**Data Collection and Analysis for the Thesis**

Thesis work on the Lancaster DClinPsy Programme always involves data obtained from human participants or activities. Trainees can use a wide variety of data collection and analysis methods for the empirical paper in their thesis. Decisions on how to collect and analyse data should be made by trainees in discussion and agreement with their supervisor(s). All proposed research designs should be potentially publishable in a reputable journal and receive ethical approval from an appropriate committee.

Usually trainees will invite participants to provide data, such as through responding to a survey that the trainee has designed or taking part in an interview with the trainee using an interview schedule they have devised. In such studies, participants are individually consented into the study and ethics approval is required.

Sometimes alternative types of data may be more appropriate in addressing the research question or type of data analysis method chosen. These could include data that is already publicly available, such as posts made in online discussion groups or social media, radio and television broadcasts, and articles and pictures in print media such as newspapers and magazines. As these examples are different forms of public data, the ethical guidance and consent requirements might vary according to which are used. For example, individual participants will not always need to be consented in to a study, but this will depend on the advice available in professional guidelines and the requirements of the ethics committee that will review the proposed study.

On some occasions, it might also be acceptable to conduct a secondary analysis on existing data sets, such as a set of interview transcripts or a quantitative data set. However, the trainee must be able to demonstrate in their thesis proposal that they are making a novel and substantial contribution beyond that made by those who collected and analysed the original data. Ethical approval is still required for such secondary analyses, even where the original study received ethical approval.

It is important to maintain parity of volume of work for different trainee projects. Therefore, where it is intended to use data collection methods that are less time intensive than those outlined in paragraph two above, then the proposed scale of the project should adjusted accordingly and be clearly articulated the thesis proposal for formal approval. This will then be assessed as part of the thesis proposal approval process.