

Approved Terms of Reference and Membership Composition of the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Committee (for use in Academic Year 2023/2024)

Terms of Reference

The *University Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Committee (UREC)* is a sub-committee of the *Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee*. Its primary focus is to consider general ethical issues concerning research and related knowledge exchange (KE) activities undertaken by University colleagues and students or other individuals working with the University, as appropriate.

Specifically, the UREC will:

- (1) Review the Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Policy and Guidance against external best practice and University needs as they develop and evolve
- (2) Oversee research and knowledge exchange (KE) ethics Policy and ethics review across the University through the management of the *College Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Committees (CRECs)*.
- (3) Review where appropriate, Class 3 applications for research and KE ethics quality and standards and liaise with the University Sponsor authoriser and University Sponsor contact colleagues any proposals which are to be proposed to the Health Research Authority (HRA) and/or relating to requests for University Sponsorship as defined by the *UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research*. Monitor the conditions, progress and amendments with the Principal Investigator, Head of School and University sponsor authoriser and University Sponsor contact.
- (4) Review and provide favourable ethics opinion, where appropriate, for Class 4 applications for research and knowledge exchange ethics review: *research which has significant ethical implications or the potential to cause a significant risk of harm, including research where there may be an institutional and/or reputational risk*. Liaise with compliance and governance colleagues including senior management around the University's risk appetite and requirements of the University, the legal and regulatory framework or other external authorities/insurers and/or collaborators.
- (5) Develop and recommend policies and systems for support of researchers and facilitation of ethically sound research in line with the highest principles of good research practice via standard operating procedures/guides for use by ethics reviewers, and researchers.
- (6) Lead on development, monitoring and audit of the operation of the framework for research and KE ethics review, including CRECs composition and remit, decisions, and systems, in accordance with the Policy and Guidance.
- (7) Oversee the provision of ethics guidance, development and training for all colleagues, including those acting in a supervisory capacity, and students at all levels, including CREC and Psychology Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Working Group Chairs and Committee Representatives.
- (8) Demonstrate the University's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of ethics decision-making and governance. The Committee will seek to protect the rights, dignity and privacy of participants, humans or animals, the researcher and others involved in the research; protect the integrity of the environment, natural habitats, resources, and cultures, with extra mitigations for vulnerable individuals or groups; avoid risk of harm to objects and sites of significant historical or cultural importance; protect the reputation of the University; and protect academic freedom.
- (9) Report to the *Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee* on research and knowledge exchange ethics issues, including through the Annual Activity Report.

Membership

Approved by Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee on 31 October 2023.

Ex-officio

Senior Academic Colleague nominated by the Chair of Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee (Chair) (1)

CREC Chairs or Deputy CREC Chairs as their nominee (3)

Clinic Manager or nominee (1)

University Human Tissue Authority (HTA) Designated Individual (DI) or HTA Persons Designate (PD) as nominee (1)

Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange Office or their nominee (1)

Nominated/Elected

College Director for Research and Knowledge Exchange or another College Research and KE Director as their nominee (1) (*nominated by the Chair of Research and Knowledge Exchange Steering Committee*)

British Psychological Society accredited member or a nominee from the same constituency (1) (*nominated by the Chair of UREC*)

Doctoral Researcher or nominee from the same constituency (1) (*elected by Doctoral Researcher constituency*)

External Member (1) (*nominated by the Chair of UREC*)

Senior Research and Knowledge Exchange academic colleagues (3) (*nominated by Chair of UREC following call for expressions of interest*)

Deputy Chair: the Chair will invite any ex-officio or nominated/elected member to act as a named Deputy Chair (of UREC).

Co-opted, by invitation

The Chair will invite individuals with relevant expertise and knowledge to provide information and advice to the UREC, and/or participate in meetings or other work of the UREC, as necessary. This will include internal lay colleagues from time to time or as required for review, i.e. colleagues who do not directly support research and knowledge exchange as part of their roles, nor are involved in carrying out or working within research and knowledge exchange activities.

Secretariat

Nomination of the Head of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO).

Quorum

A quorum of the UREC shall comprise a minimum of 40% of the members, excluding co-opted members and including the Chair or Deputy Chair.

Term of Office

Nominated/elected members shall serve a term of office not exceeding three years commencing 1 August in the year of appointment, and a maximum of two terms of office.

Meetings

The UREC shall meet at least three times per year. The work of the Committee may be conducted at additional meetings called by the Chair, or outside of meetings by means of electronic communication/officer action, subject to the approval of the Chair.

The UREC may hold sub-panels (by VRE e-meeting [non-real time online] or in person (real-time online or in person) whilst still ensuring a rigorous review. A sub-panel will constitute minimum 3 members (normally ex-officio or nominated/elected members, with ad-hoc reviewers upon request from the University's pool). This is inclusive of Chair or Deputy Chair. A member of the panel may act as Secretary.