**Theme 07 Ethics**

**Seminar activities**

1. Review of PPT
2. Defining ethical terms and issues
3. Quiz

**Activity I**

The first part of the seminar will include a brief review of the lecture slides and a question and answer session to clarify issues relating to the lecture’s contents.

**Activity II. Defining ethical terms and issues**

1. Match the ethical term to the appropriate definition.

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| **Ethical term** | **Definition** |
| 1. Research ethics | 1. Protecting against the identification of participants through inventing pseudonyms/using codes in place of names |
| 1. Avoiding harm to participants | 1. Respecting and not disclosing personal information, and storing data securely |
| 1. Informed consent of participants | 1. Avoiding intrusion on lives of participant(s) and respecting issues of anonymity and confidentiality |
| 1. Participant information sheet | 1. The values, rules and guidelines that govern decisions and actions with respect to moral research practices |
| 1. Protecting privacy of participants | 1. Not representing research as something it is not |
| 1. Ensuring participant anonymity | 1. A document outlining details including contact details, how data will be used, how confidentiality will be protected and rights of participant(s) |
| 1. Ensuring participant confidentiality | 1. Providing participants with full information about the research and seeking their agreement to take part |
| 1. Avoiding deception | 1. Assessing and minimising physical, emotional or material threat to participant(s) |

You are doing some research on student debt. However, some ethical issues have arisen. Complete the following table by choosing a different ethical issue from the list to match the problem described:

**avoiding harm informed consent privacy**

**right to withdraw** **protecting confidentiality**

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| Ethical Problem | **Issue** |
|  | As your study is about student debt, you ask your friend who works at a bank to print off a list of names of students who currently have an overdraft. These are the people you approach to be in your study. |
|  | Your research involves asking participants to give sensitive information about their personal finances and how they spend their money. This made some of them feel embarrassed. |
|  | In the same study, some participants became so uncomfortable with the questions that they asked to quit the study. However, they were told that they must continue. |
|  | Participants did not fully understand why the research was being conducted. They thought they would be getting some financial advice; however, this was not the case. |
|  | When you were collecting your data, you asked participants for their full names. When you were writing your research project, you forgot to delete the names and participants full names were connected to information about their debts and financial situation when the research was published |

**Activity III. Quiz Use the PPTs and your research skills to answer the questions**

1. **Which of the following ideas is not associated with the stance of situation ethics?**
   1. Anything goes

b. Principled relativism

c. The end justifies the means

d. No choice

1. **Why is it argued that ethical transgression is pervasive in social research?**
   1. Because most researchers do not bother to follow a professional code of ethics
   2. Because researchers rarely provide their participants with all the information they might want to know about a project
   3. Because it helps us to justify the more extreme forms of unethical conduct that we prefer to pursue
   4. Because researchers want to present themselves as inconsiderate and careless
2. **Which of the following is a form of harm that might be suffered by research participants?**
   1. Physical injury
   2. Stress and anxiety
   3. Impaired development
   4. All of the above
3. **Why is it important that personal data about research participants are kept within secure, confidential records?**
   1. So that the participants cannot find out what has been written about the
   2. In case individuals, places or organizations can be harmed through identification or disclosure of personal information
   3. So that government officials, teachers and other people in authority can have easy access to the data
   4. To enable the researcher to track down individuals and find out more about their lives
4. **Why is it "easier said than done" to ensure that the principle of informed consent is adhered to?**
   1. It is not practicable to present every participant with all the information about the study
   2. Sometimes it is desirable to withhold certain pieces of information, such as the length of time an interview will take
   3. If the participants knew exactly what the researcher was intending to study, they might change their behaviour
   4. All of the above
5. **Apart from the fact that it is "not a nice thing to do", what is an important ethical disadvantage of deceiving participants?**
   1. It can damage the professional reputation of the researcher and their discipline
   2. It makes it more difficult to gain access to deviant or hidden populations
   3. It means that records of personal data about the participants cannot be made anonymous
   4. None of the above