

University Research Ethics Committee

Terms of Reference 2021-22

1. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE FUNCTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) is a University committee under the accountability of the Vice-President Research and Enterprise. It reports to the Research Integrity and Governance Committee (RIGC) via the Chair (currently Vice-President Research and Enterprise), and via the Vice-President to the University Executive Board (UEB).

1.2 Its core responsibility is research ethics including promoting, developing and fostering a culture of responsible and ethical conduct of research amongst the University academic community.

1.3 UREC responsibilities:

1.3.1 Development, oversight and keeping under review the implementation of the University Research Ethics Policy and ethics sub-policies, and sustaining a University-wide awareness of research ethics and governance issues.

1.3.2 Development of policy and guidance with and for the University Faculties in relation to ethical and related issues.

1.3.3 Advising Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FRECs) on ethical issues and relevant procedures, including concerns related to a particular study or other matter(s) and, where appropriate and necessary, adjudicating upon such matters.

1.3.4 With the agreement of the relevant Dean of Faculty, to designate a particular Faculty Research Ethics Committee to lead in the development of specific areas of institutional best practice, and to act as the lead committee for certain areas of research.

1.3.5 To receive and review reports from each Faculty Research Ethics Committee as appropriate, including an Annual Report which is to be provided by FRECs at the beginning of each academic year.

1.3.6 To ensure that members of UREC and of Faculty Research Ethics Committees have received, or will receive, appropriate training in ethical matters.

1.3.7 To report to the appropriate bodies within the University.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The membership of UREC shall include:

☐ Vice-President Research and Enterprise (or delegate) (Chair) Professor Mark Spearing

☐ Academic Registrar Claire Atkins

☐ Head of Research Integrity and Governance Dr Alison Knight

☐ Chair of each Faculty Research Ethics Committee:

☐ Faculty of Arts and Humanities Professor Fiona Woollard

- ☐ Faculty of Medicine Susan Wilson
- ☐ Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences Professor Cynthia Graham
- ☐ Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences Dr Brian Pickering
- ☐ Faculty of Social Sciences Dr Silke Roth

☐ Chairs of the following Faculty Research Ethics Committee sub-committees:

- ☐ Sub-committee Psychology Professor Cynthia Graham
- ☐ Sub-committee Business and Law Dr Stratos Ramoglou

☐ Vice-Chair of the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences Dr Martin Warner

Research Ethics Committee

- ☐ Chair of Animal Scientific and Ethics Review Group (ASERG) Jenny Parks
- ☐ Senior academic with relevant experience in ethics, or as a member of a lead NHS Research Ethics Committee outwith the University, appointed by the UREC Chair. Professor Cynthia Graham

☐ Lay/Independent Member Edward Carter

☐ President of the Students' Union or a representative of the Students' Union. Jo Lisney

2.2 In attendance:

- ☐ Research Integrity Officer(s) – as appropriate and as required for specific matters.
- ☐ Representatives from other University teams or departments - as appropriate and as required for specific matters.
- ☐ Secretariat provided by the Governance Officer.

2.3 Lay/Independent Member:

2.3.1 A lay member is a volunteer who is independent of the University i.e. an individual who has not studied at, been employed by, or held offices with the University in the last three years.

2.3.2 The eligibility criteria for a lay member of UREC are:

- ☐ Be able to act independently and impartially and behave responsibly and ethically.
- ☐ Be able to understand key issues in research ethics.
- ☐ Be able to contribute to the work of University Research Ethics Committee.
- ☐ To live within a reasonable geographical proximity of the University (maximum 30 miles), and be able to attend UREC meetings during the working day, three times a year.

2.3.3 A lay member may be selected and appointed through a nomination or responses to adverts. Appointment is made by the UREC Chair who may, if required, use appropriate selection process. Normally a term of a lay/independent member is 3 years, with the option of up to 2 renewals.

2.3.4 A lay member will be offered an annual honorarium (pro-rata for proportion of a year served), subject to review every 3 years, for their attendance and involvement with the UREC. A lay member will be also reimbursed for reasonable expenses e.g. travel, childcare etc.

3. MEETINGS

3.1 UREC shall meet 3 times a year. Each meeting should have Minutes and agreed Actions.

3.2 All members are expected to attend all Committee meetings. Where this is not possible, a delegate of appropriate seniority should be appointed to attend the Committee in order to represent the respective Faculty Research Ethics Committee and other Teams/Departments as per Section 2 above.

4. QUORUM

4.1 For decision making the quorum shall be at least 4 members. It shall include at least 2 members of Academic Staff (i.e. from the Faculty representatives or the senior academic with experience of ethics), and at least 1 member of Professional Services Staff.

4.2 If the Committee is not quorate, any decisions made should be ratified by email communication by the required quorum or at a subsequent quorate meeting.