# Committee for Research Ethics & Governance in

# Arts, Social Sciences & Business

# Application Form for Ethical Approval of Research for

# Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught Research Projects[[1]](#footnote-1)

This form should be completed and submitted to the **appropriate research supervisor**.

Important Note**:**

Advice on the correct process for obtaining ethical approval of research **must** be sought from researchgovernance@abdn.ac.uk for any research involving:-

* **NHS patients, their tissue or data.** This includes research involving individuals when their status as NHS patients is relevant to the research, even when a medical condition if not the subject of the research; and/or
* **Participants who do not have the capacity to consent to participate;** and/or
* **NHS staff participating by virtue of their profession** (i.e. NHS staff who will carry out study duties on behalf of the research team such as clinical examinations, blood sampling, imaging, etc.); and/or
* The use of **NHS premises, equipment or facilities**

as this **may require you to follow a different process for obtaining ethical approval of your research.** Please **do not** continue with this application until you have sought further guidance on the appropriate ethical approval process.

**BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM APPLICANTS SHOULD REFER TO:**

1. [The Checklist of Good Research Practice](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-research-and-knowledge-exchange/CREGASSB-Good-Research-Practice.pdf).
2. [The Research Ethics web pages](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/ethical-approval-2780.php).
3. [Information on Research Data Management](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/research-data-management-428.php).
4. [Information on the General Data Protection Regulation (UK) and the Data Protection Act 2018 requirements](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/data-protection-6958.php).
5. [Information on Academic Research and Data Protection](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/data-protection-6958.php#panel8627) and the [Data Protection checklist for researchers](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/toolkit/documents/uploads/checklist_gdpr_for_research.pdf).

Note that compliance with data protection legislation involves a range of requirements which should be considered at the design stage of a research project.

1. Information on University Expectations of researchers can be found in the [University’s Research Governance Handbook](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/research-governance-304.php#panel6326).

**WHEN COMPLETING THE FORM APPLICANTS ARE REQUIRED TO:**

1. Consider each question carefully and provide details of potential ethical issues which might arise, allowing the reviewer to make an informed decision on whether they have been addressed appropriately. Applicants are expected to provide additional information beyond the initial ‘yes’/’no’ answer to the questions provided.

**Failure to provide enough information to allow the reviewer to provide informed approval of ethical issues within the research might result in the need to restart the review process.**

1. For all applications, researchers must provide a brief explanation of the potential ethical issues which might arise when carrying out the research (e.g. justification of the need to use certain research methodologies which might raise potential ethical concerns) and how they are to be addressed. For clearly defined research projects, the project proposal should also be attached. Any other documents relevant to the research (e.g. consent forms) should also be attached to the application.

## Project details

**Title of Project:**

**Name of Principal Investigator:**

**Project Start Date:**

**Additional Research staff (if applicable):**

## Recruitment procedures

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

The University has a duty to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults at risk[[2]](#footnote-2),

including visitors attending University events; potential students met off-campus; students,

staff and volunteers who are part of the University; or others who come into contact with

University staff, representatives or students in the course of their research.

If your research involves any of the above-mentioned groups, please provide the following

confirmation:

*I will comply with the requirements of the* ***[Safeguarding in Research Code of Practice.](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-research-and-knowledge-exchange/Safeguarding-in-Research-Code-of-Practice.pdf)***

**Please tick the box to confirm** [ ]

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | Does your research activity involve persons less than 18 years of age?[[3]](#footnote-3) If yes, please provide further information below. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2** | Does your research activity involve people with learning or communication difficulties? (**Note:** all research involving participants for whom provision is made under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 must be ethically reviewed by NHS NRES). If yes, please provide further information below. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **3** | Is your research activity likely to involve people involved in illegal activities? If yes, please provide further information below. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **4** | Does your research activity involve people belonging to a vulnerable group, other than those noted above? If yes, please provide further information below. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5** | Does your research activity involve people who are, or are likely to become your clients or clients of the section in which you work? If yes, please provide further information below. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6** | Does your research activity provide for people for whom English is not their first language? If yes, please provide further information below on how this support will be provided, or if it will not be provided, please explain why not. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7** | Does your research activity require access to personal information about participants from other parties (e.g. teachers, employers), databanks or files? If yes, please explain below how you will ensure that use of this data complies with data protection legislation. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **8** | Do you plan to conceal your own identity during the course of the research activity? If yes, please provide further information below (e.g. that this is necessary for the nature of the research, whether subjects will be contacted directly after the period of observation). |  |  |  |
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## Consent Procedures

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| --- | --- |
| **9** | Please provide details below of the consent procedures that you intend to use for obtaining informed consent from all subjects (including parental consent for children). Templates for participant information sheets and consent forms can be found on the [Committee’s webpage](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/ethical-review-10645.php#panel10596). You should provide details of how you will let subjects know that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time. You should also provide details of the processes for giving potential subjects adequate time for considering participation and for obtaining written consent. If research is observational, please advise how subjects will provide consent for being observed. If any of these issues are not applicable to your research or if you do not intend to address them for reasons of research methodology, please provide further information. |
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## Possible Harm to Researchers/Participants

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **10** | Are there any safety issues for you in conducting this research? If so, please provide details below of what these might be and how you intend to address such issues. |  |  |  |
|  |

|  |  | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **11** | Is there any realistic risk of any subjects experiencing either physical or psychological discomfort or distress? Or any realistic risk of them experiencing a detriment to their interests as a result of participation? If so, please provide details below of what this might be and how you intend to address such issues.  |  |  |  |
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## Data Protection and Security

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

The General Data Protection Regulation (UK) imposes a number of obligations for the use of **personal data** (defined as any information relating to an identified or identifiable living person), or including the use of personal data in research.

If you are using personal data, you should consider whether your research requires a Data Protection Impact Assessment and complies with the University Data Protection policy.

If you are, you now need to see the [Data Protection Checklist for Researchers](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/toolkit/documents/uploads/checklist_gdpr_for_research.pdf) for guidance.

If you then feel that a DPIA may be required or you need data protection advice, then you should contact the Data Protection Officer dpa@abdn.ac.uk.

Please provide the following confirmation:

*I have read the above guidance and have met the relevant data protection obligations.*

[ ] **Please tick the box to confirm**

**In addition,** you should also check the requirements for a Data Management Plan (DMP) in the [Research Data Management Policy](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-research-and-knowledge-exchange/Research%20Data%20Management%20Policy.pdf) and [Guidance](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/policy-zone-research-and-knowledge-exchange/research_data_management%20guidance.pdf).

**Once checked, please confirm the requirement by ticking one of the following:**

[ ] ***No requirement for DMP***

[ ]  ***DMP required and this is attached***

Please see [here](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/toolkit/systems/data-managment-plan/) for guidance on creating a DMP.  For further support, contact digitalresearch@abdn.ac.uk

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| --- | --- |
| **12** | Please provide details below of how you intend to ensure that data is stored securely and in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (UK). Please refer to the [University’s Data Protection guidance for researchers](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/data-protection-6958.php#panel8627), and in particular, the [Data Protection checklist for researchers](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/toolkit/documents/uploads/checklist_gdpr_for_research.pdf). Please give specific consideration to whether any non-anonymised and/or personalised data will be generated and/or stored and what precautions you will put in place regarding access you might have to documents containing sensitive data about living individuals **that is not publicly available elsewhere**? If your research relates to the latter, please consider the consent of the subjects including instances where consent is not sought. If applicable, describe how data might be anonymised/pseudonymised for storage. |
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| **IMPORTANT NOTE:**Please confirm if your research requires you to **travel outwith the UK? YES/NO****If YES**, please provide the following confirmation:*I will comply with the requirements of the* [***University’s Overseas Travel Policy***](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/travel-overseas-2130.php)*, including* *obtaining permission to travel (where required by the policy), completion of a* [***risk assessment***](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/insurance-367.php#faq5)*and will obtain* [***University travel insurance cover***](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/insurance-367.php#panel6305)*.* **Please tick the box to confirm** [ ]  |

**It is the responsibility of all researchers to ensure that they follow the University’s various policies designed to ensure good research practice.** This includes providing appropriate participant information sheets and consent forms and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data. Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research activity should be notified to your School Research Ethics Officer and will require a new application for ethics approval.

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| **Please attach the following to this form:*** **Full proposal of relevant research project.** In order to speed up the process of review, applicants are advised to pay particular attention to those areas for which a ‘Yes’ has been ticked in the following form, either by providing an account of the procedures or training to be employed to ensure ethical practice, or an academic justification for the research strategy employed (or both).
* **Participant information sheet and consent form (where appropriate).** Templates for participant information sheets and consent forms can be found on the [Committee’s webpage](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/ethical-review-10645.php#panel10596). Please note that the Participant information sheet must include a weblink to the University [**‘Privacy Notice for Research Participants’**](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/about/privacy/research-participants-938.php)**.**

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| **Applicant Name:****Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­\_\_\_\_****Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Supervisor: Approved/Not approved***Notes:***Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­\_\_\_\_****Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

1. Applications for ethical approval of staff and PGR research projects should be submitted using the [online application process](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/ethics-system-worktribe-14748.php)  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Safeguarding in Research Code of Practice, section 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. It is University policy that children under the age of 16 should also have parental consent to participate in research projects, in addition to the consent obtained from the child. Research participants aged 16 and over in Scotland are not required to have parental consent to participate in research projects. However in most countries it is 18 years and in these circumstances, parental consent will also be required for participants aged 17 or under. If you are working with research participants between the ages of 16 – 18 it is essential that you check the local requirements regarding parental consent. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)