Faculty of Health and Medicine

Ethical Approval Processes for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Students

1. Any coursework (assignments, essays, projects, dissertations) involving the generation of data from human participants (questionnaires, collection of samples etc.) requires ethical review. This review takes place at Divisional level, and is reported to the Chair of FHMREC.

2. The relevant form can be downloaded here: FHMREC UG/tPG form. If preferred, Divisions may develop their own forms or customise the FHMREC form, in discussion with the Chair of FHMREC. Please contact Diane Hopkins in this instance.

3. The process of approval is as follows:
   - Any undergraduate or taught postgraduate research project will take place in the context of a particular module, and therefore there will be either a module convenor or academic supervisor responsible for the project. They should discuss the need for ethical review with the student(s) concerned.
   - The student should fill out the application form, in consultation with their convenor/supervisor, and both should sign the declaration at the bottom of the form.
   - The application is submitted to the Head of Division for consideration. Students should be made aware of the timescales involved (particularly where amendments need to be made to the proposed project before it begins). If the Head of Division is satisfied with the application they sign off indicating their approval.
   - If the Head of Division feels it appropriate, an application may be referred to the Chair of FHMREC for further advice and guidance.
   - If the student applicant requires a letter to confirm they have received ethical approval for their project, an approval letter should be provided, signed by the Head of Division. An example letter can be found here.
   - Once the application has been approved, and only then, data collection can begin.
   - One copy of the signed application form is given back to the student, and the original filed in the Division.
   - One copy of the approval letter (if required) is filed in the Division, and the original given to the student.
   - The application forms and approval letters should be kept by the Division for a minimum of 5 years.
   - A full list of projects, with students’ names, details of any relevant discussions or issues and date of approval should be forwarded to the Chair of FHMREC (via Diane Hopkins) as soon as possible after approval. These will be reviewed by the Chair of FHMREC as they are received. Although it is anticipated that there will rarely be a problem identified, the Chair of FHMREC reserves the right to halt a project (temporarily or permanently) if upon scrutiny there is any ethical issue of concern, and if appropriate, discuss at FHMREC.
   - A list of project titles, student names and dates of approval will be collated and reported to UREC on a termly basis.