

Name of collection

Video 3 - Supervisor

Tyrrell Golding:

A, that it meets our research ethics standards. But obviously for me in particular, working with children and young people, I want to see that the application has really considered and understood notions of power, young people's agency, whether they're comfortable and able to participate what the research questions are. Are they intrusive?

The methods are a really important part of that. It might be completely inappropriate to study some subjects that where you might be asking young people to share personal details through a focus group. However, you do also need to think about the power differentials of a one-to-one interview with certain groups of young people, for example, and whether they'll feel uncomfortable, how you'll build relationships, how they understand really what they are being asked to participate in, and what the implications of participating in your research is.

And that goes right the way through for me to exploring how you're going to publish the findings and ensuring that you use those findings ethically, but that you are going to use them in your practice to affect change in a positive way if that's the kind of research that you're doing. So, I think for me, the ethics, as I say, partly because I sit within the practitioner kind of area, it's as much about potentially as well you upholding your professional standards if you're in a PSLB-regulated profession as well. So, you might have to triangulate those research ethics and those professional ethics.

It can be quite wide ranging, and it does potentially depend on where you're working. But think it is as kind of complex as the fact that you are an insider, sometimes we don't challenge ourselves enough or things have become implicit to our practice or our thinking that we don't question. As an insider, sometimes you have access to groups of young people or sites of inquiry or whatever we might want to call it, and there are no gatekeepers there.

It might be our field of practice, and everyone knows Tyrrell. Tyrrell's a nice woman. She wouldn't do anything. Whereas actually, if you're going from an outsider to an insider or an outsider applying, there may be different gatekeeping that takes place. And again, particularly, I relate this to my own research.

If I know a group of young people and I'm working in a particular area, and I think oh, I've got a really good research question here, there's something that we can address, and this is professional, it's practical, but I can do that through this research, actually, I've got to think about how might any pre-existing relationship with those young people might impact on their ability, willingness to say no, their freedom and comfort to say no. So, it's really thinking through, for me, from that professional-- those professional ethics as well as the research ethics perspective.

I think all those things is about how do you-- how have you thought through, considered, maybe even obtained permission from the organization you might be working with. Have they got any ethical frameworks that you need to consider? In terms of consent, very much around what is the age group you are working with? Might adults be vulnerable too? And then how do you support that vulnerability.

How do you-- how are you going to allow people to withdraw? And these can just be one sentence necessarily potentially addressed in these sorts of things. I think notions of power come to me with respect. So, whether you've got that pre-existing relationship with the group that you might be researching, how are you going to consider that?

And in terms of well-being, I mean, it can be so wide-ranging. I mean, we're so lucky to have so many brilliant applicants to the program with some fantastic research. So, it will be unique to people's particular settings. But well-being, I think for me as well, can be around the methodology.

You might think that you want to do two-hour long deep interviews with people about part of their lived experience, for example. But actually, that might be incredibly grueling for the interviewee. So, thinking about the topic that you're exploring, how are you going to ensure that the applicant is prepared in advance and is comfortable, confident, happy to talk about those kind of things?

Because quite often, our students are asking questions about some quite big societal issues. How are you going to make sure that you leave them in a comfortable space at the end of that research? And that doesn't mean to say that you don't ask important questions and you don't tackle important sort of-- address key issues. But it is something that we do have to think about, particularly if we're working with vulnerable groups, but we need to consider it at all times at all stages.

I think I'd also just put something around I would want to see how people potentially are going to be keeping the data that they collect safe during their research project. So, the way I

understand research ethics really is I understand that it's sometimes experienced as form-filling and the relief you sometimes hear from colleagues and students, oh, the ethics came through. But it's much more than that.

And for me, it is-- it's from this moment you start thinking about taking a piece of research right through to the importance of disseminating your research and actually ensuring that it is shared so that the people that volunteered their time in whatever way to be part of your project actually have that time valued by those outputs by sharing of your data. So, it's an ongoing process, an ongoing process to be thoughtful about, both in terms of your design and your methodology being really clear with your processes.

So, if you're not sure that whether you've sort of-- whether your research might reach the threshold for a next level ethics approval because there-- sometimes there are levels, and that will inform your judgment. If you're not sure, you take it to the next level of research ethics. Working with colleagues at this particular university but others, just like everything else, I've never found research ethics approvals about people wanting to stop my practice or be negative.

Where I've had feedback, it's always improved my thinking, my work, my applications. So it should be the beginning-- or not even the beginning, but part of the dialogue of you thinking about your research ethics. And for me, as I've said already, it is grounded as well in my professional qualifications.

So, thinking about my professional-- my ongoing professional ethics, being a researcher is part of my professional identity, but being ethical is just as part of that identity. And as you read and you might change your thinking about things and your approaches, then you've got to be thinking, does that change stay in an ethical vein? But it also sometimes prompts you to think differently about the processes you're undertaking already.

And I'm going to misquote who it is, but there's a wonderful phrase, isn't it? Do your best until you know better. When you know better, do better. So, you might read something and think, oh, gosh, I got this a little bit wrong in the process. Well, then you can improve through your reading and through knowledge development.

But ethics should be always on the top of your page, as it were, always something that you think about. And that something we are all open to discussing and learning more and being a cool part of our practice.