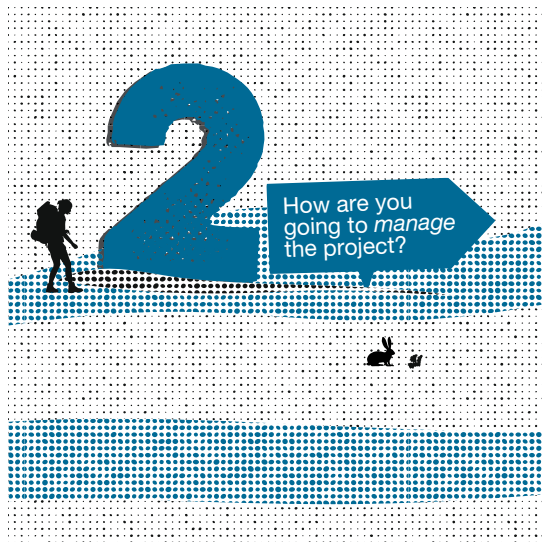
2

PREPARING: PROJECT MANAGEMENT, ETHICS AND GETTING CLEARANCE



Chapter Table of Contents

Understanding the structure of your dissertation or thesis

Drawing a timeline

Just look at those fingernails! Time management

Stresses in doing research

Working with your supervisor

The importance of being ethical

Getting clearance – ethical review

What to think about in considering ethics

Access

This chapter will help you figure out how to. . .

- Manage the project – the main elements and how they fit together
- Make a rough plan of how you want to proceed
- Work with your supervisor
- Understand ethics, and getting ethical clearance to do your research
- Manage your time
- Get access to all of the information you need

For extra help, check out these other resources:

Alderson, P. (2004) *Ethics, Social Research and Consulting with Children and Young People* (2nd edn). London: Barnardo's. A useful manual from a renowned expert.

Burgess, R. (ed.) (1989) *The Ethics of Educational Research*. Lewes: Falmer. An authoritative collection of essays on ethics.

Burns, T. and Sinfield, S. (2016) *Essential Study Skills: The Complete Guide to Success at University* (4th edn). London: Sage. This is a good guide to studying at university. Lots of practical advice.

Cottrell, S. (2003) *The Study Skills Handbook* (2nd edn). Basingstoke: Macmillan. This hugely popular book provides very, *very* basic advice on study skills. When I say basic, I mean basic – don't say I didn't warn you.

Farrell, A. (2005) *Ethical Research with Children*. Maidenhead: Open University Press. A good all-round review on working with children. Covers the practicalities of researching with people with learning difficulties.

Gorard, S. (2002) Ethics and equity: pursuing the perspective of non-participants. *Social Research Update*, 39, 1–4. The author provides a useful discussion of alternative dimensions of ethics.

Howard, K. and Sharp, J.A. (2002) *The Management of a Student Research Project* (3rd edn). London: Gower Publishing. Especially good on working with your supervisor.

INVOLVE (2014) Guidance on the use of social media to actively involve people in research. Eastleigh: INVOLVE. Available at: http://www.invo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/9982- Social-Media-Guide-

WEB.pdf (retrieved 15 October 2016). This gives examples and discussion of the use of social media to gain access to and involve research participants. The examples are all from healthcare, but the ideas have broad applicability. Good advice is also proffered on ethics and social media. As part of this, it's worth noting the existence of Easy Chirp, which is a web-accessible alternative to the Twitter.com website, designed to be simple to use and optimised for people who are disabled. It's at http://www.easychirp.com/

Kellett, M. and Nind, M. (2001) Ethics in quasi-experimental research on people with severe learning disabilities: dilemmas and compromises. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 29, 51–5. Does what it says on the tin.

Lewis, A. and Porter, J. (2004) Interviewing children and young people with learning disabilities: guidelines for researchers and multi-professional practice. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 32 (4), 191–7. A very useful overview.

Moreno, M.A., Goniu, N., Moreno, P.S. and Diekema, D. (2013) Ethics of social media research: common concerns and practical considerations. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 16 (9), 708–13. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/ articles/PMC3942703/ (accessed 11 October 2016). This is a useful overview of the particular ethics issues that confront researchers in using social media or the internet more generally.

Oliver, P. (2010) *The Student's Guide to Research Ethics* (2nd edn). Maidenhead: Open University Press. An excellent book that covers just about everything you need to know on ethics.

Open University (2013) Skills for OU study. Available at: http://www.open.ac.uk/skillsforstudy. Another basic guide on how to study.

Simons, H. (2009) *Case Study Research in Practice*. London: Sage. Simons is very good on ethical considerations in case study and other qualitative research.

Walliman, N. (2013) *Your Undergraduate Dissertation: The Essential Guide for Success* (2nd edn). London: Sage. Good for the planning process involved in doing a research project.

Ward, L. (1998) Practising partnership: involving people with learning difficulties in research. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 26, 128–32. Useful on ideas of participation and partnership with people who have learning difficulties.

Williams, K. (2013) *Planning your Dissertation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Good practical advice on planning generally.

CHAPTER 2 CHECKLIST

You may find it helpful to copy this table and write down the answers to the questions. Have you …

	Notes	
1 … drawn a timeline?	Make sure you note the beginning and end of each element.	☐
2 … met your supervisor and given an outline of your work?		☐
3 ... consulted your subject's ethical code of conduct?		☐
4 … found and completed your university's ethical review form (or, in the USA, IRB form)?		☐
5 … located the people to whom you will need access?		☐
6 … fully considered how you will gain access to your research participants?		☐
7 ... prepared an information sheet and (if necessary) drafted letters inviting participation?		☐