How to Apply for Ethical Review for New Staff-Led Research

The new University ethical review process applies to all new staff-led research projects. For funded staff-led projects, ethical review is not needed before writing and submitting applications for funding unless the funding body specifically requires it. Ethical review will be required after funding is awarded by the funding body and before work can begin. For non-funded staff-led projects, ethical review is required before the work commences.

**Step 1 – Self-Assessment Form (SAF)**

The timing for using the SAF depends on whether the Principal Investigator (PI) is applying for funding or not.

*(i) Where the PI is applying for research funding*

A PI is required to complete a SAF only after the research project has been recommended for award by the funder, unless the funding body requires an ethical review to be conducted at the application for funding stage.

*(ii) In all other situations*

For other research where no application for funding has been made, the SAF is required to be submitted before the commencement of the research project.

If the SAF indicates that no further ethical review is required, then ethical review is completed and work can then begin on the project. If the self-assessment form indicates that further ethical review is required, the PI should continue to step 2 below and complete an Application for Ethical Review (AER).

Following completion of the SAF, please note that whilst funding may be released for preliminary work (e.g. recruitment of research staff), if further ethical review is required no work with human participants should be undertaken until this is granted.

**Step 2 – Completion of Application for Ethical Review (AER)**

If the SAF indicates that further ethical review by one of the two University Ethical Review Committees is required, the PI must initiate the second step of University ethical review by downloading the AER form, completing it and submitting it to the Research Ethics Office, via email.

**Step 3 – Review by University Committee**

Following the electronic submission of the AER by the PI, the third step of the University ethical review process consists of the review and approval by one of the two University Ethical Review Committees – either the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Ethical Review Committee or the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) Ethical Review Committee.

The HASS and STEM Ethical Review Committees are made up of volunteer academic members of staff and external lay members.
Once the Committee has completed its review, the outcome is then notified to the PI. Possible outcomes include:

- Straight approval
- Conditional approval
- Request for further information and changes
- Invitation to resubmit
- Rejection