

# PRD1. Policy and Procedures for Ethics in Research

## 1. Scope

This document sets out the general framework, principles, guidance, procedures, and responsibilities in relation to ethics in research conducted with Human participants.

CITY ULE's approach to research ethics requires that all research involving human participants and personal data should be reviewed, and research ethics approval obtained, before any data collection commences. If in doubt about what academic activities constitute research that requires ethical review and approval, researchers should seek guidance from the relevant Departmental Ethics Coordinator.

CITY ULE does not have facilities, or subject-relevant academic departments, to conduct research with non-human animals, human tissue and Clinical Trials with drugs or medical devices, and therefore the current procedures for ethical review and approval do not cover these types of research activities. Researchers who may lead any research activity that falls within the above categories, and would want to obtain ethics approval should seek guidance on alternative routes from the relevant Departmental Ethics Coordinator.

Research with Humans and personal data conducted by CITY ULE staff in general or staff in its Research Centers or undergraduate/postgraduate taught students or Doctorate candidates enrolled in a University of York's degree programme should be in agreement with:

- the University of York's Research [Code of practice on ethics - Staff home, University of York](#),
- [Code of Practice on Research Integrity - Staff home, University of York](#),
- [The general data protection regulation - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)
- The EU AI Act [EPRS\\_BRI\(2021\)698792\\_EN.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#) and
- the requirements and standards of practice set out in guidelines published by scientific societies, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), funding agencies and other relevant bodies.

## 2. CITY ULE Ethics in Research Guiding Principles

CITY ULE's main guiding principle for research with humans and personal data is to avoid any harm or distress to any individual directly or indirectly involved in the research activity. This guiding principle can be expanded into three further principles:

1. Respect for the participant's dignity, rights, safety and well-being.
2. Respect for the safety and well-being of those carrying out the research.
3. Consideration of the impact of the research activity on the wider society, and the natural environment.

Additional Guidance on the interpretation of these principles can be sought in the following sources:

- European Commission document on [Ethics in Social Science and Humanities](#) ,
- European Commission document on [Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#),
- [BPS Code of Human Research Ethics | BPS](#), with supplementary guidance on the [Use of social media data](#),
- For Greece, [legal framework for research involving primary and secondary schools](#).

Research conducted outside Greece should take into consideration political, social and cultural sensitivities, and should as well comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the country/countries in question.

### 3. Research Ethics Governance Structures

In line with the University of York's approach, CITY ULE implements a devolved system for conducting ethical review and approval. This system comprises:

- individual Departmental Ethics Committees and
- an institutional-level Ethics Coordinator.

Each department has a research Ethics Coordinator, who is responsible for the administration of the procedure on a day-to-day basis, and a pool of ethics reviewers who conduct the ethical review of research projects submitted to the department. Any CITY ULE member of staff, who has received appropriate training, may become an ethics reviewer. The role of the departmental Ethics Coordinators involves:

- effective allocation of ethics reviewers,
- ensuring timely decisions on ethics applications,
- dealing with any conflict arising from the ethics review and approval process,
- keeping transparent and accountable records of the review & approval of ethics applications, and
- offering guidance and support to staff and students on any ethical matters relating to research.

Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that appropriate and high-quality procedures for ethics review and approval are in place in line with the principles set above; and that appropriate training and guidance is made available to staff and students. The lead researcher (e.g. the principal investigator or supervisor) is, however, the primarily responsible for upholding good ethics & integrity principles and practices when undertaking research activities.

The CITY ULE Ethics Coordinator is responsible for:

- ensuring that procedures are homogenised across departments,
- providing training, support and guidance on ethical issues in research when requested by the departmental Ethics Committees,
- promoting awareness and understanding of research ethical issues throughout the institution,
- monitoring the ethics review arrangements within departments, and
- reporting annually to the CITY ULE Research & Innovation Committee on the business undertaken by the Departmental committees, drawing attention to key issues.

### 4. Procedure for Research Ethics Review

The majority of research activities, conducted by staff members and undergraduate/postgraduate taught students and Doctorate candidates, which require ethical review and approval, will undergo CITY ULE's ethical procedures.

In some instances, research will require ethical approval by an outside body (e.g., Hospital Board, the Ministry of Education or a partner organisation, etc.). In such cases a judgement is required regarding the parity, in terms of scope and rigour, between the external and CITY ULE ethics review procedures, and the matter be referred to the relevant Departmental Ethics Committee.

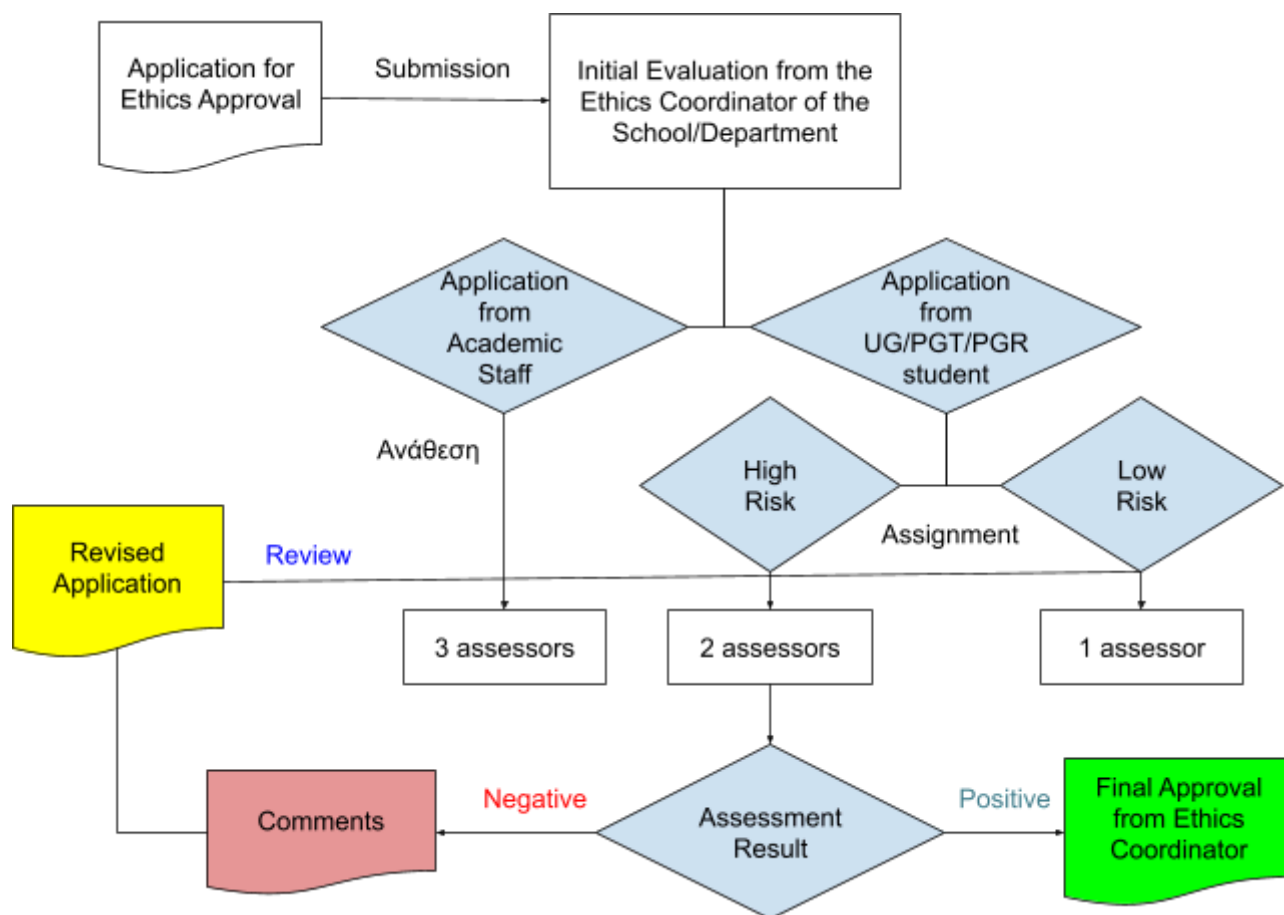
The researcher completes the standard Ethics Application Form and submits it along with any relevant documentation (e.g., Participant Information, Consent Forms etc) via the Ethics Submission Form (a link to each Departmental Ethics Application Form can be found at the Departmental Ethics websites). An application for ethics approval of a research project may only be submitted via one academic Department.

If a project involves staff from more than one Department, one Department must be selected as the channel through which ethics approval will be sought; the application cannot subsequently be submitted for ethics review in another Department. The Departmental Ethics Coordinator allocates academic reviewers depending on who is submitting the application and on a low/high risk assessment. There are three possible outcomes of the review process:

- Approved, or
- Compulsory Changes or
- Not Approved.

Ethics approval is required before any data collection involving human participants commences, and cannot be granted retrospectively.

The Diagram below illustrates the workflow of the Research Ethics Review & Approval Process:



The Ethics review procedure is based on the principles of reflection, quality, transparency and efficiency. On average, Departments should provide a decision on an ethics application within 10 working days from the original submission. However, delays can occur if a research ethics application form is not fully completed, if the ethics reviewers request more information or if an application is judged contentious.

In the rare event of a breach of CITY ULE Ethics Policy (e.g., a student who has not obtained research ethics approval for a completed research project), it may be dealt with under CITY ULE Policy for malpractice, impropriety or wrongdoing.