# **Guidance on completing a generic application**

Generic applications can be submitted for a research project which falls within a taught module that covers within it more than one sufficiently similar research project. This could be 1) a cohort of students working on a single research project, 2) individual students undertaking slightly different projects but are sufficiently similar in terms of risk, aims and methodology.

This document has been produced to help guide University of Wrexham Staff through the process of applying for generic ethical approval to cover a group of student projects. You can apply for generic approval if students are undertaking either a single research project as part of a closely supervised group or an individual project which may be closely related to other projects. The details and expectations of these projects can found in [the procedure for undergraduate and taught postgraduate project.](https://mailglyndwrac.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/EthicsSystemDocuments/ESknju-NvGlPsJ4DQ6gKjKABKlLlubZNlVVYpZuGln84pw?e=52pwOP)

Generic applications should form a framework for the research projects being conducted by a group of students. The generic application should be the base of the framework which students have to work within. The generic application does not have to be restrictive but must set the boundaries for the level of risk, the methodology and the population.

The research methodologies used for the individual studies within a research programme should be sufficiently similar that allow a single assessment of the ethical issues. Undergraduate and taught postgraduate projects falling within a generic application should be of a minimal risk.

Generic application can only be submitted through the [Wrexham Research Ethics System](https://wris.wrexham.ac.uk/main/home) (WRES). Staff should refer to the [User Guide for Staff Applications](https://mailglyndwrac.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/EthicsSystemDocuments/EVTp1AWYQO9JvTBYIkigPCYBIaDtaNq1QFcN1mZWrNdqXw?e=VcNjOY) for guidance on how to access the system and start a new application.

Supervisors should consider the following before submitting a generic application:

* Staff should ensure that all of the proposed projects under the generic approval are classified as minimal risk. If the pedagogical strategy of a course requires students to undertake projects with levels of intrinsic risk, then the programme leader or supervisor should discuss with the research ethics team to ensure a generic module application can be submitted.
* The programme leader/ supervisor will prepare a single application for ethical review of all research activities to be undertaken as part of the module.
* The programme leader/ supervisor will draw up a list of approved research methodologies to be used in the student research projects and ensure that the course curriculum includes tuition in the ethical issues associated with these methodologies.
* The programme leader/ supervisor will ensure that each student has adequate supervision in designing their research projects using the defined list of methodologies.
* The application will be submitted to the University Research Ethics Committee, the Chair will determine if the proposed research projects can be classified as a generic research application and determine if the Faculty Research Ethics Committee can review the application.
* Students working under the approval of a generic application have to be included in the application before data collection can commence. Students can be added to the approval as an amendment in the online system. It is the responsibility of the programme leader/ supervisor to inform all the student investigators of the terms of the approval.
* The maximum permitted time for a generic application is three years.

## **Completing the sections for a Generic Application within the Wrexham Research Ethics System**

### Project Details

Section 1 will ask you all the relevant details about your project.

* Only staff members can submit a generic application, so please ensure you select ‘Staff’ from the **Are you \*** drop down option.
* If there is more than one Supervisor involved in the generic application, please list them.
* Do not add individual student names in this section
* Add in any external collaborators to the application
* Ensure that your project start date takes into consideration the time it will take to obtain ethical approval
* The maximum permitted time for a generic approval is three years, therefore new cohorts of students can be added each year.
* If the generic application is funded please provide details of: Funder Name, Amount Awarded, Role on Project, Funder Award Date
* If one research project is funded within the generic application, a individual ethics application will have to be submitted.
* Make sure ‘YES’ is selected for **Is this a generic application to cover a number of student projects? (Note: Students cannot apply for a generic application). \***

### Generic Application

This section of the form allows you to detail the projects the students will be undertaking and how they fit within the framework of a generic application. You should provide adequate detail for each question. Please note that if enough information is not listed in the application - or if the projects are considered inappropriate for generic approval - then your application might be returned.

* You will be first asked to detail the aims and objectives of the projects covered by the generic application and how these projects fit into the scope of a generic application. Generic applications should form a framework for the research projects being conducted by a group of students. The application should be the base of the framework which students have to work within. The generic application does not have to be restrictive but must set the boundaries for the level of risk, the methodology and the population.
* You will be asked how students will be supervised throughout the research projects. It is essential that you consider how each student will be supervised throughout the project, including how often a meeting will be arranged with students and how their progress will be recorded. Procedures should be in place to ensure supervisor are communicating the restrictions of the collective approval effectively for large collective applications.
* Students undertaking a piece of research should have had adequate training in both research methods and research ethics before data collection commences. The form will ask you to detail what training has been offered**. Y**ou should detail any workshops, seminars or modules that the students will complete before the research projects begin.
* The application will ask you what methodologies will be used. A generic application does not have to be limited to one methodology, but the projects must be sufficiently similar to enable a single assessment of the ethical issues. You should detail all the methodologies that will be available for students to use**.** Providing a summary of how each research method/ design will be used will help the committee assess the overall application and what ethical implications there might be.
* The application will ask you about the participants involved and the recruitment strategies in place. You should explain these in as much detail as possible. If there are different recruitment techniques, they should be discussed and outlined in the form. If different students are using different methods and different sample sizes**,** they should be listed in the form. Where possible students should adopt the same recruitment strategies and be using similar populations to be considered under a generic application.
* The University has templates for both [consent forms](https://mailglyndwrac.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/EthicsSystemDocuments/Eb_Z9qxZpVtMnx1X6xb3jYUBUSj8W9pesOQUgih8aR8wcg?e=HQgZBB) and [participant information sheets](https://mailglyndwrac.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/EthicsSystemDocuments/EYFMzm1qKi1Ppr_idY7UqM4BEZm_A-uH87gbbeWiHR-b5A?e=dOv26q). The consent process for all projects should be detailed in the application. Consent forms and information sheets for all projects should be uploaded as attachments to the project. If these have not yet been developed, they can be submitted as an amendment once approval is in place.
* The application will ask you to list the names of the students who will be covered under the generic application, where possible also add in their individual project titles in this section. Please note that students who are not listed on the application will not be covered by the approval**.** You can add new students to a project as an amendment once approval has been granted.
* All research which involves human material, interaction with human participants, animals, impact to the environment or personal data carry some level of risk. It is essential that the possible risks and adverse events are identified and discussed in the application. Students and Supervisors should be aware of these risks and introduce mechanisms of support, protocols and procedures to mitigate and manage and events.

### Data Management

* This section asks you to explain what data you will be collecting and how you plan to store, protect and destroy the data you collected.
* Things to consider**:**
* All student research data should be stored on the University server or Office 365 account
* Papers copies of data should be kept in a securely locked cabinet in the Supervisor’s university office;
* Data acquired in undergraduate or taught postgraduate projects will normally not be retained. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that any personal research data collected during such project is deleted.
* Only members of the research team should have access to the data**.**
* Supervisors should have access to student research data
* This section will also ask you about the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and the research data collected. It is important that you provide sufficient detail of the process of maintaining confidentially and anonymity and how this process will be communicated with students.
* The Data Protection Act 2018 has put restrictions on transferring personal data outside the EU. If you are intending to transfer any personal data outside the EU, please get in touch with the Research Office.
* Finally, it is essential as the Supervisor of a generic application that all students understand the requirements of data management and the process of anonymisation and confidentiality. These do not have to be attached to the application, but it is recommended that students complete their own [Data Management Plan](https://mailglyndwrac.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/EthicsSystemDocuments/EQwbw9NGH1NAg93IalooNU4BHTiIVFAYcGQqmYksnFkOJQ?e=hlp3cd) and submit these to their supervisor to ensure they understand the process of data management and to ensure they are following the framework as detailed in the approval.

### Governance

This section of the form will ask you about other governance permissions**.** It is crucial that you read the information carefully as you might need further approvals or guidance from other departments in the University.

### Attachments

Staff should attach the relevant documents to the application before submitting the application for approval. This includes any recruitment advertisements, risk assessments, consent forms, participant information sheets, research tools etc.

### Submission

Please ensure you have read all the relevant policies and procedures listed in the submission checklist before selecting ‘Submit’

Please note that all generic applications are submitted to the University Research Ethics Committee. Depending on the level of risk involved**,** we will redirect your application to the most suitable committee to review as quickly as we can.