



MRC

Medical
Research
Council

Health and safety
A practical guide for research involving the public

2004

The Medical Research Council's (MRC) policy is that the safety of researchers and research participants is always more important than the successful completion of any part of a research project.

The aim of this guide is to look at the role of the MRC and the responsibilities of its employees when working in research involving members of the public. It draws attention to the possible risks attached to this type of research, looks at the health and safety responsibilities of those involved, and gives advice about how to reduce the potential risks to both MRC staff and the public. The guide concludes with case study examples of risk assessments and procedural guidance that have been used in actual research projects.

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Introduction

The MRC has a number of establishments, grant holders and external scientific staff (ESS) that carry out research projects involving the public.

Such work with the public can involve visiting individuals in their homes or in other locations, such as hospitals and schools. Depending on the research, other more unusual sites are occasionally used. For example, drop-in centres, public houses or other public places. Studies may also involve visits by members of the public to MRC establishments or other premises where MRC staff work.

Those working for the MRC may be employed permanently, or simply for the duration of a research project (eg, students or agency workers). In some instances people working on one or more research projects may not be MRC employees, but may be actively participating in joint research with the MRC. For example, employees of universities or outside agencies.

Definition of responsibilities

UK legislation¹

Employers have an overall responsibility to ensure the health, safety and well-being of their employees while they are carrying out activities related to their work.

Within civil and criminal law the employer has 'a duty of care'² towards their employees and also to members of the public involved directly and indirectly with a research project. This duty of care is very extensive and it is not within the scope of this document to cover all aspects, but to raise the awareness of the employer and employees to its complexity. It is important to remember that in law:

- The employer ultimately bears the responsibility for ensuring that the work is safe for both participating members of the public and for employees carrying out the research.
- Employers and those employed to work on research projects in the community have a responsibility to ensure the health, safety and well-being of members of the public involved in these projects.
- All employees have a duty to follow the rules, regulations and working practices put in place by their employer.

In these respects the MRC's Council and in particular its Chief Executive will be recognised as the employer in the eyes of the law.

¹ Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (www.healthandsafety.co.uk/haswa.htm)

² *ibid.*

Health and safety responsibilities of research staff

The unit director or ESS team leader

The MRC as an employer delegates authority to its unit directors and ESS team leaders. In this respect the unit director or ESS team leader represents the MRC. However, the law does not recognise the unit director or ESS team leader as the 'employer' (see footnote 1, page 3). This responsibility remains with the MRC.

It is the unit directors' and ESS team leaders' responsibility to ensure that 'so far as is reasonably foreseeable' any research work involving the public is safe for both the participants and those carrying out the work.

In some units, directors will delegate this responsibility to a senior staff member(s), defined as the "principal investigator(s)". The director's responsibility on appointing a principal investigator (PI) will be to ensure that he or she is competent to do the job. Competence here means having the appropriate scientific qualifications and relevant practical experience, together with the ability to identify work-related hazards and manage the associated risks.

Sometimes one person may have a number of roles. For example, a unit director may actively lead a particular research project and be the PI and/or the fieldwork manager.

The principal investigator

The PI is the person in charge of the research project. Their health and safety responsibilities are to ensure that:

- there are sufficient resources, including financial, for the project;
- risk assessments and codes of practice are in place and documented;
- competent persons are used in the research project;

- training requirements are identified, in place and implemented; and
- monitoring and feedback controls are in place and implemented.

Some duties can be delegated to other unit members or research staff. For example, to the immediate line managers or fieldwork supervisors of those actively participating in the research project. However, they must work closely with the PI to ensure that the health and safety components of the research project are implemented.

Principal investigators should maintain an active brief on all health and safety aspects of research projects. They are directly responsible for ensuring that safety is inherent in the design of the research project. To ensure this, they must address the following factors:

1. Costs of the overall resource requirements for safety in the research project must be included in the research proposal. The resources required will depend on the type of research proposed. Some projects require little provision, while others involve employees working in situations of potentially greater risk.

High-risk situations generally require extra resources. For example, work with unstable individuals, late at night or in 'no-go' areas may require personal alarms, mobile phones, the provision of additional training or in some cases minders. Some resources, for example employment of extra staff, may be a major financial component of the research project.

2. The need to identify security issues and provide for any resultant expenditure. For example, security screening using the Disclosure Service or Criminal Records Bureau¹.
3. The need to ensure that a risk assessment² has been carried out for each area of the research project before any work is started. It must be written by experienced and competent individuals and a secure record made.

¹ For staff working on projects dealing with vulnerable people (the young, the elderly, the infirm and those with reduced mental awareness) there is a specific requirement to have security clearance by either the Disclosure Service (Scotland) or the Criminal Records Bureau.

² Examples of risk assessments are given at the end of this document. The unit safety coordinator and regional safety coordinator will also give guidance.

The risks involved in working with members of the public can be difficult to measure. Such risks cannot be determined in the same way as those associated with working with chemicals, where the hazards are well understood and controls can be put in place to reduce risk to an acceptable level. In a community project risk assessment may have to be subjective, relying on past experience and expert advice from the target community.

4. The MRC is responsible for the safety of members of the public who enter its establishments or other premises used by ESS teams.
 - Where members of the community are participating in a research project, it is particularly important that all aspects of their safety have been considered, including their mode of transport and health.
 - The risk assessment (see 3 above) should address the provision made for emergency procedures. In addition to emergency evacuation procedures, factors such as first aid and access to medical attention from a clinician may need to be considered.
 - All researchers and participants should be familiar with the emergency procedures.
 - As a rule, the 'what if' and 'worst case' scenarios should always be considered, including hazards within research projects that superficially appear to present little risk to employee or participant.
5. Where more than one employer is involved in a research project, or aspects of the work involve outside bodies such as a university or external consultancy, the PI should ensure these outside organisations have appropriate health and safety policies and procedures in place.

This list is not necessarily exhaustive, and PIs must ensure all aspects of any other health and safety issues related to the proposed work are addressed.

The line manager/fieldwork supervisor

Many research projects need other people to carry out some of the work; for example, research assistants or interviewers/fieldworkers. The line manager/fieldwork supervisor will normally appoint these people. It is important that the line manager/fieldwork supervisor has been trained in recruitment and that the people employed are competent to do the work.

It may be necessary for these employees to have extra training, depending on the nature of the work and their experience. It should not be assumed that newly appointed and apparently experienced individuals could deal with any situation that may arise during the course of their work; for example, dealing with aggression or abuse.

As the line manager/fieldwork supervisor will generally be responsible for the day-to-day management of the research project, they should be involved in preparing the risk assessment. The line manager/fieldwork supervisor should keep detailed records of the research programme and how it is being managed. These records should include:

- the risk assessment;
- documentation of any additional training that they or the field worker(s) have received;
- details of any additional equipment provided – eg, mobile phones, personal alarms or manual handling aids.

Risk assessment

The line manager/fieldwork supervisor will, under the direction of the PI, ensure that a full risk assessment has been carried out for each area of the research project.

They will identify any safety issues shown in the risk assessment and, using the 'what if' or 'worst case' scenarios, ensure that measures are taken to remove or reduce risks to an acceptable level. This is why the line manager/fieldwork supervisor must have a clear understanding of the research project. It is essential that good communication with the PI is maintained during this part of the planning process. The issues that the risk assessment should address are listed on pages 9–11.

Security

Depending upon the nature of the research project, there may well be a requirement for newly appointed staff to be security screened and/or their occupational health needs to be addressed. Sufficient time (typically one month) during the recruitment period should be allowed for these additional measures.

Other employment issues

Other employment issues, for example ensuring that the Working Time Directive is followed, will normally fall within the remit of the line manager/fieldwork supervisor.

Fieldworkers

Fieldworkers have a responsibility to:

- Read and understand the risk assessment.
- Follow the guidelines within the risk assessment and within any training they have received.
- Use the resources provided or available properly. This could include the use of handling aids such as trolleys.
- Report any incident or accident promptly to their line manager.
- Highlight any deficiencies in the project and report these as soon as possible to the line manager/fieldwork supervisor.
- Read, understand and follow emergency procedures.

Issues to address in a community work based risk assessment

Assessment criterion

Action

Training requirements for fieldworkers

Training put in place for:

- Interviewing skills
- How to recognise potentially hazardous situations.
- How to react to hazardous situations
- Sample-taking procedures

Health and safety

Emergency plans

- Maintaining contact with base
- Delegating a 'responsible contact' person
- Implementing an emergency protocol
- A 'get out of interview' plan
- Emergency code words
- Sample spillage procedure

Protection

- Vaccinations (hepatitis B, tetanus, etc.)
- Needle stick injury protocol

Security measures

Provision of:

- Mobile phone
- Personal alarm
- Minders
- Personal vehicle

continued on next page

Issues to address in a community work based risk assessment

continued

Assessment criterion

Action

Transport

Choice of vehicle used by fieldworker:

- Unit vehicle
- Personal vehicle
- Hired vehicle

Ensuring that vehicles have:

- Current MOT
- Current tax

Ensuring drivers have:

- Adequate insurance for business use
- Emergency breakdown cover
- Clean driving licence

Client or patient transport by:

- Public transport or licensed taxi.¹

Data and/or samples

Those involved should know the methods of:

- Sample collection
- Sample transport
- Sample storage
- Waste disposal

continued on next page

¹ Normally MRC staff will not transport clients or patients. If necessary, in exceptional circumstances written permission must be obtained from the unit director or team leader beforehand. As a rule, licensed taxis must be used and more than one staff member should be present at all times. It is advisable that the unit local rules should have a policy in place for the transportation of minors. Best practice is that minors are always accompanied by two adults.

Issues to address in a community work based risk assessment

continued

Assessment criterion

Action

Maintenance of professional integrity

- Confidentiality issues
- Data Protection Act 1996
- Identify where chaperones are necessary
- Provision of guidance on what to do if changes to agreed procedures or interviews are requested which may compromise the fieldworker's integrity

Project specific issues

Accounting for:

- Manual handling
- Out-of-hours working
- Long working days
- Unusual location

Monitor and review

When:

- Major changes occur
- An incident occurs
- An accident occurs
- On completion of the project

Examples of risk assessments

All risk assessments should be written to meet the unique health and safety requirements of projects involving employees and the public.

The following examples consider the possible hazards associated with different types of community-based research projects. They were written for actual projects and tailored to meet their specific needs. They should not be followed verbatim. They are included for illustrative purposes only, to give the reader insights into approaches to risk assessment for different types of projects.

Each of the examples takes into account:

- the mode of transport;
- who might be at risk and why;
- where the proposed work will be done;
- the time of day or night when the work will be done;
- the time when the work will be finished;
- training requirements for those involved; and
- emergency procedures.

They show ways of assessing risk and practical measures for either removing or reducing any perceived risks to acceptable levels.

Example I

Working in schools

The factors that must be considered when planning work in schools fall under two broad headings:

- risk assessment;
- development of procedures for risk evaluation and control.

Risk assessment

A risk assessment consists of the following stages:

- analysis of the proposed activity;
- identification of the hazards and those who are at risk;
- evaluation of the risks, including consideration of both the likelihood of a hazardous event occurring and the extent of possible harm or damage that may be sustained; and
- a judgement on the adequacy of present measures to prevent, minimise or control risk, and on any additional measures required.

A proper risk assessment will allow for the parallel development of procedures to ensure, as far as is practicable, the safety of all those involved in the research work.

More information on risk assessment can be found in the separate *MRC Health and Safety Policy and Guidance on Working Alone in the Community*.

Procedures for risk evaluation and control

- The safety of the child is always more important than the successful completion of any part of the project.

- When working alone with a child or children the researcher has responsibility to check that any alterations made to the work environment for the purpose of the test/interview/examination do not introduce safety hazards.
- Testing should be abandoned if a child is so unruly as to threaten their or the researcher's safety.
- Researchers must log all actual or potential incidents in the Accident and Incidents Book.
- Researchers should develop an informal 'intelligence' information network similar to that used by the police. They should log any information on families/areas where their safety may be at risk, and disseminate this information to relevant others.
- **During fieldwork researchers should leave a file containing the following with a designated contact:** a detailed description of themselves and the vehicle they will be using; the name and address of the home or institution being visited; their expected time of return.

The aim of the file is to speed up the reporting process if there is a 'no-return home/work' incident. A copy should also be kept centrally.

Potential general hazards

Below is a short list of the major potential hazards to consider when going into schools to conduct interviews with teachers/children, or tests and examinations of children:

- Aggressive children or adults.
- Undisciplined children, especially if using electrical or other potentially hazardous equipment.
- Disability/medical problems (eg, asthma, epilepsy). The researcher should check for the presence of such conditions and ask for advice on what to do if a child displays symptoms during the test period. Although the teacher will usually offer advice on this unprompted, if they do not it is the researcher's responsibility to check before working with a child.
- Fire. The researcher is responsible for making sure that their name is put on the fire-check list when they report in (this is not always done automatically).

Potential hazards of equipment and transport

Equipment

- Ask about the school parking facilities before you set out, as they are often inadequate. If heavy equipment needs to be carried from the car and there is no safe parking in the school grounds, ask a member of school staff (eg, school secretary/head-teacher) for permission to park close to the school building until the equipment is unloaded. Alternatively, park outside the school grounds in the nearest available (legal) place.
- Remember that haphazard parking or manoeuvring of cars in school grounds can cause safety problems. If you need to reverse out of the space and no member of staff is able to direct, you are responsible for asking any children present to move to an area of safety and to check that they do so.
- If moving equipment from car to school building requires several journeys, it is acceptable to leave equipment in a foyer/reception if there is sufficient space to do so without creating a safety hazard, and if an appropriate member of school staff has given permission. However, from a security point of view it is not desirable to leave expensive equipment in such places.
- It is never acceptable to leave equipment in school corridors or any narrow access area.
- Check all equipment is in working order before going out. Electrical equipment which is used on a regular basis must be PAT tested, and be visually checked before each use. During periods of intensive use, equipment should also undergo visual and safety checks by a qualified technician at least once a month.
- If possible, equipment should not be bulky or hamper the movement of the researcher.
- Researchers will need suitable equipment for transporting heavy items from their vehicle, eg, a collapsible trolley.
- Researchers should have received manual handling training.
- If practical, carry equipment in a shopping bag rather than a briefcase to deter theft.

- Mark expensive-looking equipment in bold paint with the unit's name. This will reduce its market value and deter theft. All valuable equipment should be marked in several places (etched/UV pen) with the unit's postcode.
- Do not leave equipment in vehicles overnight or at any other time. (It may be necessary to leave equipment in the car for a brief period whilst locating the interview/test/examination site or in cases where there is too much equipment for safe delivery in one journey on foot.)

Planning for travel

- Drivers must have a clean driving licence, current MOT certificate where appropriate, and fully comprehensive car insurance.
- Car breakdown/running out of petrol/getting lost can nearly always be avoided with appropriate planning.
- When driving on work-related business, researchers may not offer lifts to an unescorted child or to any other member of the public.

Safety outside the school

- Be especially alert to the possibility of a child running on to the road from behind parked cars near the school.
- Get an overview of the area to be visited through formal/informal enquiries. Does the area have a known high incidence of vandalism, drug abuse, prostitution, etc? Is there a risk of violence including threatening behaviour, invasion of space, strange/intimidating behaviour or verbal abuse?
- Locate the school, on foot if necessary, before removing equipment from the car boot.
- Where appropriate walk confidently, facing the on-coming traffic but not too close to premises or parked cars.
- Always park with the return time in mind. Ask yourself whether the place will seem as safe when you return by late afternoon in the winter?

- Designated person/people should be notified as soon as possible once the interview/test/examination is completed. If working in a potentially hazardous area, drive to the nearest safe place before parking and making contact.
- Self-defence in the street: flight is better than fight if possible. If attacked, drop equipment, shout "Help, call police!" and set off your personal alarm. Try to get to a safe place as quickly as possible.
- Researchers should carry a mobile phone which has a fully charged battery and is switched on, and know how to call the emergency services.
- Researchers should carry a personal alarm which is in working order.
- Researchers should carry a basic first-aid travel kit at all times. (Occupational Health can provide a description of the required contents.)
- Researchers should wear sensible shoes in case a speedy get-away is necessary.
- Have the vehicle keys ready; check the area around the vehicle in case anyone is loitering; check the outside and inside of vehicle; unlock the boot and replace equipment before opening the doors.
- Access to counselling through Occupational Health is available for researchers who experience emotional or physical trauma from any community-based work.

Training

- Researchers should be adequately trained in working with children.
- Researchers should be trained in correct interviewing techniques. This, to some extent, helps to provide a professional barrier which can help to preclude many unwarranted or abusive comments.
- If appropriate, researchers should be trained in the lifting and carrying of awkwardly shaped and heavy equipment.

- All researchers should have had a clear, useful demonstration of how to use the personal alarm provided by the employer.

Specific requirements for researchers working with children

- Researchers who are employed by the MRC to work with children will need to undergo detailed checks by the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Researchers who work alone and whose work involves physical examinations of children must have appropriate qualifications to ensure that they have professional indemnity.

Identification and school security

- It is essential the researcher wears a clearly labelled identification badge throughout the entire visit to a school. The badge should specify their name and position and the organisation/unit they are working for. Ideally the badge will be legible from at least 2 metres. It is important that school staff are able quickly to form a judgement of how acceptable it is for a 'stranger' to be taking a child away from the classroom or talking or working alone with a child.
- Some schools have stringent rules about visitor badges, which they produce and which **must** be worn by all visitors. But in these cases it is still appropriate for the researcher to wear their own identification badge as well.
- Some schools have elaborate security systems while others have little or none. It is essential that when entering and leaving a school the researcher reports to the secretary (or head-teacher if no secretary is present). A security issue can arise when a researcher attends a school on a regular basis and becomes well known by the staff and children. It is not uncommon for researchers in this position to be told that they do not need to report in and out. It is never acceptable to take this advice. The researcher must **always report in and out** of school.

Implications for project budget

- Equipment for transporting heavy or cumbersome equipment, eg, small trolley
- Possibility of extra technician input for regular equipment checks
- Mobile phone
- Personal alarm
- Identification badge
- Basic first-aid kit

Potential training

- Researchers must have adequate training for working with children and conducting interviews
- Manual handling course for researchers

Other potential costs

- Criminal Records Bureau checks
- Extra-cover contingency staff
- Counselling

Example 2

Risk assessment for home visits

General comments on the project

Visits to women's homes to take anthropometrical measurements and complete a questionnaire regarding their diet and lifestyle during pregnancy.

Hazards identified

- Working alone in the community.
- Travelling to and from subject's home (problems locating address, safe parking).
- Carrying heavy equipment from and to car; negotiating kerbs, steps, doors and lifts.
- Making visits at all times of the day, suffering inclement weather and dark evenings.
- Visiting deprived areas with known social problems such as drugs, prostitution, crime and vandalism.
- Damage to personal property (car).
- Threat of physical or psychological abuse.
- Threatening behaviour, violence or verbal abuse.
- Phobias/allergies to animals or threats from animals, eg, dogs.

Training and control measures

- Induction training for staff involved in the study.
- Talk by the local police crime reduction officer.
- Talk/discussion on health and safety issues relating to home visits by an experienced trainer.

- Contact letter sent to the women regarding the study.
- Telephone contact to follow up letter.
- Unusual responses are noted.
- Emergency procedures in place and understood.
- The telephonists should ask the woman during the initial phone contact for specific directions to her home, including things such as landmarks, house number and location, and parking facilities. These should be noted.
- If there are any concerns following initial telephone contact with the woman (subject), these must be discussed with the project manager. If it is still felt appropriate for the visit to take place, the visiting worker must be made aware and appropriate measures taken.
- Visits to less favoured areas should be carried out during daytime if possible. If not, it may be necessary for two staff to attend the visit.
- All staff must carry personal alarms and mobile phones and check these work regularly.
- All staff involved with the study must be trained to monitor and activate the 'on-call protocol' procedures.
- All visits must be recorded on the 'on-call' sheets. These sheets show each day's scheduled visits and are used to monitor the progress of the project.

Instructions to researchers about the visit

- If at any time you feel uncomfortable or worse, end the interview. Have in your mind an appropriate end to the interview, eg, "the rest of the interview is only for women who [something not appropriate to them]". Remember your safety comes first; don't worry about abandoning the equipment if you feel you are in danger!
- Report any disturbing incidents to your immediate supervisor and complete an incident/accident form.

- All incidents must be recorded appropriately so that any person on future visits is alerted to any potentially dangerous situations pertaining to that household or the immediate neighbourhood.
- Support strategies for staff are in place. The hospital Occupational Health department is available to staff for consultation and counselling.

Additional notes on personal safety when working in the community

- Suitable clothing should be worn.
- Do not display expensive jewellery, watches, handbags, etc.
- When in the car do not leave belongings on view, do not tempt thieves who steal from cars at traffic lights, etc. Do not leave equipment or personal items on display/unattended in the car.
- Ensure you always have sufficient petrol for your return journey; have the car regularly serviced; check it is in good condition at all times; and be registered with a breakdown service.
- Ensure that your spare tyre is fully inflated.
- Know what course of action to take in the event of a breakdown (as discussed during the talk by the crime reduction police officer).
- Have your car keys ready when approaching the vehicle.
- Check the interior of the car before entering; if there are signs of interference contact the police.
- Always plan your route carefully before setting off; allow adequate time for your journey.

Parking

Think about where you are going to park, ideally near the house you are visiting. Broken glass on the road may indicate there are a lot of car thefts in the area. Ask yourself, will it be dark when I finish the visit, and am I near a streetlight? Act confidently. Avoid eye contact with passers-by.

Equipment

- Should be kept secure and out of sight, preferably in the boot of the car, if not covered up.
- Confidential information should not be left unattended in cars.
- Use suitable containers, and bags that are secure, comfortable to carry and that do not attract attention.
- All nurses should carry personal alarms and mobile phones – check these work regularly!
- Presume nothing. Before commencing the interview consider all the possible scenarios and prepare for all eventualities.
- Observe others' body language.
- Sit, if possible, near the exit, preferably in a hardback chair. Use your own judgement, remembering to trust your instinct.

At the interview

- Act confidently.
- Do not talk about your own life.
- Do not antagonise your subject and avoid any confrontation.
- Avoid behaviour that may provoke a violent reaction, eg, provocative words or actions, annoyance, impatience or irritation.
- Keep calm and collected; do not raise your voice unnecessarily.
- Treat the women and their families with respect and tolerance; try to understand their concerns and worries.
- In a difficult situation, let it be known that a colleague is expecting you to contact them regarding your safety.

- If you need to contact the 'on call' staff for help in a difficult or dangerous situation follow the instructions in the 'on call' notes **giving the agreed coded message**. This will inform the 'on call' monitor that you are in trouble and need immediate help. These instructions **must** be clearly understood before any visit.
- If the 'on-call' monitor contacts you, because the agreed visit time has elapsed, respond appropriately; use the **agreed coded message** if help is required.
- If you feel at imminent risk then leave immediately without gathering material.
- Practise conciliatory gestures and exit lines to enable you, if necessary, to end an interview as soon as possible. Have in your mind an appropriate end to the interview, eg, "the rest of the interview is only for women who [something not appropriate to them] so thank you that is the end of the interview for you".
- Remember, your safety always comes first, so leave equipment behind if necessary.
- If you are told that the person you have gone to visit is not home yet, do not enter the premises. Return to the car and wait until they arrive.
- If there is concern over a pet ask the owner if they could please move the pet into another room.
- If there is a dog in the front garden and you feel threatened do not try to enter the premises. Instead, phone the owner asking them to remedy the situation. If you are unsure do not enter the premises.

After the interview

- Interviewers must regularly be given the opportunity to 'off-load' and discuss any problems they may be experiencing. Counselling may need to be considered depending upon the circumstances.

Example 3

Risk assessment on research projects in unusual locations.

This study involves working in the commercial gay scene (bars and clubs) in Glasgow with a team of fieldworkers recruited from a variety of sources. Every other day for a month, teams of between four and six researchers, each led by a supervisor, will visit the commercial gay scene and approach people and ask them to take part in the study by filling in a questionnaire. The teams will meet at midnight and work until around 2am. The same study will be repeated in Edinburgh, 50 miles away.

From the list below identify which hazards are likely to affect the health and/or safety of the interviewer, and indicate the likelihood of the hazard causing actual harm:

Hazard no (see list on next page)	Low	Medium	High
1, 2, 3	*		
4, 5, 6	*		
13	*		
14	*		
16	*		
17, 18, 19, 20	*		

No	Hazard
	Travelling to location by car
1	Breakdown
2	Tiredness
3	Road rage
	Travelling to location by public transport
4	Standing at bus stops
5	Walking alone
6	Alone in buses/trains
7	Slow exit from area
	Location of interview
8	General area
9	Types of buildings (high rise/tenement)
10	Interviewing on the street
11	Risky/dangerous locations
12	People's homes
13	Time of day
	Study subject
14	Intimate subjects
15	Length of interview
16	Known respondents

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No	Hazard
	Trauma to interviewer
17	Following threat
18	From revelation by respondent
19	Violence
20	Abuse

Hazard no	Risk level	Solution
1, 2	Low	These issues affect the second survey only due to the long distance involved. There will be three drivers sharing the unit car to/from Edinburgh and who each have and can use their own vehicle. In the case of tiredness one of the other drivers can drive. The unit car has emergency roadside cover in case of a breakdown. The recovery service can be summoned using the mobile phone.
4, 5, 6	Low	This will only be a problem on the return journey after surveying. Many fieldworkers have their own cars and will be encouraged to drive others home. Taxis will be provided by the MRC when other transport is not available. Personal alarms will be carried by all researchers at all times.

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Hazard no	Risk level	Solution
8, 11, 13	Low	Survey fieldworkers will always operate in a group, at no point will a fieldworker be interviewing in a bar on their own. This will minimise the likelihood of these hazards, allowing instant backup to provide help or call assistance. Supervisors will also liaise with bar staff and bouncers who could provide additional support. Personal alarms will be carried by all researchers. See below for procedure to alert emergency services if necessary.
17 – 20	Low	Each of these hazards is potentially present due to the location of the survey. However, as above, working in a large group will allow instant backup in case of difficulties. Personal alarms will be carried by all supervisors. Supervisors will also liaise with bar staff and bouncers in the bars who will provide additional support. Counselling will be available post-hazard should any researcher require this, through their line manager.
Other issues: verbal/ physical abuse on streets	Low	Personal alarms will be carried by all researchers. Researchers will work in groups of more than four at all times, including movement between venues, providing backup at all times if required. Researchers will be encouraged not to travel home alone. Many researchers have their own cars and will be able to drive others home. Taxis will be provided for return journeys by the MRC when necessary.

Emergency procedures

Write a brief description of emergency procedures below:

Supervisors are responsible for calling the emergency services and/or the AA if necessary – mobile phones are provided for this. Alternatively, supervisors will be able to ask bar staff to telephone on their behalf or use public pay phones where appropriate. If the supervisor is unable to telephone, it is the responsibility of co-researchers to do so. They should use either pay phones or contact bar staff to use their telephones.

At all times researchers will be working in a group; this means that backup will always be on hand.

At what point will emergency procedures be put into action and by whom?

Emergency procedures should be put into action at the discretion of either the supervisor or co-researchers.

When will this assessment be reviewed?

Following any incident or if procedures are found not to cover all eventualities.

Signed and dated by supervisor

Signed and dated by interviewer

Guidelines for part-time researchers

1. You must always wear your ID badge whilst working.
2. You must always wear your uniform or study T-shirt whilst working.
3. You must always respect people's confidentiality.
4. The bar managers are always right in all circumstances.
5. The men you approach are always right in all circumstances.
6. If someone abuses you, apologise and retreat.
7. Your supervisor is always right (you must approach the men they ask you to).
8. You must be polite, civil and be a model of good behaviour while you are working.
9. Even though you are working in bars, you must not drink, be drunk or use any other substances while working.
10. You must record every approach you make to every man (use the response rate form).
11. You are not there to provide advice or counselling (always refer people to other agencies – see information card which can be distributed).
12. You must always carry your personal alarm whilst working.
13. The participant can refuse to fill in any questions they are unhappy with.
14. Do not walk home alone; ask for a lift or get a taxi if need be. Ask your supervisor to arrange lifts. Taxis should be used only when no other transport is available. Receipts must be kept to claim fares back.
15. Return all completed questionnaires to your supervisor at the end of the night.
16. Never leave a questionnaire with anyone or let them take one away to fill in elsewhere.
17. If people request a questionnaire they may not take one of yours but they can obtain copies by writing to the MRC.

18. If people are drunk when they complete the questionnaire write 'drunk' on the back of the envelope (not in front of them).
19. If you have a legitimate reason to not approach a man (eg, he's your ex-boyfriend) then tell your supervisor.
20. If someone is illiterate or has forgotten their glasses you can go through the questionnaire with them (but write 'helped complete' on the back of the envelope).
21. Record all the hours you work on your time sheet.
22. Counselling is available if you feel traumatised or upset by any incident that happens during working hours.
23. Do not approach a group of men alone; speak to your supervisor about approaching with another spotter.
24. If men are reading each others' questionnaires, or their friends are joining in, try your best to provide privacy (ie, suggest they move to a quieter spot, and request that they do not confer).
25. If the emergency services are required, your supervisor carries a mobile phone to ring for them. If the supervisor is unable to ring for these services it is up to you to do so – use a pay phone or ask the bar staff.
26. Do not stay in a bar on your own when you are working – always stay with the group. Alert the supervisor if the group intends to leave when someone is busy/missing.
27. Always use the script when approaching men – it is important that all men in the survey are given the same information before taking part.
28. Do not force or pressurise anyone to complete the questionnaire.

I have understood and will follow these guidelines

Signed Date

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