



Queen Mary Ethics of Research Committee

Queen Mary Ethics of Research Committee is a committee of Senate.

Terms of reference

1. To provide a forum for the independent review of research ethics in the University.
2. To review and advise on University research policies, and to provide a source of advice on ethical issues arising from their implementation. In particular to consider research ethics issues in the light of the University's mission and values, and to ensure that those policies provide an ethical framework for research within the University.
3. To approve policies, procedures and guidelines for the consideration of all proposals for research that involve human participants¹ and materials derived from human participants, and which are to be undertaken by staff or students of the University, including the identification of criteria for low risk and high risk applications.
4. To monitor and report to Senate on the implementation of research policies and to advise Senate on any other matters of relevance referred to it by Senate.
5. To provide a pool of expertise that could be used if appropriate to contribute to investigative panels in cases of alleged research misconduct.
6. To assure itself that appropriate training in the ethics of research is available to staff and students.
7. To establish and maintain the membership of the Research Ethics Review Panels.
8. To monitor the work of the Research Ethics Review Panels and to consider reports on ethical approval granted by the Review Panels and through the low risk system.
9. To consider research ethics applications that meet the criteria for being high risk or that are complex, and those applications referred to it by the Review Panels.
10. To consider relevant external developments relating to research ethics and to identify any implications and required actions for the University and the Committee's work.
11. To refer researchers who submit proposals which require consideration by an NHS, or other specialist committee, to the appropriate committee if a Review Panel has not already done so.
12. To report to Senate on its work and to make reports to the Vice Principal's Research Advisory Group for its information.

¹ For the purpose of the Committee's terms of reference, '*research which involves human participants*' should be interpreted in the broadest sense, i.e. student work, quantitative and qualitative studies involving questionnaires and interviews etc and not limited to, for example scientific experiments involving human subjects. This is further confirmed in the University's Policy on Research Ethics.

Membership of QMERC Main Committee

- An external member of Council (Chair), nominated by Council.
- An internal member of academic staff (Deputy Chair)
- A representative of Queen Mary Senior Executive, nominated by the Principal.
- Up to thirteen academic staff members, including three from each of the three Faculties of the University (Humanities and Social Sciences, Science and Engineering, Medicine and Dentistry), one from Professional Services and one student representative, nominated by the President of the Students' Union
- Up to three further co-opted external members.
- Up to three further co-opted members drawn from the staff of the University.

Each member (except the Chair) also serves on a Review Panel, as below.

Quoracy

Seven members comprise a quorum.

Secretariat

The Research Ethics Facilitator will be a member of administrative staff of the University.

In attendance

The following may be in attendance at meetings of QMERC:

- Representatives from the Joint Research Management Office
- Researchers invited to discuss their proposals and other matters with the Committee.
- Other staff and students of the University with the agreement of the Chair.

Meetings

- 3 times per year.

Research Ethics Review Panels

The six Review Panels report to the Queen Mary Ethics of Research Committee and provide independent consideration of applications for research ethics approval for studies involving human participants.

Terms of reference

1. To consider applications for research ethics and decide, on behalf of the University, whether or not ethical approval should be granted. This approval may be conditional or based on specified recommendations.
2. To identify issues for report or escalation to the QMERC.
3. To make reports to QMERC on its work as applicable.
4. To identify those proposals that require consideration by an NHS Research Ethics Committee or other specialist Committee, and advise researchers or refer them to the relevant Committee.

Membership

Across all Review Panels, there is membership representative of each Faculty, and each Panel has at least one member from each Faculty.

- A QMREC academic staff member, or lay member, as Chair
- A QMREC member from another Faculty, or lay member as Deputy Chair
- At least two, and up to six, academic staff members, at least one of which is from the third Faculty.
- At least one lay member.

Secretariat

The Research Ethics Facilitator will be a member of administrative staff of the University.

Quoracy

Three members comprise a quorum, including the Chair or Deputy. Written comments submitted in advance accepted.

In attendance

The following may be in attendance at meetings of Review Panel:

- Representatives from the Joint Research Management Office
- Researchers invited to discuss their proposals and other matters with the Committee.
- Other staff and students of the University with the agreement of the Chair.
- New Panel members in training, acting as observers

Meetings

- 2 times per year

Devolved School Research Ethics Committees (DSREC) Sub-Committee

This sub-committee has been established to accommodate the growing popularity for applications for generic approval to establish a REC at School or Departmental level within Faculties. Not only does this sub-committee review generic applications all DSREC Chairs/Deputies are invited and it will act as a forum to share best practice and overcome challenges. DSRECs are devolved sub-committees of QMERC who are set up to receive and approve low-risk research studies within their area of expertise.

Terms of reference

1. To consider applications to establish a DSREC and decide, on behalf of the University, whether or not generic approval should be granted. This approval may be conditional or based on specified recommendations. The review will always consider the DSREC's proposed Terms of Reference.
2. To prepare reports and write minutes of the DSREC Sub-Committee meetings, to be submitted to the QMERC.

Membership

- A QMREC academic staff member, as Chair
- A QMREC member from another Faculty
- DSREC Chairs and/or Deputies and/or member representative

Secretariat

The Research Ethics Facilitator will be a member of administrative staff of the University.

Quoracy

Three members comprise a quorum, including the Chair or Deputy.

In attendance

The following may be in attendance at meetings of Review Panel:

- Representatives from the Joint Research Management Office
- Researchers invited to discuss their proposals and other matters with the Committee.
- Other staff and students of the University with the agreement of the Chair.
- New Panel members in training, acting as observers

Meetings

- 3 times per year.