The ELMPS Ethics Committee

The following guidelines have now been agreed by the University of York AECC and the ELMPS Ethics Committee regarding research to be publicly disseminated involving data collected from or concerning University of York students:

Research *which is intended for publication (or other form of public dissemination)* which seeks to gain consent from students to use their data ***before or during a module* and before marks are finalised** **by the BOE** on any given module **is strongly discouraged**. This includes the use of existing data we hold on students (for example entry grades, attendance levels) and the collection of new primary data (for example interviewing students about their experiences of using a learning tool on a module). In most cases therefore ELMPS will not be able to approve such research. There may however, be some cases where the committee can approve such research, but this is only likely to be in cases where the research is funded **and/or** applicants can make a convincing case that seeking consent before marks are awarded is absolutely necessary **and** that student interests (especially in terms of their performance on the module and the relationship with module tutors) is not compromised in any way. For example, we may be able to give approval in cases where applicants seek to analyse the student experience of a whole degree and where there is no immediate connection to student marks or student performance on a given module.

***Please note that evaluations and/or reflective practice of student experience or student work which seeks to collect data on and from students and which is only intended for internal use, that is only intended to improve module delivery (and is NOT for dissemination in the public domain) is not affected by these principles and does not require ethical approval as this is covered by the University’s Privacy Statement.***

If approval is given for research as above (that is where the request for consent and data collection takes place before marks are awarded) then:

1. The initial request for consent from students should be sought by an administrator not the teaching team/researcher, but any follow up questions or issues would then be dealt with by the researcher, whose details should be clearly provided in the initial email
2. In addition an explicit statement would need to be added to the information sheet and recruitment email/documentation explicitly stating that there would be no consequences for any student of taking part or not taking part in the research in relation to their module mark or their broader degree programme performance and result

Professor Tony Royle

Chair ELMPS Ethics Committee

10 October 2022