

# **Royal College of Music**

## **Guidelines for the completion of the**

### **Research Ethics Committee Application Form**

This form is intended to assist applicants in completing the Royal College of Music's "Research Ethics Committee Application Form" for research projects carried out under the auspices of the *Centre for the Study of Music Performance (CSMP)*. Applicants should ensure that they are able to fulfil all the requirements before submitting an application.

Where relevant, text from the British Psychological Society's *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines* has been quoted. These guidelines set the ethical standards to which researchers working in psychology should ascribe and form the basis of the CSMP ethical policy. Therefore, in addition to the specific requirements detailed below, applicants are strongly advised to read the BPS *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines* in full. (A copy of the document is freely downloadable from the BPS website, [www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)).

#### **Questions 1, 2 and 3**

Before answering these questions, applicants should familiarise themselves with the research aims of the CSMP (enclosed) and be satisfied that the proposed project addresses issues that fall wholly within these stated aims.

#### **Question 4**

Particular mention should be made here of any inducements (financial and/or otherwise) likely to be offered to participants. Note that "the payment of participants must not be used to induce them to risk harm beyond that which they risk without payment in their normal lifestyle" (BPS *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*, 3.7, p. 9).

#### **Question 5**

Before answering this question, applicants should ensure that sufficient facilities and funding exist to enable completion of the project.

#### **Questions 6 and 7**

Please note the following BPS guidelines: "If harm, unusual discomfort, or other negative consequences for the individual's future life might occur, the investigator must obtain the disinterested approval of independent advisors, inform the participants, and obtain informed, real consent from each of them" (BPS *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*, 3.8, p. 9). In designing experimental studies, every effort should be made to ensure that the possibility of incidental discomfort or distress being caused to participants is minimised. Moreover, experimental studies in which some discomfort or distress is caused as a matter of procedure will generally not be acceptable.

#### **Question 8**

Please note the following BPS guidelines: "Whenever possible, the investigator should inform all participants of the objectives of the investigation. The investigator should inform the participants of all aspects of the research of intervention which might reasonably be expected to influence their willingness to participate" (BPS *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*, 3.1, p. 8). In cases where such prior disclosure would be detrimental to the outcome of the study, applicants should expect to debrief participants fully upon conclusion of their involvement in the study. Also note that, "the withholding of information or the misleading of participants is unacceptable if the participants are typically likely to object or show unease once debriefed" (BPS *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*, 4.1, p. 9).

#### **Question 9**

Please note that: "Where possible, the real consent of children...should be obtained. In addition, where research involves any persons under 16 years of age, consent should be obtained from parents or from those in loco parentis" (BPS *Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines*, 3.3, p. 9).

**Question 10**

It is expected that all applicants will have some relevant prior experience of experimental design and execution. Where this is not the case, applicants should be able to demonstrate a knowledge of appropriate working methodology and conduct in relation to participants.

***NB.***

*The College's Counsellor offers a confidential service to all students who may want to discuss problems of a personal, domestic, social or other nature. In addition, there is a confidential, advisory/support service for any student who needs additional personal support because of a sensory or physical impairment.*

*A comprehensive Health Service is available to all RCM students at Imperial College Health Centre.*