

DEPARTMENTS OF CIVIL ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT ETHICS REVIEW GUIDANCE NOTES

This note aims to guide staff and students within the Department of Civil Engineering and Management, and should be read alongside all other relevant documents at University level, available at: <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/ethics-integrity/ethics/>

The Department of Civil Engineering and Management operates a template that allows them to provide ethical approval for research projects conducted by **MSc students** that comply with the criteria laid out below. PhD students may use the Department route if appropriate (or apply for proportionate or full UREC review as required). Undergraduate students are only permitted to undertake research projects that fall within the scope of an ethical exemption. Staff projects should **NOT** use the Department template but must instead select UREC Review on the ERM system.

Ethical review is typically required for projects with human participants (e.g. interviews, questionnaires or focus groups) or that use confidential data, but each research project is assessed individually on a case by case basis. To determine if a specific research project requires ethical review, please first use the University's Ethics Decision tool:

https://www.training.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/uom/ERM/ethics_decision_tool/story.html

Please also note that the tool only gives a 'yes' or 'no' outcome as to whether ethical approval is needed; it does not tell you what type of approval is needed.

This document sets out the criteria for CEM Departmental review. For criteria relating to Proportionate or Full UREC refer to: <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/ethics-integrity/ethics/>

The CEM template covers low-risk research projects by Department of Civil Engineering and Management MSc students (supervised by staff in the Department) that satisfy all of the following mandatory criteria:

(Note: Any PGT student projects seeking ethical approval must be low-risk in nature, and therefore apply for Department level approval only. Please consult your supervisor for guidance. PhD projects that satisfy all of the following mandatory criteria may also use the CEM template, otherwise they should apply for Proportionate or Full UREC as appropriate)

Mandatory criteria (ALL must be met)

	Involves adults who are able to give informed consent.
	Participants are NOT classed as vulnerable or dependant.
	Topics will NOT lead to a significant level of distress.
	Topics will NOT be of a sensitive personal nature.
	Topics will NOT be highly contentious.
	There is NO significant risk of physical, emotional or psychological harm to participants and any potential harm is likely to be minor and temporary.
	Data collection will take place in a public or semi-public space/ building (i.e. the high street, University campus, organisation-owned offices) or private locations where the safety of the researcher(s) can be protected and privacy of participants can be guaranteed.
	Data collection will take place at a time convenient to participants.
	Data collection does NOT involve travel to or travel within an international setting that is on the list of countries/regions that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises against 'all but essential' travel to.

Optional Criteria (tick all that apply, if applicable)

	The research will capture video, audio or photographic material and the researcher is able to guarantee controlled access to authorised viewing during analysis.
	Any public screening of the video, audio or photographic material captured by the researcher will be subject to the consent agreement with the participants.
	The research requires the collection of personal data, but data will be anonymised prior to analysis and write up, or presented in a format which the participant has explicitly agreed and consented.

Important: The department template does not cover research that involves: data from NHS patients, data relating to NHS staff that is not limited to non-sensitive questions about their professional role, or users of other UK Health Department services. For details on NHS approval, see [the University's guide to applying to an NHS Research Ethics Committee](#).

The accompanying flow chart shows the possible routes for ethical approval that can be obtained by (1) PGT students; (2) PGR students; (3) members of academic staff in CEM.

Creating a new ethics application in the Ethical Review Manager (ERM) system

To create a new ethics application, go to: <https://submission-ethicalreview.manchester.ac.uk>

Please note that you can start an online ethics application at any time, but it is important that you do not 'submit' the form for review until it is complete and you are very confident that the details of your data collection plans are robust and will not change without any consequences. Incomplete and/or poorly completed applications waste University resources and will cause unnecessary delays to the ethical review process.

When using the Ethical Review Manager (ERM) to create/ complete your ethics application:

1. If you are a PGT student and your research project is low risk and satisfies all the mandatory criteria listed above, then when answering **Question A4**:
 - Select "Department of Civil Engineering and Management"
 - For ALL students: Please remember to add your supervisor in Section B2.2 to enable you to request their signature at the end of the form. You must also share the form with your supervisor (see Section B2.13).
 - Attention ALL students and supervisors: The submitted application must contain all required supporting documentation and be reviewed and signed by the supervisor. Incomplete submissions will result in delays. **Supervisors must give time to assist and advise their students on preparation of their Ethics application.** Such a coordinated effort will help reduce the number of reiterations required during the approval process, thereby reducing the time taken to receive ethical approval.
2. If your research project is NOT covered by the Department template (i.e. all staff projects and PhD student projects that do not meet low risk criteria):

- Further guidance on what qualifies for Proportionate or Full University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) Review can be found at:
<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/ethics-integrity/ethics/>
- Please note that all high risk projects must seek full University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) approval which may take 8-12 weeks.

For detailed instructions on how to create and submit an ethics application, please refer to:
<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/rbe/ethics-integrity/ethics/erm/>

If you have queries about gaining ethical approval for your specific project, please consult the Research Ethics website
<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/governance/ethics/new-online-system-for-ethics-review-erm/> or contact one of the Ethics Chairs as appropriate below.

Category	CEM Ethics Representatives
UG projects	Dr Kun Wang
MoP Group MSc projects	Dr Erika Aminian Dr Kamal Qazi
PhD & Staff projects	Dr Jillian Yeow Dr Clair Gough Dr Claire Hoolahan Dr Saeed Reza Mohandes