# Secondary Data Usage in Research Projects

If you are ONLY using secondary data for your research project, your research application may not need to be submitted through the ethics review process (Ethics RM).

Please read below to see if your study fits the criteria of research involving secondary data.

## Usage

* Secondary data is data not collected specifically for the current study.
* It may be data from a public or subscription database, another organisation or data collected for a previous research project for which consent was given to use for future studies.

***Please note that this does not include data publicly available on the internet (except those in public or subscription database or repositories) and data available on public social media feeds. Social media or other on-line research involving human participants is likely to require ethics approval and if so, this must be secured for a project before the collection of any data.***

If your research involves higher sensitivity or risk topics or you are unsure in any way that your data is covered by the checklist, please discuss with your supervisor, and together you can email ethics [ethics@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@surrey.ac.uk) to ensure it meets the criteria.

**Before using Secondary Data**, you must:

* Discuss the data and project with your supervisor
  + *See above about any higher sensitive or risk projects, or where you are unsure.*
* Fill out the Secondary Data checklist on page 2 to see if the data can be used without going through the ethical review process on Ethics RM
  + If your data fulfils the criteria: ask supervisor to sign document as criteria met meaning no ethical review needed.
  + If the criteria are not met: ethical review required through ethical review process on Ethics RM (if unsure, consult with supervisor, who will contact ethics).
* If needed, fill in Secondary Data Usage Agreement on page 3.
* If required for your dissertation (consult guidelines & supervisor), then add pdfs into your dissertation appendix of both the:
  + Signed secondary data checklist
  + Signed secondary data usage agreement (if required)

Staff: please follow the checklist and keep a copy of the checklist for audit purposes.

## Secondary Data Checklist

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Which organisation /person is providing the data?** |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Are you going to only use secondary data for your project?** *(i.e. you will not be collecting any new data)* | Yes / No |
| **Are you going to take (scrape / mine) data from social media feeds?** | Yes / No |
| **Are the data publicly accessible / available?**  *(this includes datasets which are available to subscribers or can be purchased)* | Yes / No |
| **If the data is not publicly accessible / available, is there an agreement in place for using the data?** *(e.g. see agreement next page)* | Yes / No / NA |
| **Has the data been anonymised?** | Yes / No |
| **Is there no risk of re-identification of individuals?**  *(This could be for instance by combining the data with other data on same groups, or rare, unusual or low number data. In general, this would be if re-identification is possible by “means reasonably likely to be used”)* | Yes / No |
| **Are the data being managed and shared by reputable external organisations or institutions (that comply with all legal requirements concerning data protection)?**  *(examples are NHS, central government, local authorities, public bodies, for example accessed via* [*https://www.data.gov.uk*](https://www.data.gov.uk) *or* [*https://opendatascience.com/15-open-datasets-for-healthcare*](https://opendatascience.com/15-open-datasets-for-healthcare)  *or* [*https://www.england.nhs.uk*](https://www.england.nhs.uk)*/)* | Yes / No |
| **Is the proposed research in line with the website / organisation / institution sharing agreement, terms and conditions?**  *(the terms and conditions that the organisation / person is sharing the data will vary, and may have conditions on sharing [e.g. not for commercial use, must always reference original paper/author])* | Yes / No |
| **Does consent exist in the original study / data collection to share the data, and is the proposed research in line with the participants original consent?** *(if possible, include a blank copy of the original consent form in your dissertation from original study that participants have agreed for their anonymised data to be shared for further research [or some other evidence])* | Yes / No |
| **Is your data management plan adequate for the data?**  *(this will be access, storage, processing and preservation/deletion of data)* | Yes / No |
| **Does the organisation / person sharing the data require evidence of an ethical review for use of the data?** | Yes / No |

**Supervisors:** Please sign below to state that 1) only secondary data used for the project, 2) no data are being taken from social media feeds, 3) the data being used contain no personal data (is de-identified/ anonymous), 4) has existing consent from participants for sharing and use in line with the research, 5) is able to be used legally in the way you propose (in terms and conditions / agreement of data use), 6) has no risk of re-identification, 7) data management is adequate for the data, and 8) the organisation / person / institute managing and sharing the data complies with data processing regulations and does not require an ethical review for sharing.

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student Level (e.g. UG/ PGT): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_