulated and concise?</td>
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<td>- Are the hypotheses justified in relation to the literature discussed?</td>
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<th>Method:</th>
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<td><strong>Participants (5%)</strong></td>
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<td>- Has the total number of participants been reported?</td>
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<td>- Has relevant demographic information for participants been included?</td>
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<td>- Is the sampling technique described and correctly identified?</td>
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<th>Measures/Materials (5%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>- If appropriate, are questionnaires named and properly referenced?</td>
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<td>- Are questionnaires described in appropriate detail?</td>
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<td>- Is the scoring of the measure adequately described?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- If appropriate are materials used in an experimental study appropriately described?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Has the validity and reliability of the measure been referenced?</td>
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<td>- Are reliability results (Cronbach’s alpha) for the current sample provided?</td>
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<th>Design (5%)</th>
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<td>- Is the design named correctly, e.g. longitudinal, experimental/quasi-experimental, or cross-sectional?</td>
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<td>- If a mixed design is used, are separate aspects clearly defined?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Are IVs/DVs and/or PVs/CVs correctly identified for each research aim/hypothesis?</td>
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<th>Procedures (5%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Is the procedure for the study adequately detailed?</td>
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- Have ethical considerations been addressed?
- If approval was required to access a sample is there mention of written consent?

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<th>Results:</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Is there an accurate selection of analyses to investigate research aims/hypotheses?</td>
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<td>- Are the descriptive statistics included and appropriately presented (APA style)?</td>
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<td>- Are the inferential statistics included and appropriately presented (APA style)?</td>
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<td>- Is there clear evidence of understanding of the various analytic procedures employed?</td>
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<td>- Have tables, graphs and/or figures been used to present results?</td>
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<td>- Are tables appropriately formatted (APA style)?</td>
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<td>- Is there evidence of a clear understanding of the outcome of the results?</td>
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<th>Discussion: Interpretation in terms of empirical evidence</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Is there an effort to reintroduce the primary objectives of the current study?</td>
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<td>- Are findings of the study discussed in a clear and comprehensible manner?</td>
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<td>- If hypotheses were included, are results recounted in terms of rejecting or accepting the specific hypotheses?</td>
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<td>- Are current findings critically analysed in relation to the existing literature?</td>
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<td>- Is there an attempt to highlight the contribution of current findings to the existing literature?</td>
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<td>- Is there an attempt to identify the major implications of the findings to clinical work, policy decisions, research domains, theory development etc.?</td>
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<th>Discussion: Limitations/future research/ conclusions</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Is there a critical appraisal of current work such that limitations are highlighted and discussed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is there an attempt to explain these limitations and also highlight the key strengths of the study?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is there an attempt to discuss the implications of the research findings and highlight possibilities for future research?</td>
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9. Facilities and Support
There are a range of support systems available to you in the College and you should take full advantage of these at every stage of your project.

Library
The librarians are experienced at helping students to identify relevant sources of literature for your project and have developed a guide on these resources specifically for psychology students. The library has recently re-launched its website which highlights some of these resources. If you are having problems with searching on the electronic databases, go and see the librarian or library assistants. In particular, Keith Brittle is experienced in assisting students in their dissertations and can be consulted in this respect.

Psychology Research Databases
The college has access to numerous on-line databases where you can gain access to a variety of psychology journals. This will be invaluable when performing your literature review.

To access these databases: Open Student portal → Under ‘Norma Smurfit Library’ select Online Resources → Click on A-Z Databases

From here you have many choices, the key ones of which are:

- The ‘American Psychological Association Databases’ which includes:
  - PsycARTICLES (full-text of some of the most prominent journals in psychology)
  - PsycINFO (3.3 million abstracts of psychology articles)
o PsycBOOKS (APA ebook collection)
o PsycCRITIQUES (useful resource for identifying review articles)
o PsycEXTRA (unpublished or ‘grey’ literature)
o PsycTESTS (this is a very useful resource for finding self-report psychological measure which you want to utilise in your project).

o In addition, should you conduct your final year project research with Dr. Josephine Bleach at the Early Learning Initiative you may have access to many standardised tests specifically related to educational psychology.

- **Academic Search Complete**: full-text of over 4,400 journals, including 575 psychological journals
- **Psychology & Behavioral Sciences**: 400 full-text journals related to psychology
- **Sage**: includes full-text on almost 100 psychology journals
- Other relevant databases include Sage research methods, Science Direct, and Emerald which all contain valuable sources of information.

**Reading**
There are a plethora of books which offer advice on how to do a psychology undergraduate project. During your Final Year Project module you will be provided with a significant amount of reading material on this subject. Remember however that there are different ways of doing projects, so read it with the project guidelines in this handbook in mind.

You may also need to consult text books to help you with your research methods and statistics. Use your experience from past modules for this and search the library for help.

Most importantly be sure to read lots of empirical journal articles related to your area of research. These will be invaluable in terms of improving your writing style, the formation and structure of the thesis, acquisition of available references, decisions on appropriate methods and statistical analysis, presentation of results, and discussion of findings. Use the databases listed above when starting your search as well as open source data online such as Google Scholar. In particular, you should note that it is often very helpful to begin by looking for review articles about your topic of interest that are published as recently as possible and with as many citations as possible.

**Information Technology**
If you are not confident in your IT skills then help is at hand. Go to the IT help desk and they will be able to make an appointment for you with a tutor.

For advice on specialist programmes such as SPSS, contact a member of the psychology staff or Jonathan Lambert in Maths Support.
Lab Facilities
The college has a range of lab equipment that is available for you in carrying out your research project. There are also a number of testing rooms available which you will be able to book for your research projects.

Psychology testing rooms
The following rooms are available for project work. Please contact Nigel Vahey if you would like to book one of these as availability (especially regarding CRILIT) is limited.
  o **Psychology lab 1** (room 3.08) includes 34 computers with specialised psychology software
  o **Psychology lab 2** includes the power lab system for collection of psycho-physiological data (see below).
  o **Experimental Lab 1** (exec 6)
  o **Experimental Lab 2** (exec 7)

Help with Experimental Design
The psychology technician Nigel Vahey has experience in setting up psychology research projects and he will be able to familiarise you with the various laboratory equipment and software available. A brief overview of the relevant experimental facilities are given below but you should contact Nigel or another member of staff should you require more detail. Where appropriate, in the first instance, you will be required to read an introductory manual about the relevant equipment/software that you wish to use before consulting in detail with the relevant member(s) of staff.

**Psychology Lab 1**
Psychology Lab 1 is situated in room 3.08 on the third floor of NCI. It contains 34 computers, where you can access specialised software that can be used to design, conduct and/or analyse psychological research. For example *E-prime* software can be used to create computerised questionnaire and/or response time tasks that will record data about how research participants perform on those tasks. However, when planning your research you should note that although there are 50 runtime e-prime licences available among students for the purposes of collecting data using pre-prepared e-prime experiments, at present NCI possesses only two licences capable of authoring e-prime experiments in advance of data collection.

An alternative for running experiments is to make use of *PEBL*. This is open source software which can easily be downloaded to your personal computer (see [http://pebl.sourceforge.net](http://pebl.sourceforge.net)) and is also pre-installed on the computers in room 3.08. This software has a number of inbuilt experiments that you can not only execute ‘as is’, but as your expertise develops it also allows you to modify those existing template-type experiments to suit your own particular research purposes.

When it comes to analysing any data, you must be able to use SPSS software when data is in the form of numbers (i.e. quantitative data), and NVivo when data is in the form of words (i.e. qualitative data).

If you want to record psycho-physiological data (i.e. data about how the body or brain automatically reacts to psychological processes), you can use the LabAuthor software provided in Psychology Lab 1 to design experiments to be conducted and analysed in conjunction with LabTutor software on the
psycho-physiological measurement equipment contained in Psychology Lab 2 (see the Powerlab System described in the next section).

**Psychology Lab 2**

Psychology Lab 2 is situated on the second floor of NCI. It contains one desktop computer that is connected to a PowerLab System designed to record how various aspects of a research participants’ brain or body automatically react when they are presented with psychological cues and/or tasks that may or may not be computerised.

When it comes to measuring how different parts of the brain react during at different times during psychological processes the PowerLab System can use gold-plated electrodes on the surface of the head to record EEG signals that the LabTutor software converts into a map of ongoing changes in the brain’s electrical activity.

When it comes to measuring the extent to which a person’s bodily nervous system becomes aroused by psychological processes the PowerLab system incorporates many pieces of equipment that can be selectively used in tandem with the LabTutor software depending upon what aspect of bodily psycho-physiological arousal a student would like to measure. Namely, the PowerLab system allows students to measure very precise changes in:

- a person’s heart rate (i.e. using a pulse transducer);
- how intensely a person breathes air (i.e. using respiratory belt transducer);
- the electrical profile of a person’s heart beat (i.e. using electrodes to capture ECG signals);
- the temperature of the research participant’s body (i.e. using a skin temperature probe);
- how well the skin on a research participant’s hand conducts electricity as the body perspires more versus less in response to physiological arousal (using an electrode designed to galvanic skin response signals);
- how quickly a person can consciously respond to a computerised stimulus (using a hand-held push button switch).

In addition to the above facilities and equipment there are also two smaller experimental laboratories on the first floor (Exec 6 and 7) available for project work. Executive 6 (i.e. Experiment Lab 1) and Executive 7 (i.e. Experiment Lab 2) both house two desktop PCs that are suitable for data collection, and Executive 7 is also equipped to host individual interviews and/or focus groups.

The college also has access to an eye-tracker although if you are interested in using this you would have to contact Nigel as soon as possible as availability is limited.
Appendix 1: Ethical Guidelines from NCI including Ethical Approval Form

National College of Ireland

Ethical Guidelines and Procedures for Research involving Human Participants

SEPTEMBER 2013
1. Introduction

All research involving human participants that is conducted by students or staff at the National College of Ireland should be done so in an ethical manner. The college has therefore developed an Ethics Committee, which acts as a sub-committee of the Research Committee, to ensure that ethical principles pertaining to research involving human participants are upheld and adhered to. All researchers intending to use human participants as part of their projects are thus required to reflect upon any potential ethical issues and submit their research proposals for ethical review before commencing data collection.

This document gives an overview of the core ethical principles guiding research in NCI, while also documenting the procedures required for seeking ethical approval of research involving human participants.

2. Guiding Principles

In line with other research institutions, there are three core guiding principles governing the ethical conductance of research involving human participants at NCI. These principles stem from the *Belmont Report* (1979) published by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research. While it is recognised that these principles may be operationalised differently depending on the specific research discipline, it is recommended that these are consulted as a starting point for any research involving human participants.

2.1 Principle 1: Respect for Persons

This principle entails recognition that participants should be treated as autonomous individuals and hence should never be coerced or swayed into participating in a research project against their will. The participant’s right to withdraw from a research study at any time should be respected, as well as their right to dignity and protection from harm.

Respect for individuals can often be implemented in practice via the process of informed consent, whereby potential participants are made fully aware of the requirements involved in participation. While it is recognised that in certain cases deception (i.e. the withholding of certain information from participants) may take place, this should only occur when it is robustly justified for the validity of the research. In cases where deception is justified, researchers should ensure that any potential risk resulting from this measure is minimised. Participants should also be fully debriefed on the nature of the research after it has taken place.

The principle of respect also requires researchers to protect individuals from vulnerable groups who may have diminished autonomy (see section 4.2 for more detail as to what constitutes vulnerable groups). Where full informed consent is not possible for such population groups, consent may instead be sought from their guardians. In all cases however clear assent, or willingness to participate, should be demonstrated from participants.
2.2 Principle 2: Beneficence and non-maleficence

This principle specifically focuses on the need to protect the well-being of participants. Any potential risk to participants should be minimised, whether that be risk of physical discomfort or of any psychological, emotional or social distress, while possible benefits should be maximised. Researchers adhering to this principle should thus ensure that any potential benefits derived from carrying out the study (e.g. in terms of knowledge gained) should outweigh potential risks. Even in cases where there is only a slight potential risk of harm, participants should be provided with appropriate support to alleviate this.

2.3 Principle 3: Justice

This principle emphasises the need to employ fairness in the distribution of benefits and risks to participants. The way in which participants are selected to take part in research should relate to the purpose of the study, as opposed to other factors such as availability or manipulability of participants. The exploitation of vulnerable populations should be avoided.

Where applicable, researchers are encouraged to consult guidelines stemming from their own professional bodies (e.g. The Psychological Society of Ireland) in addition to the general guiding principles above when planning their research. Researchers should also be sensitive to those issues which are specific to the population under investigation and the methodology that is employed in the project (e.g. qualitative methodologies involving the recording of data may raise issues relating to participants’ right to anonymity, as well as the ethical management and use of data). Detailed consideration should be given to all these issues when planning research and when completing the Ethical Review Application form.

3. Ethics Committee

The NCI Ethics Committee was established by the Academic Council in 2012. Acting as a sub-committee to the Research Committee, its role is to oversee ethical issues arising from all research involving human participants that is conducted by students and staff of the college. The key purpose of this committee is to safeguard against any potential harm to participants, and to ensure that their rights are recognised in line with the guiding principles outlined above.

The Ethics Committee reviews all research proposals posing ethical risk to the participants involved, however the decision as to whether projects pose ethical risk is firstly made via the appropriate Filter Committee which operates at School level (see organisational structure in Figure 1 below). The Filter Committees may review and approve research proposals which are of low ethical risk, while referring those of high ethical risk to be considered by the Ethics Committee (see categories of ethical risk in section 4.1).
While the Filter Committees are made up of staff members with subject-specific knowledge, membership of the Ethics Committee should comprise of no less than five representatives from both the School of Computing and the School of Business, including representatives from the Research Committee.

![Committee Structures](image)

**Figure 1: Committee Structures.**

### 4. Review Process

Any staff or student of NCI wishing to conduct a study involving human participants should first submit the Ethical Review Application Form or, in certain limited situations, the Ethical Review Exemption Form (both included at the end of this document), to the relevant School Filter Committee at proposal stage. This initial review will result in a graded categorisation of ethical risk, as outlined below.

#### 4.1 Categorisation of Ethical Risk

**Research category A**
Research in this category poses little ethical risk to the participants involved. Specifically, it refers to research involving human volunteers, but excluding studies involving:
- therapeutic interventions
- new research methodologies
- vulnerable populations (see section 4.2)
- deception of the participants
- any other significant physical, social or psychological risk to participants

**Research category B**
Research in this category involves human volunteers including studies involving:
- therapeutic interventions
• new research methodologies
• vulnerable populations (see section 4.2)
• deception of the participants
• any potentially significant risk to participants

Research Category C
This specifically refers to research involving human volunteers who are service users, patients, staff, records, etc., within the sphere of the HSE or similar setting (but not including clinical trials of investigative medicinal products).

4.2 Vulnerable groups

There are a number of participant populations that may fall under the heading of ‘vulnerable groups’. These groups require consideration of unique ethical challenges regardless of the nature of the project. Research involving such populations should therefore always be reviewed by the Ethics Committee.

Groups that may be classed as vulnerable include, but are not limited to:

• Children (under 18 years of age)
• The very elderly
• People with an intellectual or learning disability
• Individuals or groups receiving help through the voluntary sector
• Those in a subordinate position to the researcher (e.g. employees)
• Any other groups who might not understand the research and consent process

Note: in addition to the Ethical Review process, any researchers intending to work directly with children will be required to undergo Garda Vetting in advance of the proposed research.

4.3 Exemption from Full Ethical Review

In certain limited cases, researchers can apply for an exemption from full ethical review. In such cases, the Ethical Review Exemption form should be completed, explicitly detailing why the exemption is sought.

In completing this form, researchers must declare that the research does not involve any of the following:

• Vulnerable groups
• Sensitive topics
• Risk of psychological or mental distress
• Risk of physical stress or discomfort
• Any other risk to participants
• Use of drugs or invasive procedures (e.g. blood sampling)
• Deception or withholding of information from participants
• Conflict of interest issues
• Access to data by individuals or organisations other than the researchers
• Any other ethical dilemmas

4.4 Outcomes of Review Process

Following consideration of research projects submitted for Ethical Review, each Filter Committee will submit a report to the Ethics Committee summarising the applications considered and the decisions made.

For research that is deemed to fall under Research Category A (low ethical risk), a favourable outcome at the relevant Filter Committee will be sufficient to secure ethical approval. Research falling under the other two categories must however be considered by the Ethics Committee before approval may be granted.

On the basis of this review, four key outcomes may arise:

1. Research proposal approved (no recommendations)
2. Research proposal approved pending minor revisions (to be accepted by the Chair and Research Supervisor)
3. Research proposal approved pending major revisions (to be resubmitted and approved by the Ethics Committee)
4. Research proposal rejected (resubmission necessary)

A summary of the processes involved in applying for ethical approval can be seen in Figure 2.

Appeals

Appeals against the Committee’s decision may be made within ten working days. In this case, at least three members of the Ethics Committee, none of whom will have reviewed the initial application, may review this along with any additional information submitted by the applicant.
Does your research involve human participants?

Yes

Fill out Ethical Review Application Form

Submit to School Filter Committee

Significant Ethical risk?

Yes

Passed to Ethics Committee for review

No

Can be approved directly by School Filter Committee

Ethics Committee

Proposal Approved?

Yes

Start Research

No

Figure 2: Process chart for seeking Ethical Approval
National College of Ireland

Human Participants Ethical Review Application Form

All parts of the below form must be completed. However in certain cases where sections are not relevant to the proposed study, clearly mark NA in the box provided.

Part A: Title of Project and Contact Information

Name

Student Number (if applicable)

Email

Status:

- Undergraduate  □
- Postgraduate  □
- Staff  □

Title of Research Project

Have you read the NCI Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants?

- Yes  □
- No  □

Please indicate any other ethical guidelines or codes of conduct you have consulted

Has this research been submitted to any other research ethics committee?

- Yes  □
- No  □

If yes please provide details, and the outcomes of this process, if applicable:

Is this research supported by any form of research funding?

- Yes  □
- No  □
If yes please provide details, and indicate whether any restrictions exist on the freedom of the researcher to publish the results:

Part B: Research Proposal

Briefly outline the following information (not more than 200 words in any section).

**Proposed starting date and duration of project**

**The research aims and objectives**

**The rationale for the project**

**The research design**

**The methods of data collection**

**The research sample and sample size**

**The nature of any proposed pilot study**

**The methods of data analysis**
Part C: Ethical Risk

Please identify any ethical issues which will arise and how you will address them.

Please indicate any risk of harm or distress to participants.

Please indicate how you will address this risk (e.g. debriefing procedures, etc.).

Do the participants belong to any of the following vulnerable groups?
(Please tick all those involved).

- □ Children;
- □ The very elderly;
- □ People with an intellectual or learning disability
- □ Individuals or groups receiving help through the voluntary sector
- □ Those in a subordinate position to the researchers such as employees
- □ Other groups who might not understand the research and consent process
- □ Other vulnerable groups

How will the research participants in this study be selected, approached and recruited?

What inclusion or exclusion criteria will be used?

How will participants be informed of the nature of the study and participation?

What procedures will be used to document the participants’ consent to participate?

If vulnerable groups are participating, what special arrangements will be made to deal with issues of informed consent/assent?

Please include copies of any information letters and consent forms with the application.
### Part D: Confidentiality and Data Protection

Please indicate the form in which the data will be collected.

-   □ Identified
-   □ Potentially Identifiable
-   □ De-Identified

What arrangements are in place to ensure that the identity of participants is protected?

Please indicate any recording devices being used to collect data (e.g. audio/video).

Please describe the procedures for securing specific permission for the use of these recording devices in advance.

Please indicate the form in which the data will be stored.

-   □ Identified
-   □ Potentially Identifiable
-   □ De-Identified

Who will have responsibility for the data generated by the research?

Please describe the procedures of the storage and destruction of data.

Dissemination and Reporting

Please describe how the participants will be informed of dissemination and reporting (e.g. submission for examination, reporting, publications, presentations)?

If any dissemination entails the use of audio, video and/or photographic records (including direct quotes), please describe how participants will be informed of this in advance.
I confirm that I have read the NCI Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants, and agree to abide by them in conducting this research. I also confirm that the information provided on this form is correct.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of Supervisor (where appropriate)

Date
National College of Ireland

Human Participants Ethical Review Exemption Form

All parts of the below form must be completed. However in certain cases where sections are not relevant to the proposed study, clearly mark NA in the box provided.

Part A: Title of Project and Contact Information

Name

Student Number (if applicable)

Email

Status:
   Undergraduate ☐
   Postgraduate ☐
   Staff ☐

Title of Research Project

Have you read the NCI Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants?
   Yes ☐
   No ☐

Please indicate any other ethical guidelines or codes of conduct you have consulted

Has this research been submitted to any other research ethics committee?
   Yes ☐
   No ☐

If yes please provide details, and the outcomes of this process, if applicable:

Is this research supported by any form of research funding?
   Yes ☐
   No ☐
If yes please provide details, and indicate whether any restrictions exist on the freedom of the researcher to publish the results:

Part B: Research Proposal

Briefly outline the following information (not more than 200 words in any section).

**Proposed starting date and duration of project**

**The research aims and objectives**

**The rationale for the project**

**The research design**

**The methods of data collection**

**The research sample and sample size**

**The nature of any proposed pilot study**

**The methods of data analysis**
Please indicate the grounds on which you are applying for exemption from ethical review.

Please confirm that the research does NOT involve any of the following:

- □ Vulnerable groups
- □ Sensitive topics
- □ Risk of psychological or mental distress
- □ Risk of physical stress or discomfort
- □ Any other risk to participants
- □ Use of drugs or invasive procedures (e.g. blood sampling)
- □ Deception or withholding information from participants
- □ Conflict of interest issues
- □ Access to data by individuals/organisations other than the researchers
- □ Any other ethical dilemmas

Part D: Signed Declaration

I confirm that I have read the NCI Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants, and agree to abide by them in conducting this research. I also confirm that the information provided on this form is correct.

Signature of Applicant  __________________________________________

Date  __________________________________________

Signature of Supervisor (where appropriate)  __________________________________________

Date  __________________________________________