

## **Guidance for Committee members**

### ▪ ***Receipt and review***

The Applications for Ethical Review shall be received electronically by the Research Ethics Team (based in the Research Support Group). The level of ethical review by the ERC shall be proportionate to the potential risk of the research project. The Application shall be reviewed within a reasonable time limit.

The Chairperson of each ERC shall have the authority to delegate any of his powers to any member of the Committee.

Members of the ERC must withdraw from consideration of any submission in which they are researchers or supervisors. Any interest should be declared at the start of the review/meeting and members may be asked to withdraw from any review in which they have an interest.

### ▪ ***Types of Committee decisions***

The ERC can make four main kinds of decision: (i) approve the application as it stands, or (ii) accept it subject to the PI agreeing to suggested modifications, or (iii) require re-submission or (iv) reject it.

Any approval issued by the ERC may be conditional in the first instance.

### ▪ ***Notice of decision***

All decisions of the ERC shall be communicated to PIs in writing.

Where ethical approval is granted a formal letter to this effect will be issued to the applicant and a copy retained by the Research Ethics Officer.

Where ethical approval is provisionally granted subject to conditions, or a favourable opinion is not granted, the letter will state why that decision has been made and what the PI has to do.

Where the ERC has decided that ethical approval is subject to specified conditions, the PI cannot start the research until the Research Ethics Officer has confirmed that these conditions have been met.

### ▪ ***Effect of decisions***

Ethical approval will be granted for the duration of the research project or for 5 years, whichever is the lesser, and is binding on the applicant researchers.

A decision by any of the University's Ethical Review Committees to approve a research project does not constitute a precedent and each application will be judged on its own merits and in the light of present circumstances.

Notwithstanding a review by the ERC, the PI shall remain responsible for observing good practice. Any decision of the ERC shall not detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility that the PI must have for all research which he or she carries out.

Research shall normally commence within 12 months of the date on which a favourable ethical opinion is given by an ERC. If not, the PI has to re-apply after the expiry of that period. Generally, a study is deemed to have been commenced when participants have been recruited or any of the procedures in the research proposal are initiated.