



Ethical review in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures

When is ethics approval needed?

Ethics approval is needed for all research with ethical issues, eg research involving human participants (interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, observations).

http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/info/70/ethics/100/does_my_project_need_ethical_approval

It is a requirement of the University's Research Ethics Policy that, for research where ethics approval is needed, that ethics approval is obtained before the fieldwork starts. Applying at least **six weeks** before the fieldwork is due to start is recommended, though researchers are welcome to apply earlier than this if they want to.

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ResearchEthicsPolicies>

Who conducts the ethical review?

The University Research Ethics Committee has delegated the review of research ethics applications within AHC to the Arts, Humanities and Cultures Faculty Research Ethics Committee, [AHC FREC](#). The committee consists of a number of experienced researchers as well as a lay member. The committee reviews roughly 26 applications each month.

Why is ethics approval needed?

Ethical review is not about preventing or making it difficult to carry out research, but about helping the researcher think through the ethical issues and how to deal with them. The risks and benefits for participants and also the researchers are considered.

The application forms and further information about the process

Researchers either complete the standard application form or the Proportionate (otherwise known as the 'light touch') form for low risk projects. Both forms and further information are available at <https://ris.leeds.ac.uk/research-ethics-and-integrity/application-process/>

Participant information sheets and consent forms

It's important that anyone invited to take part in a research project is given enough information to enable them to make an informed decision about whether they want to take part. It's standard practice to provide potential participants with an information sheet that introduces the project, explains why they've been invited to take part, what participation would involve, what the information would be used for and sets out any risks or benefits. They should be provided with the researcher's contact details so that they can get in touch if they have questions or change their mind about participating.

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/InvolvingResearchParticipants> - advice on approaching and recruiting research participants, sample consent documents

Research data management

It's important that any research data, especially data that relates to individual research participants is kept securely. In practice this usually means storing it on a University of Leeds server such as the researcher's N drive.

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ResearchDataManagement> - research data management

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ConfidentialityAnonymisation> - guidance on issues relating to confidentiality and anonymisation

Taught student modules

For taught student modules where the students are conducting similar, low risk projects, the module manager is able to apply for 'block' ethics approval from the FREC. Individual student applications are then reviewed locally rather than by the FREC. Further information about this process is available at <http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/UoLEthicsapplication>.

Further information

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/PlanningResearch> - guidance on planning a research project

<https://ris.leeds.ac.uk/research-ethics-and-integrity/other-resources/health-and-safety/>

- information about risk assessments and DBS checks.

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/InternetBasedResearch> - guidance on internet-based research

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ethicstraining> - research ethics training courses and workshops, both face to face and online.

Contact

Researchers are welcome to contact the generic AHC mailbox -

AHCResearchethics@leeds.ac.uk

Your email query will be forwarded from there to the relevant individual.

Erin Pickles, AHC FREC Research Administrator

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