



DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (DREC)

TEMPLATE CONSTITUTION

1. The terms of reference for the [Name of department] Departmental Research Ethics Committee are:
 - a. to review ethics applications for research with more straightforward ethical issues (i.e. ones made using the CUREC 1A form) on behalf of the [Social Sciences and Humanities Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee](#) (SSH IDREC).
 - b. to conduct a preliminary review of CUREC 2 ethics applications (including CUREC 2 amendments), and, once satisfied, to refer CUREC 2 applications to the SSH IDREC for final review and approval.
 - c. if needed, to request further written information or clarification from the applicant following an initial review by the DREC. During this period, the timetable is suspended, to be restarted when the DREC receives a response to the initial comments.
 - d. to reach a final decision on each application, and communicate this to the applicant, normally **within 30 days** of receipt of the initial application. Decisions should be one of the following:
 - i. Approve application;
 - ii. Approve application once minor amendments have been made;
 - iii. Defer decision (in exceptional circumstances, where the committee needs further advice);
 - iv. Refuse approval;
 - v. Decline jurisdiction (referring to an external body, such as the NHS, for approval);
 - vi. Refer to SSH IDREC (in exceptional circumstances).
 - e. to inform applicants when this timetable cannot be met and to provide a new timetable. Extra time may need to be allocated for the review process outside term time, for example, during fixed periods of office closure at Christmas and Easter.
 - f. to review amendments to approved projects and inform the applicant of the outcome of the review within **15 days** wherever possible. Where the amendment(s) are so substantial that they need to be treated as a new application the 30-day deadline will apply. The applicant must be informed if the 15-day deadline cannot be met.
 - g. to conduct expedited review outside the agreed timeframe at the discretion of the DREC Chair.
 - h. to review the support (including training and guidance) given to applicants and other staff members in CUREC processes and mechanisms.
 - i. to keep records of the applications received and the decisions made.

- j. The review of ethics applications will normally be conducted by correspondence, either by email or via Nexus365 SharePoint/ Microsoft Teams.
 - k. The committee shall have leave to allow the Chair to take action as appropriate and for members to deputise for the Chair in their absence.
 - l. to retain records for **seven years** after the decision on an ethics application is made.
 - m. to report to the SSH IDREC on a termly basis on the applications reviewed, relevant training undertaken by committee members, research ethics training delivered within the Department and any incidents or complaints received.
 - n. The DREC and IDREC shall be notified **within seven days** of any unexpected adverse consequences to participants, or to the researchers themselves, in research projects approved by the DREC.
2. The **membership** of the committee shall be as follows:
- a. At least two members of the Academic Committee, one of whom will be Chair;
 - b. Director of Research (ex officio);
 - c. Secretary to the committee: Administrative Officer.
 - d. Members of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee shall serve for a term of three or four years, to be agreed at the start of the term, and shall be eligible for re-appointment so long as they remain members of the Academic Committee.
 - e. Chairs of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee, in particular, are encouraged to serve, if possible, for four years in order to harmonise with the SSH IDREC membership terms. The Chair may also be appointed as a member of the SSH IDREC.
3. DRECs shall monitor committee business and are able to make appropriate adjustments to ensure the smooth operation of the committee, such as increasing membership or setting application deadlines.
4. Substantial changes to the DREC may only be made following consultation with the SSH IDREC and approval from CUREC.