bridge project

Data Ethics Checklist

Take responsibility at every stage of the data lifecycle

- ▶ The checklist should help students work with the data according to the best research practices and prevent the risks of research misconduct and questionable research practices.

- ▶ Depending on the research field, your experience, and institutional policies and rules, the list might need to be adapted to your needs.

Plan & Preparation

Reasons

☐ The reasons for collecting new data are clearly stated.

☐ It is clear what the potential impact is on the subjects and the environment.

☐ It is clear how the data will benefit people.

☐ It is clear whether sensitive data will be processed.

Consistency & Responsibility

☐ The project is created according to the best international standards.

☐ The project takes account of broader technical integration and harmonisation.

☐ The data management plan is defined.

☐ The project identifies the leader, data controller, and other relevant roles.

☐ The project team reflects diverse opinions, backgrounds and various kinds of thought.

☐ All people involved have the necessary knowledge and skills.

Consent

☐ The research has ethical approval.

☐ Informed consent requirements have been determined.

☐ The consent form clearly explains what the users are consenting to.

☐ The consent form considers the rights of people unable to provide consent.

☐ Data subjects have explicitly provided consent (if humans are involved).

☐ Relevant authorities have explicitly provided consent if animals or the environment is involved.

☐ If the data come from a different project, the original consent is documented.

Acquisition

Primary data

☐ Data reliability is ensured (we know who collected the data and how).

☐ Only necessary and relevant data are collected from respondents.

☐ An efficient and valid data collection method was used.

☐ The sample of respondents corresponds to the target group.

☐ If necessary, the data are anonymised.

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Co-funded by the Erasmus+
Programme of the European Union
(2020-1-SE01-KA203-077973)

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Secondary data

☐ Secondary data comes from a reliable source.

☐ We know where the data came from and who owns them.

☐ All sources of secondary data will be referenced transparently.

Storage & Protection

Storage

☐ It is clear where and how the data will be stored (what device and format).

☐ The data are stored only in a designated and protected repository and are not copied anywhere else.

☐ It is specified how and where the data will be backed up.

☐ There is a recovery plan in place to preserve the data for the future.

Protection

☐ There is a plan for how to protect and secure data with an appropriate level of security.

☐ Data comply with the necessary security requirements for the data security category.

☐ It is defined who has access to what type of data, or at what level of access.

☐ Only authorised persons have access to the data.

☐ Protection of the collected data during the transfer to the repository is ensured.

☐ Protection mechanisms such as data minimisation and anonymisation are in place.

☐ If sensitive personal data are involved, the impact on data protection will be assessed.

☐ Data encryption is used to protect data for privacy concerns.

☐ The identity of individuals is sufficiently protected.

Usage

Transparency

☐ Users are informed about what data are being provided and what is being done with them.

☐ The solutions developed by the project are open and can be used by others.

☐ All data modifications are fully traceable.

Consistency control

☐ The data are statistically consistent with the sample studied.

☐ It was stated how the technology could be attacked or abused.

☐ Possible sources of data bias are understood.

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Processing

☐ The data are processed using appropriate methods according to their nature.

☐ The training data were tested to ensure that they are fair and representative.

☐ Correct functionality of the algorithms has been tested.

Visualisation, interpretation, & publishing

☐ Data modification has been notified.

☐ Data are visualised in a way that does not obscure their meaning.

☐ All potential limitations, biases, and conflicts of interest are clearly declared.

☐ The possibility of outliers and why and how they should not be omitted from the data set were considered.

Consequences

☐ It has been considered how the results might cause harm to an individual or group.

☐ Mechanisms have been set up for redressing those harmed by the results.

Archiving & reuse

Archiving

☐ It is clear where and how the data will be archived (what device and format).

☐ Local standards or regulations for archiving are taken into account.

☐ It is clarified whether the data will be open or private.

☐ Open data are publicly available and easy to find.

☐ It is defined who has access to what type of data, or at what level of access.

☐ Only authorised persons have access to private data.

☐ Cryptographic algorithms have been applied where necessary.

☐ Measures have been established to prevent the loss of archived data (physical and digital).

Reuse

☐ The data reuse has ethical approval.

☐ If data are shared with third parties, mechanisms for protection are in place.

☐ When data are shared, the associated metadata are also provided.

☐ It should be clearly stated whether the reused data are obsolete.

Destruction

☐ It has been verified that the data must be deleted in accordance with the specific rules.

☐ All copies of the data have been properly deleted.

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