

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the sixtieth meeting of the University Research Ethics Committee, held 22 November 2012

Present: David Anderson-Ford (Chair), Sheila Bannerman, Laurence Brooks, Federico Ferretti, Joan Gandy, Richard Godfrey, John MacMillan, Peter Smallwood, Mary Pat Sullivan, Jim Wood, Mary Liddell (Secretary)

Apologies: Ahmad Ghoneim, Peter Hobson

Reserved (FOI) Release date

502. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Action:

503. Minutes

The minutes of the fifty-ninth meeting held on 04 October 2012 were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED as a true record.

Action:

504. Matters arising

504.1. Papers before Council (495.2)

The Chair indicated that the necessary corrections to the Application Form and Code had been completed. These two documents and the Question-Specific Guidance were nearly ready for publication. A risk matrix indicator would be added as an appendix to the QSG.

Action:

504.2. Review of SRECs (495.3)

The arrangements for meetings in the Schools were underway. The intention was to finish the interviews by the end of March, with the final report to be submitted as soon as possible thereafter.

**Action: DA-F,
JG, JW**

504.3. Legal risks to University and researcher (495.5)

The required modifications had been made to the Application Form and Code.

Action:

504.4. School reports to the UREC (change in pro-forma) (495.6)

The Secretary stated that the required changes to the pro-forma had been completed.

Action:

504.5. Use of social media and other technologies for research (496)

The Chair noted that the working group had met, and provided an overview of their efforts so far. The aim was to provide a set of guidelines on this subject.

**Action: DA-F,
LB, PH,
RG**

504.6. Revision of research misconduct procedure (497)

The Secretary stated that the working group had met and discussed possible changes to the procedure. Following discussions with the Vice-Chancellor and the Secretary to Council, additional changes had been made. A draft revision would be circulated by e-mail to the Committee, with a date for comments to be returned.

Action: ML

504.7. External webpage for UREC (498)

The Secretary stated that she had put the revised Overview text on the webpage. Once the Application Form and Code were ready for publication, she would make the webpage live.

Action: ML

504.8. Universities UK concordat to support research integrity (491.1)

The Chair informed the Committee that he had spoken with a UUK representative, who indicated that most Universities were in the process of embedding the principles of the concordat in their documents. Research Councils UK were indicating that Universities must sign up to the concordat or RCUK would not provide research funding.

The Chair stated that he was to draft an e-mail for the VC to send to UUK to say that the University was signing up to the concordat. UUK had indicated that there would be an opportunity soon to sign up as a concordat Supporter online

Action: DA-F

505. Staff/student compliance with the requirements of the University Code of Research Ethics

The Chair provided a review of the issue. In the opinion of the Chair, the initial statement in the Code did not provide sufficient authority to require that research ethics approval was obtained prior to conducting research using human participants, their data, or their tissue/organs.

A question was raised as to what penalties would be imposed for failure to obtain research ethics approval. The general consensus following discussion was that it would be the responsibility of the Schools to determine those.

The Committee **ACCEPTED** the recommendations. The issue would be raised with Senate and Council at the earliest opportunity.

Action: DA-F

506. Animal Research Committee

The Chair briefed the Committee on the VC's recommendations with regard to the status of the Animal Research Committee. The Committee would become a sub-committee of the UREC, with appropriate dissemination of information both internally and externally. There was also a proposal to invite a member of the Animal Research Committee to attend UREC meetings, and vice-versa.

The Chair also indicated that he had spoken to the Chair of the Biological and Genetic Modification Safety Committee, and they had agreed in principle that the BGMSC would become a sub-committee of the UREC.

As there was a health and safety element to the work of the HTA-C Sub-Committee, and the BGMSC, discussions would be held with the Health and Safety Officer regarding responsibilities for those elements.

Action: DA-F

507. Terms of Reference

The Secretary agreed to send an e-mail to Committee members requesting comments on possible changes to the UREC Terms of Reference. Comments would be due 2 weeks after the e-mail was sent.

Action: ML

508. UREC SharePoint site

The Secretary informed the Committee that the SharePoint site for the UREC was essentially complete and ready for use. If any members found it difficult to use, they should notify her. Otherwise, the Blackboard version of the UREC Information Centre would be withdrawn as soon as possible.

Action: ML

509. Any other business

509.1. Named alternates

The Secretary requested that School REOs who did not currently have a named alternate provide her with a name as soon as possible.

Action: ALL

509.2. Meeting refreshments

The Secretary advised the Committee of the cost of meeting refreshments, which were underused. The Committee AGREED that provision of coffee, tea and biscuits was unnecessary. The Secretary would advise Catering accordingly.

Action: ML

509.3. Use of full application form for externally funded projects

The representative from the School of Social Sciences read out a statement that appeared on his School's webpage which stated that researchers requesting external funds for projects which needed research ethics review were required to fill out a full application form. The implication was that a checklist would not be considered sufficient.

The Chair indicated that the statement in question was not one that had been drafted by the UREC, but by the School. He recommended that the representative from Social Sciences should check with RSDO to determine whether a checklist would be sufficient for projects which involved human participants, but which did not present any ethics issues.

Action: JM

510. Meeting dates

24 January 2013

21 March 2013

23 May 2013

18 July 2013

All meetings would be held in WB A102, unless otherwise noted on the agenda. All meetings start at 1000.

ML 27/11/12

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE – NOVEMBER 2012 – ACTION SHEET

Minute	Item	Action	Action by
504.2	Review of SRECs	Complete arrangements for reviews	DA-F, JG, JW
504.5	Use of social media and other technologies for research	Produce draft guidelines	DA-F, LB, PH, RG
504.6	Revision of research misconduct procedure	Circulate draft for comments	ML
504.7	External webpage for UREC	Post documents and make live	ML
504.8	UUK concordat to support research integrity	Draft e-mail for VC	DA-F
505	Staff/student compliance with the requirements of the University Code of Research Ethics	Raise issue with Senate and Council	DA-F
506	Animal Research Committee	Meet with Health & Safety Officer	DA-F
507	Terms of Reference	Circulate for comments	ML
508	UREC SharePoint site	Ask for Blackboard UREC site to be withdrawn	ML
509.1	Named alternates	Provide names of alternates to Secretary	REOs
509.2	Meeting refreshments	Notify Catering of revised requirements	ML
509.3	Use of full application form for externally funded research	Check with RSDO to see if checklist would be accepted where applicable	JM