Guidelines of the Leiden University Psychology Research Ethics Committee (*Dutch*: Commissie Ethiek Psychologie, CEP)

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Abbreviations

BSN: Burgerservicenummer (Citizen Service Number)
CEP: Commissie Ethiek Psychology (Psychology Research Ethics Committee)
DEP: Data management, Ethics and Privacy digital tool/portal used for study review (note: it was previously known as the “CEP-tool”)
DNA: Deoxyribonucleic acid
ECG: Electrocardiography
EEG: Electroencephalography
EMG: Electromyography
EOG: Electrooculography
(f)MRI: (functional) Magnetic Resonance Imaging

FSSC: Financial Shared Service Center
FSW: Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen (Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences)
GSR: Galvanic skin response
IBAN: International bank account number
IP: Instituut Psychologie (Institute of Psychology)
LIBC: Leiden Institute for Brain and Cognition
METC: Medisch-ethische toetsingscommissie (Medical ethics review committee)
PI: Principal Investigator
SOLO: Studentondersteuning en laboratoriumondersteuning (Student support and laboratory support)
UL: Universiteit Leiden (Leiden University)
WMO: Wet Medisch-wetenschappelijk Onderzoek met Mensen (Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act)

1. General Notes

This document provides practical guidance regarding the submission of an ethics application by researchers from the Institute of Psychology (IP), Leiden University, to the Psychology Research Ethics Committee [*Commissie Ethiek Psychologie* (CEP) in Dutch], via the digital portal (DEP-tool). Note that the fundamental rules and principles that underpin the CEP's mandate, review scope, member appointment, processes, procedures, tasks and responsibilities are outlined in the "Regulations of the Psychology Research Ethics Committee".

Before submitting a proposal in the DEP-tool for ethics review, please check the following.

- Does your proposal fall under the **Medical Research Involving Human Participants Act** [Wet Medisch-wetenschappelijk Onderzoek met mensen, **(WMO)** in Dutch]. If so, submit your proposal to the local METC (De Medisch-Ethische Toetsingscommissie Leiden Den Haag Delft) for review instead of the CEP. After receiving the approval by the METC and before the start of your study (i.e. recruitment of participants and/or data collection), the METC approval letter should be submitted in the DEP-tool for study registration purposes (i.e. use the "METC Submission" option in the DEP-tool). For more information, check the paragraph: ***'Research reviewed by a Medical Ethical Committee versus the CEP'*** below. If you are in doubt about whether or not your proposed research is subject to the WMO, you can ask the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences [Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen (FSW) in Dutch], University [Universiteit Leiden (UL) in Dutch] nonWMO Advisory Committee for advice following the instructions and advice form as provided on this webpage.

- Does your proposal involve **a multi-centre or multi-site study** AND is the Principal Investigator (PI) not from FSW AND has the study received ethics approval/declaration from another Ethics Committee? If YES, then apply for a "Declaration of local feasibility" in the DEP-tool; indicate that your proposal has been approved by an ethics committee and upload all the relevant approvals, declarations, and original application (for registration purposes). For more information, check the paragraph: **'*Multi-centre and Multi-site studies*'** below.

If the proposed study does not fall under any of the two categories above, complete the Ethics tab in the DEP-tool. Please consult the ***'Guidelines for submitting proposals in the DEP-tool'*** below.

2. CEP Review Procedure

2.1 Review Turnaround Time

- The CEP aims to review your proposal for a new study, excluding Bachelor projects, within **4 weeks** after submission in the CEP-tool.
- The CEP aims to review Bachelor projects, study revisions, study amendments, and Declarations of local feasibility within **2 weeks**.
- Proposals for bachelor projects will ideally be handled within two weeks **if it is clear from the title that the proposal refers to a bachelor project**. Ideally, start your proposal title with "BACHELOR PROJECT:"
- Please make sure you submit proposals for bachelor projects as early as possible to avoid submission peaks in the bachelor project periods (February and September).
- Please note: The shorter review period for a bachelor project is meant to minimize pressure on the bachelor project timeline.
- The CEP advises bachelor project supervisors to refrain from proposing research designs for bachelor projects that are either very new or complex, since this might impact on the two-week turnaround time. Please note that the following will **facilitate evaluation** within this two-week timeframe:
    - The proposed study involves a simple behavioural experiment,
    - The study uses surveys that do not solicit sensitive information,
    - The study is conducted in a healthy population,
    - The proposed study is a replication study or highly comparable to projects previously approved by the CEP.
- Note that this does not mean that you cannot submit more complex designs for bachelor projects. However, for more complex designs, bachelor project supervisors are responsible for acquiring ethical approval in a timely fashion (i.e., before the start of the bachelor project). In short, the more you deviate from the above list, the less likely it is that the project can be reviewed within two weeks.
- The review turnaround time may be longer during the vacation periods, or due to the need of the CEP to consult with other internal/external role players (e.g. METC and subject matter experts). If, for some reason, there is a substantial delay in the review of your proposal, you will be notified by email.
- In general, the CEP will not consider requests for quicker review turnaround time unless a compelling reason is provided per email to the CEP's mailbox and a CEP-reviewer is available to conduct the review on short notice. The CEP Co-chairperson/s will decide on the justification and review feasibility of such requests.

2.2 Review Decisions

The following CEP-review decisions are possible:

- **Approval** – The proposed study and study documents are scientifically and ethically acceptable. Once approved as per a formal approval letter, the study activities (e.g. participant recruitment and data collection) may commence on condition that all privacy (as per the privacy assessment process of the UL Central Privacy Office), data management and/or legal (contracts) aspects, as applicable, have been duly assessed, cleared and/or completed.
- **Revisions Required** – The researcher or research team is required to address the CEP-reviewer's comments in terms of providing additional/clarifying information and/or revised study documentation in the DEP-tool dossier. The CEP-reviewer will then review the revisions, followed by a formal decision. The proposed study activities (i.e. participant recruitment and/or data collection) may not be initiated while the decision status is "revisions required".
- **Rejected (Not approved)** - The proposed study is scientifically and/or ethically unacceptable without a reasonable prospect of being revised to meet due scientific and/or ethical standards. The reason/s for not approving the proposed study are provided as part of the reviewer's comments. The

proposed study activities may not be initiated. The research team may appeal the decision.

- **Suspended** – The approval of a study is temporarily withdrawn due to suspected noncompliance, unanticipated risks, or serious adverse events. The study is temporarily paused while awaiting clarifications and/or further actions (e.g. resolution of a policy/process contravention). The research team may appeal the decision.
- **Revoked** – The previous approval decision is annulled or cancelled based on evidence of intentionally providing incorrect/false information in the original ethics application, or evidence of significant non-compliance to the relevant local, regional and/or global ethics rules/principles. The research team may appeal the decision.
- **Exemption** – The proposed study meets all the CEP-criteria for a fast-track review (i.e. minimal risk study), thereby exempting it from full review by a CEP reviewer (see Section 2.3 for more information on study exemption submissions).
- **Local Feasibility Declaration** – This involves a confirmation of the Institute of Psychology's (IP) support for a study approved and primarily managed by an external (non-UL) party/institution) to be conducted in the UL context and environment. The study must already have received approval from an appropriate ethics committee. Note that a Local Feasibility Declaration does not constitute an ethics approval *per se*, but only a declaration that the IP acknowledges support for the specific study activities involving IP resources.

In the event of an **objection/appeal** by the study applicant (i.e. researcher and/or research team) to the decision by the CEP, the disagreement should be raised per email with the CEP Exco who will consider the objection/disagreement within two weeks from receipt of the objection/disagreement. The Exco may engage in a discussion with the study applicant/s to clarify the original decision and/or to discuss the basis for the objection/disagreement. In addition, the Exco may invoke the use of a CEP-reviewer/s other than the original reviewer, to fully rereview the study application. In the event of a sustained irreconcilable difference of opinion between the CEP and the study applicant regarding any review comments and/or the (re)review decision for a submitted study, the CEP shall refer the matter to the FSW Ethics Committee for a second opinion.

2.3 Study Exemption Submission

The following guidelines should be adhered to and/or noted when applying for an exemption decision in the DEP-tool:

- Even if researchers deem their study to meet the exemption criteria, all study details must still be submitted in full in the DEP-tool for an automated fast-track review and an automated determination of minimal risk.
- "Exemption" does not mean that the study is exempt from national laws, institutional policies, or ethical research principles. Also, "ethics exemption" does not imply "privacy exemption"; the prescribed privacy assessment form/s should still be completed for the quick and/or full privacy assessment as per the privacy procedure.
- Note that exemption does not mean that the study has been granted "approval" as described in the first bullet of the previous section. Rather, it should be regarded as a formal statement by the CEP that the study meets the set minimal ethics risk criteria as outlined in the "Fast-track Ethics Screening" tab of the DEP-tool based on information provided by the researcher(s) [e.g. (non)inclusion of minors as participants; use of active/passive consent; (non)use of deception in the study; (non)use of risky/invasive procedures; (non)inclusion of vulnerable persons/groups]. The researcher(s) remain fully responsible for the correct provision of the information and correct ethical conduct per de Institute's protocols and Nethics code in conducting the study.
- A formal CEP exemption letter will be issued to proposed studies that meet the ethics exemption criteria.
- All amendments (see Article 4, CEP Regulations) to exempted studies must be submitted in the DEP-tool for review. If the amended study still meets the exemption criteria, then the exemption decision will be maintained. However, if the amended study does no longer meet one or more

of the exemption criteria, then a full review of the amendment(s) will be conducted as per the procedure described above in this section ("2. CEP Review Procedure").
- At regular intervals, the CEP-Chairperson/s will conduct reviews of some of the exempted studies to check whether the study content does in fact meet all the criteria for an exemption decision. If the reviewed studies are found to not meet all the criteria for an exemption decision, the researchers will be requested to resubmit the studies in the DEP-tool for full review.

2.4 CEP-approval Validity Period

- The CEP-approval of a study is valid for a period of five years from the approval date as indicated in the CEP-approval letter. Data collection must be completed within this time.
- Amendments to the approved study during the validity period must be submitted in the DEP-tool for approval before being implemented.
- At the end of the 5-year validity period, if data collection has not yet been completed, the (updated) study must be submitted for re-review and re-approval or re-exemption by the CEP.
- In case there is a delay in the start of the study of more than six months, send an email to the CEP (ethiekpsychologie@fsw.leidenuniv.nl) to notify the committee about this delay.

3. Research Reviewed by a Medical Ethical Committee (METC) versus the CEP

Not all research is evaluated by the Psychology Research Ethics Committee (CEP). Research with human subjects must undergo a medical ethical review if it falls under the scope of the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act (WMO)[1]. The WMO applies when a study meets both the following two conditions [2&3]:

1. It is *medical-scientific research*: This means research which is carried out with the aim of finding answers to a question in the field of illness and health (aetiology, pathogenesis, signs/symptoms, diagnosis, prevention, outcome or treatment of illness), by systematically collecting and analysing medical data. The research is carried out with the intention of contributing to medical knowledge that can also be applied to populations outside of the direct research population.

2. *Participants are subjected to procedures* or are required to follow rules of behaviour that could potentially lead to physical or psychological harm/discomfort.

3.1 Unsure whether your research falls under the scope of the WMO?

Deciding whether a study falls under the scope of the WMO or not can be difficult in some cases. In case you are uncertain, you can submit a request for advice to the FSW nonWMO Advisory Committee by sending a completed advice form to e-mail: nWMOadvisory@fsw.leidenuniv.nl. The nWMO advice form and explanation about the procedures can be found on this webpage.

[1] See the text of the Act (in Dutch): wetten.nl - Regeling - Wet medisch-wetenschappelijk onderzoek met mensen - BWBR0009408 (overheid.nl)
[2] https://english.ccmo.nl/investigators/legal-framework-for-medical-scientific-research/your-research-is-it-subject-to-the-wmo-or-not (accessed 02-Jul-2025)
[3] https://english.ccmo.nl/investigators/publications/publications/2002/01/01/ccmo-memorandum-behavioural-research (accessed 02-Jul-2025)

4. Multi-centre and Multi-site Studies

If a study is conducted at several (inter)national institutes/locations and is primarily coordinated by a Principal Investigator from FSW, the overall proposal must be submitted to the CEP for approval. Moreover, data collection at the other institutes/locations can only start with additional ethics approval and/or a declaration of local feasibility from the other participating institutes/locations. An exception to this requirement is international studies conducted on digital platforms (e.g. Prolific); such studies do not require local ethics approval unless explicitly required by local laws. Note that additional privacy assessments or data transfer agreements may be needed; please contact the privacy officers (privacy@BB.leidenuniv.nl) or the CEP (ethiekpsychologie@fsw.leidenuniv.nl) for more information.

If data is collected at several (inter)national institutes/locations including the Netherlands, and this study is coordinated by a main Principal Investigator (PI) from *outside* FSW, the overall study proposal should be submitted to the CEP in addition to the relevant approvals from the ethics committee of the location where the PI is residing. In this case, an assessment by the CEP is carried out for a "Declaration of Local Feasibility". Thus, the CEP accepts the ethics clearance already granted by another accredited ethics committee for the overall study. The CEP's review focus is limited to a feasibility assessment (i.e. access, resources and regulations) of the study to be conducted in the Leiden University context. It means that the CEP's approval/acceptance of the study in the context of a Local Feasibility application should be regarded as a decision on the ethics of the local implementation rather than an ethics approval for the full study.

5. Guidelines for Submitting Proposals in the DEP-tool

For research falling under the scope of the CEP, this section contains guidelines regarding specific ethical aspects of psychological research. It is assumed that researchers submitting a CEP-application have taken note of and adhere to these guidelines where applicable and will discuss and justify any deviations from these guidelines in the CEP-application form.

5.1 Language of CEP-submission

The default submission language is English due to the international nature of the research conducted at the IP, the research terminology, the peer-reviewed international journal publications, and to facilitate the wider impact of open science. However, note the following exceptions:

- If all the study-related documents and activities are exclusively conducted in Dutch, then the CEP-application in the DEP-tool may be completed in Dutch. This is the case when all formal study documents are in Dutch (e.g. proposal, report, information letter, informed consent document, recruitment material). Check first with the CEP (E-mail: ethiekpsychologie@fsw.leidenuniv.nl) before submitting an application written in Dutch in the DEP-tool. Note that the CEP-review of Dutch applications may take slightly longer than the 4-week guideline due to fewer CEP-reviewers who can professionally review Dutch documents.
- Participant-facing documents (e.g. recruitment material, information letter, informed consent form) intended for use with non-English speaking participants should be drafted in the 1st language(s) of the participants. These documents, together with an English-version of each for review purposes, as well as a statement regarding the identity and language skills of the translator(s) need to be submitted in the DEP-tool; upload it to the "Declarations and other files" section in the "Attachments" tab. Note the following exception to this requirement: participant-facing documents in Dutch do not need to be accompanied by English-versions if only Dutch speaking participants will be recruited.

5.2 Title of the Study

Make sure the title of the proposal you submit is specific, descriptive and recognisable for your study. Please do not use the exact same title for different proposals.

In case you submit a proposal for a bachelor project, and you want it to be reviewed more quickly, make sure you indicate in the title that it involves a "bachelor project", so the committee can recognize it faster.

5.3 Vulnerable Groups (Items on "Sample description" and "Sample characteristics")

The Nethics Code, 2025[4] (National Ethics Council for Social and Behavioural Sciences, The Netherlands) states that "(s)pecial care is taken to protect those who may be extra vulnerable to harm from being identified and/or having information linked to them, e.g. those who are in a position of dependence (whether psychological, social, economic, political, or otherwise), easily stigmatised, discriminated against, prosecuted, or met with violence" (Principle H.4). Also, the Declaration of Helsinki (2024)[5] states that "… research with individuals, groups, or communities in situations of particular vulnerability is only justified if it is responsive to their health needs and priorities and the individual, group, or community stands to benefit from the resulting knowledge, practices, or interventions. Researchers should only include those in situations of particular vulnerability when the research cannot be carried out in a less vulnerable group or community, or when excluding them would perpetuate or exacerbate their disparities" (Principle 20).

The following populations are usually regarded as vulnerable groups:

- Children (<16 years of age);
- Refugees and asylum seekers;
- Migrants;
- Sex workers;
- People with cognitive impairments;
- Dissidents;
- Traumatised people at risk of re-traumatisation (e.g. people from conflict areas, victims of crime and/or violence);
- People in dependent relationships with the researcher or the research team (e.g. students doing course work with researchers);
- Research subjects who are legally, physically, or mentally incapable of giving consent;
- Incarcerated persons;
- Medical / mental health patients.

The use of vulnerable individuals/groups should be adequately justified, and additional safeguards need to be described and implemented to minimize the relevant risks[6]. Note: this requirement applies only to studies in which vulnerable persons/populations are specifically targeted (i.e. as stated in the inclusion criteria of the study). In other words, the unintentional inclusion of vulnerable persons/populations in a study that does not focus on vulnerability factors or characteristics is not subject to these requirements, unless it could be reasonably foreseen in which case they should be listed in the exclusion criteria of the study.

For research involving minors[7]:

- Minors younger than 12 years of age: Active informed *consent* is obtained from the parent(s) or legal representative(s). It is good practice to, where possible, ask the child for age-appropriate

[4] https://nethics.nl/gedragscode-ethical-code
[5] https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki/
[6] This aligns with Principle C.3, Nethics Code 2025.
[7] This aligns with Principle E.4, Nethics Code 2025

informed *assent* where possible. "Assent" refers to the act of agreeing to participate in research by participants who cannot legally provide informed consent (e.g. being <16 years of age) after being informed about the research at their level of understanding.

- Minors from 12 to <16 years of age: Active informed *assent* is obtained from the minor and *consent* from the parent(s) or legal representative(s).
- In both the above cases, active informed consent from **one parent or legal guardian** is considered sufficient by default, unless the CEP decides that a particular study requires consent from both parents/guardians.
- From 16 years of age, *consent* is only obtained from the participant. For some types of risky and/or invasive research it may nevertheless be good practice to inform the parents or legal representatives.
- With 'active consent', a signature on an informed consent form is meant (i.e. 'opt in'). This means that it is not sufficient to assume consent after only giving the participant, parent and/or legal representatives the opportunity to object ('opt out'). See Nethics Code 2025, Principle F.5, for the specific requirements that must all be met for considering an "opt-out" consent[8].

5.4 Number of Participants (Item on "Desired sample size")

You need to provide a valid justification in order to motivate that: 1) the chosen sample size is sufficient to answer the research question; and 2) the chosen sample size is not unnecessarily large. For quantitative studies, in most cases this can be done by means of statistical power calculation. For sample size justification you need to specify the appropriate statistical test to answer the research question, alpha-level (usually .05), effect-size of interest, and desired statistical power (usually 0.80). For qualitative studies (i.e. focus groups and semi/unstructured interviews), this can be done by indicating the expected number of participants to reach data saturation. In both cases scientific literature with similar designs and/or similar research questions can be used to substantiate the chosen sample size.

In case you want to exceed the maximum number after submitting the proposal to the CEP, please submit an amendment to your original proposal. For online studies, please remember to deactivate your study if you have included the maximum number of participants (and/or when the end date of the study has been reached).

5.5 Privacy of Participants (Item on "Anonymous or Pseudonymous data")

Data should ideally be *collected* and *stored* in a coded way. This means that identifiable personal data first need to be pseudonymised (e.g., uncoupling the identifiable information from the research data) and the identification code lists should be stored and/or destroyed as per the study-specific advice provided by the Central Privacy Team. In case of any deviation from these general guidelines (e.g., in case of longitudinal research in which data from the same participant across different time points need to stay linked), a justification should be provided in the CEP-application form. Please be aware that online studies pose other privacy risks than in-person or laboratory-based studies. In the case of online studies, researchers should make use of secure digital tools (i.e. those always cleared by the Central Privacy Team). Recruitment via social media platforms (e.g. LinkedIn) for studies with smaller sample sizes or with sensitive topics in the advertised recruitment link should be done via the researcher's

[8] "A. active consent leads to substantial and demonstrable disadvantages with respect to the quality or aim of the research, and/or the interests of the participants;
B. there is minimal burden and no risk for participants;
C. special care is taken to inform participants and/or their representatives of the study and the possibility to opt out;
D. the opt-out procedure is straightforward;
E. researchers have communicated the information in a way that ensures that participants or representatives have received the information."

contact details, who will in turn provide a link to a more detailed study description upon request (rather than providing the link to the study directly on the platform along with the advertisement). These measures aim to prevent the collection of sensitive personal information in a social media context.

For guidance on any privacy-related matters, you can contact the UL Central Privacy Office at the following e-mail address: privacy@BB.leidenuniv.nl.

For guidance on any data management-related matters, you can contact the FSW Data Stewards at the following e-mail address: Datastewards_PSY_PED@FSW.leidenuniv.nl.

The following definitions can provide guidance for distinguishing between the different data types (https://utrechtuniversity.github.io/dataprivacyhandbook/glossary.html):

Anonymous data**:** It refers to any data or dataset where an individual is irreversibly de-identified (e.g., through removing names, email addresses, dates of birth). Anonymous data means that you cannot identify someone:

- by combining variables or datasets (e.g., a combination of date of birth, gender and birthplace, or the combination of a dataset with its name-number code); or
- via inference, i.e., when you can deduce who the data are about (e.g., when "profession" is Dutch prime minister, it is clear who the data is about); or
- by singling out a single subject, such as through unique data points (e.g., someone who is 210 cm tall is relatively easy to identify, especially if you also know their gender and place of residence).

Pseudonymous data**:** It refers to personal data that cannot lead to identification *without additional information*, such as a code list linking pseudonyms/codes to names. This additional information should be kept separately and securely. Data are sometimes pseudonymised by replacing direct identifiers (e.g., names) with a participant code (e.g., number). However, this may not always suffice, as sometimes it is still possible to identify participants indirectly. Keep in mind that pseudonymous data are still regarded as personal data and therefore must be handled in accordance with the GDPR.

5.6 Compensation for Participation (Item on "Compensation")

Compensation for participation should be explicitly mentioned in the Information Letter. However, compensation is not indicated or necessary in many studies.

The following considerations are important[9]:

- Compensation offered to research participants should be fair and reasonable;
- Compensation should not have a disproportionate effect (e.g. coercion) on whether or not participants consent and/or decide to participate in a particular study or activity, i.e. it should not compromise the autonomy of the participants or voluntary participation;
- If local resources of a community (e.g. laboratories, computers, offices, support staff) are being used, adequate compensation should be provided.

Note that "compensation" is different from "reimbursement". The latter refers to direct expenses that participants incur to participate in the study, e.g. transport costs and parking costs; these costs should be reimbursed in full.

Compensation rates as of April 2026 (applicable to new studies only):

The recommended monetary compensation rate to research participants for **standard behavioural experiments and tests (e.g. questionnaires)** is € 15,00 or less per hour for participants 16 years of age and older, and € 5,00 or less per hour for participants younger than 16 years of age[10]. Any significant

[9] This aligns with Principle G.1-3, Nethics Code 2025.

[10] As of 1 January 2026, the statutory gross minimum wage in the Netherlands for employees aged 21 and older

deviation from these recommended compensation rates should be explained in the CEP-application form. The actual compensation to research participants depends on the estimated participation time. The compensation should be proportional to the estimated participation time, which may include the appropriate use of refined time ranges (e.g. € 1,50 per 6-minute time frame, or € 3,75 per 15-minute time frame). Note that when student credits are offered, the following credits rates apply (i.e. 15-minute time frames must be used):

- Up to 15 minutes: 0.5 credit
- 15-30 minutes: 1 credit
- 30-45 minutes: 1.5 credits
- 45-60 minutes: 2 credits
- Etc.

Note that in the case of data collection via **online recruitment/panel companies** (e.g. Prolific), the specific company's payment guidelines for registered participant/panel members may be followed.

The recommended monetary compensation rate to research participants for **behavioural experiments with external participants that are difficult to find within the faculty** (e.g., participants with a specific cultural background, age group, or educational level) and for **psychophysiological experiment and interventional studies** [e.g., (f)MRI scans, EEG measurements, use of medication / hormone / pheromone substances, collecting tissue samples (e.g. DNA, cortisol), physiological measurements (heart rate, blood pressure, skin conductance), pain/itch or fear-induction studies] is €20,00 per hour. Any significant deviation from these recommended compensation rates should be explained in the CEP-application form. The actual compensation to research participants depends on the estimated participation time. The compensation should be proportional to the estimated participation time, which may include the appropriate use of refined time ranges. Note that when student credits are offered, the following credits rates apply (i.e. 15-minute time frames must be used):

- Up to 15 minutes: 0.5 credit
- 15-30 minutes: 1 credit
- 30-45 minutes: 1.5 credit
- 45-60 minutes: 2 credits
- Etc.

Note: No student credits may be offered in (f)MRI studies, in part due to the fact that MRI scanning is associated with high levels of scanner noise which many students find intrusive. As such, these students will not be able to gain course credits for (f)MRI study participation. Thus, only monetary compensation may be offered to these research participants.
Note: Although psychophysiological experiments and interventional studies justify a higher monetary remuneration, the reward in course credits should still correspond to the amount of time spent. In this case, participants can be compensated for the higher burden of the experiment by a monetary bonus on top of a regular course credit reward.

Reimbursement and compensation in the case of premature termination or withdrawal from study:
The reimbursement and compensation for participation in the case of premature termination or withdrawal from a data collection event should be clearly outlined in the Information Letter to Participants. The compensation should be proportional to the actual time spent in the data collection event, unless an alternative approach (e.g. in the case of online and/or panel studies) has been described in the study documents and duly approved by the CEP.

is €14.71 per hour, while the statutory gross minimum wage in the Netherlands for minors (aged 15 years old) is €4.41 per hour.

Offering student credits per study[11]:
There is a maximum reward **per study** of 8 course credits for students. The reason for this is that the course credit system has been implemented in the first-year curriculum as an educational element: research participation for credits is intended as a way for students to experience a variety of experiments. By using an upper limit to the number of course credits per experiment, the Institute aims to allow students to obtain a varied experience with psychological experiments. If researchers want to perform studies that require participation longer than 240 minutes (i.e. 8 course credits), they will have to make use of a monetary reward or a combination of course credits and monetary award. Also, researchers are not allowed to reward at a rate of more than 1 course credit per 30 minutes, as this will yield unfair competition between studies / researchers. If you have experiments lasting less than 15 minutes, please try to combine experiments so that student participants spend a minimum of 15 minutes for their credit/compensation.

Additional compensation:
The rationale for using additional compensation for specific experimental procedures, should be explained in the study protocol. Also, this compensation should be reasonable so as not to unduly influence participant autonomy or cause unfair competition between studies.

Additional participant information when awarding more than €50 compensation per participant per study:
Dutch law regarding the payment of more than €50 compensation per participant per study requires that the University must collect the following participant data: full name, street name, apartment/house number, postal code, city, country, date of birth, BSN number, and IBAN. This is not applicable to compensation below €50 participant per study. The FSSC (Financial Shared Service Center) will not proceed with payment of compensation for studies without this information[12].

5.7 Psychophysiological Assessments (Item on "Psychophysiological Assessment")

For psychophysiological research [excluding (f)MRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) studies], including EEG (electroencephalography), EOG (electrooculography), ECG (eelectrocardiography), blood pressure, GSR (galvanic skin response), EMG (electromyography), eye tracker, genetic assessments, endocrine measures, and interventional studies (including induction of stress, pain, itch etc.) the Guidelines for hygienic testing should be followed and specific lab protocols should be applied [in case of doubt please consult with SOLO (Dutch: *Studentondersteuning en laboratoriumondersteuning*; Student support and laboratory support)]. For (f)MRI studies, guidelines are provided on the website of the Leiden Institute for Brain and Cognition (LIBC; Homepage). Additionally, the Information Letter should clearly state that no medical statements are possible on the basis of the data collected, that coincidental findings will not be interpretable by the researchers, and that the participant should visit his or her general physician if he/she wants to know more about his or her physical functioning.

5.8 Deception (Item on "Deception")

The following considerations are important[13]:

- A study may not employ deception about the aim, study design and/or the character/nature of the study unless the use of deception can be justified by the study's significant prospective scientific or applied social value and when there is no alternative procedure for effectively collecting the data;
- Information for participants may be withheld from participants (omission) or participants may

[11] See the SONA Rules (Accounts; Study rules; Code ethical commission; Rewards & Compensation; No-show penalty) on the following webpage: SONA Rules - SOLO Research Wiki.
[12] See the Payment Procedure - SOLO Research Wiki for more information and guidance.
[13] This aligns with Principles F.1-4, Nethics Code 2025.

be actively deceived (commission) about the purposes of the study only when necessary to preserve the integrity of the research;
- Information that is withheld or deception may not pertain to the following: study-related risks; procedures that can reasonably be expected to cause physical, mental, moral or social harm; information that can be considered otherwise relevant for the participants' willingness to participate;
- Any deception or withheld information must be explained (i.e. debriefed) to participants as early as possible, immediately after participation, and no later than at the end of data collection. The researcher must explicitly verify that the participants' informed consent remains intact and informs participants that they have the right to withdraw and have their data deleted without any negative consequences. The template information letter provided by CEP include suggested sentences about this as well.
- Debriefing should include appropriate mitigation and/or aftercare of the potentially immediate and longer-term negative effects on, for example, mood, stress level or self-image.

5.9 Covert Methods (Item on "Covert Methods")

Covert observation or surveillance means observing research subjects without their knowledge. This can be from a physically concealed position, e.g. behind a barrier or screen, or it can mean that the fact that observation is being conducted is not disclosed to participants at appropriate opportunities during data collection. Additionally, informed consent is not obtained before the study in these methods, e.g. a researcher may participate in a group, including online groups, without their status being made known to other participants.

Covert research may only be undertaken when:
- it provides unique forms of evidence that are crucial to the research objectives or methodology, or
- when overt observation might significantly alter the phenomenon being studied.

In general, collecting data without the participant being informed is ethically prohibited, unless informed consent is practically impossible to obtain (e.g. when studying commuter behaviour on a busy train station) or when informing the participant beforehand will almost certainly significantly influence their behaviour to the extent that the study-related behaviour is no longer displayed or it is significantly altered. However, note that participants always need to be informed when data is collected in a way that renders them identifiable (e.g. photographs, videos, audiorecordings)[14].

In principle, covert research should not be undertaken lightly, routinely or as a matter of mere convenience. It is only justified if important research issues (e.g. participant rights, research integrity, research validity, public trust, privacy laws) are being addressed and if matters of social significance, which cannot be uncovered in any other non-covert ways, are likely to be discovered.

Note that observational research of people in public spaces may occur without consent[15]. However, a privacy officer must be consulted for advice and guidance on how to collect, store and analyse such observations in a privacy-compliant manner.

5.10 Information Letter and Informed Consent (Items on "Information Letter" and "Consent")

All research should include appropriate Information Letter(s) and Informed Consent form(s) for the participants [see "Vulnerable Groups" (Section 5.3) above for consent requirements when minors (<16 years of age) are targeted as research participants]. The information provided in these documents

[14] This aligns with Principle F.8, Nethics Code 2025.
[15] This aligns with Principle F.6, Nethics Code 2025.

should be comprehensible for the participants, considering factors such as age, literacy level, level of education, cultural diversity, and language competencies[16]. Also, the information should be provided in a neutral tone that refrains from overemphasising the advantages and/or downplaying the disadvantages.

For submitting studies for evaluation by the CEP please use the templates for the information letter, informed consent as provided on the CEP webpage. Whenever a study requires to deviate from the standard templates, the researcher(s) should concisely explain the rationale for the deviation(s) in the DEP-tool comment box of the ethics application form.

The **Information Letter** should include information about the following[17]:

- Theme, purpose and aim of the study;
- Involvement and roles of other parties in the study (i.e. collaborators outside Leiden University or commercial companies);
- Inclusion criteria (i.e. the potential participant characteristics required to answer the research question/s);
- Exclusion criteria (i.e. the potential participant characteristics that render them ineligible to participate in the study; the exclusion criteria should be limited to those necessary to exclude people for whom the intervention, or other aspects of the study procedures, may be harmful);
- Study procedure;
- Study risks, burdens and benefits, including the time investment asked of the participant and (if applicable) cognitive or emotional investment;
- The kind of data that will be collected with emphasis on personal data and data of sensitive nature, any recording of voices and images;
- The incentives and/or compensation awarded for participation;
- Guaranteed confidentiality;
- Voluntary participation and the right to discontinue participation without any negative consequences, including the consequences for the compensation received;
- Any other information relevant to the specific study. For example, indicate if you are planning to use the data for future research, Open Science purposes, or if you would like to contact the participant for future studies; and
- Contact information of the PI should be provided for questions and/or complaints. Always include contact details of the University Data Protection Officer for privacy issues: privacy@bb.leidenuniv.nl.

The **Informed Consent** should be clearly linked to the Information Letter (same document, or referring to the letter) and should include at least all of the following criteria:

- The participant has read and understood the information about the study and has had the opportunity to ask questions about this.
- The participant has been provided sufficient time to consider the information. Note: the higher the sensitivity, burden and/or risks of the study, the longer time must be provided to consider potential study participation[18].
- The data will be collected and processed in a coded or anonymous way.
- The participant can withdraw from participation at all times, without needing to provide reasons (also indicate what the consequences will be for the compensation that participants receive and pay attention to the guidelines regarding this).
- The participant offers permission to participate and use of the data for the purposes described in the information letter by signing the consent form (name, date, signature) or, in case of an online consent, by filling out name and date and by actively ticking a participation box on a

[16] This aligns with Principle D.3, Nethics Code 2025.
[17] This aligns with Principle D.1, Nethics Code 2025.
[18] This aligns with Principle D.5, Nethics Code 2025.

website. Participants should only be able to participate if active informed consent is provided, i.e. a deliberate act of opting-in[19].

- If applicable:
  - The participant agrees to being contacted for further studies in the future.
  - The participant agrees to the data being used for further research and/or Open Science purposes, i.e. anonymised data being made available in an online database.

5.11 Debriefing (Item on "Debriefing")

For submitting studies for evaluation by the CEP, please use the template as provided on the CEP webpage for the debriefing of your participants. Whenever unique research needs may lead to deviations from the template, we request that researchers concisely detail the deviations with a justification in the comment box of their ethics application form.

In all research in which the study-related information could not be fully provided in the Information Letter and Informed Consent, this information should be provided in the debriefing letter, including a statement as to why deception was necessary. When using deception or covert methods, **debriefing is always necessary** to inform participants about the nature of the research, their role in the study, and to educate individuals about research. However, note that a debriefing letter should be provided for all kinds of research, including questionnaire and experimental studies, even when deception was not used in the study. In these cases, the debriefing letter is meant to provide additional information and/or support resources about the research topic. Make sure to avoid jargon in the debriefing where possible.

The following are important considerations for debriefing and the debriefing letter:

- An important goal of debriefing is to clear up any misconceptions and to leave participants with a positive feeling toward psychological research and their participation.
- Debriefing informs participants about the actual rationale for the research in which they participated and about their specific contribution to the research. Make sure to avoid jargon in the debriefing where possible.
- During the debriefing session (excluding online survey studies), the participants should be monitored for verbal and non-verbal signs of discontent, and such signs should be acted upon appropriately by addressing and/or alleviating the discomfort[20].
- In case of research activities or study topics that potentially induce negative emotions including stress, sadness, or anxiety, aftercare should be offered (e.g., contact information of student psychologists).
- The debriefing letter should contain the Principal Investigator's contact details.
- If any form of deception was in the study, the debriefing should always include an 'opt-out' for participants. The actual purpose(s) of the study should be explained to the participants, and they should be informed that they can decide whether their data may or may not be used for those aims. and the timeframe within which they can request that their data be removed.
- If participants decide to discontinue their participation before finishing the study, they should still be debriefed, if possible, and if this will not jeopardize the continuation of the study (i.e., when communicating about the debriefing with other participants or participating in the study is unlikely). This holds especially in case of studies including deception, in particular if this deception involves false feedback or fake news.

  Please note:
  Research participation of students for credits is intended as a way for them to experience a variety of experiments so please keep in mind relevant educational elements when debriefing students.

[19] This aligns with Principle E.1, Nethics Code 2025.
[20] This aligns with Principle E.5, Nethics Code 2025.