

Data protection from the start

# Think about ethics and data protection in action research from the start

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Action research is social research which involves people and inevitably raises ethical issues and responsibilities.

As an action researcher, you will have to inform participants and gatekeepers that you are conducting research and ensure that you follow the required procedures in your institution (e.g. schools, universities etc.). You also need to explain the research and obtain consent from people taking part.

Action researchers have a responsibility to protect data and personal information collected from participants. You should respect participants' rights to privacy and ensure confidentiality and anonymity when reporting on your research. Participants have a right to know what happens to their data under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

For more information on ethics in action research and data protection:

- BERA (British Educational Research Association) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* [https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-for-Educational-Research\\_4thEdn\\_2018.pdf?noredirect=1](https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-for-Educational-Research_4thEdn_2018.pdf?noredirect=1)
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007) *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- *The EU General Data Protection Regulation* <https://eugdpr.org/>
- Feldman, A., Altrichter, H., Posch, P. & Somekh, B. (2018) *Teachers investigate their Work: An Introduction to Action Research across the Professions*. London: Routledge.