

Appendix D – Role Descriptions:

1. Supervisors

Supervisors of research (regardless of level, whether undergraduate or postgraduate):

- have a clear responsibility to ensure that the highest standards of research integrity and ethical conduct are met in the research;
- must actively participate in the ethical review process by ensuring that applications are complete and ready for ethical review;
- must seek to foster a culture of integrity and openness; and
- must ensure that those they are supervising have the appropriate skills, understanding and support to conduct the research as described

Role Descriptions may be edited by College/Department RECs to reflect local circumstances but must meet the standards outlined in the Research Ethics Framework and the REC Standard Operating Procedure.

2. Research Ethics Committee Chair

Purpose of the role

REC Chairs are required to ensure that high quality ethical review is carried out within their College/Department and to promote a culture of good practice in research.

Specific requirements

The Chair must be a senior member of academic staff (normally Senior Lecturer or above) with experience in research ethics review and a knowledge of research ethics principles. The Chair must receive appropriate support from the College Executive Group. A co or vice-Chair may be appointed. The co or vice-Chair may be a junior member of staff where this is considered to be a development opportunity.

Key Responsibilities

- Scheduling the REC's business
- Ensuring that the REC's Standard Operating Procedure is written, published, implemented, reviewed and amended as necessary
- Chairing REC meetings, including ensuring that decisions are clearly recorded and actioned, approving minutes and facilitating the work of the REC as a cohesive group
- Processing applications as described in the REC Standard Operating Procedure, providing competent and timely review
- Maintaining an awareness of Equality & Diversity, ensuring that applicants and members are treated fairly and equally regardless of age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or ethnicity
- Providing training and support for REC members and Department Ethics Officers as required
- Working with the Research Ethics and Governance Manager, recruiting and appointing an independent member to the REC
- Undertaking training and development as appropriate to the role
- Membership of the University Ethics Committee
- Alerting the Research Ethics and Governance Manager where there may be an actual or perceived conflict of interest
- Disseminating relevant ethics and good practice guidance to researchers within the College, encouraging a culture of integrity and ethical practice

- Working with the Research Ethics and Governance team to improve ethical review processes and systems, to identify training, policy and guidance needs, and to develop guidance as relevant

Term of office

The term of office will normally be three years, renewable for further terms.

Appointed by: PVC (or ADR if delegated) of the relevant College

Note that REC Member and Department Ethics Officer roles may be interchangeable or in practice may both be combined and held by one individual.

3. Research Ethics Committee Member (Reviewer)

Purpose of the role

REC members are required to provide high quality ethical review according to the relevant procedures, and to promote a culture of good practice in research. Depending on the College and REC structure, this role and the role of Department Ethics Officer may be interchangeable.

Specific requirements

The REC member must be a researcher with a basic knowledge of research ethics as applied to the research within their area of expertise. REC members will be expected to undertake induction into the role.

Key Responsibilities

- Processing applications as described in the REC Standard Operating Procedure, providing competent and timely review
- Maintaining an awareness of Equality & Diversity, ensuring that applicants and members are treated fairly and equally regardless of age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or ethnicity
- Escalating queries to Chair of Research Ethics Committee or to the Research Ethics & Governance team, recognising when it is appropriate to escalate rather than responding directly
- Undertaking training and development as appropriate to the role
- Identifying training, policy and guidance needs within the College/Department or REC
- Disseminating relevant ethics and good practice guidance to researchers within the College, encouraging a culture of integrity and ethical practice
- Alerting the Chair of the REC where there may be an actual or perceived conflict of interest

Term of office

The term of office will normally be three years, renewable for further terms.

Appointed by: REC Chair (if delegated by the PVC or ADR of the relevant College)

4. Department Ethics Officer

Purpose of the role

The role holder will act as the first point of contact for ethics queries within the academic department, provide high quality ethical review according to the relevant procedures and promote a culture of good practice in research. Depending on the College and REC structure, this role and the role of REC Member (ethics reviewer) may be interchangeable.

Specific requirements

The Department Ethics Officer will be a member of academic staff with some knowledge of research ethics as applied to the research carried out in the department. Ethics Officers will be expected to undertake induction into the role.

Key Responsibilities

- Act as first point of contact for ethics queries within the Department
- Processing applications as described in the REC Standard Operating Procedure, providing competent and timely review
- Maintaining an awareness of Equality & Diversity, ensuring that applicants and members are treated fairly and equally regardless of age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or ethnicity
- Escalate queries to Chair of Research Ethics Committee or to Research Ethics & Governance team, recognising when it is appropriate to escalate rather than responding directly.
- Undertaking training and development as appropriate to the role
- Identifying training, policy and guidance needs within the Department
- Disseminating relevant ethics and good practice guidance to researchers within the College, encouraging a culture of integrity and ethical practice
- Alerting the Chair of the REC where there may be an actual or perceived conflict of interest

Term of office

The term of office will normally be three years, renewable for further terms.

Appointed by: REC Chair or Head of Department