

Master's Thesis Seminar

Research Ethics and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)



Aalto University
School of Business

Research ethics

Research ethics and promoting the responsible conduct in research consists of both *preventing any harm caused to the research subject*, and *behavior in the researcher community*.

These are prerequisites for research to be ethically acceptable and reliable, and for its results to be credible.

- Aalto Research Ethics & Integrity
- See also the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (TENK)

Unattributed borrowing or plagiarism

Plagiarism, or unacknowledged borrowing, refers to representing another person's material as one's own without appropriate references. This includes research plans, manuscripts, articles, other texts or parts of them, visual materials, or translations (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity 2012, p. 33).

To avoid plagiarism, it is important to both cite the source and mark the quotation, as well as to keep the length of the quotation appropriate for the purpose.

Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity and Handling Violations Thereof

Unattributed borrowing or plagiarism

Some forms of plagiarism

- Quotations or word-for-word citing without clear indication
- Minor changes to the source text, e.g. changing only word order
- Inadequacies in citing and referencing
- Copy & paste
- Direct translation from the original without indicating the direct quotation
- Collusion; making a collaborative work to look as if it had been produced independently or without assistance
- Autoplagerism; copying your own work

**NOTE! Do not use snipping tool to copy figures/tables from other publications!
You need to redo them yourself.**

Other forms of misconduct

Fabrication

- *reporting invented observations or results to the research community* (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity 2012, p. 32).

Misrepresentation (falsification)

- *modifying and presenting original observations deliberately so that the results based on those observations are distorted* (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity 2012, p. 33).

Misappropriation

- *the unlawful presentation of another person's result, idea, plan, observation or data as one's own research* (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity 2012, p 33).

Data Protection, personal data (EU General Data Protection Regulation)

Personal Data and Research Ethics

Researchers collecting personal data must comply with appropriate legislation, ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioral sciences and proposals for ethical review and Aalto guidelines on the processing of personal data in scientific research.

Please read carefully

<https://www.aalto.fi/en/services/personal-data-and-research-ethics>

What is GDPR?

The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is applied as of 25 May 2018 in all of the EU member states.

Regulation on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

- In essence, protects fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons and in particular their right to the protection of personal data.

More information [here](#) and [here](#)

All studies that collect personal data fall under GDPR!

What is personal data?

All data related to an identified or identifiable natural person is personal data.

“an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person;” (source)

Personal data can be stored in, for example, electronic files or databases, on paper, in a card file or folders, or on audio or video recordings.

Pseudonymised / Anonymized data

“Pseudonymization means the processing of personal data in such a manner that the personal data can no longer be attributed to a specific person without the use of additional information” (source)

- For example, encoding of data.

Note! Pseudonymized data **still constitutes personal data**, which means that their processing is subject to data protection regulations (GDPR).

“Anonymization refers to the processing of personal data in a manner that makes it impossible to identify individuals from them” (source)

- For example, aggregating data into statistics so that individuals cannot be identified from them.

Controller has to ensure that the anonymization is irreversible.

Anonymized data are no longer personal data, but the GDPR does have to be followed until the data has been anonymized.

In case your research data involves personal data

Familiarize with Aalto guidelines

- How to handle personal data in research
- Instructions for secure processing of personal data

Plan the collection and use of data

Draft a Privacy Notice

Ask for a consent from every participant in the study

Use the data only in connection with its intended purpose

Destroy any unnecessary and expired personal data

- Do not store personal data “just in case”!

Templates in
MyCourses

Necessary documents: Data Privacy Notice

The Privacy Notice is used to inform the research participants of how you will process their personal data before you start to collect or otherwise process personal data.

- The information regarding the processing of personal data has to be provided to research participants in a concise, transparent, intelligible and easily accessible form, using clear and plain language.

Necessary documents: Consent

Every time a research participant interacts with the researcher, an *informed and ethical consent* to participate in research is required.

In GDPR: 'consent' of the data subject means any freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous indication of the data subject's wishes by which he or she, by a statement or by a clear affirmative action, signifies agreement to the processing of personal data relating to him or her; (source)

If a participant refuses to sign the consent, you are not allowed to collect personal data from that person!

- Consent may also be withdrawn by the data subject at any time.
- When consent is the legal basis for processing personal data and is withdrawn, all personal data collected up to that point regarding that data subject must be destroyed (or anonymized, if possible)