# Introduction

The **University Ethics Committee** (UEC) is appointed by Senate and is charged with sustaining a University-wide awareness of ethical issues arising from non-clinical research involving human subjects, human material and data. In exceptional circumstances, the UEC may also review clinical research, but only when such research clearly falls outside the remit of NHS Research Ethics Committees.

# Committee remit

The remit of the UEC in respect of ethical review of research is as follows:

* to develop, oversee and keep under review the implementation of the University Research Ethics Review Policy, ethics sub-policies and guidance, and oversee the University’s ethics review process;
* to develop policy and guidelines for and with Colleges;
* to promote the consistent application of research ethics procedures across the University and to review and approve procedures for Research Ethics sub-Committees (REsCs), including College and School level Committees and those established for specific research areas;
* to promote good ethical practice throughout the University;
* to advise REsCS on ethical issues and relevant procedures, including concerns related to a particular study or other matters;
* to consider and recommend responses to external and institutional ethical issues;
* to oversee the provision of appropriate training for designated Ethics Officers;
* to consider and offer guidance on cases of uncertainty referred to it from Research Ethics sub-Committees and to hear appeals against REsC decisions. In exceptional cases, the UEC may itself make decisions on research;
* to require and approve annual reports from REsCs on their work, including ethical review of proposed research projects and oversight of ethical issues within Colleges, Schools or other sub-Committee areas;
* to review and make recommendations, as appropriate, on the operation of REsC procedures;
* to make a bi-annual report to the Research Planning and Strategy Committee (RPSC) on the operation of procedures and any outstanding difficulties relating to the ethical review of research with the University;
* to seek clarification from external expert bodies, as necessary, on matters of ethical review policy and practice
* to promote good data governance in line with Data Protection & Freedom of Information Office when it pertains to research ethics;

# Scheme of Delegation

The following details the delegated authority for the University Ethics Committee and shows how it is placed in the overall University Scheme of Delegation with escalation to Senate:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of Responsibility** | **Limit** | **Decision Making Delegated Authority** | **Escalation To** |
| Approve policy and guidelines for REsCs | N/A | Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange) | RPSC |
| Approve appeals against REsC decisions | N/A | Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange) | RPSC |
| In exceptional circumstances make decisions on research referred to it from REsCs | N/A | Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange) | RPSC |
| Receive and approve annual reports from REsCs on their work | N/A | Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange) | RPSC |
| Make bi-annual reports to the Research Planning and Strategy Committee (RPSC) | N/A | Vice Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange) |  Senate |

# Committee Membership

This is a University led committee with the following membership:

* Chair
* A lay member from outwith the University.
* REsC Chair and Vice-Chairs, where applicable.
	+ College of Arts & Humanities
	+ College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences
	+ College of Science & Engineering
	+ College of Social Sciences
	+ Scholarship of Teaching & Learning
* President of the Students’ Representative Council (“SRC”)

In attendance:

* Clerk

The term of office for members of the University Ethics Committee shall normally be four years with the possibility of a four -year extension.

 The Committee's membership will include the skills and experience necessary to address its remit effectively. To this end the UEC shall be permitted to co-opt specialists to advise its members.

# Substitutions and Quorum

Substitutions may be made with prior notice given to the clerk and approved by the Chair. There must be a minimum of 6 members in attendance for decisions or approvals.

If a member of the Committee is not able to attend the meeting they may submit written observations on any issue under consideration. Colleges may also nominate a substitute from the College Ethics Committee to attend a meeting which the College ethics officer is unable to attend. In the event that a consensus is not reached, decisions are by majority on a show of hands and in cases of equal votes, the Chair shall have the casting vote.

# Conflict of Interest

The UEC will follow [the UofG procedure for the management of any conflicts](https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_176371_smxx.pdf). The procedure defines declaration of conflicts as a standard agenda item at the start of the meeting, the maintenance of a register of conflicts, and a process for managing all conflicts which are declared.

# Format and cadence

The meeting schedule is no less than twice per semester. The frequency and timing of meetings of the University Ethics Committee will be determined by the reasonable requirements of the University. These meetings will be time-tabled in advance and the dates circulated.

Where ethical issues arise in circumstances where they cannot be considered at the next ordinary meeting, the University Ethics Committee may meet on an ad hoc basis. In exceptional circumstances when, for good reason, issues needing more rapid consideration arise, the Chair may act after consultation with no less than two other members of the UEC who are not members of the College or Colleges concerned. The Committee shall be immediately informed of decisions made on this basis. In addition, in order to facilitate the conduct of business, issues may be considered by the Committee by correspondence.

**INPUTS**

* Previous meeting minutes, actions and agenda
* Audits
* Proposals concerning clinical research where it does not fall within the remit of an NHS Research Ethics Committee
* Reports from Research Ethics sub-Committees
* Referrals from Research Ethics sub-Committees
* Appeals from Research Ethics sub-Committees

**OUTPUTS**

* Reports to RPSC
* Minutes including decisions and actions
* Guidance to Research Ethics sub-Committees
* Appeals decisions letters