

Position Paper: Overseas Research and Ethics

Overseas Research and Ethical Compliance

A student or staff member is defined as conducting research overseas when they are located in an overseas location to conduct that research. If they are in the UK, even if they are conducting research or collecting data remotely (e.g. via Teams) in a different country, it is UK law and LBU's policies and procedures which are the key to ethical approval.

If a student or colleague for that matter is located overseas while conducting research, e.g. data collection, there is a **double requirement for ethical compliance**.

UK law and LBU policies and procedures always apply because as a student, the researcher is working towards an award from our university, and as a colleague, they are employed by the University.

But as part of that ethical compliance, **colleagues and students conducting research overseas must also adhere to local law and ethical practice**, and as part of their ethical approval, they must demonstrate that they have an understanding of those laws and practices and that their research is compliant with local laws and ethical practices. **It is the responsibility of the student or staff member to outline their compliance with overseas law and practice as part of their ethical approval. Where the applicant is a Postgraduate Researcher, they should be supported in this process by their supervisory team.**

All materials relating to the application must be in English.

Colleagues and students must also always be mindful of local cultural sensitivities when undertaking research in overseas locations, and must take every precaution – detailed in their application and risk management processes - to protect research participants and themselves. This is especially important when the research concerns something that is taken as a norm in the UK but is either illegal or disapproved of in the overseas territory. (One example might be the territories in which LGBTQ identification might put a participant at risk; another might be the collection of data which is hostile to the government of the country concerned.)

The university recognises that not all territories have equally developed legal frameworks and/or ethical guidelines. Where a country does not have a developed legal framework and/or ethical guidelines, UK law and Leeds Beckett University's policies and procedures are taken in lieu.

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Chair of Research Ethics Sub-committee
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