

Faculty Research Ethics Committee Chair

Role Description

Overview of role

The Faculty Research Ethics Committee (F-REC) Chair ensures the highest standards of ethical conduct in research and related activities involving human participants, animals, the environment and data. The Chair leads the committee, overseeing fair and rigorous ethics review, interpreting and applying ethical principles in accordance with university policy, guidance and external regulation. The Chair is responsible for ensuring timely, independent and informed consideration of the ethical design of research submitted to the F-REC, supports its members and relevant ethics officers, facilitates training, and contributes to the development and monitoring of university-wide ethics policy through their *ex-officio* membership of the Research Ethics and Integrity sub-Committee (REISC). The Chair sits as an *ex-officio* member of the Health and Social Care Sponsorship Sub-Committee and the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee. They take a lead role in promoting a culture of research integrity both within and across Faculties.

Key responsibilities

- a. To oversee the consistent and timely management of the F-REC review process, ensuring they align with the *University of Sussex Ethics Policy, Code of Practice for Research and Concordat to Support research Integrity*, and that all associated research governance requirements are identified and addressed to the highest standards of practice within a culture of honesty and respect for all stakeholders;
- b. Promote the effective working of the F-REC as a cohesive group, providing guidance to members regarding potential conflicts of interest and any other related concerns;
- c. Organise and Chair a minimum of one physical meeting of the F-REC per year;
- d. To nominate and articulate responsibilities of a Deputy Chair¹, and to offer ongoing support to the person in this role, ensuring that they are able to take over the duties of the Chair when required. In the event that a Deputy Chair is not available, the Faculty that employs the Chair shall ensure that cover is available until such time that a new Chair can be formally appointed;
- e. To provide advice and guidance to the F-REC members, Senior Research Ethics and Integrity Officers (SREIOs), School Research Ethics Officers (SREOs), supervisors, staff and post graduate researchers;
- f. To work with the Research Ethics, Integrity and Governance Team to make arrangements for training provision for both F-REC members and staff and students across Faculty;
- g. To produce and ensure dissemination of information relating to Faculty research ethics review processes, supporting F-REC members and SREOs to do the same;

¹ It is expected that the responsibilities of the Deputy Chair will fall within the role description of the Chair however, the Chair can delegate as necessary.

- h. To be aware of equality and diversity and ensure that applicants to the F-REC are treated fairly and equally regardless of age, gender, sexuality, religion, disability or ethnicity;
- i. To sit as an *ex-officio* member of the REISC, attending a minimum of two meetings per year, to contribute to the development, monitoring and review of ethics policies, procedures and processes;
- j. To provide periodic reports of F-REC and SREO activity to the Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee (REISC);
- k. To facilitate auditing relevant to the F-REC in accordance with the requirements of the REISC;
- l. Where appropriate, to assist Executive Deans in recruitment of new members to the F-REC and address issues of poor performance in the first instance.
- m. Sit as an *ex-officio* member of the Health and Social Care Sponsorship Sub-Committee and the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee;

Appointment: Approved by the Chair of REISC, following nomination by the Executive Dean of the appropriate Faculty.

Tenure: 3 years, renewable for a further 2 upon mutual agreement.