# **XXX 20XX Research Protocol**

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| --- |
| Evaluation Security |
| OVERALL RATING |  **/ 5** |
| Comments |  |

# **Summary**

Summarise the programme by outlining what the research protocol is for, and what it focuses on, so that anyone quickly picking up the document understands the core purpose of the programme.

# **Project Planning**

## Background

Include the purpose of the project:

* Why the project needs to be delivered - What is the challenge you’re trying to solve?
* What is the policy context, and what research already exists to inform the challenge and the solutions?

Identify possible solutions based on the academic and practitioner literature, your own work and expertise, and interventions that have been successful in other contexts. Also set out what the end results will be upon project completion and the consequences of not delivering the project.

## Aims/Objectives

Include how the purpose of the project breaks down into individual objectives and the specific, measurable results expected upon project completion. These might be represented as objectives, research questions, or goals, all that matters is that they are outlined in a way that will enable them to measure the success of the project. For example:

* Research Aim: “to understand whether SMS messages around belonging or employability can increase attendance at the Welcome Fair”.
* Social Impact Aim: “to increase the number of first year students (in particular those defined as “Widening Participation” students) attending the 2019 Welcome Fair during Freshers’ Week”.

## Key Personnel

Include who will be on the project team and what their role will be. This is useful for alerting other teams to input you might need from them in the future and agreeing their involvement.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Department | Role in project |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## Timetable

Include a GANTT Chart for the project from planning to evaluation.

## Preliminary work

Set out what you have done to scope out your project. Include links to any relevant Literature Reviews.

# **Design**

## Theory of Change

## Include your theory of change model.

## Intervention design

Detail each section of the research, including the dates and times at which things will happen, and who is responsible for what.

This section will be important to refer back to throughout the trial, helping to keep things running smoothly when questions arise and making sure that the intervention is delivered consistently.

Make sure that you define the scope of the project. Also Include:

* Research methods and rationales
* What’s in and out of scope
* What the project must deliver- A list of the expected and required deliverables/products/outputs that the project must create or acquire should be included in this section.
* How stakeholders will be communicated with during the project and how frequently. This should include a note on where to find the Communications Plan if you have one.

Include sections for different research methods.

# **Evaluation**

Set out how you will evaluate your programme, by including all the work that you have produced in the ‘Diagnose’ and ‘Planning’ steps of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF).

## Research Questions

Include the research questions selected in Section 4.1 of the MEF

## Outcome Measures

Include the outcome measures selected in Section 4.2 of the MEF

## Research Method

Set out the following:

* The plan for evaluation of impact
* The type of evaluation (process/ impact) you will undertake
* How you will evaluate against your outcome measures
* How you will evaluate participant experience
* How you will evaluate stakeholder perception and experience

# **Analytical Strategy**

## Data collection

Over the course of the project there are likely to be several pieces of data that need collecting. This will include your outcome measures, any data required for monitoring and tracking students, and potentially context details. Set out for each piece of data when it will be collected, by whom and what data protection measures will be in place if the data is confidential or sensitive.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Data item | When | Data collector | Data protection |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## Power Calculations

If applicable, your evaluation team should complete.

## Analysis

Set out how will you analyse the data. What comparisons will you do and how will it be presented?

For Level 2 and 3 evaluations, your evaluation team might be best placed to complete this section.

# **Risks**

Provide an assessment of the key risks to the project and plans for mitigation:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Risk/Issue | Detail | Mitigation | Date/Solver |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# **Ethical Considerations**

Please use this section to consider whether the project described in this document classifies as Research (requiring ethical clearance) or Service Evaluation or Audit (no research clearance required).
Project owners, with guidance from designated institutional evaluators, are responsible to decide whether their work should be classified as research, service evaluation or audit. Please refer to the [Ethics Review](https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/ethics-reviews/) published by the Economic and Social Research Council (or contact your institutional Research Ethics Committee) to help ascertain whether or not your project should be considered as research.

If your work is classified as research, please use this section to:

* Clearly describe the process for obtaining ethical approval, including timelines and responsible parties.
* Describe the procedures for obtaining agreement to participate in the trial.
* Include references to the ethical clearance obtained via the responsible Ethics Subcommittee for your research.