

***For applications that may involve research participants who are/where engaged in activities in breach of (or potentially in breach of) the applicable laws (including those of Hong Kong and/or those of other relevant jurisdictions)***

In case sensitive data, namely, information related to possible illegal/unlawful conduct of research participants needs to be collected, I will take extra precautions to minimize risk to my research participants and myself and avoid any unethical action that may be illegal, especially when it is in breach of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance or other relevant laws of Hong Kong and/or those of other relevant jurisdictions.

As sensitive data could place research participants at significant risk if a criminal investigation were to take place, I understand that I would be required by a court order to hand over data, and that destruction of such materials after a court order to produce it has been issued could result in criminal prosecution.

In order to safeguard research participants and myself, I will store data including answers to questionnaires, interview transcripts, etc. (held electronically or in hard copy) in a manner so that it cannot be directly matched with the identity of individual research participants (such as names of participants, date of interview, location of interview etc.).

In the event that an ethics application involves research participant(s) under investigation by a competent authority or participant(s) subject to legal proceedings in court of otherwise (criminal, civil or disciplinary), I understand that the University will normally suspend the processing of the ethics application until the completion of the relevant investigation or legal proceedings.

I will oblige by the following principles:

- (a) serious and due consideration must be given to whether or not such involvement is well justified, taking into account such factors as academic merit, alternative research methods and sources, potential risks, mitigation measures and interests of stakeholders;
- (b) there must not be any act, conduct or activity that may bring the University into disrepute;
- (c) there must not be aiding, abetting, counselling or incitement in respect of any offence or potential offence;
- (d) legal duties to report or disclose as required under the applicable laws must be discharged (e.g., legal provisions in respect of offences of drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, national security, etc.);
- (e) there must not be obstruction to criminal or other investigations by the competent authorities or the commission of acts tending to pervert the course of justice;
- (f) requests for the disclosure of information/documents (including confidential information/documents) as required under the compulsion of applicable laws must be complied with; and
- (g) in the informed consent form, in addition to being provided with the general information, prospective research participants must be informed of the risks and circumstances in which confidentiality may not be maintained (e.g. compulsion by relevant legal authorities to hand over research materials or answer questions) and what additional safeguards the PI will therefore undertake to protect the integrity of the research and the identity of research participants, subject to compliance with the applicable laws.