2018 Ethics Studio: Confidentially & Anonymity

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Defining:
• Confidentiality
• Anonymity

How to address these standards in your ethics application (e.g., PLS).
• Some case examples.
What does confidentiality mean in a research context?

Not disclosing and protecting the information provided by participants for research (akin to privacy)
• **Anonymity** means that:
  – the research team does not know the identity of the study participants
  – the research team takes steps to protect information pertaining to the identity of the study participants (e.g., in public reports).
Confidentiality

Need to inform participants about:

• What will happen to the information they provided for research?
• How will this information be stored?
• Who will access or be given this information?
• What information will they access?

Confidentiality is difficult to guarantee.
Often there are limits (e.g., legal, study design)
‘We will protect your anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses to the fullest possible extent within the limits of the law’.

‘We intend to protect your anonymity and the confidentiality of your responses to the fullest possible extent for the duration of the research project, subject to any legal limitations’.

• What does this mean in practice?
1. When your sample size is small?
2. When you are running focus groups?
3. When you are researching with children who might disclose information that places them or others at risk?
In the final report, you will be referred to by a pseudonym. Any references to personal information that might allow someone to guess your identity will be removed, however, due to the small sample of participants, it is possible that someone may still be able to identify you.

Source:
“Information provided by your son as part of group discussions will not be anonymous although the importance of keeping information confidential will be explained to all group participants and boys will be advised to share only information that they are comfortable sharing. Also, only group data will be reported, and therefore your son’s individual responses will remain confidential in any public documents or presentations”.
“We intend to protect the confidentiality of your son’s responses to the fullest possible extent, within the limits of the law (i.e., we will disclose information about your son to the school only if we feel that his or other people’s health and safety is seriously at risk). Your son’s name and contact details will be kept in a separate, password-protected computer file from any data that is provided. No identifying details are required on survey responses”.
All MGSE Ethics Studios are in Room 514/515, Level 5, 100 Leicester Street at 11:00am and please BYO Laptop for:

- Monday 16 July (Note start time is 12:00pm)
- Thursday 16 August
- Wednesday 12 September
- Tuesday 16 October
- Wednesday 21 November
- Monday 10 December
Useful Websites


- Themis Support: [https://unimelb.service-now.com/it?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=a167a4d04fdf5a00aa75c61f0310c7cc&origin=fix&question=0063e1944f139a00aa75c61f0310c7ff](https://unimelb.service-now.com/it?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=a167a4d04fdf5a00aa75c61f0310c7cc&origin=fix&question=0063e1944f139a00aa75c61f0310c7ff).

- RIOT: [https://app.lms.unimelb.edu.au/webapps/blackboard/execute/content/blankPage?cmd=view&content_id=_5757273_1&course_id=_332791_1](https://app.lms.unimelb.edu.au/webapps/blackboard/execute/content/blankPage?cmd=view&content_id=_5757273_1&course_id=_332791_1).

Thank You!

Questions?  Comments?  Suggestions?