

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question What should I do before submitting an application to Faculty REC?

Answer *Before submitting an application to the Faculty REC you should ensure that you have completed the following steps:*

- *Finalise your study protocol and all supporting documents*
- *Arrange for Peer Review of your proposal in accordance with School and University regulations*
- *Arrange for Health and Safety and/or Risk Assessment of your proposal in accordance with University regulations*
- *Identify which type of application to the Faculty REC is required by using the Proportionate Review Screening Tool. This is available on the Faculty REC website.*
- *Complete the relevant application form.*

Question Once I have successfully completed the Peer Review and Health and Safety/Risk Assessment processes, finalised my study documents and completed the relevant application form, what do I do next?

Answer *The Chief Investigator should sign the application form (electronic signature is acceptable) and submit it, along with all supporting documents, for review.*

Question My application is suitable for Proportionate Review and I am an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught student, how do I submit my application for review?

Answer *Your application and supporting documents must be reviewed by your Supervisor(s) and one other independent member of staff from within your School. Your Supervisor is responsible for arranging this review and submitting the necessary paperwork to [facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk](mailto:facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk) for acknowledgement. You may not begin your project until you receive an acknowledgement letter from the Faculty REC.*

Question My application is suitable for Proportionate Review and I am a Postgraduate Research student or Staff member, how do I submit my application for review?

Answer *You should submit your completed application form and all supporting documents to [facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk](mailto:facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk). The Research Ethics Officer will arrange for review and notify you of the decision within 10 working days of receipt of a valid application. You may be asked to provide clarification or revised documents before a final decision can be issued. You may not begin your project until you receive a letter from the Faculty REC confirming ethical approval.*

Question My application requires review by the Full Faculty REC, how do I know when the meetings will take place and when is the last date I can submit my application before the meeting?

Answer *If your application requires review by the Full Faculty REC, it will be reviewed at a meeting of the Full Faculty REC. These are held monthly and details on meeting dates and associated cut-off dates are published on the Faculty REC website. You should submit your completed application form and all supporting documents to [facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk](mailto:facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk) on or before the cut-off date of the meeting at which*

*you wish your project to be reviewed.*

Question Can a student be the Chief Investigator on a project?

Answer *No, the Chief Investigator must be a permanent member of University staff. This is usually the main Supervisor for student projects.*

Question Are there templates for study documents, such as the research protocol, Participant Information Sheet or Consent Form?

Answer *There is currently no template for a study protocol, although work is being done to develop example templates for various study types. In the meantime, a protocol should follow the structure below:*

- *Title*
- *Abstract/Summary*
- *Background or rationale of the project*
- *Aims and objectives of the project*
- *Project design and methods (including statistical and data analysis)*
- *Ethical Considerations*
- *Benefits of the study*
- *Information on resources and costs*

*Templates and guidance for an Information Sheet and Consent Form have been developed and are available from the Faculty REC website.*

*These should be adapted to fit with your project proposal.*

Question How will I know when I have ethical approval?

Answer *You will receive a letter from the Faculty REC confirming that your study has been reviewed and approved. You must not begin your research until you receive this letter. Please note that you may be asked to provide additional information or amend study documents following the initial review and you will need to provide this for further review before an approval letter will be issued.*

Question What else should I consider when submitting my application for review?

- Answer
- *Ensure that you provide consistent information in your application form, protocol and supporting documents.*
  - *Put a version number and date on all study documents as this will assist in document control if changes are required at any stage.*
  - *Use appropriate logos on participant-facing documents.*
  - *You should proof-read your documents for typographical errors or administrative inconsistencies.*
  - *Don't forget to include a signature field on your Consent Form.*

Question I have ethical approval for my research, but need to make a change, what do I do?

Answer *You need to inform the Faculty REC of any proposed changes and have these approved before you implement them. You do not need to halt your study as you can continue your research in accordance with the approved protocol while you seek approval for the changes. You should complete the Notification of Amendment form and send this along*

with any new or revised documents to [facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk](mailto:facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk).  
Don't forget to amend the version number and date on any documents submitted.  
The submission will be reviewed by the appropriate Faculty REC representative(s) and a decision letter issued.  
If the amendment is approved, it may be implemented. If the amendment is not approved, you must proceed with the study as it was originally approved.

Question It is 12 months since I received ethical approval, will the Faculty REC expect to be informed about my progress?

Answer Yes, the Faculty REC will expect to receive a progress report on an annual basis for the duration of your study.  
There is an Annual Progress Report form available on the Faculty REC website.  
This should be completed by the Chief Investigator for the study and sent to [facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk](mailto:facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk).  
The first submission should be made 12 months after the date of the letter confirming ethical approval for the project.  
A letter of acknowledgement will be issued by the Research Ethics Officer.

Question I have finished my research project; do I need to tell the Faculty REC?

Answer Yes, the Faculty REC will expect to be notified when you complete your project as this will allow the file to be closed by the Research Ethics Officer.  
There is a Notification of End of Study form available on the Faculty REC website.  
This should be completed by the Chief Investigator for the study and sent to [facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk](mailto:facultyrecepts@qub.ac.uk) within 6 months of study completion.  
A letter of acknowledgement will be issued by the Research Ethics Officer.

Question Are there other resources that will help me with my research proposal and ethics application?

Answer There are useful resources online to support your evaluation of ethics and help shape your research project.  
For example, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) has useful guidance on a Framework for Responsible Innovation. The AREA model (Anticipate, Reflect, Engage and Act) brings you through the key issues you might need to think about in planning your project:  
<https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/index.cfm/research/framework/>.  
The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) also has extensive guidance, resources and case studies that are relevant across disciplines in EPS:  
<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/>.