



The BPS (1998) Ethical Guidelines

These are a set of principles that are intended to ensure that psychological research is carried out with consideration of the dignity and well being of the research participants.

Deception

Intentional deception of the participants should be avoided wherever possible. Participants should never be deliberately misled without strong scientific justification.

Have you planned to deliberately mislead PPs about any aspect of the investigation?
If you are contemplating deception, is there an alternative method you could use?

Informed consent

The researcher should inform the participants of the objectives of the research and of all the aspects that might reasonably interfere with their willingness to participate. If children are involved, then it is essential for their parents or guardians to be fully informed of the procedures of the research and to gain their consent.

Will the PPs be aware that a psychological investigation is taking place?
Have you planned to inform them about everything that might affect their decision to participate?

Protection of participants

Researchers have a primary responsibility to protect participants from harm, both physical and psychological. Participants should not be exposed to any risks that are greater than they would encounter in everyday life.

Have you assessed the risks (physical and psychological) involved with your procedure?
Have you planned to address any unforeseen harm?

Debriefing

When any participant knows they have been involved in a piece of research, they should be provided with any information necessary to complete their understanding of the research they have been involved in at the end. The researcher should discuss the participant's experiences with them and must try to deal with any negative effects of the research, and if necessary, arrange for support.

Have you ensured that your debriefing will address all the concerns a PP might have?
Have you planned to explain your study, invite questions and inform the PP about psychology?

Right to withdraw

Every participant has the right to withdraw from research at any time, regardless of having received payment. They also have the right to withdraw their data from being used in the research.

Have you ensured that PPs are aware of their right to withdraw before, during and after the study?