

Cross-Schools Research Ethics Committees (C-REC)

Key Role:

- to provide independent review of the ethical design of research, on behalf of the University in accordance with the principles and values of the *Code of Conduct for Research* and the standards of the *Concordat to Support Research Integrity* and as indicated in the University's ethics review framework
- to review, facilitate and encourage consistently high-quality ethical research in accordance with the standards of good practice across the disciplines of the academic schools represented on the committee.
- to ensure, on behalf of the Research Ethics and Integrity Committee, that good practice is shared and that an understanding of high-quality ethical research practice is valued and recognised as a fundamental quality of a skilled researcher at the University of Sussex.

There will be **three** Cross-Schools Research Ethics Committees (C-RECs) as follows:

Science and Medicine (2 committees):

- Sciences and Technology C-REC (SCITEC) cluster (covering the School of Engineering and Informatics, the School of Life Sciences, the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences and the School of Psychology).
- Brighton and Sussex Medical School Research Governance and Ethics Committee (BSMS RGEC).

Social Sciences and Arts (1 committee):

- Social Sciences & Arts C-REC (SSARTS) cluster (covering the Business School, the School of Education and Social Work, the School of Global Studies, the School of Law, Politics and Sociology, and the School of Media, Arts and Humanities).

(1) Terms of Reference:

- (a) to follow the requirements laid out in the University's codes and policies relating to research ethics, integrity and to support and facilitate effective research governance

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within a culture of honesty and respect for participants, the environment and the full range of stakeholders of university research;

(b) to make recommendations to the Research Ethics and Integrity Committee relating to the procedures and policies for supporting and facilitating ethical research under the auspices of the schools, appropriate to the academic disciplines within the Schools, and in accordance with recommendations made by relevant outside bodies;

(c) through the relevant School Directors of Learning and Teaching, to conduct a periodic review of School procedures which consider low risk projects (including undergraduate) and to prepare periodic reports on the findings and to keep the effectiveness of its current practice under continuous review.

(d) to review and approve on an annual basis, the basis on which academic schools organise the oversight of School Research Ethics Officers (SREOs) where more than one is appointed by the Head of School.

(e) to report on a periodic basis to the Research Ethics and Integrity Committee in a form stipulated by the Research Ethics and Integrity Committee, providing a summary of all reviewed projects;

(f) to implement review mechanisms for staff and student projects that ensure that research ethics policies are applied in a manner appropriate to such projects and that any associated research governance requirements are identified and dealt with in a manner consistent with the highest standards of research excellence.

(g) to undertake auditing of a percentage of previously approved studies according to Research Ethics and Integrity Committee requirements

(h) to participate and facilitate auditing of the ethics review process across C-REC and across SREOs within the C-REC

(i) to review and approve any School or cross-School based processes for the review and approval of relevant research projects.

(j) to keep appropriate records of practices and decisions and to issue a common form of Certificate of Approval which will cover statutory and ethical compliance, research integrity and, where appropriate, sponsor specific requirements.

(k) to refer cases to the Research Ethics and Integrity Committee that require decision or require advice / opinion.

(2) Composition:

- A member of academic faculty distinguished in research (Chair).
- One (or more) member(s) from each School undertaking research relevant to the Committee, nominated by the relevant Head of School (proportionate to applications reviewed by the cluster).
- At least one external lay member
- School Research Ethics Officers (SREO) from the academic schools in the cluster*
- Additional (non-voting) attendees may be invited by the Chair for meetings or items to ensure an appropriate range of expertise.

*Not all SREOs will act as C-REC reviewers (through full membership of the C-REC) for high risk PGT, undergraduate studies or staff and PGR applications.

The terms of the SREO's reviewing duties, as specified in the letter of appointment, will be agreed by the Head of School, and will be reflected in the time allocated within their overall responsibilities.

(3) Reports to: Research Ethics and Integrity Committee

