

DEVELOPING GENERIC ETHICS PRINCIPLES FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

In March 2015 the Academy's Council formally adopted five guiding ethics principles for social science research and commended them to its member Learned Societies and the community of social science researchers.

The **Five Principles** are:

1. Social science is fundamental to a democratic society and should be inclusive of different interests, values, funders, methods and perspectives.
2. All social science should respect the privacy, autonomy, diversity, values, and dignity of individuals, groups and communities.
3. All social science should be conducted with integrity throughout, employing the most appropriate methods for the research purpose.
4. All social scientists should act with regard to their social responsibilities in conducting and disseminating their research.
5. All social science should aim to maximise benefit and minimise harm.

These principles are the outcome of a series of discussions at symposia, a conference and meetings which have been taking place since 2013, led by an Academy Working Group of Janet Lewis, Robert Dingwall, John Oates and Ron Iphofen. This group, with Nathan Emmerich, now constitutes the Academy's Research Ethics Group. Participants in these discussions have included individuals from the various member Learned Societies (<http://acss.org.uk/mem-soc/>) and representatives from the ESRC and UKRIO as well as those involved with research governance in the UK and beyond.

The five principles have evolved during the course of the discussions. It is not envisaged that they would be adopted by Learned Societies without further consideration and, where appropriate, adaptation, reiteration and revision. They are presented here as a stimulus to future conversations among Learned Societies and, potentially, as the foundation for the development of a common framework for research ethics across the social sciences.

Further information about the Academy project 'Developing Generic Ethics Principles for Social Science Research,' including details of the papers presented at the symposia series, the 2014 conference and the position paper 'Towards Common Principles for Social Science Research Ethics' can be found at <http://acss.org.uk/developing-generic-ethics-principles-social-science/>. Plans are in hand for further events and discussions on specific aspects of research ethics. Join our mailing list by contacting us at acss.ethics@gmail.com.