

Appendix 5 – Extracts from Email Correspondence with Sikt, NHH, and LSM

The correspondences with Sikt and NHH were originally in Norwegian, but here translated using ChatGPT for the convenience of this thesis.

Response from Sikt 31.07.2024

Hi,

We don't have access to share the notification form, but you can do this yourself at minforskning.sikt.no by going into the project and selecting "Share."

We also note that you've stated in the information sheet that NHH and UCL are joint data controllers. Have you confirmed with NHH that this is accurate, and has an agreement been made regarding joint data responsibility? If so, UCL should also be listed under "Data Controller" in the notification form.

Please note that we do not have an agreement with UCL, so the information sheet should not state that we have assessed anything on their behalf. UCL must ensure that its processing of personal data complies with European and Belgian data protection laws.

If UCL is not actually a joint data controller, the information sheets will need to be revised to clarify that NHH alone is responsible. In that case, personal data must be processed solely within NHH's systems or according to NHH's guidelines, and NHH must independently determine the purposes and methods.

You can read more about joint data responsibility on Datatilsynet's website: datatilsynet.no/rettigheter-og-plikter/virksomhetenes-plikter/behandlingsansvarlig-og-databehandler/felles-behandlingsansvar

We recommend that you contact the research administration at NHH if you are uncertain about data processing responsibilities.

Email to LSM 20.08.2024

Hello!

Are there any ethical concerns or do I need any approvals of my research project at LSM before conducting interviews with companies? Finally, I have gotten hold on some informants. Before the interview I send them this together with the interview questions. At the beginning of the interview, I also read it to them.

Ethics and Consent (5 min)

Inform the participant about their rights, the purpose of the interview, how data will be stored and treated:

- Participation is voluntary and you can withdraw whenever you want without giving a reason.
- All information will be anonymised in the thesis.
- There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or to later withdraw.
- The data will only be accessible to me as a researcher, and my two supervisors.
- Your name will not be visible in the material or final thesis. Your company name will be mentioned, but not linked to your answers.
- The interview will be transcribed and decoded as soon as possible.
- The recordings will be deleted after the project is done.

Best regards,

Samuel Braaten

Response from LSM 21.08.2024

Dear Samuel,

There are no ethical concerns involved, so you can go ahead.

Best regards.

Response from NHH 22.08.2024

Hi Erlend,

The question regarding the privacy assessment was forwarded to me by [person] at NHH. I am the [title] and can assist with questions about data protection regulations.

I understand that you've been in contact with Sikt regarding your project, and there were questions raised about joint data processing responsibility.

Feel free to reach out to me, and I can help clarify. I can also assist in evaluating whether your project requires consultation with me. The duty to consult with the Data Protection Officer is the reason we use services from Sikt, and most student and research projects do not fall into the category requiring consultation.

I'm available between 12 – 2 PM today, or tomorrow morning. Alternatively, just let me know what works best for you; I'm quite flexible.

Best regards,

[Person]

Response from NHH 09.10.2024

Hi Erlend,

You don't need to worry. You are correct in noting that it's not Sikt that approves your project; the institutions do that. Essentially, you probably wouldn't have needed to consult Sikt, and having the project listed as "unresolved" likely isn't significant.

When it comes to data processing responsibility under the data protection regulations, it pertains to the processing of personal data, not the responsibility for your project itself. According to the regulations, when two or more data controllers (institutions) jointly decide the purpose of personal data processing and the means (such as how the data will be processed, including information security), they are considered joint data controllers. In such cases, responsibility must be clarified and allocated between the parties through an "arrangement" (as specified by

the law), and participants (data subjects) must be made aware of these responsibilities. There's no need for a separate agreement on joint data responsibility if it has already been agreed upon between institutions regarding how the project will be conducted. For participants, it is sufficient that the information sheet specifies that the project is carried out as a joint degree.

Furthermore, all matters related to research ethics, such as providing information to participants and obtaining consent, are not within Sikt's advisory scope. This responsibility falls under the institutions' remit for research ethics. Thus, you are not dependent on any type of approval from Sikt. However, if you still prefer not to have your project listed as "unresolved," you can specify both institutions and inform Sikt that responsibility has already been clarified through an existing agreement between the parties for your degree.

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Best regards,

[Person]

Response from Sikt 09.10.2024

Hello, and thank you for your response.

It sounds like the project does not require our assessment. If NHH has a role in the processing of personal data, we understand NHH's feedback to mean that our evaluation is not necessary, as the duty to consult does not apply. The consultation obligation only applies to projects that process sensitive personal data related to health, religion, etc. (special categories).

We will therefore register the notification form as withdrawn. However, if it turns out that the project does require our assessment after all, you can reopen it at any time by resubmitting the notification form.

Hope this clarifies things.