

Dissertation/Major Project

Module Code: SCH5533

Ecological Design Thinking

Module Leader: **Mona Nasser**

Other Module Staff: - **Emma Kidd, Roberto Fraquelli**

Table of Contents

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION	3
TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT TEAM	3
MODULE AIMS	5
MODULE ASSESSED LEARNING OUTCOMES	5
TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY	6
SCHEME OF WORK	7
LATE WORK/EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES	11
SOURCES OF GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT	12
MODULE FEEDBACK	12
REFERENCING PROTOCOLS AND ACADEMIC OFFENCES	12
READING LIST; RECOMMENDED TEXTS/SUPPORT MATERIALS	13
GUIDELINES OF FORMATTING FOR THE PRODUCTION AND SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION	14
APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF RESEARCH: POSTGRADUATE DISSERTATIONS	21

Welcome and Introduction

This Major Project/Dissertation module enables students to pursue a project or an academic essay of their own interest in the context of Ecological Design Thinking. They are required to conduct autonomous inquiries and contribute to the further evolution of theory and practice in the field. Assessments are made of students' ability to apply knowledge gained over the course of the taught elements of the Masters in innovative and practical ways.

Teaching and Assessment Team

Programme Leader:	Mona Nasserri
Location:	Schumacher College
Email:	Mona.nasserri@schumachercollege.org.uk
Phone number:	0044- (0)1803847233
Student meeting times:	By agreement

Module leader:	Mona Nasserri
Location:	Schumacher College
Email:	Mona.nasserri@schumachercollege.org.uk
Phone number:	0044- (0)1803847233
Student meeting times:	By agreement

Personal Tutors:	Mona Nasserri , Emma Kidd, Roberto Fraquelli
Location:	Schumacher College
Email:	Mona.Nasserri@schumachercollege.org.uk Roberto.Fraquelli@schumachercollege.org.uk Emma.Kidd@Dartington.org

Phone number:	01803847232 01803847233
Student meeting times:	By Agreement

Lecturer:	Mona Nasser Emma Kidd Roberto Fraquelli
Location:	Schumacher College
Email:	Mona.Nasser@schumachercollege.org.uk Emma.Kidd@dartington.org Roberto.Fraquelli@schumachercollege.org.uk
Student meeting times:	By Agreement
Module moderators:	Emma Kidd

Module Aims

- Enable students to undertake a substantial investigation that addresses significant areas of Ecological Design Thinking and practice;
- Extend students' powers of critical evaluation drawing on, and synthesising a range of ideas and information in innovative ways in a substantial investigation addressing a significant area of theory and/or practice;
- Further develop students' ability to facilitate diverse groups in uncertain and changing circumstances, respond to dynamic and changing circumstances, and co-develop holistic solutions to complex problems;
- Develop the skills and confidence necessary to carry out innovative Ecological Design Thinking projects in other areas once the taught elements of the degree have been completed.

Module Assessed Learning Outcomes

- 1) Make a contribution to the development of ecological design thinking;
- 2) Develop, define and evaluate their own inquiries and processes, draw original conclusions and display methodological and theoretical rigour;
- 3) Present and communicate inquiries, ideas, problems, solutions and results in a clear and accessible manner.
- 4) Critically engage with theoretical literature, resources and wider body of knowledge relevant to the context of study, and demonstrate an ability to analyse, evaluate, compare, contrast, and synthesise ideas

Teaching and Learning Strategy

SUMMARY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING [<i>Use HESA KIS definitions</i>]		
Scheduled Activities	Hours	Comments/Additional Information (briefly explain activities, including formative assessment opportunities)
Research skills and methods	8	The programme lead for Ecological Design Thinking in consultation with the Programme Tutor will design and deliver a day-long workshop on appropriate research methods in term 1, and a follow-on day-long workshop in term 2. Research methods and methodologies will be revisited in relation to research ethics, risk assessment, etc.
Online lectures	0	Presentations and workshops by faculty and visiting teachers provide students with knowledge, theories and methodologies from experts in the field.
Tutorial and supervision	8	The Dissertation Supervisor will provide 8 hours of support and advice over the course of the dissertation or dissertation project.
Peer-to-peer learning	8	Students will be encouraged to participate in regular self-organised peer-to-peer learning workshops over the course of the dissertation or dissertation project.
Guided independent study	576	Students will be expected the capacity to devise, develop and deliver an Ecological Design Thinking project, or academic dissertation that advances Ecological Design Thinking, managing their time and the dissertation process, critically analysing both the discipline and their own practice. They are expected to demonstrate innovative and independent practice at this stage, either individually or working as part of a small group.
Total	600	(NB: 1 credit = 10 hours of learning; 10 credits = 100 hours, etc.)

Students are expected to take full responsibility for their learning, **attend all** scheduled sessions, read appropriate indicated readings, and work on set exercises (formative and summative assessment).

Scheme of Work

This module will be assessed by: Mona Nasser, Roberto Fraquelli and Emma Kidd

Element Category	Component Name	Component Weighting
Coursework	Major Project/ Dissertation ALO1, ALO2,ALO3,ALO4	100%

Assignment submission 3.00pm on Tuesday, August 13, 2024
 Feedback and provisional marks 3.00pm on Wednesday, September 13, 2024

Dissertation Calendar

Tuesday 3rd July	Deadline for the submission of dissertation drafts for comment. <i>By this date, it is expected that you will have produced solid working drafts of your introduction, literature review, and methodology (see below).</i>
After Tuesday 3rd July	following the submission of drafts students are welcome to contact staff members for questions, but may not submit further drafts for comment.
Tuesday 13th August 15.00hrs UK Time	Deadline for the submission of completed dissertation
Wednesday 13th September 15.00hrs UK Time	Feedback and provisional marks

Dissertation supervision and Submission

After 3 July 2024 students are welcome to contact staff members for questions, but not to read and comment on specific material. In other words you will continue to have staff support/guidance and conversations on critical issues/questions, but it is up to you to write and present the final document.

Staff agree the need to be consistent in our approach to ensure fairness to you all, so whilst we may be around during the summer break we are unable to read your dissertation.

This may seem strict, however, some institutions provide no reading of draft material at all for Masters Dissertations. At others, it is true, supervisors will read material right up until the submission deadline. On the face of it, the latter may be more appealing to you as students, however, the problems with such an open-ended arrangement are threefold:

- there are discrepancies in how much individual staff members will comment and when they are available (especially given that many staff members take their holidays in the summer months); and
- this leads to some students being (dis)advantaged over others due to things such as staff leave/other commitments;
- as a professional qualification, at Master's level you are expected to undertake and produce your own work, not the work of your supervisor.

We believe the supervision arrangements in place provide you with a good level of support to meet the deadlines set.

Full dissertation guidelines, including ethical principles for research involving human participants and guidelines for the production and submission of dissertations can be found in Appendix A. A further copy can be found in the dissertation area for your programme on the DLE.

It is the expectation of the College that you will remain in regular contact with your Supervisor and continue working full-time on your dissertation regardless of your study location. If you are a Tier 4 student the UKVI regards your constant progression and contact as necessary for us to maintain our sponsorship licence. Tier 4 student responsibilities regarding contact will be given to you at the end of Term 2.

Final dissertation submissions need to be made via the Digital learning environment (DLE) no later than 15.00 (UK time) on the date specified above.

Selection of a Dissertation Topic and Supervision

EDT faculty, Mona Nasser, Emma Kidd and Roberto Fraquelli will help you identify a dissertation supervisor. This supervisor may come from within the Schumacher College faculty. Students are required to maintain close academic contact with their Dissertation Supervisor through visits and/or email or Video Conferencing tools .

Dissertation tutorials and Submission

After 3 July 2024 students are welcome to contact staff members for questions, but not to read and comment on specific material. In other words, you will continue to have staff support/guidance and conversations on critical issues/questions, but it is up to you to write and present the final document.

Staff agree the need to be consistent in our approach to ensure fairness to you all, so whilst we may be around during the summer break, we are unable to read your dissertation.

This may seem strict, however, some institutions provide no reading of draft material at all for Masters Dissertations. At others, it is true, supervisors will read material right up until the submission deadline. On the face of it, the latter may be more appealing to you as students, however, the problems with such an open-ended arrangement are threefold:

- there are discrepancies in how much individual staff members will comment and when they are available (especially given that many staff members take their holidays in the summer months); and
- this leads to some students being (dis)advantaged over others due to things such as staff leave/other commitments;
- as a professional qualification, at Master's level you are expected to undertake and produce your own work, not the work of your supervisor.

We believe the supervision arrangements in place provide you with a good level of support to meet the deadlines set.

Full dissertation guidelines, including ethical principles for research involving human participants and guidelines for the production and submission of dissertations can be found in Appendix A. A further copy can be found in the dissertation area for your programme on the DLE.

It is the expectation of the College that you will remain in regular contact with your supervisor and continue working full-time on your dissertation regardless of your study location. If you are a Tier 4 student the UKVI regards your constant progression and contact as necessary for us to maintain our sponsorship licence. Tier 4 student responsibilities regarding contact will be given to you at the end of Term 2.

Final dissertation submissions need to be made via the Digital learning environment (DLE) no later than 15.00 (UK time) on the date specified above.

<https://dle.plymouth.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=71806>

Selection of the Dissertation Topic and Supervision

EDT faculty, Mona Nasser, Emma Kidd and Roberto Fraquelli will help you identify a dissertation supervisor. This supervisor may come from within the Schumacher College faculty. Students are required to maintain close academic contact with their Dissertation Supervisor through visits and/or email or Video Conferencing tools .

Assessment Forms

Assessed Learning outcome 2: Develop, define and evaluate their own inquiries and processes, draw original conclusions and display methodological and theoretical rigour;			
Fail: 0 - 49%	Pass: 50 - 59%	Merit: 60 - 69%	Distinction: 70 - 100%
Fails to develop a self-directed inquiry which demonstrates critical thinking and displays methodological and theoretical rigour.	Provides evidence of a partially developed self-directed inquiry that demonstrates an average critical thinking and acceptable methodological and theoretical approach.	Provides evidence of a robust self-directed inquiry which demonstrates critical thinking and methodological and theoretical rigour.	Provides evidence of distinguished ability to conduct rigorous self-directed inquiry which demonstrates critical thinking and sound methodological and theoretical approach.

Assessed Learning Outcome 1: Make a contribution to the development of ecological design thinking.			
Fail: 0 - 49%	Pass: 50 - 59%	Merit: 60 - 69%	Distinction: 70 - 100%
Fails to demonstrate any contribution to the development of the field of ecological design thinking	Demonstrates narrow contribution to the development of the field of ecological design thinking	Demonstrates considerable contribution to the development of the field of ecological design thinking	Demonstrates outstanding contribution to the development of the field of ecological design thinking

Assessed Learning Outcome 3: Present and communicate inquiries, ideas, problems, solutions and results in a clear and accessible manner.			
Fail: 0 - 49%	Pass: 50 - 59%	Merit: 60 - 69%	Distinction: 70 - 100%
Fail to demonstrate a coherent presentation of ideas	Demonstrate a satisfactory presentation of ideas and arguments	Demonstrate a coherent and clear presentation of information, ideas and arguments.	Demonstrate an excellent quality of presentation; coherent , clear, and creative communication of ideas, arguments and conclusion

Assessed Learning Outcome 4: Critically engage with theoretical literature, resources and wider body of knowledge relevant to the context of study, and demonstrate an ability to analyse, evaluate, compare, contrast, and synthesise ideas			
Fail: 0 - 49%	Pass: 50 - 59%	Merit: 60 - 69%	Distinction: 70 - 100%
Absence of any evidence demonstrating engagement with the relevant theoretical literature and ability to analyse, evaluate, compare and contrast, synthesise solutions for the given context;	Provides limited evidence of engagement with the relevant theoretical literature and ability to analyse, evaluate, compare and contrast, synthesise solutions for the given context;	Provides robust evidence of engagement with the relevant theoretical literature and ability to analyse, evaluate, compare and contrast, synthesise solutions for the given context.	Provide extensive evidence of engagement with the relevant theoretical literature and ability to analyse, evaluate, compare and contrast, synthesise solutions for the given context;

Module Schedule

Semester Week	Week Beginning	Provisional Activities
1	29 April	dissertation off-site
2	6 May	dissertation off-site
3	13 May	dissertation off-site
4	20 May	dissertation off-site
5	27 May	dissertation off-site
6	3 June	dissertation off-site
7	10 June	dissertation off-site
8	17 June	dissertation off-site
9	24 June	dissertation off-site
10	1 July	3 July - deadline for submission of the first draft
11	8 July	dissertation off-site
12	15 July	dissertation off-site
13	22 July	dissertation off-site
14	29 July	dissertation off-site
15	5 August	dissertation off-site
16	12 August	13 August- Deadline for Final Project/Dissertation

Please note that this schedule may be subject to alteration.

Students are requested to submit:

A dissertation - on line via the DLE on 13th August 2024. This process includes the use of Turnitin.

<https://dle.plymouth.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=71806>

The work will be marked using assessment form (see above). Feedback will be discussed and delivered to students no later than 13th September 2024.

Teaching materials, Assignment submission areas and student feedback forms are available on the DLE.

Late Work/Extenuating Circumstances

If your participation in an examination or assessment has been affected by an extenuating circumstance, then you can ask the University to take this into consideration. You can submit a claim for extenuating circumstances to cover late submission of work, non-submission of work or non-attendance at a time specific assessment, such as an examination, test presentation or performance, or field class. Information regarding the Extenuating Circumstances policy and how and where to submit Extenuating Circumstance Claims are available

here: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/exams/exam-rules-and-regulations/extenuating-circumstances>

Where there are no valid extenuating circumstances, the following regulations will automatically apply:

- Work submitted after the deadline date/time but within 24 hours of it, will be capped at the pass mark to 50% if PG
- Work submitted 24 hours after the deadline will receive a mark of zero.

Students will be informed and reminded about the process relating to extenuating circumstances during the module briefing/introduction session.

Sources of Guidance and Support

Students and academic staff will work closely together to make best use of Seminars, personal tutorials, DAS and LD to modify any assessment modes and/or provisions required. During the residential time students are encouraged to make use of the wider Dartington Learning opportunities including sister programmes at Schumacher College and Dartington Arts School, short-courses and vocational programmes; and the broad level of facilities available on the Dartington estate including cinema, social entrepreneur programmes and many other resources and services available.

Module Feedback

We value what our students say: you share your feedback we act upon it. Part of the feedback process includes Module Evaluation.

Referencing Protocols and Academic Offences

When writing a report or an essay you are expected to fully reference the materials you have used. The report or essay should be your own work, in your own words.

Plagiarism is an offence under the University regulations on examination and assessment offences. It is important that you familiarise yourself with what constitutes plagiarism, and academic offences. Further information can be found:

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/regulations/plagiarism>

And <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/exams/exam-rules-and-regulations/examination-offences>

Reading List; Recommended Texts/Support Materials

Recommended readings

- Kara, H. (2015) *Creative Research Methods in Social Sciences; Practical guide*. Policy Press. Bristol
- Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods*. 3rd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robson, C., 2002. *Real World Research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers*, Oxford, UK; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers.
- Simonsen, J., 2010. *Design Research: Synergies From Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, New York: Routledge.
- Zeisel, J., 1981. *Inquiry by Design: Tools For Environment-Behavior Research*, Monterey, California : Brooks/Cole Pub. Co.
- Van Manen, M. (2016). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Routledge.
- Seamon, D., & Gill, H. K. (2016). Qualitative approaches to environment-behavior research: Understanding environmental and place experiences, meanings, and actions. *Research methods for environmental psychology*, 115-135.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., Larkin, M. (2021). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research (2nd ed.)*. Sage Publications

Guidelines of Formatting for the Production and Submission of Dissertation

Cover page

Refer to submission details.

Title page

The title page must provide a title relevant to the topic as well as the student's full name, the name of the course, the college and university and the year of submission.

Abstract

Your abstract must be between 110 and 120 words. It should summarise concisely the topic/phenomenon that was investigated, the key results, and the main conclusions reached.

Acknowledgements

All acknowledgements, including sources of funding, assistance received from colleagues/supervisor appear immediately after the abstract.

Table of contents

This is simply an outline of the headings with relevant page numbers.

List of tables/figures

If you have tables or figures you will want to include a separate page giving their titles and relevant page numbers.

Information relating to all of the following categories is normally required in a dissertation. The following sequence is conventionally regarded as a good model, however, it may not suit all purposes and the precise format of a final dissertation is a matter of personal choice to be discussed and agreed with your supervisors.

Five distinct elements are expected to be included in any dissertation, though it is not strictly necessary that each be addressed in distinct and discrete sections or in the following order:

- Introduction
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Findings and discussion
- Conclusion

Followed by references and appendices outlined below.

The following instructions are relevant in those cases where the conventional route to dissertation writing is favoured and the elements listed above are addressed discretely and sequentially.

INTRODUCTION

- The heading for this section is simply **INTRODUCTION** (in upper case and in bold).
- The purpose of this section is to set the stage/context for the main discussion. This may be achieved by discussing previous literature and by highlighting the project's importance and/or value and/or contribution to its related field of study.
- This section should end by outlining the project aims and objectives and by detailing an outline of the structure of the thesis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- The heading for this section is simply **LITERATURE REVIEW** (in upper case and in bold).
- It provides a critical assessment of the relevant bodies of knowledge and theoretical frameworks pertinent to your research problem. It is not enough simply to report the literature in a "who said what" manner. At Master's level you are required to synthesise and draw your own conclusions on the key areas within your topic.

METHODOLOGY

- The heading for this section is simply **METHODOLOGY** (in upper case and in bold).
- It should justify and explain both your approach and choice of methods in relation to both primary and secondary data.
- It should be presented in such a way that the reader would be able to replicate what you have done should they wish to do so. Thus, detail is important, as are those things that did not work or could have been improved. Thus, it is essential to demonstrate reflection and critical awareness in your methodology by discussing limitations and issues of reliability and validity.
- The subjects in the study should be described together with the criteria and method of selection
- It should discuss ethical issues and justify ethical approaches where appropriate.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

- The heading for this section is as '**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**' (in upper case and in bold).

- It should present your data and findings in a clear and appropriate manner, but more importantly you are providing the reader with the analysis of these data/findings and a discussion that is set within the context of the literature review and methodology.
- This discussion is subtitled as appropriate. This is the penultimate section of the dissertation. It is here that you demonstrate to the reader your discoveries.

CONCLUSION

- The heading for this section is simply **CONCLUSION** (in upper case and in bold).
- This section can begin with a restatement of the research problem, followed by a summary of the research conducted and the findings.
- It then proceeds to make concluding remarks, offering insightful comments on the research theme, commenting on the contributions that your study makes to the formation of knowledge in the holistic science field, and may also suggest research themes/challenges in years ahead.
- This section need not be limited to one or two paragraphs. The contribution of your project deserves to be insightfully featured here.

TABLES AND FIGURES

- Tables and figures should be numbered and given a brief one-line descriptive title. Example:
Table 1. *UK National Parks*
Figure 1. *The Study Area in the South Hams*
- Data in tables should be presented in columns with non-significant decimal places omitted.
- All table columns should have brief headings
- Tables should be kept as short as possible (i.e. no more than a single side).
- Important details should be footnoted under each table or figure, using alphabetic superscripts to connect the footnote to the relevant term/figure in the table. References to sources of information should appear at the bottom of the table. Example: Source: Smith (2013: 203).
- Tables and figures generated by the author need not be sourced.
- All illustrations or graphical representations should be referred to as figures.

REFERENCES

- It is vitally important that you refer to sources of literature wherever possible. This may be achieved throughout the dissertation's text and/or in a list of references that appear at the end of the dissertation.

- Please note that you should provide a list of only those references that you have cited in your dissertation. You are neither asked for, nor should you provide a bibliography, which is all the material you consulted during the research process.
- You should follow the **Harvard** system of referencing.

APPENDICES

- You should think carefully why appendices are needed. References, copy of questionnaire, interview transcripts are required but should not 'pad out'.
- Appendices should be numbered, titled and have page numbers that follow from the main text.

FONT SIZE, SPACING AND WORD COUNT

- The report must be typed 1.5 spacing, font size 12, on A4 paper, with at least 2.5cm left hand margin and with consecutive page numbers.
- The word limit for the dissertation on MA Ecological Design Thinking **15,000 words (+or _ 10%)** not including tables, list of references, contents or appendices.

The ability to write clearly and succinctly, but also in a readable style is an important academic skill. With this skill comes the ability to put forward powerful, focused arguments, to select the best and most relevant case studies to support an argument, and to write in a style accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

A word count need not hamper creativity - it should be something that requires attention in the editing and proof reading stage of writing for students: checking that the completed assignments answer the intended question in a readable, clear and concise manner. If the initial assignment was devised with a word limit in mind, students should have less difficulty producing a highly effective answer which keeps close to that word limit.

Ensuring that students keep to the word limit as far as possible also ensures equity between all students doing an assignment. A word limit reflects the scope of the assignment: it gives all students a clear indication of the maximum length of a piece of assessed work, the amount of work expected and therefore how much detail they should go into and how they should allocate time to one piece of assessed work in relation to others.

Beyond academia, certain vocations require people to write clearly and concisely, sometimes to a strict word limit. Therefore in terms of employability, this is a useful skill for students to develop.

OTHER STYLE GUIDELINES

- **Abbreviations/acronyms** - should appear in full on first appearance

followed by acronym in brackets. If you are only going to use once or twice then only use full name.

- **Third person** - Normally, the dissertation is written in the third person. Exceptions to this guideline can be discussed with your dissertation supervisor.
- **Terms** - unfamiliar terms, especially those in foreign languages, should appear in *italics*, followed with their meaning in English in parenthesis. Example.....*modiriat* (Management).....
- **Spelling** - ensure you spell check your report using UK spelling.
- **Numbering** - Do not number each paragraph.

It is intended that these dissertation guidelines enable a wide variety of types of investigation. For example, these may include empirical research; contributions to theoretical or experiential knowledge; applied projects (such as the development of a business plan for a social or environmental enterprise) and artistic projects (such a documentary on an issue related to the holistic science). Your supervisor is there to help you structure and plan your work within the dissertation guidelines.

SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION

Four bound copies and one electronic copy of your dissertation must be submitted

The title of the project, the name of the student and the programme studied must appear on the front cover.

Late submissions, within 24 hours of the deadline, will be capped at 50%. After 24 hours, or if a submission is not made, the dissertation will be marked as zero.

Plagiarism

As a general guide, to avoid plagiarism students should observe the following:

- Use their own words to express widely held concepts and general information obtained from lectures and books.
- When reproducing verbatim extracts from books, lectures or original papers, these should be placed in quotation marks.
- Formally acknowledge (by means of reference) all sources of information.

MARKING OF YOUR DISSERTATION

The dissertation will be read by your supervisor and also by a second marker. If the supervisor and the second marker cannot agree a mark, then a 3rd academic will be asked to act as an independent arbiter and make a judgement on the piece of work.

Once all dissertation marks have been agreed, a selection of dissertations will be sent to the External Examiner for moderation. The selection is agreed with each External Examiner independently but it is most common they request a selection from the top, middle and bottom two marking bands.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Ethical principles for research involving human participants

Following discussions with your supervisor you may be advised or directed to submit for ETHICAL APPROVAL through the College's Ethics Committee. Where required, please submit for approval through the College's Postgraduate Administration team as soon as possible and where possible, no later than end of Term 2.

Informed consent

The researcher should, where possible, inform potential participants in advance of any features of the research that might reasonably be expected to influence their willingness to take part in the study.

Where the research topic is sensitive, the ethical protocol should include verbatim instructions for the informed consent procedure and consent should be obtained in writing.

Where children are concerned, informed consent must be obtained from parents or teachers acting in loco parentis.

Openness and honesty

So far as possible, researchers should be open and honest about the research, its purpose and application.

Some types of research appear to require deception in order to achieve their scientific purpose. Deception will be approved in experimental procedures only if the following conditions are met:

- Deception is completely unavoidable if the purpose of the research is to be achieved.
- The research objective has strong scientific merit.
- Any potential harm arising from the proposed deception can be effectively neutralised or reversed by the proposed debriefing procedures

Failing to inform participants of the specific purpose of the study at the outset is not normally considered to be deception, provided that adequate informed consent and debriefing procedures are proposed.

Covert observation should be resorted to only where it is impossible to use other methods to obtain essential data. Ideally, where informed consent has not been obtained prior to the research it should be obtained post hoc.

Right to withdraw

Where possible, participants should be informed at the outset of the study that they have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

In the case of children, those acting in loco parentis or the children themselves if of sufficient understanding, shall be informed of the right to withdraw from participation in the study.

Protection from harm

Researchers must endeavour to protect participants from physical and psychological harm at all times during the investigation.

Note that where stressful or hazardous procedures are concerned, obtaining informed consent (1) whilst essential, does not absolve the researcher from responsibility for protecting the participant. In such cases, the ethical protocol must specify the means by which the participant will be protected, e.g. by the availability of qualified medical assistance.

Where physical or mental harm nevertheless does result from research procedure, investigators are obliged to take action to remedy the problems created.

Debriefing

Researchers should, where possible, provide an account of the purpose of the study as well as its procedures. If this is not possible at the outset, then ideally it should be provided on completion of the study.

Confidentiality

Except with the consent of the participant, researchers are required to ensure confidentiality of the participant's identity and data throughout the conduct and reporting of the research.

Ethical protocols may need to specify procedures for how this will be achieved. For example, transcriptions of the interviews may be encoded by the secretary so that no written record of the participant's name and data exist side by side. Where records are held on computer, the Data Protection Act also applies. (<https://www.gov.uk/data-protection/the-data-protection-act>)

Please note: One copy of your dissertation is held and available publically in the College library unless it contains confidential or sensitive material which means that it should not be publically available.

Confidential Dissertation Form

Where Researchers have obtained permission to access sensitive organisational information that must remain confidential, the Researcher must agree and complete a 'Confidential Dissertation Form' outlining the agreed distribution, handling of the final dissertation and its ultimate destruction. This should be agreed in line with both the organisation and Schumacher College. Forms can be obtained from the Postgraduate Administration Office or on the Open area of the V.L.E.

Ethical principles of professional bodies

This set of principles is generic and not exhaustive of considerations which apply in all disciplines. Where relevant professional bodies have published their own guidelines and principles, these must be followed and the current principles interpreted and extended as necessary in this context.

Appendix B

Application for Ethical Approval of Research: Postgraduate Dissertations

Name of Student:	
Name of Supervisor:	
Dates and Duration of the research project:	
Aims and objectives of the research project:	
<p>Brief description of research methods and procedures:</p> <p>Specify subject populations and recruitment method. Please indicate also any ethically sensitive aspects of the methods. Continue on additional sheets if required.</p>	<p>a) Participants - inclusion/exclusion criteria</p> <p>(b) Method of recruitment</p>

<p>Brief description of research methods and procedures:</p>	<p>(c) Details of research methods</p>
--	--

Declaration

To the best of our knowledge and belief, this research conforms to the ethical principles laid down by The University of Plymouth.

Student: Signed: Date:

Please print your name.

Supervisor: Signed: Date:

Please print