



RUSI's Ethics Policy for Research Projects

Principles

1. Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken in a manner that ensures rigour, integrity and quality. This includes: honest presentation of research goals, intentions and findings; rigour in the design of research in accordance with clear and credible methods and/or methodologies, including clarity about what can (and cannot) reasonably be concluded from the research; appropriate recognition of authorship in published outputs.
2. Where appropriate, researchers should ensure that research subjects are informed, to the greatest extent possible, about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved. Some variation of this principle is allowed in specific research contexts, when agreed, and recorded, as appropriate by the RUSI Research Ethics and Integrity Committee (REIC). Where the project involves the collection and/or use of personal data, an appropriate legal basis for processing the data must be identified and made explicit.
3. Unless permission has been explicitly given, the confidentiality of personal information supplied by research subjects and the anonymity of respondents must be respected. The storage of such data is subject to data protection legislation and must be compliant with the law and RUSI DP policy.
4. Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion. Where their personal data is being used or collected, participants must give informed consent for their involvement in the research.
5. Harm to vulnerable individual research subjects must be avoided, and potential harm and unintended consequences to other research participants (including researchers and research respondents) taken into account. 'Harm' is taken to mean more than just physical harm and can refer to emotional harm and risk of upset, as well as to reputational damage. However, it is acceptable for research to produce findings that make individuals and institutions uncomfortable if there is a potential public benefit in doing so.
6. The independence of research must be clear, and any potential for conflicts of interest must be explicitly addressed. While it is acknowledged that funders of research shape the broader research landscape by stipulating strategic objectives in the use of their funding, it is not

acceptable, however, for funders to influence the integrity of specific research activities or outputs at RUSI.

7. The REIC acknowledges that some research respondents may occupy positions of comparative power relative to those of researchers themselves. In such cases, the Committee reminds researchers that their primary duty is to preserve the integrity of their research, and supports RUSI research teams in undertaking research free from external pressures.

8. The Committee further observes that power relations between internal and/or external research collaborators have the potential to affect the integrity of the research. The Committee therefore encourages research teams to critically examine their own practices throughout all stages of each research project, from research design to publication, including transparent and equitable attribution of authorship and roles and responsibilities in dissemination.