UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE
Ethics Application Form

PLEASE NOTE THAT ONLY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION IS ACCEPTED

This application form is to be used to seek approval from one of the three University Ethics Review Panels (BAHSS; Science & Health). Where this document refers to 'Ethics Review Panel' this denotes BAHSS; Science & Health. These Ethics Review Panels deal with all staff and postgraduate research student projects. Taught (undergraduate and MSc dissertation projects) will normally be dealt with via School/Faculty process / committee.

If you are unsure whether your activity requires ethical approval please complete a UCLan Ethics Checklist. If the proposed activity involves animals, you should not use this form. Please contact the Ethics and Integrity Unit within Research Services – EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk – for further details.

Please refer to the notes for guidance on completion of the form.

If this application relates to project/phase which has previously been approved by one of the UCLan Ethics Review Panels, please supply the corresponding reference number(s) from your decision letter(s). ONLY REQUIRED FOR PHASED PROJECT SUBMISSIONS	
Previous Ethics Approval Ref No	N/a
Student Registration No	S20698339

1. Insurance Assessment Questions:

Does any part of your research take place outside of the UK? ☐

Does the research deliberately include participants from any of the following groups: pregnant women? ☐

children aged five or under? ☐

adults who lack the capacity to give informed consent? ☐

Does the research include medical intervention involving: investigating a medical device? ☐

a clinical trial? ☐

contraception? ☐

Does the research include more than 5000 participants? ☐

Is the research to be carried out by other organisations where the University is required by contract to provide insurance cover for the research if it proceeds? ☐

1.1 **Project Type:**

☐ Staff Research ☐ Commercial Project	☐ Masters by Research ☐ MPhil Research ☒ PhD Research ☐ Professional Doctorate	☐ Taught MSc/MA Research ☐ Undergrad Research ☐ Internship

1.2 **Principal Investigator:**		
Name	**School**	**Email**
Dr. Carl Morris	Humanities, Language and Global Studies	cjmorris2@uclan.ac.uk
1.3 **Other/Co- Researchers / Student:**		
Name	**School**	**Email**
Brandon Reece Taylorian	Humanities, Language and Global Studies	BRTaylorian@uclan.ac.uk
1.4 **Project Title:**		
Religious Freedom and State Recognition of Belief		
1.5 **Proposed Start Date:**		
01/12/2021		
1.6 **Proposed End Date:**		
01/03/2023		

1.7 **Is this project in receipt of any external funding** (including donations of samples, equipment etc.)?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please provide details of sources of the funding and what part it plays in the current proposal.

1.8 **Project Description** (in layman's terms) including the aim(s) and justification of the project (max 300 words)

This research aims to identify the collection of tactics employed by governments of all kinds in using the recognition of religions as a way to restrict religious activity. The study intends to explore how legal and commercial restrictions imposed on religious organisations negatively impact the religious freedom situation. A discussion will ensue as to the most efficient means of combatting governmental misuse of the apparatus of religious recognition. This research will analyse the knowledge of existing literature and will produce knowledge from participant interviews (participants will be split into Category One and Category Two, the former of which will not be anonymised while the latter will be anonymised). These interviews will be conducted to test whether this approach to religious freedom advocacy could contribute to the improvement of freedom of religion conditions in countries around the world. This will include recommendations for how recognition systems could be established and used for the betterment of religious freedom rather than to its detriment.

This research presents the hypothesis that the systems established by some governments to recognise belief systems, as well as the absence of recognition systems at all, are abused as a means of controlling citizens' identities and to maintain a hegemony on belief. Fundamentally, that it is recognition or lack thereof that stands as the central, persisting obstacle to the protection of freedom of religion or belief and that with a greater understanding of how recognition systems can be abused, experts active in the field at national and international levels will be more equipped to identify when recognition, non-recognition, or misrecognition are the cause of other issues impacting religious freedom conditions like terrorism, the disenfranchisement of minorities etc. By exploring the extent of the issue of recognition system abuse, this research hopes to enable advocates, commissioners, and scholars to understand the centrality of recognition to broader human rights concerns regarding religion and belief.

1.9 **Methodology** Please be specific

Research Objectives

1. To provide an empirically-based, qualitative understanding of the tools that states use to restrict religious and philosophical groups via recognition, or lack thereof.

2. To examine how recognition is central to many of the human rights concerns regarding freedom of religion or belief and to propose a fairer system for recognising belief systems that sustains religious freedom standards.

Research Questions

1. Is the imposition of commercial restrictions on religious institutions a freedom of religion issue?

2. What techniques of restriction could be included in a religious recognition apparatus

3. Is the outlined approach and framework of recognitionism a valuable one for improving religious freedom conditions?

4. What types of religions could be adversely effected by the abuse of recognition systems?

5. What recommendations can be made to help resolve the potential issues arising from government systems of religious recognition?

6. Is a free-market economy the remedy to religious freedom repression?

Methodology

The research will involve three primary methodologies:

(i) To conduct at least fifteen interviews split between public figures in the field (who will not be anonymised) and individuals facing religious freedom violations based on recognition (who will be anonymised). This is to explore whether and to what degree recognition systems impact religious freedom conditions.

(ii) Supplementary use of journal articles as well as governmental and non-governmental reports that document religious freedom conditions.

(iii) Supplementary use of national constitutions as direct sources regarding religious freedom policy and how governments frame their approach to recognising different religions. The analysis of these constitutions will be validated by academic sources that study constitutional terminology.

As this study will concentrate on countries where foreign travel is limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic and where the discussion of religious freedom issues is dangerous, collecting data in person will be unrealistic for a single individual to undertake. Due to the ongoing pandemic, interviews will take place via Microsoft Teams; these will be recorded and transcribed. All sensitive data – including recordings, transcriptions and field notes – will be kept in a secure location and only ever accessed by the researcher. Each interview will follow a semi-structured approach which will allow for greater elaboration on key topics that fully structured interviews often don't permit; ac-

Category One is public figures in the field of religious freedom (e.g. commissioners, rapporteurs, activists) and Category Two is individuals who have faced religious freedom violations based on recognition. Both kinds of participants will be recruited over email communications. Risks to participants include:

1. Participants in Category Two are likely to live in countries where violations of human rights are ongoing and where governments are not hospitable to citizens who speak out about their human rights records. This scenario puts these kinds of participants at risk of being contacted by their government, harassed or otherwise targeted for speaking out about their experience of violations of religious freedom in their country.
2. Category Two participants will be speaking about their personal experience of religious freedom violations which could cause them distress by reflecting on their experiences.

- The first issue will be resolved through the anonymisation of participants so that governments or other nefarious parties cannot trace them. The only information about the participant that will be made available is their religion and the country in which they have experienced violations of their religious freedom. The participant will be informed prior to participation that this information about them will be made public.
- The second issue is resolved by informing the participant of the risk of their distress in the PIP prior to their participation which, upon agreement to participate, the participants states they understand this risk. This risk is also mitigated by the researcher exercising sensitivity during the interview, allowing for breaks whenever required and ensuring throughout that the participant is comfortable to continue.

By putting these methods to resolving identified issues into practice, the risks associated with the research for Category Two participants will be mitigated.

The first category is not going to be given anonymity but the second category is to be given anonymity. There are three reasons why anonymity is not being given to Category One:

- Category One will consist of experts in the field, meaning their contributions to the study provide credibility to the research which is important to maintain by wavering anonymity.
- Due to the niche area of expertise that the participants of this study possess, it would be difficult to anonymise them as few other individuals hold the specific knowledge and experience about this research topic.
- All the intended participants for this study are public figures (e.g. commissioners, human rights advocates). Each participant is involved publicly in the field of human rights and freedom of religion; referring to their identities, their past and present roles in the field and their specific domains of experience is crucial to this research therefore anonymity is being wavered for Category One.

Each participant will be expressly made aware of the wavering of anonymity for this research in the Participant Information Pack. Expressed consent from each participant will be gained regarding the wavering of anonymity for participants in Category One, both during fieldwork and during the project's dissemination. Participants in Category Two will be expressly informed that they will be anonymised for the duration of the study to protect their personal safety due to the sensitivity of the topics addressed. This consent will be obtained through consent forms to ensure participants

1.10 **Has the quality of the project been assessed?** (select all that apply)

☐ Independent external review
☒ Internal review (e.g. involving colleagues, academic supervisor, School process)
☒ Research Programme Approval gained on 2nd November 2020 by Dr. Philip Constable ***(Please note that RPA is a prerequisite for Research Degree Students and Professional Doctorates).***
☐ None
☐ Other

If other please give details

1.11 **Please provide details as to the storage and protection of your physical / electronic data for the next 5 years** – as per UCLan requirements – **or whichever archive period is appropriate**

Interview transcripts, as well as the video and audio recordings of interview are planned to be stored in the UCLan Office 365 secure network in password protected folder, a folder which only accessible to the researcher. Participants are informed of this on page 8 of the Participant Information Pack.

1.12 **How is it intended the results of the study will be reported and disseminated?** (select all that apply)

☒ Peer reviewed journal – hard copy or online
☒ Internal report
☒ Conference presentation
☒ Other publication
☒ Written feedback to research participants
☒ Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
☒ Dissertation/Thesis
☐ Other

If other, please give details

1.13 **Will the activity involve any external organisation for which separate and specific approval is required** (e.g. NHS; school; any criminal justice agencies including the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Prison Service or Probation Service)?

☐ Yes ☒ No
*IF **YES**, BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH THIS FORM, click here to CHECK WHEN, HOW AND WHAT IS REQUIRED*

If Yes, please provided details of the external organisation and attached letter of approval

1.14 The nature of this project is most appropriately described as research involving:-
(more than one may apply)

☐ Behavioural observation
☐ Questionnaire(s) – please provide a copy of the questionnaire / survey
☒ Interview(s) – please provide a list of questions to be asked, or if semi-structured the topics
☐ Qualitative methodologies (e.g. focus groups) – please provide the questions/topics to be covered
☐ Psychological experiments
☐ Epidemiological studies
☐ Data linkage studies
☐ Psychiatric or clinical psychology studies
☐ Human physiological investigation(s)
☐ Biomechanical device(s)
☐ Human tissue(s)*
☐ Human genetic analysis
☐ A clinical trial of drug(s) or device(s)
☐ Lab-based experiment – please provide relevant COHSS / RA forms
☐ Archaeological excavation/fieldwork
☐ Re-analysis of archaeological finds/ancient artefacts
☐ Human remains analysis
☐ Lone working or travel to unfamiliar places (e.g. interviews in participants homes) – please provide relevant risk assessment form
☐ Other (please specify in the box below)

If 'Other' please provide details:

1.15 Human Participants, Date or Material – the project will involve:

Please select the appropriate box(es)

☐ Participants [proceed to next question 1.16]
☐ Data [proceed to question 1.30]
☐ Tissues /Fluids / DNA Samples [proceed to question 1.31]
☐ Remains [proceed to question 1.32]

1.16 Will the participants be from any of the following groups:
(tick as many as applicable)

☐ Students or staff of this University†
☐ Children/legal minors (anyone under the age of 18 years)
☐ Patients or clients of professionals
☐ Those with learning disability
☐ Those who are unconscious, severely ill, or have a terminal illness
☐ Those in emergency situations
☐ Those with mental illness (particular if detained under Mental Health Legislation)
☐ People with dementia
☐ Prisoners
☐ Young Offenders
☐ Adults who are unable to consent for themselves

* Please email EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk if any project involves HT
†

Where staff or students of the university are being used please explain how this is not a convenience sampling

☐ Any other person whose capacity to consent may be compromised
☐ A member of an organisation where another individual may also need to give consent
☐ Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. those in care homes
☒ Other vulnerable groups (please list in box below)

If 'Other' please provide details:
- Individuals subjected to religious freedom violations by the government of the country of which they are citizens which is why they are being given anonymity to protect their safety.

1.16a **Justify their inclusion**

*Ethics approval covers **all participants,** but attention must be given to those in a vulnerable category. Therefore, you need to fully justify their inclusion and give details of extra steps taken to assure their protection.*

I had originally submitted for ethics approval without the inclusion of Category Two of participants but following the progression of the research, I realised that it was necessary that in order to create new knowledge on the topic that I would need to interview those directly affected by the issues raised in the reason. I found that it would not be sufficient to only interview experts in the field and certainly not sufficient enough to interview academics alone. It is therefore essential to the success of the research is interviewing those individuals directly impacted by the problems identified regarding religious recognition in the research. To protect these individuals from their governments that have been the cause of their religious freedom violations, anonymity is extended to all individuals part of Category Two.

1.16b **Is a DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly CRB – Criminal Records Bureau) check required?**

Certain activities and/or groups of individuals require DBS (formerly CRB) clearance. If unclear, please seek advice.

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please advise status of DBS clearance (e.g. gained; in process; etc)

1.16c **All staff should be aware of UCLan's Policy and Procedures on Safeguarding and Prevent. Please confirm that, where relevant to your project, the appropriate training has been undertaken.**

Please refer to UCLan Safeguarding Children, Young people and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Prevent guidance

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

If Yes, please give details of relevant training session – external or internal - and when (e.g. within last 3 years)

1.17 **Please indicate exactly how participants in the study will be (i) identified, (ii) approached and (iii) recruited?**

If an advertisement and/or information sheet is being used, please attach

Participants will be approached directly – via either email, telephone or a letter – with an outline of the research and an invitation to participate. When appropriate pre-exisiting contacts will be used to facilitate an introduction to participants, but participation will not proceed without formal consent, including the consent form, a full explanation of the research, objective and expected outcomes. The Participant Information Pack attached to this submission will be sent to each participant so that they are fully aware of the purpose, methods, and components of the research.

1.18 **Will consent be sought from the participants and how will this be obtained?**

If a written consent form is being used, please attach

Written consent forms will be used and have been attached.

1.19 **How long will the participants have to decide whether to take part in the research?**

Participants will be given precisely 2 months from their receipt of the Participant Information Pack to decide whether to take part in the research. This will allow time for the participants to adequately read the Information Pack and to commit to participating in the research. This stipulation has been explained to the participant on page 8 of the Participant Information Pack.

1.20 **What arrangements have been made for participants who might not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information, or who have special communication needs?**

Gives details of what arrangements have been made (e.g. translation, use of interpreters, etc).

All participants will be English speakers.

1.21 **Payment or incentives: Do you propose to pay or reward participants?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please provided details

1.22 **Will deception of the participant be necessary during the activity?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please provide justification, and complete Question 1.28

1.23 **Does your project involve the potential imbalance of power/authority/ status, particularly those which might compromise a participant giving informed consent?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please detail including how this will mitigated
Describe the relationship and the steps to be taken by the investigator to ensure that participation is purely voluntary and not influenced by the relationship in any way.

1.24 **Does the procedure involve <u>any</u> possible distress, discomfort or harm (or offence) to participants or researchers** (including physical, social, emotional, psychological and/or aims to shock / offend – e.g. Art)?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please explain
Describe the potential for distress, discomfort, harm or offense and what measures are in place to protect the participants or researcher(s). Please consider all possible causes of distress carefully, including likely reaction to the subject matter, debriefing or participant upset.

1.25 **Does the activity involve any information pertaining to illegal activities or materials or the disclosure thereof?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please detail
Describe involvement and explain what risk management procedures will be put in place.

1.26 **What mechanism is there for participants to withdraw from the investigation and how is this communicated to the participants?**

The researcher will give participants a one month window following their interview to withdraw from the research. Participants should do so by either conducting Brandon directly or the secondary contact Dr. Carl Morris. Participants have been informed of this on page 10 of the Participant Information Pack and both Brandon and Carl's email addresses have been provided if necessary.

1.27 **What are the potential benefits for the research?**

Each of these potential benefits of participation have been expressed to the participants on page 9 of the Participant Information Pack.

- Participants will have the opportunity to engage in discussion regarding religious recognition that could then contribute to their advocacy.
- Interviewing participants from Category Two will allow the researcher to understand real world experience of violations of religious freedom stemming from a misused system of recognition.
- Participants will help to contribute to the existing body of knowledge regarding freedom of religion and belief.
- Taking part in this study may also help you in your own professional role.
- Participants will be supported throughout the study with regular updates from the researcher on the study's progress.
- Participants will be supporting improvements in the broader religious freedom landscape by dispensing their expertise on how best to deal with religious recognition and how to devise a model for a fairer recognition system for future implementation.
- Participants will help to promote awareness of their own religious freedom work and advocacy and will promote freedom of religion and belief in general.
- In order to sustain and protect religious liberties around the world, the body of knowledge dealing with freedom of religion must continue to grow and develop and by participating in this study, you will be contributing to that very development.

1.28 **Debriefing, support and/or feedback to participants**

Describe any debriefing, support or feedback that participants will received following the project and when.

1.29 **Will the project involve access to confidential information about people without their consent?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain and justify
State what information will be sought, from which organisations and the requirement for this information.

1.30 **Confidentiality/anonymity** - Will the activity involve:

	Yes	No
a. non-anonymisation of participants (i.e. researchers may or will know the identity of participants and be able to return responses)?	☒	☐
b. participants having the consented option of being identified in any publication arising from the research?	☐	☒
c. the use of personal data (i.e. anything that may identify them – e.g. institutional role – see DP checklist for further guidance)?	☒	☐

*If **yes to any** please attach completed Data Protection (DP) checklist*

‡

1.31 **Does the activity involve human tissue?** See **Human Tissue Act (HTA) Supplementary list of Materials** to check what is classified as human tissue.

☐ Yes ☒ No

If no, please skip to question 1.32
If yes, please detail and answer questions 1.31a-c

1.31a **Who will be sourcing the human tissue? (e.g. a tissue bank governed by its own HTA licence)**

1.31b **Will the human tissue be stored at UCLan? (please note restrictions on storage)**

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please state how long and in what form - cellular or acellular (DNA extracted)
Please note – if human tissue is only kept for DNA extraction rendering it acellular the HTA storage regulations may not apply. If holding for DNA extraction, please state the length of time the tissue would be stored pre-extraction.

1.31c **Is the human tissue being used for an activity listed as a 'scheduled purpose' under Schedule 1 Parts 1 and 2 of the Human Tissue Act 2004?** *(click here to see list of HTA 'scheduled purpose' activities)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

1.32 **Does the project involve excavation and study of human remains?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please give details
Discuss the provisions for examination of the remains and the management of any community/public concerns, legal requirement etc.

‡

Until such time as the University gains its own HTA Research License, human tissue that is for a 'scheduled purpose' and not sourced from a BioBank or part of an NREC approved project can only be stored for a maximum of 5 days

1.33 **Does the project involve working in a low or lower-middle income country as defined by the World Bank ?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please explain how each article within the Global Code of Conduct for Research in Resource-Poor Settings has been considered with respect to your project:
http://www.globalcodeofconduct.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Global-Code-of-Conduct-Brochure.pdf

NOTE: *If your research involves humans or animals, UCLan ethics/AWERB approval needs to be in place before application for local approval is made.*

DECLARATION

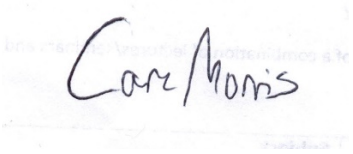
This declaration needs to be signed by the Principal Investigator (PI), and the student where it relates to a student project (for research student projects PI is Director of Studies and for Taught or Undergrad project the PI is the Supervisor). Electronic submission of the form is required to EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk. Where available insert electronic signature – alternatively, provide an email in lieu from appropriate party.

Declaration of the:
☒ Director of Studies/Supervisor and Student Investigator
• The information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I take full responsibility for it.
• I have read and understand the University Ethical Principles for Teaching, Research, Knowledge Transfer, Consultancy and Related Activities.
• I have read and understand the University's policy and procedures on Safeguarding and Prevent.
• I undertake to abide by the ethical principles underlying the Declaration of Helsinki and the University Code of Conduct for Research, together with the codes of practice laid down by any relevant professional or learned society.
• If the activity is approved, I undertake to adhere to the study plan, the terms of the full application of which the Ethics Review Panel has given a favourable opinion and any conditions of the
• I undertake to seek an ethical opinion from the Ethics Review Panel before implementing substantial amendments to the study plan or to the terms of the full application of which the Ethics Review Panel has given a favourable opinion.
• I understand that I am responsible for monitoring the research at all times.
• If there are any serious adverse events, I understand that I am responsible for immediately stopping the research and alerting the Ethics Review Panel within 24 hours of the occurrence, via EthicsInfo@uclan.ac.uk.
• I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date and comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.
• I understand that research records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future.
• I understand that personal data about me as a researcher in this application is required by the Ethics and Integrity Unit within Research Services, on behalf of the University, for an ethics review, and to evidence that the appropriate level of ethics review has been undertaken. Such data will be stored and managed in accordance with the principles established in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
• I understand that the information contained in this application, any supporting documentation and all correspondence with the Ethics Review relating to the application, will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts. The information may be disclosed in response to requests made under the Acts except where statutory exemptions apply.

- I understand that all conditions apply to any co-applicants and researchers involved in the study, and that it is my responsibility to ensure that they abide by them.

* Ethics Review Panel refers to Science, Health or BAHSS

• **For Principal Investigator:** I understand my responsibilities to work within a set of ethical and other guidelines as set out by the University Policies and/or professional standards.
• **For Supervisor/Director of Studies:** I understand my responsibilities as Supervisor/Director of Studies, and will ensure, to the best of my abilities, that the student investigator abides by the University's Policy on Research Ethics at all times.
• **For the Student Investigator**: I understand my responsibilities to work within a set of ethical and other guidelines as agreed in advance with my Supervisor/Director of Studies and understand that I must comply with the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.
Please indicate below if you consent to your University Ethics Checklist, Ethics Application and other documentation being shared for training and review purposes. All forms and documents will be anonymised. **Yes/No**

☒ **Signature of Principal Investigator: or** ☐ **Supervisor or Director of Studies**	
Print Name:	CARL MORRIS
Date:	3/12/2021
Signature of Student Investigator:	
Print Name:	BRANDON REECE TAYLORIAN
Date:	3/12/2021

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