Ethics and Security of Peace and Conflict Students during their Work-based Learning Activities

Chris van der Borgh, Luuk Slooter,
Koen Hoogendoorn

in cooperation with Sergiu Mișcoiu, Ana Pantea

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Authors: Chris van der Borgh, Luuk Slooter, Koen Hoogendoorn (in cooperation with Sergiu Mişcoiu, Ana Pantea)

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The integration of practical experiences into university curricula has become a standard across various disciplines and study programmes. However, there is often still a gap between theory and the training of analytical skills on the one hand and practical experiences, which students gain at workplaces and during internships, on the other hand. Peace, Conflict and Security Studies are no exception in this regard, even though scholars and employers have stressed the necessity for a closer integration of theory and practice. This is of particular importance for programmes that aim to qualify for a career in the field of peacebuilding, foreign and security policy, or conflict resolution. INCOPS proposes a more comprehensive and systematic approach to overcome existing limitations. INCOPS develops and apply a tailored concept of the Work-based Learning approach to systematically integrate theory and practice in university teaching and curriculum development with a particular focus on the role of internships and voluntary work.

Project Partners:
University of Marburg (DE), Center for Conflict Studies [coordinating institution]
Babeș-Bolyai University (RO), Centre for International Cooperation
University of Coimbra (PT), Faculty of Economics
University of Coventry (GB), Centre for Trust, Peace, and Social Relations
University of Kent (GB), School of Politics and International Relations
Utrecht University (NL), Centre for Conflict Studies

CENTER FOR CONFLICT STUDIES

Philipps-Universität Marburg, Center for Conflict Studies
Stéphane Voell (Coordinator), Ketzerbach 11
D-35037 Marburg, konflikt@uni-marburg.de

Content

Executive Summary

In this text we provide guidelines for ensuring ethical and secure Work-based Learning (WBL) activities for students pursuing higher education in Peace, Conflict, and Security (PCS) master programmes. The report draws on a literature review and questionnaire responses from partner universities to identify best practices for upholding ethical standards and ensuring the security and well-being of participating students.

We conclude that ethical and security concerns are critical in WBL activities and must be prioritized to safeguard the well-being of students and the people they work or engage with. The findings suggest that partner universities should develop written policies on ethics and security during students' internships and ensure that these policies are communicated effectively to students and stakeholders.

We recommend that universities should provide students with adequate training and support to prepare them for WBL activities. This includes training on ethical considerations, security measures, and risk management. Universities should also establish clear communication channels between students, supervisors, and other stakeholders to ensure that ethical and security concerns are addressed promptly.

In the guidelines we highlight the importance of monitoring and evaluating WBL activities to identify potential ethical and security risks and take appropriate measures to mitigate them. Universities should establish clear reporting mechanisms for students to report any ethical or security concerns they encounter during their WBL activities.

Finally, we suggest that universities should collaborate with other stakeholders, including employers, policymakers, and civil society organizations, to develop and implement ethical and security guidelines for WBL activities. This collaboration can help to ensure that WBL activities are conducted in a manner that upholds ethical standards and prioritizes the security and well-being of all stakeholders.

In conclusion, in this text we provide valuable guidelines for universities to ensure that WBL activities in PCS master programmes are conducted in an ethical and secure manner. By following these guidelines, universities can help to safeguard the well-being of students and the people they work or engage with, and contribute to the ongoing discourse on ethics and security within PCS education.

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, the study of Peace, Conflict, and Security (PCS) has become increasingly critical. As students pursue higher education in PCS master programmes, they often engage in Work-based Learning (WBL) activities to gain practical experience and apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. However, it is imperative to ensure that such activities uphold ethical standards and prioritize the security and well-being of participating students and the people they work or engage with in different kinds of WBL activities. This report aims to shed light on the ethics and security concerns arising during WBL activities in PCS master programmes of the INCOPS partner universities Universitatae Babes Bolyai (Cluj), University of Kent, University of Coimbra, Coventry University, University of Marburg and Utrecht University. By examining the current guidelines, challenges, and best practices employed by partner universities, we aim to develop a better understanding of the ethical implications and security measures that should be integrated into these programmes.

Intellectual Output 5 (O5) consists of five chapters. The report starts, after this introductory chapter, with a literature review in chapter two. This review focuses on the key components of O5, which are ethics and security during WBL activities in PCS studies. This section will explore relevant scholarly works that examine the ethical considerations inherent in such programmes, highlighting the importance of maintaining ethical standards in research involving human subjects. Additionally, the literature review will delve into the history of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and the implications of the General Data

Protection Regulation (GDPR) enacted by the European Union, emphasizing their influence on social science and PCS research. This chapter will lay the foundation for interpreting the empirical findings of the current guidelines and challenges surrounding ethics and security at our partner universities.

Chapter three presents the questionnaire formulated by Utrecht University, which was distributed to all partner universities participating in this study. The questionnaire aims to capture valuable insights regarding the ethics and security measures implemented during WBL activities in PCS master programmes.

Chapter four provides a summary of the responses obtained from partner universities through the questionnaire. This section will present an overview of the varied approaches, challenges, and best practices identified by the participating institutions. By analysing the questionnaire data, we can gain insights into the current landscape of ethics and security practices during WBL activities, allowing us to identify common themes and highlight noteworthy examples from partner universities.

The final chapter, chapter five, will synthesize the findings from the literature review and questionnaire responses, providing an overview of the ethical and security considerations during WBL activities in PCS master programmes. This chapter will examine the best practices employed by the partner universities, drawing connections to the literature review to identify effective strategies for upholding ethical standards and ensuring the security and well-being of participating students. By aligning empirical findings from the partner universities with current debates in the literature, this report aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on ethics and security within PCS education and inform the development of future guidelines and policies of the partner universities.

Through this report, we aspire to enhance the understanding of ethics and security concerns within WBL activities in PCS master programmes. By examining the current landscape and identifying best practices, we aim to foster an environment that safeguards the well-being of students and people they work or engage with in activities of WBL. Ultimately, our findings could serve as a resource for educators, administrators, and policymakers seeking to strengthen the ethical framework and security measures surrounding WBL activities in PCS master programmes.

2. Literature Review

This literature review is based on the most important components of what O5 is about: ethics and security during WBL by students of PCS studies. Next to that, the literature review will discuss the birth of Institutional Review Boards and the General Data Protection Regulation by the European Union and its consequences on PCS research. This chapter therefore is meant as a foundation that later will be used to interpret the empirical findings of the current guidelines and challenges within ethics and security at the partner universities.

2.1. Ethics

For the foundation of this literature review and this report in general, it is important to describe what ethics are, what general principles it leads to and what discussions there are, within PCS literature specifically, on ethics.

2.1.1. Terminology

According to the Oxford Dictionary of English, ethics are “moral principles that govern a person’s behaviour or the conduction of an activity” (cf. Oxford Dictionary of English (ed.), 2022). Greek Philosopher Aristotle said that ethos (the Greek derivative of ethics) is “a man’s character”, according to him it is supposed to be a balance between passion and caution (cf. Aristotle in Nicomachean Ethics, Book II, p. 1104b). This balance is important in every step of life, one could argue, but particularly when considering ethics in science. As scientists can be passionate to fulfil their research goals, and therefore become less cautious, for instance: “If I just could get person X to talk about their experience with Y, my research would make so much (more) sense”. It is not difficult to envision scenarios where this could cause ethical challenges, especially when a researcher, as is often the case in PCS, deals with vulnerable research participants such as traumatized populations in conflict zones.

2.1.2. The Main Principles and Perspectives on Ethics within Peace, Conflict and Security Studies

In order to safeguard research from unethical behaviour, in particular within PCS where its research, and its participants, generally exist in vulnerable and sensitive spaces, there are three main ethical principles that are considered the ethical base of all social science research, including PCS: respect for persons, beneficence (do no harm) and justice (cf. Fujii, 2012, p. 718). The first, "respect for persons" is about treating people as "means and not as ends", which involves obtaining informed consent (cf. Fujii, 2012, p. 718). The second, beneficence, better known as the "do no harm principle", means that it is the researcher's duty to maximize benefits and minimize harm to the research participants and their environment (cf. Fujii, 2012, p. 718). The third, justice, refers to the way researchers select their participants. This process should be "fair" and not be tainted with personal prejudice. Specifically, within the literature on PCS, there is a discussion whether a researcher who navigates vulnerable spaces, such as conflict zones, also has the ethical obligation to not just "do no harm", but also to do good (cf. Brewer, 2016, p.1). According to sociologist John Brewer, PCS exists in an (ethical) space where researchers are often committed to making a (positive) difference to the lives of people affected by conflict (cf. Brewer, 2016, p. 1). This is what Hammersley and Traianou call new ethics, research where "conventional ethical practice is supplemented by ethical practices designed to promote social justice and human rights" (ibid.; Hammersley & Traianou, 2014). The risk of this form of ethics is that the normative purposes of the research outweigh the scientific standards. According to Brewer, this drive to do good can cloud researchers their judgment in dilemmas of ethics and security (cf. Brewer, 2016, p. 3). In the ambition to do good, a researcher could risk their own safety to be able to gain information that they think (at that time) is necessary for their research to truly matter (and therefore do good) (cf. Brewer, 2016, p. 2). In addition, the ambition to "do good" can potentially harm people researchers work with (e.g. by disclosing sensitive information about the past), or harm the groups and people that are allegedly responsible for injustices or atrocities in the past.

How do researchers then, who want to "do good", balance "doing good" with conducting ethical research? They do so, according to qualitative methodology researchers Lincoln and Tierney, by asking the ethical follow-up question: does the potential benefit of this research outweigh the potential harm? (cf. Lincoln & Tierney, 2004, p. 228) This is in line with Alan Bryman, professor of Social Research and author of the most popular social research method books, who states that researchers have an ethical obligation to quality (cf. Bryman, 2016, p. 134). This means that research which is not of sufficient quality to "contribute something useful to existing knowledge" is unethical (cf. Bryman, 2016, p. 134). Hence why Lincoln and Tierney opt for the ethical assessment whether the potential benefits outweigh the potential harm that is being done with the research, in order to be able to contribute as much knowledge as ethically possible (cf. Lincoln & Tierney, 2004, p. 228).

This perspective on ethics, as described in both Christopher Lamont's international relations- and Alan Bryman's social science research method books, could be described as a violationalist perspective on ethics (cf. Lamont, 2022, p. 72). This is a school-of-thought that states that researchers in principle are unable to avoid harm, and that it is the duty as a researcher (and an ethical obligation) to justify that harm as much as possible with new-found knowledge. For a violationalist, the new-found knowledge outweighs the harm in most cases. Sociology Professor Maurice Punch writes for example that "some dissimulation is intrinsic to social life and, therefore, to fieldwork" (Punch, 1994, p. 91), for which he finds support in sociologist Herbert Gans who writes: "if the researcher is completely honest with people about his activities, they will try to hide actions and attitudes they consider undesirable, and so will be dishonest. Consequently, the researcher must be dishonest to get honest data" (Gans, 1962, p. 44). In this perspective, the ethical duty of a researcher to deliver (new) knowledge to the research community has the most weight. If a researcher would do their research in the most ethical manner possible but delivers no new knowledge to the community, it would therefore be regarded as unethical (cf. Bryman, 2016, p. 134).

The school-of-thought that is more common in universities with an Ethics Review Board, is that of the situationalist. This perspective on ethics is that research should be justified case-by-case on potential ethical transgressions. Here, as a researcher, "you will be asked to justify your proposed research in writing and submit what may look like an application to conduct your research project to a panel of researchers who will evaluate the ethical implications of your proposed course of action" (Lamont, 2022, p. 72). It is somewhat similar to the violationalist perspective, in the sense that it is "okay" to have some ethical transgressions (albeit, according to the situationalist, always doing some harm to a participant is not an inherent part of social research). However, in the situationalist perspective it needs to be justified by an outside panel (such as an Ethics Review Boards). What an Ethics Review Board, or Institutional Review Board entails will be further explored in 2.2.1.

The perspective on ethics that is most often encountered as a starting researcher, or as an (under)graduate, is that of the universalist. This is the school-of-thought that wants the researcher to "adhere strictly to ethical codes imposed by [their] institution" (Lamont, 2022, p. 72). This is primarily to protect the institution from (legal) liability and to minimize the chances of the researcher from doing harm (or getting in danger themselves), because in "most cases, starting researchers lack the appropriate training to work directly with vulnerable or traumatized groups of people, such as victims of war crimes or minors" (Lamont, 2022, p. 72). This is the strictest school-of-thought, where the least amount of freedom in ethical judgment is given to the researcher. In 2.2.3., the difference between ethics being about protecting the researchers and the research participants versus ethics being used as an instrument to protect the institution from legal damages will be further explored.

The last perspective worth mentioning is that of anything goes, which speaks for itself. Researchers who subscribe to this school-of-thought are often of the opinion that "the kinds of deception that we can engage in as social scientists can hardly be considered serious when taken against the backdrop of the types of activities routinely engaged in by the state police or security services" (Lamont, 2022, p. 72). This is naturally not a perspective that is supported in the mainstream research community, but exists more on the fringes and as a critique to the bureaucratization of research and ethics (more in 2.2.3.)

2.1.3. Ethical Considerations within Peace, Conflict and Security Studies

So, in what way do ethics in PCS differ from general research? What do PCS researchers need to give extra, ethical, attention? Because of the essence of PCS research, PCS researchers often encounter vulnerable research participants, such as persons or communities who live in conflict prone areas. This adds a different layer to the ethical challenges that other social science researchers face. In this subparagraph the different ethical considerations that researchers encounter specifically during PCS research will be explored.

PCS researchers often get their data from fieldwork. Kees Koonings, Dirk Kruijt and Dennis Rodgers wrote a method book on ethnographical research and the (ethical) challenges researchers encounter while doing research in violent and sensitive contexts, thus while "in the field". Fieldwork is a "spatial practice; it involves carrying out research in uncontrolled physical locations often referred to as 'the field', in contrast to 'the laboratory', for example" (Koonings, Kruijt & Rodgers, 2019, p. 4). Fieldwork is often carried out in a particular way, namely through participant observation. This is a process of "simultaneous participating and observing everyday life, whereby researchers immerse themselves in people's daily lives, watching, listening, asking questions and recording actions, discourses, and routines. In other words, ethnography is a research methodology that aims to study people in their own time and space" (Koonings, Kruijt & Rodgers, 2019, p. 4).

This way of researching naturally carries its own ethical considerations, especially since PCS research is concerned with conflict (among other things) hence why it is not seldom that fieldwork takes place in violent and sensitive contexts. This also means that "the interaction with participants depends on an even more personal relationship with the researcher" than with fieldwork research in non-conflict settings because of the sensitive information that research participants share in stressful situations such as an (ongoing) conflict (cf. Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 90). Because of this sensitivity and vulnerability of the research participants, PCS researchers have, more than in other research, an ethical obligation to avoid psychological harm to their respondents, and to give extra attention to the psychological demands of research for the researchers themselves; in light of secondary trauma (which will be further discussed in 2.3) (cf. Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 86).

2.1.3.1. Avoid Psychological Harm to Respondents

Considering the "do no harm" principle, it is the key concern of PCS research to avoid any kind of harm to respondents – both physical in the form of repercussions for speaking on conflict issues, as psychological in the form of (relived) trauma (cf. Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 95). Avoiding harm in conflict and sensitive contexts, is linked to the contextual knowledge that the researcher needs to build about the area and its communities. This means building knowledge on for instance "knowing which questions to ask, what wording to avoid, and how to go about certain topics (e.g. do not ask women about sexual violence while men are present)" (Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 95). Based on extensive review of fieldwork research reports, Moss and Uluğ come to some suggestions as to avoid psychological harm to respondents as much as possible: do not pry into people's lives unnecessarily, ask what is needed, but no more. Furthermore, "systems of support should also be considered" such as giving respondents phone cards "for use in case they needed to talk after going over traumatic experiences in the interviews" (Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 95).

Researchers, journalists and legal advocates often "carry the belief that exposing and documenting violent events and 'assisting' disempowered people to tell their story is a fundamental good and in line with international social justice and human rights agendas" (Howe, 2022, p. 369). To give victims a voice is considered to be virtuous. However, how "necessary" is it to share a particular story? Howe, psychotherapist of trauma survivors and research programme director of Conflict and Governance at Tufts University, states that the risk of retraumatization by having research participants retell their traumatic story can in some cases be too high for such an interview to be considered ethical (cf. Howe, 2022, p. 370). Only when the natural process of healing has taken place, most often as a result of therapy, it is safe and ethical to interview a traumatized research participant. Howe states that "trauma-informed research thus requires us to ask if our projects are scientifically necessary and ethically sound given the real risk of retraumatizing participants" (Howe, 2022, p. 370). Howe forces researchers to think if there are other ways of learning about "events that do not require us to ask for a full, pointed, and detailed disclosure based on personal experience" (Howe, 2022, p. 370).

However, to push back on Howe, there are some challenges when talking about (the risk of) retraumatization of research participants during fieldwork. First of all, the term lacks consistent definition and there is no clinical validity for any proposed definitions (cf. Duckworth & Follette, 2012, pp. 1-8). Second, the majority of the literature suggests that retraumatization is not a significant concern during fieldwork in social science research, "especially not in research that only involves talking about trauma, given standard safeguards (particularly the right to refuse or opt out)" (Weiss, 2023, pp. 2-3). Third, participants also report personal benefits of being able to express their (traumatic) stories, being listened to and validated (cf. Weiss, 2023, pp. 2-3). However, lastly, it is important to not conflate the process of interviewing a participant for research with professional therapy (cf. Howe, 2022, p. 370). In general, reading about and preparing trauma-informed methodologies regarding interviewing research participants could be a helpful, and above all an ethical step in order for researchers to minimize the risk of doing psychological harm to their (traumatized) participants (cf. Howe, 2022, p. 377).

The psychological demands of the researcher will be discussed in 2.3, as this, for the purpose of this report where the matters of ethics and security are separated (although one could make a good case how security is inherently a part of ethics), is more related to (the researcher's) security than to ethics.

2.1.3.2. Continuous Reflection on Ethics

As has been stated, PCS research often takes place in violent, unstable, and sensitive contexts such as conflict areas. These are politically dynamic contexts that may be subjected to radical change in short periods of time (cf. Knott, 2019, p. 140). This is why research ethics within PCS is a dynamic and continuously changing process, in contrast to more static research that is more experiment based. What could be ethical at the start of a PCS research, or even when the researcher travels back home from the field with all the newly collected data, could be unethical once this researcher starts the process of publication due to the changed political context (cf. Knott, 2019, p. 140). This is in line with Fujii who states that "ethics is an ongoing responsibility, not a discrete task to be checked off a 'to do' list" (Fujii, 2012, p. 717). Researchers can achieve this through keeping an ethical diary, where they – before, during and after fieldwork – frequently reflect upon the ethical challenges they are facing and how they handled these situations (cf. Brewer, 2016, p. 3).

The concept of learning ethics by doing ethical research through trial and error will be explained more in 2.4. However, first it will be discussed how ethics in the last 80 years have become institutionalized through Institutional Review Boards first and later on with the General Data Protection Regulation by the European Union.

2.2. Institutionalizing Ethics

History unfortunately has taught us that ethics do not necessarily come as a second nature to humans, and therefore also not to researchers. A researcher has a certain power, namely that of knowledge production and of choosing what knowledge gets produced; they therefore have an ethical obligation to treat that power ethically (cf. Fujii, 2012, p. 718). During World War II, German scientists, Nazis, used camp inmates of concentration camps to do horrifying, unethical medical experiments without patient consent. This was widely publicized during the Nuremberg trials of 1946, which led to the Nuremberg Code, which is a set of ethical research principles for human experimentation. Although originally created to ethically guide medical research, its core principles such as "informed consent" and "do no harm" have trickled over to social science research as well as we have read in 2.1.2 (cf. Lamont, 2022, p. 61). Naturally, the focus of the ethical codes that have been formulated in Nuremberg are on experiments carried out upon human subjects, where the researcher is detached from what is being researched, and not for social science where the researcher is also part of what is being researched; namely the social world (cf. Lamont, 2022, p. 61).

2.2.1. Institutional Review Boards

The (un)ethical atrocities of World War II, but also of a long-term (unethical) study on syphilis conducted between 1932 and 1972 by the U.S. Public Health Service, led to the National Research Act of 1974 and the Belmont Report in the United States. This outlined the primary ethical principles that have been discussed at the start of 2.1.2., respect for persons, beneficence and justice, and created Institutional Review Boards that needed to decide whether research proposals and projects followed these principles (cf. Fujii, 2012, p. 717).

Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), or the more European term: Ethic Committees, are committees where a board of diverse researchers take place to review research proposals on its ethical and security challenges. As described above, IRBs were founded in the United States with the National Research Act of 1974, followed later by

Canada and the United Kingdom. For medical sciences, or science in general where experiments are executed on people, there are IRBs in most universities over the world. For social science research, such as PCS, it is a more recent trend in continental European universities. However, how ethics are being institutionalized differs from country to country. In Germany for instance, the debate on research ethics is rather different. This is due to the fact that "social science research has to adhere to data protection legislation but does not generally undergo ethical review" (Unger, 2016, p. 88). Actually, only in the second half of the 2010s (and primarily due to "requirements posed by international journals and funding agencies such as the European Union) have social science faculties in Germany started to establish local research ethics committees at universities" (Unger, 2016, p. 88). Further differences in European universities will be explored in Chapter 4 when we describe how the situation regarding ethics and security is at the partner universities of this INCOPS project.

The most important parameters are the primary ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence and justice that have been mentioned. Next to that, depending on the field of research, codes of conduct from a specific field/discipline are used. For instance, for Anthropology there is an Anthropological Codes of Conduct for ethnographical fieldwork that the Ethic Committee of Utrecht University uses (cf. European Research Council (ed.) 2021). Since most Ethics Review Boards in social sciences are still relatively young, the codes of conduct upon which the boards make their decisions are still being developed (cf. Unger, 2016, p. 88). For instance, it is only recently that this Ethic board allowed informed consent to be obtained orally as well, instead of it having to be fulfilled in written form which can create challenges during ethnographical fieldwork when a researcher deals with research participants that cannot read (cf. Knott, 2019, p. 143).

However, in the literature there is a lot of critique on IRBs stating that instead of being primarily occupied with the question whether research subjects are being harmed or subjected to significant risks, IRBs seem more bothered with whether they are legally accountable (cf. Schrag, 2011, p. 120). This goes as far as IRBs openly coming out stating that "their main concern is protection of the institution from damage" (Lincoln & Tierney, 2004, p. 220). This is a fundamental shift "from the original purpose of ascertaining risk to human and animal subjects and assuring that informed consent was adequate to prepare human subjects for associated risks" (Lincoln & Tierney, 2004, p. 220). Therefore, the main critique that is found in the literature is that members of the IRBs are too focused on bureaucratic notions. For instance, the critique is that they often have a legal, medical, or more physical evidence-based background and therefore are mostly concerned with questions regarding those fields, lacking field experience in social sciences. This makes such IRBs with a lack of diversity in their members unequipped to deal with ethical challenges in social science research (cf. Schrag, 2011, p. 120). This will be further discussed in paragraph 2.2.3., how IRBs are mentioned in the literature to have become (too) bureaucratic and how to possibly get out of this perceived moral panic. First, however, the General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union will be discussed and explained as another safeguard, potentially contributing to the bureaucratization of ethics.

2.2.2. General Data Protection Regulation

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was implemented in the European Union in 2018 to protect data (and privacy) of European Union (EU) citizens. It is relevant to discuss the GDPR in this document, because ever since the GDPR there is a codified exemption for researchers in regard to privacy laws when dealing with data. How is this "exemption" in practice? What institution is in charge of giving these exemptions to researchers?

In the GDPR, a mandate is given to member states to pass exemptions "for the purpose of academic, artistic or literary expression" (Article 85 (2) General Data Protection Regulation, European Commission (ed.)). The academic exemption of the GDPR is laid down in article 85 paragraph 2 of the GDPR, and there are a few reasons why it would seem that the GDPR creates greater academic freedom (cf. Mourby et al., 2019, p. 193). First, the fact that there is an exemption codified, giving member states the mandate to exempt researchers from the strict norms of the GDPR regarding privacy, consent and data protection. Next to that, the article states that member states should reconcile the right to freedom of expression and information with data protection, implying that it should not be a black or white situation; there is plenty of grey area to balance academic research with the GDPR's goals of data protection and privacy. Finally, the term "academic expression" is (probably intentionally) ambiguous and open-ended, which means that there is a broad range of application and interpretation left to the member states.

In practice however, exemptions are hard to come by for researchers according to Mourby et al. (2019, p. 192). Therefore, Mourby et al. argue that the GDPR does not create greater academic freedom for researchers, but in fact limits academic expression (cf. Mourby et al., 2019, p. 206). It is evident, when using the United Kingdom as a case study, as done by Mourby et al. (2019), "that even a full exercise of the academic derogation is likely to be limited by the GDPR's requirement of necessity, and by privacy rights wherever they are engaged" (Mourby et al., 2019, p. 192). The mandate that has been given to member states to give exemptions to researchers is generally materialized in the Institutional Review Boards, Ethic Committees, or specialized (GDPR) privacy officers at universities. Generally, social science researchers process personal data of their participants such as names, addresses and sometimes potentially incriminating information through interviews. Therefore, institutions fear legal liability because of privacy issues. With the GDPR being (intentionally) vague, there is not a clear understanding of when the line is crossed. Therefore, institutions seem to have a stricter (than necessary) interpretation of the GDPR out of fear for legal liability (cf. Mourby et al., 2019, p. 206). What goes hand in hand with this development, is the bureaucratization of ethics that will be explored next.

2.2.3. Bureaucratization of Ethics

The danger of formalizing ethics through apparatuses as IRBs, is that ethics become bureaucratized instead of being (and remaining) a reflective process on what constitutes proper ethical research. Millar for instance makes the difference between research ethics procedures such as IRBs (procedural ethics with a small "e") and Ethics in a more substantive sense (reflective Ethics with a capital "E") (cf. Millar, 2021, p. 147).

The literature suggests that the process of ethical review "is often regarded as adversarial, and as creating unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles" (Gillam & Guillemin, 2018, p. 263 in Hickey et al., 2021, p. 3). Some authors even describe the experience of getting ethical clearance for a research proposal as one of "near collective dismay, discomfort and disorientation about the process" (van den Hoonaard & Hamilton, 2016, p. 5). Because of the fear of legal consequences, researchers fear, and already notice a process of bureaucratization of ethics in the universities (cf. Schrag, 2011, p. 120). According to sociologist John D. Brewer there has been a strict tightening of ethical regulatory frameworks in social science which has been carried over from the scientific and medical ethical codes and norms (cf. Brewer, 2016, pp. 1-11). Brewer views the neoliberal marketisation of higher education as a reason for this, since Brewer links marketisation to research that has to be measurable, generalizable and above all do not cause any legal liability for the institution (cf. Brewer, 2016, p. 1). Therefore, researchers must thread through all kinds of bureaucratic hurdles for their research plan to be approved, in particular the research question(s) and the research method. For a field like PCS this is particularly problematic, since most of PCS research is based on qualitative fieldwork; which means that the research questions usually only develop while collecting data (generally through interviews and observations). This could mean that there need to be constant (re)approval of their research, while already researching, as is the case for instance in the United Kingdom (cf. Mourby et al., 2019, pp. 192-206).

However, most researchers do see the value of having an ethical review in order to safeguard research from unethical and inappropriate behaviour (cf. Hickey et al., 2021, p. 1). In a 2021 article, Hickey et al. have tried to push back on the narrative that ethics review boards are problematic and a burden due to their bureaucratic characteristics (cf. Hickey et al., 2021, p. 1). Hickey et al. did this by giving an overview of critiques on IRBs and providing potential solutions or focus points for IRBs to improve their workflow. Hammersley for instance notes the "active stymying of research activity through adherence to overly bureaucratic processes, but with a limited opportunity for dialogue and engagement between researchers and review boards" (Hammersley, 2009, pp. 211-225 in Hickey et al., 2021, p. 8). This perceived limit of capacity for engagement and dialogue between researchers and boards fuels criticisms of the bureaucratic nature of these boards. However, Allen explains this lack of engagement and dialogue as a result of "a combination of crippling workload and limited research" that make it difficult "for a committee to do anything other than review the huge volume of new applications submitted to each meeting" (Allen, 2008, p. 108 in Hickey et al., 2021, p. 9). This limits the capacity of IRBs to take a more prominent role in "educational strategies or policy development" (Allen, 2008, p. 108 in Hickey et al., 2021, p. 9).

Therefore, in its essence, Hickey et al. conclude that the dialogue between IRBs and researchers can be a very helpful tool to safeguard ethical research and improve research quality. If there would be more time and resources, and there has to be, Hickey et al. suggest that IRBs should generate deliberative approaches for working with researchers such as: "1) mitigating the mystifying aspects of the ethics review process; 2) promote a generative, rather than antagonistic, climate of support for research; 3) enhance through deliberative engagement, ethics review practices; and 4) build stronger, more productive research communities" (Hickey et al., 2021, p. 17). This could create a climate of dialogue and engagement where both the researcher and the board would benefit from in order to navigate ethical dilemmas and challenges. Now, the specific security challenges PCS researchers face will be further explored in the next paragraph.

2.3. Security

As a result of the sensitive and violent contexts PCS researchers can find themselves, it comes naturally that doing fieldwork comes with (some) security challenges researchers need to be prepared for. However, in terms of a PCS researcher in training, such as a graduate student at a university, how can a university take care of its students when doing work-based learning activities such as fieldwork or internships in conflict prone areas?

The "duty of care" is a broad legal concept that has many branches into different segments. It mostly means that certain entities have a special duty to look out for the safety of those under their care. Around the mid-twentieth century, universities shifted from having *a loco parentis* ("in place of the parent") relationship to a "bystander" relationship with their students, meaning that students ought to take care of themselves and that they are considered autonomous adults instead of young adults/teenagers that need care from the university (cf. Dyer, 2008, p. 1386). However, the legal intricacies of whether a university has a duty of care towards their students is not the purpose of this report. What matters is what kind of security challenges students (and PCS researchers) face when they go "into the field" during their work-based learning activities.

As described in 2.1.3, going into the field means that researchers subject themselves to often violent and sensitive contexts one can find themselves in when doing PCS research. This means that there should be extra attention to the psychological demands of the researcher before, during and after their exposure to the field (cf. Moss & Uluğ, 2019, pp. 95-96). Moss and Uluğ mention in their article for example that researchers can face "self-blame, going over and over particularly difficult interviews, worrying about the safety of research staff and the respondents, increased sensitivity to violence and reliving difficult situations" (Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 95). However, what might be the toughest psychological risk of being in the field is high frequency exposure to trauma, with the possibility of leading to experiencing secondary traumatic stress (STS), defined as "the sustained effects on witnesses of observing gross human rights violations" (Wood, 2006, p. 384).

According to Howe, director of the Conflict and Governance at the Tufts University, there is a lack of literature on how students, and researchers, can have a trauma-informed approach to interviewing respondents in conflict-affected countries (cf. Howe, 2022, p. 364). Strong risk factors for developing a condition such as STS are "having one's own history of trauma" and the (repeated) frequency of exposure (cf. Howe, 2022, p. 369). To (psychologically) support researchers during fieldwork, suggestions in the literature are along the lines of setting up a "sharing process (…) to the researcher and research assistants: for example, the team could meet every evening of fieldwork to discuss what bothered or affected them" (Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 96). More importantly, once the researchers return "to the home university, continued sharing and run-through of experiences could be arranged through mental health services there if available" (Moss & Uluğ, 2019, p. 96).

However, according to Howe, most importantly is the researcher's own psychological preparation for fieldwork. Deeply knowing oneself, self-awareness, gives the researches two assets: knowing your own history, traumas, and trigger points to design a research project as such to "minimize exposure to traumatic material (e.g. using existing data sets), or forgoing the work altogether" (Howe, 2022, p. 374). Furthermore, it means that you become aware of your psychological limits. In order to find this out, researchers have to reflect on these questions before, during, and after their fieldwork trips (cf. Howe, 2022, p. 374). Keeping an (ethical) research diary can help with this, as will be further explored in 2.4. Next to that, having an empathy partner is recommended: such as a close friend, relative or a partner. This is recommended because empathy partners "are a vital access point to keeping us connected to ourselves, and to reveal what we might not see" (Howe, 2022, p. 374).

Furthermore, on the more general security challenges a researcher or student faces when in conflict prone areas, there is literature that prepares field researchers through security checklists. A popular checklist for universities in The Netherlands is the "Security Guidelines for field research in complex, remote and hazardous places" by Hilhorst et al. (2016). This is a general security guideline that prepares researchers to do research in the field, discussing a range of risks and dangers (including everyday risks that all travellers have to deal with, such as health and traffic). It explains the process of security planning through a context and risk analysis through which a researcher becomes aware of the environment where the research is being conducted, "pertaining directly to the research project but also about the location, its history, politics, population and culture" (Hilhorst et al., 2016, p. 18). Hilhorst et al. underscore that, as with research ethics while doing fieldwork, this is a continuous process, starting before departure and continuing throughout the fieldwork period. It is vital that students prepare their fieldwork by reading literature as Hilhorst et al. and discussing this literature with fellow students and their supervisors in order to be aware of the security risks and challenges while in the field.

2.4. Ethics and Security in Work-based Learning

As part of the O5, the partner universities need to exchange best practices regarding WBL projects for students on their MA Peace and Conflict Studies programmes. This paragraph is intended as a short discussion on what WBL is and what challenges could arise in WBL projects for the PCS students. Furthermore, it discusses how ethics can be taught to students in universities.

The term WBL is used in higher education in the United Kingdom to describe the learning arising from real-life activity within the workplace, so it is "what is 'learned' by working – not reading about work, or observing work, but actually undertaking work activities. Interactions with others are often crucial … this is learning from real work and real life and accepting how inextricable linked those activities are" (Helyer, 2015, p. 2). What we can extract from this definition is that WBL is about interaction in the broadest sense and learning from that interaction. In PCS interaction is inescapable; it is an essential part of doing fieldwork research or an internship. And according to Lee Ann Fujii, "we must remind ourselves [as PCS researchers] that to enter another's world as a researcher is a privilege, not a right" (Fujii, 2012, p. 722). Therefore, we should treat this privilege with the utmost care, in the most ethical way possible. To do this, PCS staff should emphasise the importance of Bildung and ethical reflection within their MA programmes.

2.4.1. Teaching Ethics

Reina Neufeldt wrote in a 2017 article about how, as university teachers, we can give students ethical training in the field of Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS). In line with what John Brewer wrote about the drive of PCS researchers to "do good", Neufeldt also signals a sense of moral, and therefore ethical confidence among students and researchers of PCS (cf. Neufeldt, 2017, p. 4). The general understanding among PCS students and researchers, according to Neufeldt, seems that as long as your intentions are good, what you are doing is ethical. However, Neufeldt discusses how back then there was no significant training in ethics from teachers to students (and vice versa) which should be necessary because history has shown us that how having good intentions can still produce negative effects. This is in line with what Von Unger notices in the literature on ethics. There are "generally many textbooks on different methodologies, but little guidance on how to teach them" (Unger, 2016, p. 89). According to Von Unger, what is needed are "concepts for conveying skills and knowledge about research ethics when teaching different methodologies in the social sciences" (Unger, 2016, p. 89). What is important in ethics is gaining reflexivity (in qualitative research): so how can students learn to practice ethical reflexivity? (cf. Unger, 2016, p. 89)

There are different, but so far in the literature still limited, approaches to teaching ethical reflexivity to students (cf. Unger, 2016, p. 89). Neufeldt suggests a more holistic approach to ethics with having students reflect on broad and general reflective questions such as: what are your ethics? What makes you a good human? And more specifically, what makes you a good researcher or a good intern? What are your values? (cf. Neufeldt, 2017, p. 4) Neufeldt argues that in order to be able to judge (often high risk) situations, a researcher needs to have thought and seriously reflected on their own values. Neufeldt raises the question whether we consider our own ethics enough as PCS researchers. What does it mean to do "good"? Is PCS research automatically moral as long as it is motivated by good intentions?

Von Unger presents and discusses her experience with teaching sociology students about aspects of research ethics while training them in qualitative methods (a semester-long course where 20 students participated for 2 hours a week). Von Unger's approach to ethics was more practical: all students had to do the same case study (focusing on a trial against one member and four supporters of a right-wing extremist group of Neo Nazis) and do two interviews to reflect upon what kind of ethical challenges they faced (cf. Unger, 2016, p. 90). These reflections were bundled in a paper under the header, "Reflections on Research Ethics," where they had to respond to the question: "What did I learn in the course and through the practical exercises on ethics in qualitative research?" (Unger, 2016, p. 90). Von Unger also stresses the importance for students to reflect upon historical scandals in research ethics, such as the human experiments under National Socialism in Germany in order for students to practice their ethical reflexivity (cf. Unger, 2016, pp. 90-91). However, Von Unger stresses that the students learn the most by doing, especially from trial and error (cf. Unger, 2016, p. 95). The damaging potential of an "error" by a student can be mitigated by preparing students through practical learning. This is in line with Van den Hoonaard who already in 2001 suggested that methodology teachers should teach research ethics through an inductive manner, for example to send their students out to collect field data in relatively safe places, return to class, and reflect upon the ethical challenges and responsibilities they encountered (cf. Hoonaard, 2001, pp. 32-34).

When assembling the different literature on teaching research ethics, it seems that a combination of letting students reflect on more broad ethical questions and teaching ethics through an inductive manner is the best way to practice ethical reflexivity in social science (and PCS) research. Furthermore, what is worth mentioning is a trend that John Brewer notices among researchers who do fieldwork in conflict areas, namely maintaining an ethical diary (cf. Brewer, 2016, p. 3). This combines the above points, namely continuously reflecting (on a daily or bi-daily basis) on ethical challenges that one runs into while in the field. This too could be a routine to be taught to student in order to practice their ethical reflexivity. Again, this could be done in an inductive manner where students do a day of fieldwork and conducting interviews and having them reflect upon the ethical challenges they encountered as Von Unger and Van den Hoonaard stated. Students should be taught to engage the self in order to become a reflective and ethical researcher, because as Aristotle said: "we are inquiring not in order to know what virtue is, but in order to become good" (Aristotle in Nicomachean Ethics, Book II, Chapter 2). Ethics cannot be (only) taught through the books, but through continuous reflection in and on the field.

3. Ethics & Security in WBL at Partner Universities

All partner universities were asked to answer a questionnaire (3.1.) in order to gather data to analyse how partner universities currently deal with ethics and security during their Peace and Conflict Studies work-based learning activities. All completed answers can be found in Appendix. Below (3.2.-3.7.) you will find a concise summary of the information provided by representatives of the partner universities.

3.1. Questionnaire Ethics & Security in WBL

1. What are the current written policies on ethics and security during students' internships? Please share the differences on university, faculty, and programme level. If there are no written policies, please share any informal rules of conduct.
2. How does the ethical procedure look like? When does a proposal get approved/rejected?
    a. Do gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal?
    b. In what way does security play a role when evaluating a proposal?
3. Is there counselling for students doing on-location/online internship? If yes, what does it entail?
    a. Do you have extra preparations for cases when the student might be/is in high-risk situations (harassments, accidents, conflict areas etc)?
    b. Do you have extra preparations for when the student deals with a traumatized population?
4. Is there provision for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues? If yes, do they actually make use of it?
5. What are some examples of the biggest ethical and security challenges your university faces? For example: research participants preventing publication of dissertation because of revoking their consent // students ignoring negative travel advice in terms of security // etc.
6. Is there a procedure in case the internship organization, a supervisor (host institution/university) or student acts unethical (e.g. intimidation // inappropriate (sexual) behavior)? Could you give an example on how you handled such a case?
7. Do you have any literature recommendations on ethics and/or security in PCS? In particular with how gender/cultural identities and/or dealing with traumatized populations has an impact on ethics/security.

3.2. Utrecht University

At the Utrecht University, policy and processes regarding ethics and security are in constant development (find the complete answers to the questionnaire in Appendix A). With the birth of the Faculty Ethics Assessment Committee of Humanities (FETC-H) in 2018, there have been multiple new instruments and policies on ethics and security. At the university level there is no written policy regarding internships and/or research projects by students. However, at the faculty level, due to the FETC- H, a checklist has been created for students for "Human-subject related research by Humanities students: Points of interest in the areas of ethics, privacy and data management" (June 2022, see Appendix A1). The MA Conflict Studies and Human Rights (MACSHR) class of 2022-2023 were the first students who were able to use this new checklist. This document is mostly concerned with questions such as: if the research participants are informed about the research (no deception), if the research touches upon sensitive topics, if there is informed consent and if there is a plan for data management. The checklist is meant as a tool for students to think critically about ethical questions and to discuss it with their supervisor.

On a programme level, the MACSHR students receive a general guideline that describes the entire MA programme (The Red Book). In Chapter 8 of the Red Book, students can find information on ethics and security. In Chapter 8.1 there is a Security Awareness List, meant to inform students how to tackle different types of risks during their internship/research. During the MA Programme, there is a course called "Preparing Research Project" with a mandatory lecture on ethics. For students to go on fieldwork, there is a "Security" seminar based on "Security guidelines for field research in complex, remote and hazardous places" by Dorothea Hilhorst et al. (see Appendix A2) In Chapter 8.8, there is a segment on "Ethics" which describes at what points the MA programme introduces ethics (such as during a recently introduced Fieldwork Safety Seminar at the end of block 2, and during the writing of the ethical paragraph in a student's thesis).

The main thinking on ethics by the MA CSHR at the UU is in line with Mason (2018, p. 87), namely to encourage students to identify and address ethical issues throughout the research process. Other than that, there are three reflective questions that students need to think about before, during and after their project:

- How and when you inform your informants about your research, and how do you ask for their consent (both written and oral consent is possible)?
- What ethical issues/risks do you foresee and what is your strategy in dealing with these issues/risks?
- Where and how do you store your data and what precautions do you take to make sure that the data is treated with care and well-secured?

There is a potential for the MACSHR to collaborate with the FETC to come up with procedures in case informants revoke consent about their participation, or what to do if students experience inappropriate behaviour by their host (internship organization) (see examples in Appendix A3).

3.3. Universidade de Coimbra

The survey explores the existing policies, procedures, and challenges related to ethics and security during students' internships at the University of Coimbra. The university does not have specific written policies on this matter. Instead, students are expected to adhere to the general ethics and security policies outlined in the "Code of Good Conduct for the Prevention and Fight Against Harassment at Work at the University of Coimbra" and the "University of Coimbra Student Disciplinary Rules".

Ethics and security considerations are considered during the evaluation of internship proposals. The approval or rejection of a proposal is based on its scientific relevance, methodology, and feasibility. While gender and cultural identities do not typically play a direct role in the evaluation process, they may be considered within the framework of feasibility. To assess security aspects, supervisors consult the travel recommendations provided by the Portuguese Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA). Students are required to have a local hosting institution and fieldwork supervisor to navigate the local context.

When it comes to counselling, there is no mandatory institutional provision specifically tailored to students undertaking on-location or online internships. However, the Programme's Coordinator and staff engage in discussions with supervisors to address relevant ethical and security issues. Ethical matters are also addressed in the Methods' Seminar, where the focus is on providing students with a broad understanding of ethical considerations in research. Additionally, the Centre for Social Studies organizes a roundtable on ethical issues in research at the beginning of each academic year.

Supervisors do not receive specialized training to handle ethical dilemmas and security issues. Instead, they rely on their own experiences and knowledge gained from colleagues and researchers associated with the Centre for Social Studies. If any concerns arise, the Programme Coordinator takes responsibility for addressing them and, if necessary, alerts the School's Dean.

The lack of specific written policies poses challenges, particularly regarding data collection, management, and storage. Students may not always adhere to the recommended ethical standards. Furthermore, security challenges arise when students ignore negative travel advice or fail to fully consider the advice provided by supervisors during their internships.

In cases of unethical behaviour, the University of Coimbra has established the "Code of Good Conduct" and "Student Disciplinary Rules". Students or alleged victims can report incidents to their supervisors or the Programme Coordinator, who may involve the School's Dean to initiate disciplinary or legal processes. Additionally, students have the option to approach the Students' Ombudsman, an institution aimed at promoting students' rights and improving the quality of services provided by the university.

While no specific literature recommendations were provided concerning ethics and security in PCS, the university encourages students to participate in roundtable discussions organized by the Centre for Social Studies, where researchers and activists share their approaches and challenges in researching sensitive issues related to security and social contexts.

In conclusion, the University of Coimbra does not have specific written policies regarding ethics and security during internships. However, they rely on general codes of conduct and disciplinary rules. Supervisors play a significant role in addressing ethical and security concerns. Challenges primarily stem from the absence of clear guidelines, and incidents of unethical behaviour are dealt with through established disciplinary procedures.

3.4. Universitatea Babes Bolyai

The university has written policies on ethics and security for internships, which are implemented at multiple levels including the university, faculty, and programme levels. The university provides a general framework, while faculties create specific procedures that programmes follow. In the absence of written policies, informal rules of conduct may apply.

Ethical procedures involve evaluating proposals without considering gender or cultural identities as criteria. Security considerations are more informally communicated to MA students at the programme level, particularly for placements in Romania's urban areas. Erasmus mobilities raise security concerns in regions like West Africa and India.

Counselling services are available for on-location and online internships, with both university and faculty-level counselling becoming more common. Feedback from students and final written reports are used to address high-risk situations, such as harassment, accidents, and conflict areas. The faculty has cancelled internship agreements based on student narratives involving unqualified tasks, overwork, and ethnic discrimination.

Preparations are made for students dealing with traumatized populations through courses that focus on Roma population, refugees, and European social space. There is currently no provision for supervisor training on ethical dilemmas and security issues, but efforts are underway to address this. In the Faculty of Theatre and Cinematography, there are pending legal cases involving inappropriate sexual behaviour during internships. Students receive counselling, but they believe academic staff should also receive it. The staff justifies their actions by citing the specificity of their disciplines and the necessity of working with the body.

The biggest ethical challenges within the programme involves plagiarism, both voluntary and involuntary, where data and information are used without proper attribution. GDPR-related issues also pose challenges, especially if participants or interested parties harass researchers or demand excessive compliance. Security threats in field research are rare but can occur in sensitive communities or neighbourhoods.

3.5. Coventry University

Coventry University has written policies on ethics and security for student internships. The university requires all research and activities involving human participants to undergo ethical review and clearance. The university's Group Research Ethics Committee ensures that research activities meet high ethical standards and governance policies. Specific procedures and guidelines are in place for data analysis, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, confidentiality and security of research data, participant information and informed consent, payment/incentives to participants, and data management plans.

The university's Center for Trust, Peace, and Social Relations (CTPSR) has an ethics committee responsible for promoting research integrity and good ethical practice. The committee provides support and advice, reviews ethics applications, and ensures ethical considerations are addressed and approved before projects begin. The application process involves online forms and peer review by a team of reviewers.

Gender and cultural identities play a minimal role in evaluating proposals, with the focus being on the expertise and knowledge of the reviewers. Security is considered through risk assessment, and high-risk applications require additional documentation, such as high-risk travel assessment forms.

Counselling services are available for students during on-location or online internships. Extra preparations are made for high-risk situations and potential psychological harm, with regular contact between students and supervisors or line managers. Supervisors currently do not have standardized ethics training, but the Ethics Committee is exploring ways to implement such training.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the university is staff training, awareness, and standardization of advice given to students regarding ethics and security during their applications. There is no specific example provided for unethical behaviour, intimidation, or inappropriate conduct by the internship organization, supervisor, or student.

3.6. University of Marburg

The university, faculty, and programme in Marburg currently do not have written policies specifically addressing ethics and security during students' internships. Instead, ethics and security topics are often incorporated indirectly during seminars and lectures, sometimes alongside other content. Peer-to-peer exchanges among students are also common for discussing questions related to ethics and security.

Regarding the ethical procedure, there is no standardized process or proposal evaluation. Gender and cultural identities are usually not the most relevant considerations for students in Marburg, with factors such as medical exceptions, disabilities, parenthood, or caretaking duties being more significant. Students have the flexibility to fulfil their internships in Germany, and they are not obliged to go abroad. The Center for Conflict Studies typically becomes involved after the internship is completed, as students only submit a report and confirmation from the internship provider. The compliance with internship specifications is rarely in question.

Counselling for students during on-location or online internships is not standardized but can be sought on individual initiative, such as through office hours. The contact person responsible for the internship module focuses more on administrative aspects and is not specifically trained for security or ethical questions. However, during the COVID pandemic, guidelines were provided to assist students affected by return transportation measures, allowing them the option to complete their internship module without pressure.

There are no standardized preparations for students dealing with traumatized populations. Individual initiatives, such as addressing the topic in seminars or lectures, may provide some guidance. Supervisors do not receive specific training to handle ethical dilemmas or security issues in this context. In case of unethical behaviour by the internship organization, supervisor, or student, there is also no standardized procedure. However, the Gender Equality Office (Frauenund Gleichstellungsbeauftragte) can be contacted in respective cases.

3.7. University of Kent

Security and ethics approval are separate processed. For all travellers from the University of Kent who are travelling on university study/business have to undertake the following, depending on the destination: risk assessments, health assessments, take out university insurance (free to the traveller), let the School of Politics and International Relations know where they will be and how they can be reached.

For all research involving human subject's ethics approval is required and has to be sought before the relevant part of fieldwork commences. Students need supervisory approval before the ethics application is reviewed by members of the ethics committee. As ethics approval is obtained from a committee, supervisors are not involved in ethics approval. If there are concerns related to security they are usually addressed by the Head of School.

There is no specific training for staff related to ethics and supervision but there are offers on research ethics more generally and supervisor training as well.

At Kent there are no PCS programmes that feature internships (Marburg is in charge of the internship for our joint award).

4. Conclusion and recommendations

This report discussed the ethics and security of WBL activities in various teaching programmes in the field of PCS. In this fourth and final chapter we will propose ways in which the partner universities can integrate the considerations that have thus been brought forward through the literature and the current policies of the partner universities on ethics and security. This chapter starts with a brief overview of four key points derived from the literature review and will subsequently present a number of concrete recommendations.

First, the literature review discussed the key principles of ethics in academic research: respect for persons, beneficence (do no harm) and justice. Specifically, within the literature on PCS, there is a discussion on so called "new ethics", debating whether there is also an ethical obligation to not just "do no harm", but also to do good and make a (positive) difference to the lives of people affected by conflict. At the same time these new ethics, designed to promote social justice and human rights, are critiqued as "doing good" is by some seen as being too normative and therewith potentially hurting scientific standards.

Secondly, the literature review identified four perspectives on ethics in social science in general: violationist, situationalist, universalist, and "anything goes". The starting point of the violationist perspective is to acknowledge that social research will always do harm in one way or another and it emphasizes that the ethical duty of a researcher is in the first place to deliver (new) knowledge to the research community. The situationalist perspective is less concerned with the production of new knowledge and focuses predominantly on potential ethical transgressions. These transgressions are allowed to a certain degree, but should be justified case-by-case, often to an outside panel/review board. The universalist perspective, in turn, is the strictest and wants the researcher to "adhere strictly to ethical codes imposed by [their] institution" (Lamont, 2022, p. 72). This is primarily to protect the institution from (legal) liability and to minimize the chances of the researcher from doing harm (or getting in danger themselves). The last perspective anything goes is less widely supported and exists on the fringes. It argues that anything goes since "the kinds of deception that we can engage in as social scientists can hardly be considered serious when taken against the backdrop of the types of activities routinely engaged in by the state police or security services" (Lamont, 2022, p. 72).

Thirdly, the literature review identified a number of ethical and security challenges that are specific for the field of PCS. PCS researchers often encounter vulnerable research participants and communities who live in conflict prone areas. Avoiding psychological (e.g. (re)traumatization) and physical harm (e.g. security threats) for both research participants and researchers is therefore of utmost importance. It requires a careful risk assessment and reflection on strategies to deal and minimize these risks.

Finally, the literature review discusses the institutionalization of ethics through the rise of review boards and legislation. On the one hand the increased attention for ethics and security may lead to a professionalization of research practices. On the other hand, there is a danger that ethics become bureaucratized (simply ticking boxes and filling out forms) rather than a reflective and dynamic process on what constitutes proper ethical research at all stages of the research (prior, during and after data gathering). This tension is illustrated by the distinction that Millar proposes between procedural ethics (such as often encouraged by IRBs) and reflective Ethics or "ethics as a process".

4.1. Recommendations

In this section we give inputs and recommendations on the integration of ethics and security in WBL programmes. These recommendations are based on the experiences with ethics and security in academic research (of students and staff). We argue that ethics and security should be an integral part of and in WBL and an ongoing concern for students, supervisors at universities, and supervisors of internship organizations. This implies that ethical and security considerations are not only (and not primarily) an "ex ante" activity, as working ethically and safely should be part of the very learning process of WBL. It is important that students start to reflect on ethics and safety before the projects of WBL, and that ethical and security considerations are included in their work plans and endorsed by supervisors at the university and internship organization. Supervisors should pay particular attention to the ethical and security assessment made by students, and discuss the ethics and safety on a regular basis (in supervision meetings). Currently many of the participating universities do not ask for ethical clearance by the ethical committee and we argue that it is not necessary to do so, as in the practice of WBL new ethical and safety issues are likely to occur in the process.

As each WBL project raises particular ethical issues, and as each university has its own requirements and procedures, below we discuss the main responsibilities of academic staff and students (that engage in WBL) to identify and address the relevant ethical and safety issues.

Responsibilities of university programmes and staff to prepare students

- Train staff to supervise students in WBL programmes and to identify and address the main ethical and security issues.
- Provide students with the basic knowledge about ethics and safety, and prepare them to act in the WBL activities in an ethical and safe way. We suggest that training is included in existing courses (e.g. methodology courses), and that students are encouraged to practice in "safe settings" and reflect on their behaviour (trial and error).
- Programmes should offer guidelines (what questions to ask) and/or checklists (what topics should be addressed) that help students to reflect on the possible ethical and safety issues. However, ethical conduct in WBL activities is not a "one-off" activity, but should be an ongoing concern.
- WBL supervisors should have regular check ins with students about the experiences in the WBL activities and discuss ethical and security issues in these meetings. Supervisors should also be available for advice and feedback when students are dealing with challenges that cannot be postponed to the next meeting.
- Programmes/universities should provide a "safety net" beyond the supervisor. E.g. ethical boards, ombudsmen or "counsellors" may advise on more complex or sensitive issues before and during the WBL activities.

Responsibilities of students

- Address the questions mentioned in the reflection tool below, and give sufficient attention to these questions before, during and after the WBL activity.
- Before the WBL-activity students should write a section on ethics and safety in the WBL workplan, which is approved by the academic supervisor and/or – depending on the regulations of the university – other persons or bodies. Students should use guidelines or checklists of their universities.
- During the WBL activity students should keep a log about their ethical and safety considerations. In most activities of WBL students have to keep a log of their activities and the ethical and safety considerations can be integrated in this log.
- Discuss ethical and safety considerations with the supervisor on a regular basis during the WBL activity. Discussion of ethical and safety issues can be integrated in the regular progress meetings about the WBL activity.
- Contact the academic supervisor (or other contact person, depending on university policy) when the student has urgent questions related to ethics and safety, or when things go wrong.
- Discuss the ethical and safety issues and choices made during the WBL activity in the final report.

Reflection tool

Students should at least deal with the following questions.

- In case you conduct research in the WBL activity: How and when do you inform about your research? And how do you ask for their consent?
- You can either do this in a written or oral form: “Informed consent does not necessarily imply or require a particular written or signed form. It is the quality of the consent, not its format, which is relevant” (AAA, 2012).
- If you choose for a written format: templates of information letters and informed consent forms are available on the website of the Faculty Ethics Assessment Committee/Humanities UU (see link below).
- What ethical and security issues/risks do you foresee? What is your strategy in dealing with these issues/risks?
- Use the relevant ethical and security guidelines of your discipline and university (e.g. “do no harm”, respect for persons, and “do justice”). Please be aware that this is a continuous process – prior, during and after the collection of your data.
- Reflect on your positionality in the WBL activities.
- Where and how do you store your data? What precautions will you take to make sure that data of your informants is treated with care and well-secured?

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6. Appendix

A. Utrecht University

1. What are the current written policies on ethics and security during students' internships? Please share the differences on university, faculty, and programme level. If there are no written policies, please share any informal rules of conduct.

There is no written policy for students their internships / research projects on a university level. However, on faculty level there is a checklist for "Human-subject related research by Humanities students: Points of interest in the areas of ethics, privacy and data management" (June 2022). This document was drafted by the Faculty Ethics Assessment Committee of Humanities, which was founded in 2018. The checklist is a relatively new instrument, class 2021-2022 were the first students to be able to use it. This document is mostly concerned with questions such as: if the research participants are informed about the research (no deception), if the research touches upon sensitive topics, if there is informed consent and if there is a plan for data management. The checklist is meant as a tool to let students think critically about ethical questions and for them to discuss it with their supervisor.

On a programme level, the students of the MA Conflict Studies and Human Rights receive a general guideline that describes the entire MA programme, gives information on who to contact for questions or concerns, and provides more information for students their research or internship period: The Red Book.

In Chapter 8 of the Red Book, students can find information on ethics and security. In Chapter 8.1 there is a Security Awareness List, meant to inform students how to tackle different types of risks during their internship / research. Most risks, however, are answered by something along the lines of "the student is expected to take precautionary measures". For women there are some tips of how to deal with inappropriate male attention during their fieldwork (such as to wear a wedding ring and to carry a photograph of their "spouse", and to not be alone with a man). This segment is closed with a "Security Waiver Letter" (8.2) which is meant as a responsibility waiver of the supervisor.

During the MA Programme itself there is a course called 'Preparing Research Project', where there is a mandatory lecture on ethics. For students to go on fieldwork, there is a "Security" seminar based on "Security guidelines for field research in complex, remote and hazardous places" by Dorothea Hilhorst et al. Furthermore, most of the staff has extensive fieldwork experience so if a student would want to go to a high-risk area, they can be advised by their supervisors to perhaps part-take in specific training or to pick another, safer, area to do their fieldwork / internship.

In Chapter 8.8, there is a segment on "Ethics" which describes during which points in the MA programme attention is given to ethics (such as during a recently introduced Fieldwork Safety Seminar at the end of block 2, and during the writing of the ethical paragraph in a student's thesis). Other than that, the Red Book mentions how fieldwork research, and its ethical challenges, are highly contextual dependent. Therefore, it is mentioned that the MA CSHR "follows Mason (2018, 87) to encourage students to identify and address ethical issues throughout the research process". At a minimum though, three key questions are noted for students to reflect upon during their research:

- "How and when do you inform your informants about your research? And how do you ask for their consent? o You can either do this in a written or oral form: "Informed consent does not necessarily imply or require a particular written or signed form. It is the quality of the consent, not its format, which is relevant" (AAA, 2012). If you choose for a written format: templates of information letters and informed consent forms are available on the website of the Faculty Ethics Assessment Committee/Humanities UU.
- What ethical issues/risks do you foresee? What is your strategy in dealing

with these issues/risks? 45 o Please reflect on ethical guidelines (e.g. 'do no harm' and 'do justice' – see also recommended readings). Please be aware that this is a continuous process – prior, during and after the collection of your data.
- Where and how do you store your data? What precautions will you take to make sure that data of your informants is treated with care and well-secured?"

These baseline questions are mostly similar to the before-mentioned checklist on Faculty level.

2. How does the ethical procedure look like? When does a proposal get approved/rejected?
    a. Do gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal?

It is unclear whether gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal. There is no written policy on this topic. This means that it is within the responsibility of the supervisor and student together, to decide whether or not it is safe enough (or simply if it makes sense) for a student, considering their gender/cultural identity, to go to a specific area for their fieldwork / internship.

    b. In what way does security play a role when evaluating a proposal?

On a university level, students are ought to follow the Travel Advice that is administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They cannot travel to countries that have an orange or red travel advice. However, students are able to apply for an exception[1] to this advice in order to still go to a high-risk area. It is unclear whether this is just for COVID risk-areas (because of the place on the website where this can be found, under the subheader 'corona') or if it can also be applied to other high-risk-areas, such as conflict zones. Furthermore, there is no transparent information as to how and when exceptions are made.

3. Is there counselling for students doing on-location/online internship? If yes, what does it entail?

There is no planned/regular counselling. Students are encouraged to contact their supervisor for any circumstances they encounter during their fieldwork/internship or even personal life in Utrecht. Anything that is relevant for their progress in the MA, and their emotional and physical well-being is of course a big factor in this. If the supervisor finds the situation troublesome, they can refer the student to the study-advisor and they can refer the student to a (student)psychologist.

    a. Do you have extra preparations for cases when the student might be/is in high-risk situations (harassments, accidents, conflict areas etc)?

There is a security seminar and prescribed literature for students to go do fieldwork. Students have to write a security assessment about their fieldwork and this needs to be approved by their supervisor.

    b. Do you have extra preparations for when the student deals with a traumatized population?

No.

4. Is there provision for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues? If yes, do they actually make use of it?

No.

5. What are some examples of the biggest ethical and security challenges your university faces? For example: research participants preventing publication of dissertation because of revoking their consent // students ignoring negative travel advice in terms of security // etc.

[1] Cf. *https://students.uu.nl/en/corona/travel-exchange*, checked on 21.11.2023.

During last year's cohort, there was a case where a student's thesis could not be published (MA theses always get published in the university's online archive) because of a revoked consent by a research participant. There was not a procedure that could be followed. The supervisor needed to act on their own judgement and the MA Programme Coordinator was also informed and involved in the process of making sure all parties' needs were heard. Ultimately the thesis did not get published.

6. Is there a procedure in case the internship organization, a supervisor (host institution/university) or student acts unethical (e.g. intimidation // inappropriate (sexual) behavior)? Could you give an example on how you handled such a case?

There is no procedure. However, on a university level there is a procedure ("Complaints procedure concerning intimidation, aggression, violence and discrimination") for students or staff to file a complaint when there is inappropriate (sexual) behaviour by another student or staff member. However, this is not mentioned in the Red Book of the MACSHR, so it is unclear how many students are aware that this procedure even exists. I was a student in the 2021 class, and I was unaware of this procedure. Furthermore, this complaint procedure does not apply to students experiencing inappropriate behaviour this during their internship / fieldwork. Then it is, again, in the hands of the supervisor to take appropriate next steps such as psychological support.

B. Universidade de Coimbra

1. What are the current written policies on ethics and security during students' internships? Please share the differences on university, faculty, and programme level. If there are no written policies, please share any informal rules of conduct.

The University of Coimbra has no specific policy regarding ethics and security during students' internships. When doing an internship, students are covered/bound by the University's general ethics and security policies stated in the "Code of Good Conduct for the Prevention and Fight Against Harassment at Work at the University of Coimbra" (2019), which states that the University is committed to the principle of no tolerance of such practices and that this commitment includes students and any student practices/actions. There are also "University of Coimbra Student Disciplinary Rules" (2019), which states that a student can be charged with a disciplinary infraction if they do anything that violates the duty of responsible ethical conduct as well as any principle of the "University of Coimbra Student Principles' Charter" (2012). This Charter includes issues of academic honesty, such as plagiarism, but also a reference to "students' responsibility to... build a daily life of tolerance and repudiation of physical, psychological or moral violence". The University also uses the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) travel recommendations to approve or not students' travel.

At the Master in International Relations: Peace, Security and Development (MRIEPSD) Programme level, the Coordinator in articulation with the Programme's teaching staff and supervisors organizes sessions on ethics and security in the Methods' Seminar and each supervisor discusses one-on-one these issues. The proposal's feasibility assessment is where these issues are usually raised and the informal rules of conduct include students not having permission to go to places not recommended by the MFA; requirement that students have a hosting institution/contact person that officially hosts them and is known also officially to the supervisor and Programme Coordinator; recommendation to install the MFA app for Travelers; definition of a communication plan in terms of regularity with the supervisor, with clear red lines that will trigger alerts when the student does not get in touch.

2. How does the ethical procedure look like? When does a proposal get approved/rejected?
    a. Do gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal?
    b. In what way does security play a role when evaluating a proposal?

A proposal is approved or rejected based on its scientific and methodological relevance and merits and on its feasibility. Ethical and security matters are considered when assessing/discussing the proposal's feasibility. And it is the role of the supervisor with the Programme's Coordinator and teaching staff to decide if the proposal complies with National and European Ethical standards and with the Programme's security considerations.

Gender/cultural identities do not usually play a role when evaluating a proposal, but they may be highlighted when assessing the proposal's feasibility.

The first reference in terms of security concerns is always the Portuguese MFA recommendations, then the supervisor with the Programme's Coordinator and teaching staff make an assessment based on their knowledge, contacts and experience. Still, independent of the security situation in the hosting country, the Programme always requires students to have a local hosting institution with a local fieldwork supervisor/contact that helps them navigate the local context and is known to the supervisor or any of the Programme's teaching staff. We also usually recommend that they buy a return ticket, even if the return date is not yet decided, and that they install the Foreign Ministry's app for travelling abroad. A communication plan with the supervisor is also defined in terms of regularity and possible red lines that would trigger any alerts.

3. Is there counselling for students doing on-location/online internship? If yes, what does it entail?
    a. Do you have extra preparations for cases when the student might be/is in high-risk situations (harassments, accidents, conflict areas etc)?
    b. Do you have extra preparations for when the student deals with a traumatized population?

There is no institutional mandatory or specific counselling for students doing on-location/online internship. However, the Programme's Coordinator and staff team in articulation with the student's supervisor usually discusses these issues if they are deemed relevant. Additionally, in the Methods' Seminar, ethical and security issues are addressed generically and the Centre for Social Studies organizes a roundtable on ethical issues in research at the beginning of each academic year, where researchers/activists share their approaches and challenges when working/researching security and social sensitive issues. This year, 2022-2023, we had someone that addressed research/activism on racism and racism-induced violence and subsequent trials, on sexual violence survivors and on vulnerable social and political contexts. The inclusion of a specific topic is, however, decided by the organizing teaching team.

4. Is there provision for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues? If yes, do they actually make use of it?

No. There are no provisions for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues. The Programme's supervisors build on their own experiences and on the experience of their colleagues, as well as of researchers of the Centre for Social Studies. There is a socialization of young supervisors on how to address and manage these concerns and the Programme Coordinator is responsible to share with the remaining teaching/supervising team to find an appropriate answer and, if needs be, to alert the School's Dean.

5. What are some examples of the biggest ethical and security challenges your university faces? For example: research participants preventing publication of dissertation because of revoking their consent // students ignoring negative travel advice in terms of security // etc.

Since there are no specific written rules on these issues, the challenges are associated with either supervisors and teaching staff prevention approach or when problems occur. As such, probably the biggest ethical challenge is the fact that students may not follow proper ethical standards regarding the collection, management and storage of data. For instance, regarding interviews' transcripts and their storage/accessibility after the MA is concluded, there are no guidelines to be applied. And the biggest security challenge is students ignoring negative travel advice or underestimating supervisors' advice when already in the field/internship.

6. Is there a procedure in case the internship organization, a supervisor (host institution/university) or student acts unethical (e.g. intimidation // inappropriate (sexual) behavior)? Could you give an example on how you handled such a case?

The University has a "Code of Good Conduct for the Prevention and Fight Against Harassment at Work at the University of Coimbra" (2019), which states that the University is committed to the principle of no tolerance of such practices and that this commitment includes students and any student practices/actions. There are also "University of Coimbra Student Disciplinary Rules" (2019), which states that a student can be charged with a disciplinary infraction if they do anything that violates the duty of responsible ethical conduct as well as any principle of the "University of Coimbra Student Principles' Charter" (2012). This Charter includes issues of academic honesty, such as plagiarism, but also a reference to "students' responsibility to... build a daily life of tolerance and repudiation of physical, psychological or moral violence".

We have not had such a case, but if it were to occur, either the student or the student's alleged victim would contact the supervisor or Programme Coordinator, who would then contact the School's Dean, who can then decide to initiate a disciplinary process and, if relevant, ask the Rectorate to initiate a civil/criminal law process. Students can also contact the Students' Ombudsman directly, a University body that aims to raise students' awareness of their right to get a quality, efficient and respectful public service and also to encourage them to participate in the improvement of this service through their personal commitment and critical thinking.

C. Universitatea Babes Bolyai

1. What are the current written policies on ethics and security during students' internships? Please share the differences on university, faculty, and programme level. If there are no written policies, please share any informal rules of conduct.

There are multiple level policies at 1. University; 2. Faculty; 3 Program level working in a hierarchical way. The university offers just a general framework related the host institutions (including specific criteria like financial balance, number of employees) and the sending faculty (equal chance policy, competition-based placement). The faculties are creating procedures at at the programs are implementing it.

2. How does the ethical procedure look like? When does a proposal get approved/rejected?
    a. Do gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal?

No, no gender or minority positive discrimination criteria are applied.

    b. In what way does security play a role when evaluating a proposal?

At program level, the MA students are informed more informally by their tutor what to expect. A significant majority of placements are in Romania, on urban areas, only in a very few cases we had internships in Roma ghettos or other marginalized communities. Through our Erasmus mobilities we have security concerns (in West Africa, India).

3. Is there counselling for students doing on-location/online internship? If yes, what does it entail?

The university has a counselling office, but there is a trend to have faculty level counselling as well. EU projects always stimulates to hire a counceller.

a. Do you have extra preparations for cases when the student might be/is in high-risk situations (harassments, accidents, conflict areas etc)?

We have/should have weekly feedback from the students and a final written report (standard open questions survey). As the internship is mandatory and the students get credit for it, they come back from the internships with personal narratives on the situations they faced. Our faculty had canceled 3 internship agreements as a consequence of the narratives we had red (unqualified level tasks, overwork, ethnic discrimination of the intern).

b. Do you have extra preparations for when the student deals with a traumatized population?

Our courses which deal with Roma population, refugees (title of the course: European social space).

4. Is there provision for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues? If yes, do they actually make use of it?

No, actually not, but we are working on it.

5. What are some examples of the biggest ethical and security challenges your university faces? For example: research participants preventing publication of dissertation because of revoking their consent // students ignoring negative travel advice in terms of security // etc.

The most relevant ethical issue is related to voluntary and involuntary plagiarism: using data, information and analyses without properly quoting the authors and pretending to have conducted different field research enquiries which are actually fictional.

The GDPR related issues seem also increasingly important and could lead to a deadlock in case some participants to research or interested parts decide to harass the researchers and/or to impose them to be over-zealous on this matter. The situation described above applies to field work for scientific research. We faced a few cases at PhD level, but generally if the students are honest on the objective of the research, the respondents are not preoccupied by GDPR. In Romania, GDPR is used on fieldwork as an excuse.

Field research was rarely threatened by security-related issues, except for the researches conducted in sensitive communities or neighbourhoods.

6. Is there a procedure in case the internship organization, a supervisor (host institution/university) or student acts unethical (e.g. intimidation // inappropriate (sexual) behavior)? Could you give an example on how you handled such a case?

In the Faculty of Theatre and Cinematography there are two legal cases pending for inappropriate sexual behavior during internship at the theatre. The students received counselling, but they consider that the academic staff should actually receive one. The academic staff invoke the specificity of disciplines and the necessity of working with the body.

7. Do you have any literature recommendations on ethics and/or security in PCS? In particular with how gender / cultural identities and/or dealing with traumatized populations has an impact on ethics/security.

- General Internship Guide for Students[2]
- Regulamentul Universității Babeş-Bolyai Cluj-Napoca privind cadrul general de organizare şi desfăşurare a practicii de specialitate a studenților la nivel licență şi master[3]

[2] Cf. *https://euro.ubbcluj.ro/studenti/practica/*, checked on 20.11.2023.
[3] Cf. *https://senat.ubbcluj.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Hotarare_380_Infiintare-Centru-Practica.pdf*, checked on 20.11.2023.

- Babeș-Bolyai University Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct[4]

D. Coventry University

Comment from the CTPSR. Please note we do not undertake internships, so all information is concerning field-based research.

1. What are the current written policies on ethics and security during students' internships? Please share the differences on university, faculty, and programme level. If there are no written policies, please share any informal rules of conduct.

Coventry University has an ethics statement which we subscribe to. The statement is as follows

> *Coventry University requires all research to be submitted for ethical review and clearance as a matter of priority. All staff and students are required to obtain ethical approval before undertaking any research. Approval may also be required for other, non-research, activities involving human participants. Staff are responsible for following the internal process and supervisors of students are responsible for ensuring that their students do the same. The University Group Research Ethics Committee is responsible for ensuring that any research activity undertaken by staff or students meets the highest ethical standards and is in line with its policy on governance. These principles and standards apply to all research irrespective of whether it is unfunded, internally funded or externally funded through Research Councils, other public monies, or any other sources. Ethical approval is required before undertaking any: Research, design studies, product development, artistic studies, or experiments, Survey work, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups or case studies.*

In addition, we use a variety of different approaches to inform various parts of our ethics applications. Please see the below list as to what forms/policies relate to what area

- Data Analysis: Universities UK Form, Sensitive Guidance
- Disclosure and Barring Service Checks: DBS guidance
- Confidentiality, security and retention of research data: Data protection guidance for staff; Data Protection Guidelines for Students; Data Protection Guidance for Obtaining and Managing Consent;
- Participant info and informed consent: Group Guidance on Research Consent
- Payment/incentives to participants: Research Participant Incentives Guidance
- Data Management Plan: Guidance: Data protection guidance for staff; Data Protection Guidelines for Students; Data Protection Guidance for Obtaining and Managing Consent; Forms: GDPR Compliance Report
- Templates: Participant Information: Forms: University templates
- Informed Consent Templates: Guidance: Group guidance on research consent Forms: University templates
- Risk Assessment form: Guidance: CTPSR Travel Flow Chart, Health and Safety pages on Staff and Student Portals. Forms: University Project Risk Assessment Form; CTPSR Risk Assessment Form, University High Risk Travel Form

2. How does the ethical procedure look like? When does a proposal get approved/rejected?

Within CTPSR we have an ethics committee. The overarching responsibility of the CTPSR Ethics Committee is to promote a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers

[4] Cf. *https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/despre/organizare/files/EN_Codul-de-etica-si-deontologie-profesionala.pdf*, checked on 20.11.2023.

in line with the University Research Conduct and Ethics Policy.
The purpose of the CTPSR Ethics Committee is to:

- Provide support and advice to researchers and others on matters relating to research integrity;
- Ensure that any ethics issues associated with research projects conducted by CTPSR staff or students of any level (and whether externally or internally funded) have been appropriately considered, addressed, and approved before the projects begin, and good ethical practice is employed as projects are delivered.

The role of Ethics Committee members includes:

- Reviewing CU Ethics applications allocated in a thorough and timely fashion, reporting their evaluation to the appropriate Ethics Committee meetings.
- Undertaking tasks in order to meet the responsibilities of the Ethics Committee.
- Chairing the Ethics Committee meetings in the absence of the Chair/Deputy Chair.
- Serving, on a rotating basis, as Secretary in Ethics Committee meetings.
- Convening, on a rotating basis, the Ethics Committee Drop-in Sessions.

There are 13 members of CTPSR staff (from all levels) on the committee.
Making an application - Each ethics application is undertaken via an online form. when this is complete (and attachments added), the application is peer reviewed by 2 of the team (3 if it a high risk application, or involves research with under 18s). the reviewers know the identity of the applicant, but the applicant does not know the identity of the reviewers

a. Do gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal?

I do not have the data to hand to make a fully informed decision. However, in my experience, the double peer-review process, experience of the reviewers, and background level of knowledge we have means our gender/cultural identities play a minimal role.

b. In what way does security play a role when evaluating a proposal?

Risk assessment plays an important role. as seen in Q1, we have a range of guidance sources for risk and security assessments. If deemed high risk, the applicant must fill out a high-risk travel assessment form, and this form gets signed off by appropriate figures in the centre.

3. Is there counselling for students doing on-location/online internship? If yes, what does it entail?
   a. Do you have extra preparations for cases when the student might be/is in high-risk situations (harassments, accidents, conflict areas etc)?
   b. Do you have extra preparations for when the student deals with a traumatized population?

We have a counselling service available at Coventry University which staff and students are entitled to use. In terms of travel to high risk areas, there are extra risk assessments which staff/students must fill out as a term of their ethics. As part of the ethics form, applicants are asked to reflect on the mitigation strategies they will have in place to deal with potential psychological harm to themselves or participants. We ask all students to be in regular contact with their supervisor throughout the period of fieldwork, and if a member of staff, they keep in contact with their line manager.

4. Is there provision for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues? If yes, do they actually make use of it?

We do not currently have standardized ethics training amongst PhD supervisors. The Ethics Committee is considering ways in which to institutionalize training.

5. What are some examples of the biggest ethical and security challenges your university faces? For example: research participants preventing publication of dissertation because of revoking their consent // students ignoring negative travel advice in terms of security // etc.

Staff training, awareness and standardization of advice given to students undertaking applications.

6. Is there a procedure in case the internship organization, a supervisor (host institution/university) or student acts unethical (e.g., intimidation // inappropriate (sexual) behavior)? Could you give an example on how you handled such a case?

n/a

7. Do you have any literature recommendations on ethics and/or security in PCS? In particular with how gender / cultural identities and/or dealing with traumatized populations has an impact on ethics/security.

Mac Ginty, Roger; Brett, Roddy; Vogel Birte (eds.) 2000. The Companion to Peace and Conflict Fieldwork. Palgrave Macmillan Cham.

E. University of Marburg

1. What are the current written policies on ethics and security during students' internships? Please share the differences on university, faculty, and programme level. If there are no written policies, please share any informal rules of conduct.

- There are no written policies on ethics and security.
- Ethics and security issues are addressed during seminars and lectures, sometimes more indirectly in addition to another content, sometimes in a direct way when explicitly focussing on it.
- Often there are peer-to-peer exchanges between the students on questions regarding ethics and security.

2. How does the ethical procedure look like? When does a proposal get approved/rejected?
    a. Do gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal?
    b. In what way does security play a role when evaluating a proposal?

- there is no proposal or standardised ethical procedure
- gender and cultural identities are usually not the most relevant identities for students in Marburg, rather having a medical exception or disability, being parents (or pregnant), or fulfilling caretaking duties, but they can equally fulfil their internship in Germany (e.g. they do not have to go abroad necessarily)
- In Marburg, the program demands to complete an internship module and that the chosen internship complies with the specifications of the internship module of the program. In theory, students are meant to contact the official at the Center for Conflict Studies responsible for internships with regard to that purpose. However, in practice, the Center for Conflict Studies only gets involved after the internship is already completed: students only hand in a report and a confirmation of the internship provider that they completed the internship: Thus, before that the Center does not have a specific role in practice as the compliance is barely ever in question.

3. Is there counselling for students doing on-location/online internship? If yes, what does it entail?
    a. Do you have extra preparations for cases when the student might be/is in high-risk situations (harassments, accidents, conflict areas etc)?

- not in a standardized way, only on individual initiative by the students, for example consultation during office hours
- there is a contact person who is responsible for the internship module. However, this person is rather responsible for administrative aspects of the module, and not specifically trained for security or ethical questions, etc.
- However, an exception was caused by the latest Sars-CoV-2 pandemic. For students affected by (forced) return transportation measures during the onset of the Sars-CoV-2 pandemic, which was a large-scale medical emergency of sorts at the time, the Center did pass clear guidelines assuring students' ability to complete their internship module etc., so they could return to Germany based on whether they felt this was the right option for them, not based on pressure created by the formal demands of the module.

   b. Do you have extra preparations for when the student deals with a traumatized population?

- not in a standardized way, only on individual initiative by the students, for example by individually addressing it in seminars or lectures

4. Is there provision for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues? If yes, do they actually make use of it?

- no, there are no provisions

5. What are some examples of the biggest ethical and security challenges your university faces? For example: research participants preventing publication of dissertation because of revoking their consent // students ignoring negative travel advice in terms of security // etc.

- None to mention up so far

6. Is there a procedure in case the internship organization, a supervisor (host institution/university) or student acts unethical (e.g. intimidation // inappropriate (sexual) behavior)? Could you give an example on how you handled such a case?

- not in a standardized way
- there are officers for certain aspects, like for equal opportunities (Gleichstelltungsbeauftragte), who could be contacted in respective cases

Note (20.11.2023): The risk assessments and the consideration of ethical issues during field research, excursions or internships abroad are currently being revised. It is important to the Center for Conflict Center that there is an adequate approach without being a bureaucratic processing of bullet points.

F. University of Kent

1. What are the current written policies on ethics and security during students' internships? Please share the differences on university, faculty, and programme level. If there are no written policies, please share any informal rules of conduct.

Security: All travellers from the University of Kent who are travelling on university study / business have to undertake the following, depending on the destination risk assessments, health assessments, take out university insurance (free to the traveller), let the School know where they will be and how they can be reached. Ethics procedures: for all research involving for example human subjects, ethics approval is required and has to be sought before the relevant part of fieldwork commences. Students need supervisory approval before the ethics application is reviewed by members of the ethics committee.

2. How does the ethical procedure look like? When does a proposal get approved/rejected?

   a. Do gender/cultural identities play a role when evaluating a proposal?
   b. In what way does security play a role when evaluating a proposal?

Security and ethics approval are separate processed.

3. Is there counselling for students doing on-location/online internship? If yes, what does it entail?
   a. Do you have extra preparations for cases when the student might be/is in high-risk situations (harassments, accidents, conflict areas etc)?
   b. Do you have extra preparations for when the student deals with a traumatized population?

We do not have any PCS programmes that feature internships (Marburg is in charge of the internship for our joint award).

4. Is there provision for supervisors to be trained to judge and deal with ethical dilemmas and security issues? If yes, do they actually make use of it?

As Ethics approval is obtained from a committee supervisor are not involved in ethics approval. If there are concerns related to security they are usually addressed by the Head of School. I am not aware of specific training for staff related to ethics and supervision but there are offers on research ethics more generally and supervisor training as well.

5. What are some examples of the biggest ethical and security challenges your university faces? For example: research participants preventing publication of dissertation because of revoking their consent // students ignoring negative travel advice in terms of security // etc.

We don't really have an internship programme; for joint award students see Marburg's answers.

6. Is there a procedure in case the internship organization, a supervisor (host institution/university) or student acts unethical (e.g. intimidation // inappropriate (sexual) behavior)? Could you give an example on how you handled such a case?

This would be dealt with under general regulations on breach of university rules.