Worktribe Ethics: risk levels

Though the ethics application form is new, the requirements for ethics review and the ethics review process itself remain unchanged. It is a requirement of the University's Research Ethics Policy that ethics review is obtained for all research involving human participants or personal data.

Instead of having separate application forms, the completed form is classified as low, medium or high-risk. The risk level determines the review route.

Previous form	Risk level	Review process
CUREC 2	**High**	Preliminary review by the DREC **and** review by the SSH IDREC.
CUREC 1A CUREC 1C	**Medium**	Review by the DREC or SSH IDREC secretariat on behalf of the SSH IDREC.
CUREC 1B	**Low**	Review by student's supervisor (student applications) or by an academic peer (staff applications) on behalf of the SSH IDREC.

High-risk research

- Research conducted without participants' informed consent.
- Research involving participants who are vulnerable in the context of the research.
- A risk of significant harm or criminal prosecution.
- Research that raises issues relevant to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (the Prevent Duty).

Medium-risk research

- Research where the high-risk elements can be addressed through the application of a CUREC Approved Procedure.
- Research involving topics that could be considered sensitive.
- Any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the researchers or others involved in the project.
- International or collaborative research where there may be issues of local practice and political sensitivities.
- Participants taking part in the research without their knowledge and consent (e.g. covert observation).
- Researcher(s) in a position of authority over participants, e.g. as employers, lecturers, teachers or family members.
- Potential conflicts of interest.
- Scope for incidental findings, ie, potentially significant findings that are unrelated to the objectives of a study and discovered unintentionally during the course of the research (e.g.

observations of potential clinical significance (such as medical or psychiatric conditions), or illegal activity).

- Third parties collecting data on behalf of the researcher or research team.
- Permission from a gatekeeper is required for access to the participants.

Low risk research

1. None of the high or medium-risk criteria can apply.
2. The PI and any other researchers must complete either the core or the refresher research integrity training course.
3. Research must be conducted with participants' informed consent. Information sheets and consent forms must be based on the University's templates.
4. Any applicable CUREC Best Practice Guidance must be used when planning the research.
5. Research must be conducted in accordance with relevant professional guidelines.
6. Personal data must be managed in accordance with the University's data protection requirements and ideally be stored on University servers or within Nexus365 One Drive.
7. Research must not trigger requirement for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA).
8. Individual participants must not be identifiable from the research outputs without their explicit consent.
9. If a fieldwork risk assessment is needed, this must be undertaken and approved before the research starts.
10. Students must be supervised by a University of Oxford member of staff.