

6. RESEARCH ETHICS

6.1 Research ethics at UWE Bristol

- 6.1.1 UWE Bristol is committed to promoting high ethical standards in the conduct of research undertaken by its staff and students. All research involving human participants, their tissues or data requires ethical approval by the University's Research Ethics Sub-Committee (RESC) or one of its Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FRECs) in accordance with the operating procedures set out in 6.3 below. Research that involves NHS or Social Care organisations, or involves human tissue, may also require review by an NHS REC or the Social Care REC (as part of the Health Research Authority approval process), and guidance about approval pathways in these circumstances is available [here](#). All academic staff engaged in research are required to complete the UWE Bristol Research Ethics Training on-line. This includes all academic staff supervising postgraduate research students, and postgraduate taught students, and undergraduate students undertaking research-based modules.
- 6.1.2 Some BSc/MSc student research which is 'low risk' may be approved by the student project Supervisor in accordance with the operating procedures relating to student projects (including the mandatory completion by the Supervisor of a [Student Ethical Review Record](#) – all academic staff at UWE should have automatic access to this, but if there are any problems with accessing this please contact researchethics@uwe.ac.uk). The University regards proper ethical conduct, including appropriate ethical review, as a central tenet of good research practice which must be observed by anyone conducting research at UWE Bristol.

6.2 University obligations

The University undertakes regular and timely review of its research ethics policy, guidance and review process to keep them up-to-date and fit for purpose. The University is committed to independence in ethical review, the appropriate composition of research ethics committees (RECs) and adequately resourcing ethical review as set out, for example, by [ARMA/UKRIO](#) in their [Research Ethics Support and Review in Research Organisations](#) guide (p33):

'Both governance and research ethics review must be adequately resourced for good practice to be sustained'.

6.3 Research ethics policy and procedures and researcher obligations

6.3.1 Research involving human participants, their tissue or their data

Information about how to apply for ethical approval, including information about how to apply for Health Research Authority approval (incorporating NHS REC approval) where necessary can be found in the [UWE Bristol Research Ethics Handbook](#). It is a requirement of all those conducting or supervising research at the University that they familiarise themselves with the Ethics Policy and guidelines and follow the required procedures.

6.3.2 Research with Animals and Animal by-products

Research with live vertebrates does not take place on UWE premises, however **all** research and teaching activity undertaken by UWE staff or students that involves or impacts upon animals or utilises animal by-products must be approved by UWE Animal Welfare and Ethics Sub-Committee (AWESC), prior to the activities for which review is necessary commencing. Animal by-products include any part of an animal, regardless of where sourced. This includes, but is not confined to, feathers, uncured leather/fur, bone, honey, milk, skin, eggs, eyeballs, meat, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates and serum/serum products.

Applications for student research projects (at all levels) where animals or animal by-products are involved must be approved by AWESC. Supervisors will need to apply for approval for all undergraduate and postgraduate taught student projects that they are supervising. Postgraduate Research students are expected to apply for approval, but this will need to be done with the approval of their Director of Studies (further details are given in the research ethics application form).

If a research project involves both animals/animal by-products and human participants then both the AWESC and UWE Research Ethics application forms must be completed to allow appropriate ethical scrutiny of your research in respect of the animals/animal by-products and human participant elements of the research.

Please contact researchgovernance@uwe.ac.uk for more information about applying for AWESC approval and about how to access UWE guidance.