UNIVERSITY ETHICS AND INTEGRITY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The University Ethics and Integrity Committee (UEIC) is a sub-committee of Academic Board. It oversees the University's approach to academic integrity, corporate ethics and due diligence, and considers and makes recommendations on significant ethical matters for the University. Ethical considerations include academic activity, particularly research, knowledge exchange and academic partnerships, and also corporate ethics matters such as donations and business engagements as referred to the Committee. The Committee is responsible for promoting and championing ethical practices and standards across the University.

The University Ethics and Integrity Committee has the authority to steer the work of Colleges, Academic Schools and Professional Service areas of the University, in relation to its areas of responsibility. The Committee will consider key themes, complex individual research ethics cases where referred from College or School Ethics Committees/Panels, and matters as referred by Colleges, Schools and the wider university, in line with the University's integrity policies and procedures.

In fulfilling its purpose, the University Ethics and Integrity Committee will work closely with the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee and the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, and may call upon the support of its sub-committees:

- Animal Welfare & Ethics Sub-Committee.
- Human Tissue Sub-Committee.

The Committee may also call upon internal and external advice, for example in relation to Genetic Modification, biological safety, radiation, data protection and other related areas.

The College or School Ethics Committees/Panels will fulfil the research ethics consideration and approval process locally and report to the College Dean of Research and Enterprise, with exception reporting to be provided to the Committee. It is not expected that the College or School Ethics Committees/Panels will hold regular formal meetings, but instead that they adopt agile ways of working to manage their workflow.

The Chair of UEIC will meet at least annually with College or School Ethics Committees/Panels to review key themes, best practice and developments regarding university policy, practice and guidance in this area. The Chair will also have ongoing

engagement with the Chairs of College or School Ethics Committees/Panels with regards to the specific policy, procedural or training needs of the College or School.

Membership

Chair – nominated by the Vice-Chancellor and independent from university executive structures

Deputy Chair – nominated and approved by the Chair in consultation with the Committee, from existing Members

College Deans of Research and Enterprise (representing College or School Ethics Committees/Panels within their College and providing assurance on their effectiveness, these roles will also be trained as scrutineers)

Head of the Doctoral Academy (or nominee)

Chair of the Animal Welfare & Ethics Sub-Committee

Chair of the Human Tissue Sub-Committee

Students' Union elected representative, on the nomination of the Students' Union President.

An independent member of the Board of Governors

Chief People Officer (or nominee)

Director Research, Business and Innovation (or nominee)

Director of Student & Academic Services (or nominee)

Finance Director (or nominee)

General Counsel

Head of Risk, Resilience and Assurance

Research Governance Manager

Independent external member from the health sector – nominated by the Vice-Chancellor and approved by the Chair

Independent external member from the business sector – nominated by the Vice-Chancellor and approved by the Chair

18 Members

In attendance

Chief of Staff and Clerk to the Board of Governors / Director of Strategy and Governance (Secretary)

Committee Officer

Members "in attendance" do not have voting rights. The Chair has the discretion to invite additional officers to a set meeting of the Committee in a non-voting capacity to provide specialist advice as required, for example in relation to corporate communications or data protection. In addition, members of the University's research community will be drawn upon where their academic expertise in a particular area is required by the Committee or to support the exception reporting from the College or School Ethics Committees/Panels.

The membership can include up to two co-opted members with voting rights. Co-opted members are appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Committee.

Responsibility

The University Ethics and Integrity Committee is responsible for:

1. Considering, robustly debating, and establishing a university-wide approach for significant current and future ethical matters impacting on the business of the University.
2. Maintaining oversight of the ethical framework for the University's decision making, assuring itself that decisions are being taken across the University in line with this framework, including around partnerships and international work.
3. Overseeing and gaining assurance on the University's framework for due diligence and the consideration of conflicts of interest, providing advice to the Vice-Chancellor on the most complex cases.
4. Approving, with advice from the University's Executive, the approach to research ethics review in the Colleges and Schools, monitoring and providing assurance that human and animal participants, and the environment, are afforded appropriate ethical protection in relation to research conducted by staff and students of the University.
5. Overseeing the work of the Animal Welfare and Ethics sub-Committee, and the Human Tissue sub-Committee, providing assurance on legal compliance and fulfilment of their terms of reference.
6. Advising on individual research ethics applications, where:
   a. It is not appropriate for the application to be considered by a College or School Ethics Committee/Panel.
   b. The applicant does not have a home School, or where an external application cannot be reasonably reviewed by a College or School Ethics Committee/Panel.
   c. The Chair of the College or School Ethics Committee/Panel refers the application to UEIC for additional advice.
7. Advising on ethics and integrity issues raised by Colleges, Schools or Professional Services, in line with the University's policies and procedures.
8. Providing advice on ethical matters to inform Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor's Executive and/or the Board of Governors' decisions on specific issues that might pose significant ethical and/or reputational risk to the University.
9. Considering any ethical matters that might be submitted for review by the Board of Governors, Vice-Chancellor's Executive, or Academic Board, convening an emergency meeting or review via Teams, of the whole or part of the Committee, as appropriate, to consider the issues where required.
10. Working with Schools, Colleges and the Vice-Chancellor's Executive, to create an environment in which ethics and integrity are embedded into all areas of the University's work, leading on the training, development, and understanding of emergent issues to facilitate this.
11. Seeking clarification from external expert bodies on matters of ethics and integrity policy and practice.

12. Advising on and assuring compliance with external regulations, funding requirements and/or guidance on the integrity and ethical conduct of research, in particular the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.
13. Developing and reviewing policy, procedures and guidelines for corporate ethics, integrity and the ethical conduct of research, research misconduct, due diligence and supporting the spreading of good practice across the University.
14. Overseeing a programme of audit of the ethical conduct of research conducted by staff and student researchers.
15. Ensuring active consideration of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the conduct of its business.
16. Evaluating annually its performance and that of any Sub-Committees, Panels or groups it creates to ensure academic governance arrangements enhance institutional performance and add value.

Accountability

The University Ethics and Integrity Committee is accountable to Academic Board. It reports to it on:

- Approval of new policies and frameworks within its area of competence.
- Proposals for changes to its Terms of Reference, membership, or priorities.
- Any matters or priority areas referred to it for action by the Chair of Academic Board or Vice-Chancellor's Executive.

The Committee also reports to the Board of Governors on any matters related to corporate ethics or matters that are referred to it by the Board.

The University Ethics and Integrity Committee provides an annual assurance report to Academic Board, through which it demonstrates how it has fulfilled its Terms of Reference and assessed its own effectiveness. The requirements for the report are specified by Academic Board, which may then make recommendations to amend its Terms of Reference and/or membership accordingly.

Administration

UEIC will normally meet five times a year. Meetings will be scheduled to enable UEIC to fulfil its accountabilities to Academic Board, supporting timely updates on progress and new developments. The duration of meetings will be approximately 2.5 hours.

The Quorum for meetings is one-third of members eligible to attend.

Representative members who are nominated to represent a particular constituency will be reviewed and confirmed annually. Co-opted members will serve a maximum three-year term.

A committee officer will be identified to support the Chair in the effective and efficient conduct of the Committee's business.

An emergency meeting, or review of an urgent matter via Teams, can be initiated by the Chair working with the Clerk. The approach taken will be noted, and where appropriate considered, by the Committee at its next meeting.

The Terms of Reference for UEIC will be reviewed annually to ensure they are still relevant and effective and that UEIC can effectively discharge its duties. As part of the review consideration should be given to how the Committee can improve and better integrate practices which support equality, diversity and inclusivity.