

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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## **Ethical Approval**

### **1. Where can I find out if I need ethical review?**

First seek advice via the [Ethics Decision tool](#) (ensure you use Firefox, Internet Explorer or Safari to access). If the tool tells you that ethical review is required please log into the ERM and [create a new project](#). Please also ensure you read the guidance notes featured in the Help Bubble for Question A5 as these will help you to determine the correct route of ethical review.

### **2. I'm not confident in the outcome of the Ethics Decision tool, where can I go for more information?**

Please contact your [Ethics Signatory](#) or [School Chair](#) and be sure to include a copy of the outcome text that you received when using the tool.



**Note: IMPORTANT!** Please note the RGEI office is only able to accept queries from supervisors, Ethics Signatories or School Chairs. Student queries will be returned and they will be encouraged to speak with their supervisors in the first instance.

### **3. What type of ethical approval do I need?**

To find out please visit the [research ethics website](#) for guidance on the types of ethical approval and specific requirements. If you're still unsure, seek advice from your [Ethics Signatory](#) or [School Chair](#).

### **4. I need to obtain ethical approval via the Health Research Authority (HRA) or the NHS Research Ethics Committee (NHS REC). Can I use the ERM system?**

The ERM system should only be used for applications made to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) or a Division/School panel. All applications to the HRA or NHS REC should be made via IRAS which is a separate system to ERM. For more information on which type of ethical approval is needed for your study, please first use the [Ethics Decision Tool](#). If you still require further information please contact:

- Faculty Governance Team [FBMHethics@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:FBMHethics@manchester.ac.uk)

### **5. I need HRA approval as well as UREC approval, can I use ERM?**

Yes, you can use ERM for the UREC application but you will still need to complete an IRAS application for the HRA portion. For specific guidance on this process, please refer to question A2 in the ERM system. Please refer to the [How to create an ethics application](#) PDF guide for information on ERM application completion and visit <https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/> to complete your IRAS application.

Alternatively contact:

- Faculty Governance Team [FBMHethics@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:FBMHethics@manchester.ac.uk)

## Accessing ERM

### 6. Where can I log into ERM?

Applicants <https://submission-ethicalreview.manchester.ac.uk> to submit an application  
 Reviewers <https://review-ethicalreview.manchester.ac.uk> to review submitted applications

You will need your **University of Manchester username and password** to access the system. If you need assistance with this, please contact the IT Services Helpdesk.



**Note: IMPORTANT!** Students and their supervisors should access the **Applicant** side only.

### 7. Can I access the ERM system off-campus?

Yes, the system can be accessed from any location in which you have a stable internet or Wi-Fi connection. Please use the following browsers

**Recommended:** MS Internet Explorer or other industry-standard web browser of equivalent or better functionality such as Firefox or Chrome. **For speed purposes we recommend Firefox or Chrome.**

**Excluded:** The following browser versions are specifically excluded from the list of those considered of equivalent or better functionality when using the ERM.

- IE < 9.x (including Mac OS versions)
- Safari < 3.x
- Firefox < 3.x
- Opera < 9.5
- Netscape all
- Browsers based on Webkit versions released before June 2009.
- Any browser of any version running on PowerPC based Apple Macintosh systems.

Browser versions are subject to on-going support by the browser manufacturer and may change over time.

## My Application Form

### 8. Where can I find the GDPR templates and other example documentation?

You find these and other resources on the [research ethics website](#) as well as in the information bubbles to the right of the relevant questions in the ERM application form.

### 9. I am affiliated with 2 different Divisions or Schools, how do I know which one to select on my form?

Please ensure you select the Division or School of your primary supervisor or if you are a member of staff, the Division or School that is your primary affiliation.

### 10. I'm a staff member and also a student, how do I fill in my application form?

You need to consider in what capacity you are conducting the research project. If this is part of a staff project that you have received funding for, then select the Staff option. If this is part of the degree programme that you're on (UG/PGT/PGR) then please select the Student option.

### 11. Can I print my application form?

Yes, please see the [PDF training guide](#) or [video](#) entitled 'How to create an ethics application' and instructions for printing are featured under the topic - 6. Printing.

**12. My contact details are incorrectly displayed on my ethics application. How can I change these?**

The ERM system automatically imports your contact details from the University's Open Directory. If these are incorrect, please first visit your Open Directory entry: <http://directory.manchester.ac.uk/>  
From here, please click on the purple button at the bottom of the screen entitled 'Change Your Details' and update your profile accordingly. If you are unable to change your details then please contact the IT Services Helpdesk for assistance.

**13. How can my supervisor(s) or colleagues read/contribute to my form?**

Please ensure you first **share the form** with your supervisor or colleagues. For instructions on sharing, please refer to PDF training guides or videos entitled 'How to add contact information', under a topic - Sharing. Once you have shared the form with your supervisor or colleagues, they will be able to read and contribute to your form.

Videos

- [How to add contact information for Staff](#)
- [How to add contact information for Students](#)

'How To' PDF guides

- [How to add contact information for Staff](#)
- [How to add contact information for Students](#)

**14. I have 2 supervisors, where do I put their details?**

Please ensure you list your primary supervisor (as only he/she has to sign your application) under the appropriate section of the Contact Information question (Section B). Then use the 'Add Another' button to add the details of your second supervisor.



**Note: IMPORTANT!** Remember to use the search field located above the contact question to locate the name of your supervisor(s) and auto-populate their correct contact details. Your Supervisor **MUST** login in ERM at least once in order to activate their account in order for you to use this feature.

**15. How do I sign my form?**

Please refer to the [PDF training guide](#) or [video](#) entitled 'How to sign request withdraw and respond'.

**16. Who should sign the form?**

*From November 2018 only the supervisor or principal investigator are required to sign the form.*

If a **student or member of staff who is not the project PI** created the form: You will need to use the grey 'request signature' button in Section S of the form to request the signature of the supervisor or PI.

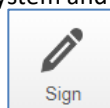
If the **supervisor or PI** created the form: Only the supervisor/PI needs to sign by pressing the blue 'sign' button in Section S of the form under the heading entitled 'Signature of the Individual Completing this Form'

**17. My student/colleague can't request my signature. What do I do now?**

Please ensure that you have activated your ERM account. To do this, log into the [submission side of the system](#) and then log back out again. The system will retain a copy of your details for future use. Please also ensure your student or colleague is using your correct email address.

**18. I'm a supervisor/PI, how do I respond to a signature request?**

Please open the application in the ERM system and look on the left hand side of the screen for a button which looks like this:



Please press this button to sign the form.

## Ethical Review Process

### 19. How long does the ethical review process take?

This will depend on whether you are seeking review via the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) or at Division/School level. On average, the process can take:

- 8-12 weeks for full UREC
- 4-6 weeks for Proportionate UREC
- 4-6 weeks for Division/School Review.

Please consult the information listed on the splash page of the ERM system (when you submit your project) for approximate timeframes of key stages. Please ensure you take into account these timeframes when submitting your project to allow for plenty of time to complete the ethical review procedure.

Please also note that the **full UREC Committees do not meet over August** and therefore review times are likely to be longer during the summer months. The Proportionate UREC Committee however reviews all year long.

### 20. How can I see the status of my application during the review process?

First, log into ERM and locate your application. Once opened you will see the 'form status' which appears just below the reference number of your application in the left/middle of the screen. The form status will let you know where your application is during the course of the review. If you have queries regarding the status of your application, please contact the following individuals:

**For Division/School review:** Please contact your [Division/School Administrator](#)

**For UREC Applications:** Please contact your [Ethics Signatory](#)



**Note: IMPORTANT:** If the form status says 'not submitted' you have not yet clicked the 'Submit' button to formally submit your application. You **MUST** click the 'Submit' button in order to submit your application in the ERM system.

## After Submission

### 21. I made a mistake and need to retrieve my submitted form. What should I do now?

If this occurs, please contact your Division/School Administrator or Ethics Signatory and request that your form is returned to you.

### 22. I'm leaving the University and need to hand over my application to a colleague. What should I do now?

If you are a member of staff: Please use the 'Transfer' function in ERM to transfer ownership of the form to your colleague who must be a UoM member of staff. For specific steps of how to do this, please refer to the PDF training guide or video entitled 'How to add contact information' for both staff and student guide, topic – Transferring ownership. If you are a student, please use an amendment form as outlined in Question 18 below.

Videos

- [How to add contact information for Staff](#)

'How To' PDF guides

- [How to add contact information for Staff](#)

**23. I need to make a change to my approved research project in ERM. What do I do now?**

Please seek an amendment request. For specific instructions on seeking an amendment request via the ERM system, please refer to the [PDF training guide](#) or [video](#) entitled 'How to make an amendment to an application approved in ERM'.

For more information on the criteria for submitting an amendment to an approved application, please read the [guidance information](#) (also linked to in your letter of ethical approval).

**24. I received ethical approval 2 years ago for an application that did not go through the ERM system and now need to seek an amendment. What should I do now?**

Please first create a historical project form and then complete an amendment request. For specific instructions on seeking an amendment to a historical application via the ERM please refer to the [PDF training guide](#) or [video](#) entitled 'How to make an amendment on historical application'.

**25. I've lost the email that had my letter of ethical approval, how do I get another copy?**

The ERM system automatically saves a copy of all emails and letters generated in the system. You can locate your letters by going into your Notifications at the top of the screen. For more details on locating your letter of ethical approval, please refer to the [PDF training guide](#) or [video](#) entitled 'How to make an amendment to an application approved in ERM', under the topic - Locating the Committee that granted approval. For all archive projects (those approved outside of ERM), please email [research.ethics@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:research.ethics@manchester.ac.uk) for assistance in obtaining your letter of ethical approval.

**26. My project was granted an unfavourable ethical opinion, what do I do now?**

Please consult your letter of unfavourable ethical opinion sent to you via email or stored in ERM. The letter will outline if your project is eligible for a resubmission. If so, you will need to prepare a new ethics application in ERM and submit via the normal process but being sure to indicate in Question D1 that this is a re-submission. Otherwise, you will need to re-think your research project and develop a new one that does not pose the same ethical issues as your previous submission. Submit new proposal if applicable.

## **Troubleshooting**

**27. I'm having trouble accessing the ERM system or specific content within?**

Please ensure you clear all of your cache and perform a hard refresh of your browser by pressing the control key + F5 at the same time.

**28. I'd like to download a blank copy of the ethics form, how can I do that?**

Unfortunately as the form is interactive (and expands/removes questions based on your answers) it's not possible to download a blank copy. You can however start a new project, answer only the multiple choice questions in the form and then use the 'print' function to print a (mostly) blank PDF copy to use offline.

**29. I've received a correspondence message not meant for me, what should I do?**

If your name is not listed under the heading of 'This message is meant for' then please delete the message immediately.

**30. I'm trying to create an amendment but the 'create sub-form' action button isn't visible, what should I do now?**

Please ensure you use the 'update' button at the top of your screen to update your application form to the latest version. Once you do this the create sub-form action button will become visible.

**31. Why is there a red warning message at the top of my screen asking me to perform an update?**

**Warning:** The project owner must update your project in order to submit this form [Update](#)

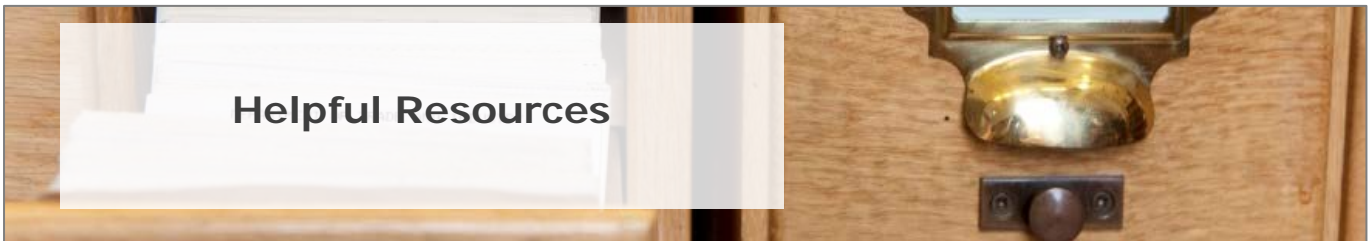
The system administrators periodically need to release new versions of the application form to correct bugs or add new compliance information and guidance. When this occurs you will be asked to update your form to the latest version to ensure it corrects any current issues.

**32. The update warning at the top of my screen says it will invalidate all signatures. Will this affect my existing ethical approval?**

No, the update will only affect signatures on a form which has not yet been approved.

**33. I'm having trouble accessing DMP online, who should I contact?**

All queries relating to the DMP Online system should be directed to The Library via [researchdata@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:researchdata@manchester.ac.uk)



**Helpful Resources**

- [Ethics Decision Tool](#): please use Firefox, Internet Explorer or Safari to access
- [Do I need ethical approval](#): additional information to help you decide
- [Types of Ethical Approval](#)
- [Submission side of the ERM system](#)
- [List of Ethics Signatories](#)
- [Information on the ERM System](#): PDF training guides and videos
- [Example Guidance Documents](#): participant information sheets, consent forms, distress protocols, debrief sheets, confidentiality agreements and more
- [Helpful Ethics Information](#): insurance requirements, lone working, fieldwork considerations and more
- [UREC meeting timetable](#)
- [Making amendments to approved applications](#)
- [Research with children](#)
- [Research ethics policy](#)
- [SOP on Recording of Participants in Research Projects](#)
- [Guidance on the use of survey tools](#)
- [Records Retention Schedule](#)
- [Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee \(MoDREC\)](#)
- [Research with the National Offender Management Service \(NOMS\)](#)
- [Health Research Authority approval and IRAS](#)

**Ethical  
Review**



For any queries relating to ethics or ethical approval:

**Your Ethics Signatory or School Chair**

For any technical queries related to the ERM system that are **NOT** answered in the PDF training guides, videos or this FAQs:

[Research.ethics@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Research.ethics@manchester.ac.uk)