

Quality Code for Higher Education

Terms of Reference – Ethics Committee

Chair

Director of Higher Education & Skills

Reports to:

Higher Education Learning & Teaching Committee

Terms of Reference

Accountable for:

- Considering all research proposals involving access to human participants and all data collected about them, before commencement of data collection
- Reviewing all research proposals involving members of staff or students at the College, with authority to approve or reject the proposed research
- Maintaining confidentiality of individual proposal details and feedback

Responsible for:

- Protecting the rights, safety, dignity, well-being of potential research participants (including staff, students and general public) to facilitate and promote ethical research that is of potential benefit to participants, science and society subjects
- To provide independent advice to participants, researchers, funders, sponsors, employers, care organisations and professionals on the extent to which proposals for research studies comply with recognised ethical standards
- Promoting professional responsibility and accountability within the research domain
- Granting ethical approval or rejection of research undertaken within the College
- Providing constructive feedback to applicants
- Co-opting particular expertise as appropriate
- Observing legal and ethical requirements in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 to ensure the safety of all those associated with the research

Consulted on:

- All ethical issues related to research within the College
- Potential ethical issues within learning, teaching and assessment

Mode of Operation:

- Committee meetings will be held every semester, or ad hoc as requested, throughout the academic year.
- If a member is unable to attend a meeting then comments must be sent in lieu to the Chair.
- An annual list of meetings will be placed in the College HE Quality Cycle.
- Written feedback will be given to proposers within two weeks of the Committee meeting.
- Decisions by the Committee to approve a project will need to be unanimous. Where unanimity is not reached, the proposal will be referred to the Vice Principal.
- The Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, call upon any other person they consider suitable to assist them with their decision.
- Chair's action may be given when a proposal is resubmitted following completion of amendments requested by the Ethics Committee; the Chair may request such revised proposals to be seen again by the full Committee.

Complaints Procedure:

- See Code of Practice on Research Misconduct (appendix to HE Quality Code)

Composition and Membership:

Chair
HE Administrator
HE Course staff member
QI Representative