

**Task:** For each of the examples below, decide which ethical code has been broken and then justify your answer. In some cases, you will also be asked to explain how the researcher could deal with it.

Some could relate to more than one ethical issue.

1. A sociologist has decided to conduct some research on early gender role socialisation. She wants to use an observation method of 3–4 year olds in a nursery/day care setting. The researcher locates a nursery where she can conduct her research.

- a. What ethical issue could pose a problem in this scenario?

- b. How might the researcher deal with this?

2. A researcher conducted some research into job satisfaction at a call centre. Once the research was completed she wrote up her results and published her findings. One of the respondents, a 'Miss Tracey Smith', provided some interesting information about how the job was highly unsatisfactory and in fact, she was only working there as a stopgap until she could find a better job. When the firm read the research they saw what Tracey had said and decided to fire her.

- a. What ethical guideline(s) had the researcher broken?

- b. What should the researcher have done?

3. James Patrick became a participant observer of a Glasgow gang. One day the gang decided to set fire to newspapers in a public library, pushed books off tables and emptied shelves of encyclopaedias. They were also trying to set fire to newspapers being read by some elderly people. Also, at a party Patrick attended, he sampled 'black bombers'.

a. What ethical guideline has the researcher broken? Explain your answer.

b. What would have happened if Patrick had not broken this ethical rule?

c. Do you think breaking ethical codes of conduct is ever acceptable? Explain your answer.