

TRINITY LABAN

Research Ethics Introduction, Policy and Scope

Revised September 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee considers applications from TL staff and students for ethical approval of research. Documentation is provided on [Moodle](#) and the [Trinity Laban Website](#) for Research Ethics Applications:

- Introduction, Policy and Scope
- Guidelines for Applications
- Application form for Research Involving Human Participants
- Application form for Performance Ethics
- Information for External Researchers

All Staff and Students should submit their Application Form to the Research Ethics Committee using the **Research Ethics Application Online Submission Portal**, accessed via this LINK: <https://forms.office.com/e/7tbEjEngEq>.

Students should discuss any potential ethical issues their project raises with their supervisor in the first instance. Programme Leaders should present a summary of all student projects to the relevant Research Ethics Committee meeting on which projects raising potential ethical issues are highlighted.

The TL Research Ethics Committee meets in October, December and March and holds extraordinary meetings as and when required. Applications are also considered outside the committee schedule.

If your project is cross-institutional your application may be considered by the Conservatoires UK Research Ethics Committee. Please contact the Chair of the TL Research Ethics Committee, Professor Jonathan Clark.

If you are an External Researcher considering a request to involve Trinity Laban staff or students in your research, please read the Research Ethics Information for External Researchers on the Trinity Laban website.

Key Contacts

Queries and urgent research ethics applications should be addressed to:

- [Professor Jonathan Clark](#) (Chair, Research Ethics Committee)
- [Melanie Clarke](#) (Deputy Chair, Research Ethics Committee)
- [Sara Pay](#) (Secretary, Research Ethics Committee).

TRINITY LABAN

RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

Trinity Laban ensures that appropriate governance procedures and mechanisms are in place to oversee research involving human participants. The ethical principles of integrity, honesty, confidentiality, voluntary participation, impartiality and the avoidance of personal risk to individuals or social groups characterise research that is conducted in a professional and ethical manner. The key concept of informed consent needs to be understood by both researchers and Trinity Laban's Research Ethics Committee in light of the context, aims and objectives.

All activities that have a potential ethical implication should be forwarded to the Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee for consideration. The Secretary for this Committee is Sara Pay, S.Pay@trinitylaban.ac.uk.

Ethical principles for conducting research with human participants

In all circumstances, researchers (which by definition, includes individuals also undertaking postgraduate research) must consider the ethical implications and psychological consequences for the participants in their research. The essential principle is that the investigation should be considered from the standpoint of all participants; foreseeable threats to their psychological well-being, health, values or dignity should be eliminated. Researchers should recognise that, in our multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society and where investigations involve individuals of different ages, gender and social background, the researchers may not have sufficient knowledge of the implications of any investigation for the participants. It should be borne in mind that the best judge of whether an investigation will cause offence may be members of the population from which the participants in the research are to be drawn.

Code of Best Practice for Research

- Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken in a way that ensures its integrity and quality.
- Research staff and participants must be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved. Informed consent entails giving as much information as possible about the research so that prospective participants can make an informed decision on their possible involvement.
- The confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected. Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion.

TRINITY LABAN

- Harm to research participants must be avoided.
- Parental/guardian consent must be sought for research participants under the age of eighteen.
- The independence and impartiality of researchers must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.
- Participants should not be recruited into the study before ethical approval has been granted.
- Participants in collaborative research should at all times follow best practice as regards the accreditation of the work of others.

TRINITY LABAN

RESEARCH ETHICS SCOPE

The Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee is charged with ensuring that research and performances across the institution are safe and ethical; it does not take a view on artistic content or academic merit.

We consider ethical approval applications from Trinity Laban students and staff, both for research involving human participants and performances ethics, for:

- All research conducted at Trinity Laban;
- research conducted by Trinity Laban staff outside Trinity Laban where the research is conducted by staff as part of their development hours; and/or if Trinity Laban will be cited in published work resulting from such work.

The Research Ethics Committee does not consider ethical applications relating to research based elsewhere where Trinity Laban staff are employed as freelancers (the ethical processes of the research host are then to be used).

All applications are submitted to the Research Ethics Committee. Applications from staff and MPhil/PhD/MFA students are reviewed directly by the Research Ethics Committee. Applications by all other students on taught programmes (UG & PG) may be reviewed by Programme Leaders, who present a summary to the Research Ethics Committee for further consideration.

To assist in deciding whether a research project or a performance should potentially be considered by the Research Ethics Committee, applicants should consider the following guidance:

Performance-based outcomes (Performance Ethics Applications)

For projects with a performance-based outcome, does your project involve:

- Explicit material (for example, performances involving nudity)
- Material that has potential to cause serious offence to members of the Trinity Laban community (examples might include performances that depict religious or racial groupings in derogatory terms, either deliberately or unintentionally)
- Material that may be unsuitable for viewing by children (for example, the use or depiction of strong language and/or violence in a performance/other project)
- Depiction or action of physical harm on/to yourself or other participants

TRINITY LABAN

- Projects that investigate, and therefore may effect, the mental health and/or wellbeing of participants
- Any other project or part of a project that, in your judgement, may have ethical implications.

If the answer is 'yes' to any of the above, students should discuss their project with their teacher/supervisor and find the appropriate guidance and ethics application docs via the links given below.

Research-based outcomes (Research Involving Human Participants Applications)

For projects with a research-based outcome which involve human participants:

- Fundamental ethical principles are integrity, honesty, confidentiality, voluntary participation, impartiality and the avoidance of personal risk to individuals or social groups.
- In all circumstances, researchers (which by definition, includes individuals also undertaking postgraduate research) must consider the ethical implications and psychological consequences for the participants in their research. The essential principle is that the investigation should be considered from the standpoint of all participants; foreseeable threats to their psychological well-being, health, values or dignity should be eliminated. Researchers should recognise that, in our multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society and where investigations involve individuals of different ages, gender and social background, the researchers may not have sufficient knowledge of the implications of any investigation for the participants. It should be borne in mind that the best judge of whether an investigation will cause offence may be members of the population from which the participants in the research are to be drawn.

Student projects investigating the mental health, trauma or neurodiversity of other students/ external participants/ themselves

Trinity Laban seeks to ensure that students are supported to undertake research projects which have the potential to bring substantial benefits, whilst reducing the number of projects that may require significant safeguarding support to ensure that the needs of the community can be met. Topics that the institution is not confident can be adequately safeguarded will not be given approval, for instance, projects in which students investigate the mental health, trauma or neurodiversity of other students, themselves or external participants.

TRINITY LABAN

Ethics applications from postgraduate/ research students investigating these themes will be considered, but these projects will not be approved at undergraduate level.

Freedom of Speech

Trinity Laban believes that freedom of expression and academic freedom are at the heart of its mission and that staff and students should be free to undertake academic research within the law. Our approach is to enable and promote free speech and encourage debate of all kinds. The Research Ethics Committee acknowledges the importance of academic freedom. Trinity Laban's Freedom of Speech Code of Practice can be found at: <https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/about-us/policies-procedures/freedom-of-speech-code-of-practice/>