Covert Observation
- the researcher should get consent before they conduct their study
- people with learning difficulties may not understand what the study entails. Some people argue that uninformed consent is the same as no consent
- consent can be difficult to obtain especially when it is with secret groups or with sensitive topics such as crime and sexuality

Covert observation is when the group are not being told that they are being studied. They are criticised for lack of honesty and informed consent.

Covert observation requites access to sensitive or dangerous groups and this means they will pretend to be apart of it and the group wont know the true purpose of the study.

Humphrey ‘tearoom trade’ was a covert observation of sexual activity 1970
Men would have sexual activity in public places which was illegal

Humphrey posed as someone who watches homosexual acts for a thrill to gain their trust and observe genuine actions.

Milgram
Told people to give an electric shock when the person got a question wrong. Then the person pretended to pass out. The experiment showed how people would obey authority without question which helps to understand how people took part in war crimes and genocide.

The experiment wouldn’t have worked if they knew the purpose of it
Therefore, Milgram had to be dishonest.

Many of his participants showed distress and were disturbed by being manipulated. However, he did a follow up with his participants and found that they learnt a valuable lesson.

Key issues in research methods
- all respondents must have their basic right to privacy and their information must not be distributed to anyone
- respondents must remain anonymous
- if the researcher breaches their trust they will be put off future studies

nobody must be harmed during the research
- emotional and physical harm is never acceptable and the study will be criticised if people were
- if the researcher is studying mental health then they have to contact vulnerable groups and ask sensitive questions. This brings up an ethical question to whether they should stop the research and remove the person from the dangerous situation
- some topics may be traumatic for the participant to respond to and therefore they need informed consent