

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
(Joint Committee of the Council and the Senate)

Membership

Professor N. Norris (Chair)
Dr M. Wilkinson (Deputy)
Chairs of U-REC sub-committees:
Prof. P. Kitson (General REC)
Dr Z. Bika (Norwich Business School)
Dr B. Neil (Social Work)
Dr P. Fleming (Psychology)
Dr S. Russell (International Development)
Dr D. Smith (Computing Sciences)
Dr P. Lamb (Education & Lifelong Learning)
Dr M. Wilkinson (Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences)
Prof E. Fatas (Economics)
Dr F. Wells (Lay member)
Information Policy and Compliance Manager

Secretary – Mrs S. Steel

Expert members co-opted as required Faculty Associate Deans for Research (for information)

Terms of Reference

Minimum Terms of Reference for the University Research Ethics Committee (U-REC)

The University Research Ethics Committee (U-REC) defines the University's Research Ethics Policy and operational principles, which are applied by U-REC and its sub-committees (S-RECs), and reports to Senate.

1. The membership is as follows:
 - A Chair: appointed by Senate
 - A Deputy Chair
 - The Chair of each S-REC
 - The Associate Dean for Research or nominated Deputy where the Faculty has no reviewing REC
 - The University's Information Policy and Compliance Manager
 - At least one Lay Member
 - At least one male and one female member
 - The Secretary
 - The University's Survey Officer
 - Co-opted expert members as required
2. U-REC is responsible for the development and review of the Research Ethics Policy, principles and procedures.
3. U-REC identifies areas of best practice and disseminates these across the University. It is responsible for identifying and responding to strategic developments both within and outside the University. It may also instigate periodic audits of S-RECs, as routine, or where there are any causes for concern, e.g. adherence to terms of reference.
4. U-REC coordinates the provision of research ethics training for REC members, staff and students of the University.

5. U-REC approves core documentation used by S-RECs for reviewing research proposals.
6. U-REC may recognize an external ethics approval body as equivalent to the University's, to avoid unnecessary duplication of reviews, and will advise S-RECs accordingly.
7. U-REC will schedule three meetings per year, with the option of cancelling two if not required, or of carrying out business virtually. U-REC will report annually to the University Research Executive and Senate.
8. U-REC may carry out any of the functions of ethics review described in the Terms of Reference for S-RECs (Annex 3).
9. U-REC may meet on an extraordinary basis as circumstances dictate to ensure that S-RECs are able to meet their terms of reference, including:
 - approval of recommendations for the recognition of external ethics review bodies;
 - approval of recommendations for the classification of research as low risk for the purposes of Light Touch review;
 - hearing appeals against decisions made by S-RECs;
 - providing definitive guidance on problematic cases or interpretations of ethics review requirements;
 - reviewing the remit and functioning of research ethics committees in light of changing research activity profiles; and,
 - considering any new statutory or professional responsibility and advising the relevant Committees or Officers of the University accordingly on the implementation of that responsibility.
10. U-REC will monitor the activity of S-RECs and will carry out periodic audits of the reviews and decisions of S-RECs.
11. U-REC will carry out periodic audits of research studies approved by U-REC and S-RECs. The audit programme will be determined by the requirements of legislation and funders, the risk assessment of individual studies, and concerns raised by adverse event reports or suspicion of research misconduct.

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