

Online research ethics submission system:

Instructions for supervisors and Departmental Approvers

on reviewing applications

CONTENTS

Overview	1
Review/approval routes	2
Receiving/accessing an application	2
Reviewing an application	3
i) Reviewing the ethics form	3
ii) Reviewing attachments	4
iii) Decision options.....	4
iv) 'Approval not required'	6

Any questions about the ethics review process should be directed to research.ethics@lse.ac.uk

If you have any technical problems please contact Research.systems@lse.ac.uk

Overview

The online Research Ethics Submissions System allows researchers (whether students or staff) to submit their ethics applications for review/approval by the appropriate approver (supervisor¹, Departmental ethics approver, or Research Ethics Committee).

Researchers log in to the **My Research** platform from which they can:

- Submit an ethics review application
- Log in at any time to check the status of their application
- Receive automatic notifications by email when any action is required
- Provide details of any external ethics review that the study will or has undergone

¹ The term '**supervisor**' is used throughout this guidance to encompass project/dissertation/thesis supervisor or academic mentor/advisor as appropriate.

Review/approval routes

Ethics review applications are automatically categorised as requiring either Departmental or Research Ethics Committee review/approval. This is determined by the researcher's answers to screen F of the form.

1) Departmental² review

Applications that raise few ethical issues will be automatically routed to Departmental review/approval.

For staff, such applications are reviewed by the Departmental ethics approver³.

For students, such applications are reviewed by the appropriate supervisor (who the student will need to name in B7 of the form).

In addition, applications submitted by **taught students** (UG or PGT) for **projects which are NOT for their dissertations**, will also be routed to Departmental review (even where the project includes elements that would normally require review/approval by the Research Ethics Committee).

2) Research Ethics Committee (REC) review

Applications for projects that include any of the following elements will be categorised as requiring review/approval by the Research Ethics Committee:

- sensitive topics;
- children or other vulnerable groups;
- research that poses a risk (whether physical or emotional/psychological) to either the participant or the researcher;
- deception or the withholding of information as to the true purpose of the research;
- where consent will **not** be obtained in writing⁴;
- the collection of any biometric or physiological data

Staff applications which require REC review are submitted directly to the Research Ethics Committee (they do not go to the Departmental ethics approver for review).

However, **all student applications will first be reviewed by the relevant supervisor** before being submitted (by the supervisor) to the REC.

Receiving/accessing an application

When a researcher (whether student or staff) submits an ethics review application, the relevant supervisor/approver will receive an automatic email notification that a review is required.

The email will include a link to access the application directly.

Alternatively, supervisors/approvers can log into the Salesforce Research Ethics app at any time to view the list of applications pending their review (or to view any previously actioned reviews).

The system can be accessed by going to:

² For reasons of simplicity the term 'Departmental' is used here to encompass research Centres and Institutes too.

³ A list of all Department/centre faculty ethics approvers can be found on the webpage [here](#).

⁴ There is an exception to this for staff/students in the Anthropology department

<https://lse360.lightning.force.com/> (we recommend using **Google Chrome**⁵)

Log in with your usual LSE network credentials⁶

Once logged in, click on the 'Research ethics' box.

Viewing the 'To action' or other project lists

On opening the app, under the **Home tab**, supervisors/approvers they will see their 'To Action' list, which should look like this:

Request	Due Date	Requester	Project	Review Type
1 35837		Staff Researcher	Amanda_Anthro low risk	Low Risk Ethics Review
2 35841		Staff Researcher	TEST AB	Low Risk Ethics Review
3 35843		Staff Researcher	Testing E2 options	Low Risk Ethics Review

This is a list of all of the applications that require their review and action. Once they have completed the necessary review/action, the application will move to the "Completed" tab.

Supervisors/approvers can also click on the "Research Projects" tab at the top of the page, where:

- the "My Research Projects" list view will display only their own research ethics applications (where they are the actual researcher, rather than the reviewer);
- the "All – Submitted" list view, where supervisors can view all applications submitted by or to them, and Department Approvers can view all applications submitted by them, as well as all applications submitted by students or staff in their departments.

For information: **administrative staff** (such as programme managers) can request access to the system so that they can help monitor student submissions. They can view the list of submissions and see the application status. However they cannot open individual review forms.

Reviewing an application

i) Reviewing the ethics form

To open a project/form to review, the supervisor/reviewer can either click on the link in the email notification they have received, or they can log into the system, as described above, and click on the 'Request' (i.e. reference) number.

⁵ If you experience any problems with cookies, please see the guidance [here](#)

⁶ If you presented with a choice of 'University Email Address' or 'LSE Staff Login', please use the LSE staff login

The form will open as per the screenshot below.

The supervisor/reviewer can scroll up and down to read the form; the form view can be expanded/changed by using the 'All' button in the bottom LH corner to toggle between different views, and/or they can click on the circle/arrows button on the top right of the form to expand the view (however in the latter case the 'Attachments' tab will no longer be visible, until the button is clicked again).

ii) Reviewing attachments

Click on the 'Attachments' tab to review the supporting documentation that the researcher has uploaded. This will normally comprise the participant information sheet/consent form, but may also include other supporting documents (e.g. a research outline, interview topic guide, etc.). **It is important that supervisors/reviewers check the informed consent document(s), and that these are in keeping with the [LSE informed consent guidance](#)/suggested templates. In particular, please check that what the researcher states in the consent form is consistent with what they state in the information sheet and in the ethics form (for example, relating to anonymity).**

iii) Decision options

Having reviewed the form and attachments, the supervisor/approver needs to select/submit their decision.

In the 'Scorecard' section on the left, click on the down arrow under the 'Decision' button – this will display the decision options. These are slightly different depending on whether the application has been categorised as Departmental Review, REC review, or 'Approval not required':

Departmental reviews:

For Departmental reviews there are two decision options: to approve, or to request changes from the researcher.

(For taught student projects which are not for dissertations, there is also an *optional* third decision to 'Refer to REC' – see below)

i) If you have comments for the researcher to respond to: select 'Changes required', and then in the box below add the comments and/or the requested changes. (Note that the box can be expanded by dragging from the bottom right corner.)

The screenshot shows a 'Scorecard' interface for a 'Departmental Review'. At the top, there's a 'Scorecard' title and a 'Departmental Review' tab. Below this is a 'Decision' section with a dark blue header. Inside, there's a red asterisk followed by 'Decision'. Below that are two buttons: 'Approved' and 'Changes required'. At the bottom of the section is a red 'Submit Review' button.

Once you have entered your comments click the 'Submit' button. The researcher will receive an automated email notification that further action is required. The email will contain the supervisor/departmental approver's comments. The researcher will be able to re-edit their application and/or supporting documents and re-submit. Once the researcher re-submits their revised application, the supervisor/approver will then receive another email notification. They can approve (or request yet further changes).

ii) To approve: If the supervisor/departmental approver is happy to approve the application they can select the 'Approved' option, enter a comment, and then click 'Submit review'. The researcher will then receive an automated email notification confirming that their ethics review has been approved.

iii) Taught students NON-dissertation research projects: ethics applications submitted by taught students for projects which are not for their dissertations do not require REC review even if they include some elements which would normally require REC review (as per the elements described on p.2, §2). Supervisors are expected to discuss any ethical issues with the student and agree appropriate safeguards before opting to approve. Should the supervisor have any serious concerns that have not been resolved after discussion with the student there is an **optional decision to 'Refer to REC'**.

Continued....

Applications categorised as requiring REC review/approval:

For applications categorised as requiring REC review⁷ there are two decision options:

- i) **To request further information or changes:** to request further information/changes from the researcher (in the same way as for Departmental review applications above), or
- ii) **to refer to the REC.**

Supervisors/Departmental approvers do not have the option to approve applications which have been categorised as requiring REC review.

The screenshot shows a 'Scorecard' interface. At the top, it says 'Scorecard' and 'REC Review Required' in a red box. Below this is a dark blue bar with the word 'Decision' in white. Underneath is a section titled '*Decision' with a red asterisk. It contains two buttons: 'Send to REC' (light blue) and 'Changes required' (dark blue).

To refer to REC: if the supervisor is happy with the application they should select the 'Send to REC' decision option. **Please provide a few comments to indicate your support of the application and/or any concerns.** Then click 'Submit'. The application is then assigned to the REC for review/approval.

Where the Committee have comments for a student to respond to, the supervisor will receive a copy of these.

iv) 'Approval not required'

Screen C determines whether or not ethics approval is required. If the student has answered NO to both questions C1 (a-d) and C2, the application will be categorised as 'Approval not required' (pending confirmation).

The form will automatically be sent to the project supervisor (for students)/ethics approver (for staff) who should review the details (for instance, checking that the data collection described in A4 is consistent with the answers given in C1/C2).

The screenshot shows a 'Scorecard' interface. At the top, it says 'Scorecard' and 'Approval Not Required Review' in a blue box. Below this is a dark blue bar with the word 'Decision' in white. Underneath is a section titled '*Decision' with a red asterisk. It contains two buttons: 'Confirm approval not required' (light blue) and 'Changes required' (dark blue).

The supervisor/ethics approver will have two decision options:

- i) to confirm that approval is not required, or
- ii) that changes to the form are required.

Once the decision is submitted the researcher will receive the corresponding email notification.

⁷ Reminder that applications submitted by staff (academic or research) which require REC review will go directly to the REC for review, they will not go to the Departmental ethics approver.