

School of Business and Enterprise

School Guidelines for Ethical Practice in Research and Scholarship

Introduction

The University has the responsibility to maintain the highest ethical standards in research and scholarship through a culture of honesty, rigour, transparency and respect. In doing so it is required that every member of staff is aware of the policies and processes relating to ethical approval.

All research and scholarship involving animals, human participants, personal data or risk to the investigator requires independent ethical scrutiny. This requirement applies to all staff employed by the University, both academic and administrative, as well as to students, and to all research taking place within the University or under the auspices of the University.

Most of the activities for ethical review within UWS are devolved to Schools. Each School therefore has a responsibility to make sure that School and University ethical guidelines are available to every member of their staff and to ensure that all Programme teams are committed to raising awareness of the ethical implications of research and scholarship. These activities are overseen by the School of Business and Enterprise Ethics Committee that was formed to meet the minimum requirements in terms of reference and composition according to University Regulations and the UWS Guidelines for Ethical Practice in Research and Scholarship at:

https://www.uws.ac.uk/media/1419/uec_guidelines_for_ethical_practice_in_research_scholarship-refreshed_sept_2016.pdf.

The current School Ethics Committee membership is documented in Appendix 1.

This document provides an overview and guidance to the approach adopted within the School of Business and Enterprise for ethical scrutiny/approval of all research and scholarly activity.

Principles for good practice

Confidence in research and scholarship requires that they be conducted according to core elements of research integrity.

- **Honesty** in the intentions of the work; in acknowledging the work of others; reporting all the findings; and in making valid interpretations and claims.
- **Rigour** in choosing and adhering to appropriate methods; in drawing conclusions; and in communicating the results.
- **Transparency** in declaring conflicts of interest; in reporting data collection methods; in the analysis and interpretation of data; and in making findings widely available, including to the general public.
- **Respect and care** for all participants. All research and scholarship involving human participants, personal data or risk to the investigator requires independent ethical scrutiny. The purpose of this scrutiny is to protect the dignity, rights, welfare and safety of all participants, including the researcher, and to consider the legitimate interests of other individuals, bodies and communities associated with the research.

Ethical approval process

The School of Business and Enterprise acknowledges that varying levels of ethical consideration may be required for differing types of research and scholarly activity. Consequently processes have been designed to facilitate ethical screening, review, progress and amendment, specifically but not exclusively, of undergraduate student projects, postgraduate taught and research student projects and staff research activity. All research and scholarship involving animals, human participants, personal data or risk to the investigator requires independent ethical scrutiny.

For undergraduate and post-graduate taught projects it is advised that students consider and discuss ethical issues at the proposal stage with their supervisors. For research student projects it is advised that students discuss, at a first instance, ethical issues with their Director of Studies /Supervisor and if needed with a member of the School Ethics Committee.

It is required that all applications be submitted by the Principal Investigator to a School Ethics Committee via the online system at <https://uws.forms.ethicalreviewmanager.com>. In the case of student research the online application must first be reviewed and signed by the Supervisor and then submitted for review. This process is embedded in the online system The School Ethics Committee will distribute received applications to two independent reviewers. The review process can take up to 4 weeks.

Instructions and training on how to use the online Ethical Review Manager system is available at: <http://moodle.uws.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3394>

In cases where the School Ethics Committee cannot reach consensus, the application should be referred to the University Ethics Committee for further review and decision, a process that may take a total of 4-6 weeks. Where following discussion the applicant is dissatisfied with the final decision of the School Ethics Committee an appeal may be lodged, giving reasons, to the University Ethics Committee. The decision made by the University Ethics Committee will be the final one.

Ethical approval should be secured prior to any data collection activities. Retrospective ethics review i.e. request to approve research that has been commenced or completed, is not permitted.

Approved projects are required to be carried out in accordance with the original application and the conditions. If changes are made to the project whether these have an ethics impact or not e.g. engagement of different groups of participants, different recruiting methods, and a different approach to obtaining consent, then the School Ethics Committee must be informed immediately.

A similar process can be followed for staff research and scholarly activity where the initial consultation can involve a member of the School Ethics Committee.

Contact Details for ALL School Ethics Committee Enquiries

Unless otherwise instructed, all School Ethics Committee (SEC) enquiries should be made to: businessandenterpriseethics@uws.ac.uk

Appendix 1

School of Business and Enterprise School Ethics Committee (Membership)

Preamble

All Schools will be mindful of the need to consider ethical issues in undergraduate and postgraduate projects, in postgraduate research student programmes and in staff research activities, and to operate within the University's Ethics Policy. Each School shall have a School Ethics Committee, or should make arrangements with a partner School to have a joint School Ethics Committee.

The School Ethics Committee will operate within the framework set out by the University Ethics Committee, and where projects involve complex issues or vulnerable human subjects, shall refer matters to the University Ethics Committee for consideration.

Membership

Chair	Dr Athanassios Kourouklis
Vice Chair	Professor John Struthers
Ex-officio Members	Professor Moira Lewitt (Chair of University Ethics Committee) Professor Heather Tarbert Professor Edward Borodzicz
Appointed Members	Professor Robert Smith
External or Lay Members	Dr Gordon Heggie (School of Media, Culture & Society) Faye Duncan (SSD Manager, School of Media, Culture & Society)
Co-opted Members	Ana Paula Fonseca (Research Student Representative)
Administrative Support	Julia Deans (Administrative Assistant: Research & Enterprise)

Quorum

The quorum shall be one-third of the total membership, with at least one external in attendance per meeting

Terms of Reference

- To consider general ethical issues relating to School activity, specifically, but not exclusively, undergraduate student projects, postgraduate taught and research student projects, and staff research activity;
- To implement the University Ethics Committee Guidelines for Ethical Practice in Research and Scholarship;
- To refer high risk or complex applications to the University Ethics Committee, including projects where risks may be posed to the researchers themselves, e.g. in laboratory or field;
- To monitor the quality of ethical applications and ensure that the approval process is conducted in a fair and independent manner;
- To provide an annual report to the University Ethics Committee and to provide a summary of applications and minutes of meetings, quarterly;
- To ensure that students and staff are aware of the importance of considering ethical issues and of considering ethical issues and of the appropriate channels for seeking ethical approval

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least four times per annum, but may meet as often as required, particularly at peak periods (Masters Dissertations etc.).

Reporting

The Committee shall report to the School Board, and shall provide an Annual Report to the University Ethics Committee.