

Committee Terms of Reference: University Research Ethics Committee

Reports to: Senate

Occurrence: 3 times a year

Terms of reference last reviewed: March 2019; and next due for review: March 2021

Members:

- PVC Research (Chair)
- Chair of Research Ethics Panel (REP)
- Chair of Sponsorship Group (SG)
- Senior Home Office Licensee - Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB)
- RBI Representative
- Postgraduate Student Representative

6 members.

Quorum: Chair, plus 3 members.

In attendance:

- Administrative support
- Research Ethics & Integrity Officer
- Data Protection Manager (as required)
- Health, Safety and Environment Advisor (as required)

At the discretion of the Chair other University officers, as may be appropriate, shall be invited to attend meetings.

Remit:

The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) undertakes a scrutiny role and is responsible for matters of policy, practice, training and governance in relation to research ethics and research integrity. UREC also undertakes an oversight role of three sub-groups, which includes the: Research Ethics Panel (REP), Sponsorship Group (SG) and Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB).

Terms of reference:

1. To consider and recommend for approval by the Senate:
 - a. Substantial revisions to the University's ethics and integrity processes and procedures;
 - b. Revisions to the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Policy;
 - c. The University's annual report on Research Integrity, as required by the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which shall be reported to Senate for approval and Council for information;
 - d. Guidance to Faculties on the organisation, roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to the delivery of the ethical review of research and in the ethical conduct of research.
2. To consider and have authority to approve on behalf of the Senate:
 - a. Development, implementation, and review of University policies and standard operating procedures relevant to the delivery of, and adherence to, the University's Research Ethics Policy and Framework;
 - b. The acceptability of ethical standards (e.g. in standard operating procedures [SOPs]) of safety and welfare of human participants involved in research activities and referred to it by the relevant Faculty, UREC sub-group or individual members of staff;
 - c. Identification of training needs and advising Faculties / Departments on relevant induction, training and development activities for all staff with research responsibilities (and where not covered elsewhere, the training needs of students);
 - d. Reports and items for consideration from the established UREC sub-groups;

- e. The appointment of University representatives on UREC sub-groups;
3. To receive reports for information and advise the Senate, or a governance committee, as appropriate on:
- a. Reports on institutional performance relating to areas of the University's operation within the purview of this committee, such as compliance with ethical review procedures;
 - b. Changes in legislation and best practice relating to areas of the University's operation within the purview of the committee;
 - c. UKRIO (UK Research Integrity Office) revisions to the Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research;
 - d. Revisions to the Sensitive Research Policy and Procedure (as required in fulfilment of the Prevent Duty);
 - e. Reports summarising any allegations of research misconduct amongst staff and postgraduate research students, including processes relating to the Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research;
 - f. Minutes and reports from Research Ethics Panel, Sponsorship Panel and Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board.

Operation

The Committee shall be required to notify the Vice-Chancellor and Researcher when projects which have been reviewed by the respective sub-group and been found to have intellectual merit, but have potentially high risks for the University due to the sensitivities of their ethical aspects.

The committee shall agree and present to Senate and the Governance and Compliance Committee an annual report outlining the key business undertaken by the Committee during the previous academic year, with a particular focus on the decisions taken by the Committee on behalf of the governing body in accordance with the delegated authorities provided in these terms of reference.

The committee may consider matters referred to it by Council, the Senate (via the Vice-Chancellor), or the University Executive.

Where the committee agrees a recommendation to Council in relation to an academic matter, the recommendation shall first be presented to the Senate for comment before consideration by the Council.