



University of
Chester

Quality and Standards Manual

Handbook G: Postgraduate Research Degrees

Ethical Approval for PGR Thesis Projects

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1. Purpose

A Student must obtain any required ethical approval for their research project, including any approval required from relevant external organisations. Further information is available in the [Research Governance Handbook](#).

2. Ethical Approval

2.1 Before starting the research project, the student and their supervisors must carry out an Analysis of Ethical Considerations.

2.2 If the Analysis of Ethical Considerations identifies that ethical approval for the project is required, the student must follow the procedures in the [Research Governance Handbook](#) and the [Research Integrity](#) information on Portal.

3. Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC)

3.1 Each Faculty has a research ethics committee (FREC) (or similar) which examines and approves project proposals from students. The Faculty can delegate this responsibility to academic departments.

3.2 Each FREC sets its own application procedures. These are available on each Faculty's Portal page:

- [Arts, Humanities and Social Science](#)
- [Health, Medicine and Society](#)
- [Science, Business and Enterprise](#)

3.3 The role and membership of a FREC is covered in the [Research Governance Handbook](#)

3.4 After considering the application, the FREC informs the student and the Principal Supervisor in writing:

- if ethical approval for the project has been granted;
- any conditions or limitations placed on the project;
- if approval is not granted, whether a modified proposal can be resubmitted;

- if further information or clarification is needed before a decision is made.

3.5 The FREC must meet as often as practicable to ensure that students are not unduly delayed.

3.6 The FREC's decision to approve or deny ethical approval is an academic judgement and is final. The student has no right of appeal. The student can submit a revised project proposal.

4. Approval by an External Organisation

4.1 See [Research Governance Handbook](#)

5. Research Conducted outside England

5.1 See [Research Governance Handbook](#)

6. Failure to Follow the Research Ethics Process for PGR Theses / Projects

6.1 If the student:

- does not follow the processes for obtaining ethical approval for the project;
- conducts research that needs ethical approval before approval has been given;
- breaches the approval terms

they may have broken University research regulations (see **Policy on Academic and Research Integrity**).