The University of Edinburgh

OSF



# Encouraging pre-registration upon favourable opinion from a research ethics committee

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- Research Ethics Committee of the School of Health in Social Sciences (HiSS REC)



# A prompt to pre-register a study

- Short message embedded in the favorable ethics opinion email
- Mapping the pre-registration forms on our ethics application form
- More info on pre-registration on our website

Thank you for your revised application. Based on your responses the application meets the standards for favourable opinion from the Clinical Psychology, University of Edinburgh Ethics Committee. The signed ethical response sheet/application is attached – please note that this is fine to attach to your dissertation etc. If you require a formal letter of ethics approval (this is only required if you are approaching third parties, NGOs etc) then please contact the new ethics mailbox (ethics.hiss@ed.ac.uk) requesting this and a formal letter of approval will follow in due course. If you need to make any changes to the study, you should return your amendment to the new ethics email - ethics.hiss@ed.ac.uk, cc'd above with the changes clearly noted in the relevant section of the form.

**This is the perfect time to pre-register your study on OSF (Open Science Foundation): https://osf.io/dashboard**

**You put a lot of time in your application and provided us with many details of your study, which could make preparing a pre-registration quite quick!** To help this process, we mapped the forms and made suggestions regarding which sections of the form of our committee might contain the relevant information to the different sections of the pre-registration forms. You can find these **enriched templates** for quantitative and qualitative studies on the HiSS Research Ethics website: Ethics and Integrity | The University of Edinburgh

Preregistration is the practice of registering the hypotheses, methods, and/or analyses of a scientific study before it is conducted and involves creating a time-stamped record of the study and analysis plan. So, when you preregister your research, you're simply specifying your research plan in advance of your study and submitting it to a registry.

Pre-registration of studies is to be uploaded before you start any data analysis. That means that you can submit the pre-registration while you are collecting data. If anything should change, you can also update the pre-registration before starting the analyses.

Why would I want to pre-register my study? See a list of benefits here: Ethics and Integrity | The University of Edinburgh

Good luck with your project.

Best wishes,
Zsofia

Dr Zsofia Garai-Takacs
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4. Hypotheses (required)
    4.1. List specific, concise, and testable hypotheses. Please state if the hypotheses are directional or non-directional. If directional, state the direction. A predicted effect is also appropriate here. If a specific interaction or moderation is important to your research, you can list that as a separate hypothesis.
    4.2. **Example**: If taste affects preference, then mean preference indices will be higher with higher concentrations of sugar.

**Zsofia Garai-Takacs**
You might have stated your research questions and/or hypotheses in 'Q1'

## Design Plan

**Zsofia Garai-Takacs**
You might have stated the study type in 'Q1'

In this section, you will be asked to describe the overall design of your study. Remember that this research plan is designed to register a single study, so if you have multiple experimental designs, please complete a separate preregistration.

5. Study type (required)
    5.1. Experiment - A researcher randomly assigns treatments to study subjects, this includes field or lab experiments. This is also known as an intervention experiment and includes randomized controlled trials.
    5.2. Observational Study - Data is collected from study subjects that are not randomly

# Pre-registration

Pre-registration is the practice of registering the hypotheses, methods, and/or analyses of a scientific study before it is conducted and involves creating a time-stamped record and analysis plan. When you preregister your research, you are specifying your research plan in advance of your study and submitting it to a registry ensuring scientific transparency.

Pre-registration of studies should be uploaded before you start any data analysis. That means that you can submit the pre-registration while you are collecting data. If anything should change, you can also update the pre-registration before starting the analyses.

## Why would I want to pre-register my study?

The primary goal of pre-registration is to be transparent about your research process, and to avoid poor research practice. Others can compare your pre-registered plans to the final study and evaluate the evidential value of the research, particularly in relation to the ability of your analysis plan to falsify predictions and control for type 1 errors (in essence, incorrectly concluding that an effect exists).

### Other benefits are:

- Helps you clarify the hypotheses/research questions and the planned analyses and to make sure that the whole research team is on the same page. It encourages you to formulate precise research questions and fine-tune your design prior to conducting the study.
- Helps to avoid questionable research practices such as p-hacking.
- Will help writing up the report.
- Many journals prefer studies that had been preregistered.
- Much better chances to publish the study even in case of null results.
- The university encourages pre-registration.

If you want to read up on pre-registration:

- More and more scientists are preregistering their studies. Should you?
- Preregistration: Definition, Advantages, Disadvantages, and How It Can Help Aga…
- Pre-registration: Weighing costs and benefits for researchers
- Embracing Open Science and Transparency in Health Psychology
- Three steps to open science for qualitative research in psychology

## Where can I pre-register my study?

You can pre-register your study on OSF (Open Science Foundation), following instructions of how to create a pre-registration.

When starting a pre-registration, you can choose between different types of preregistrations depending on your preferences and what type of study you want to pre-register. The most common are: OSF preregistration and Qualitative data preregistration.

The ethics application form contains many details of your study, which will make preparing a pre-registration quick. To help this process, we mapped the forms and made suggestions regarding which sections of the form of our committee might contain the relevant information to the different sections of the pre-registration forms.

Below you will find examples of OSF pre-registration mapped to the School Research Ethics Application Form:

Quantatative OSF pre-registration (43.11 KB / DOCX)
Qualitative OSF pre-registration (53.99 KB / DOCX)