

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES INTER-DIVISIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SSH IDREC)

Ethics review process for low risk research CUREC 1B pilot

Introduction

The SSH IDREC is piloting a shorter application form and simpler review process for the ethics review of research with low risk ethical issues.

The CUREC 1B application form is currently being piloted in the following departments:

- Asian & Middle Eastern Studies (SSH IDREC: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk)
- Computer Science (DREC: ethics@cs.ox.ac.uk)
- Education (DREC: staff.curec@education.ox.ac.uk or student.curec@education.ox.ac.uk)
- The School of Geography and the Environment (DREC: curec@ouce.ox.ac.uk)
- International Development (DREC: staff applications: emma.rundall@geh.ox.ac.uk, student applications: dominique.attala@geh.ox.ac.uk)
- Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics (SSH IDREC: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk)
- Music (SSH IDREC: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk)
- Sociology (DREC: drec@sociology.ox.ac.uk)

The pilot will be reviewed by the SSH IDREC at its Trinity Term 2024 meeting. Please send any feedback or suggestions for improvements to the SSH IDREC via ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk.

Ethics review process

The CUREC 1B form is available on the Research Support website:

<https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/ethics/apply/sshidrec>.

In order to be eligible, none of the criteria for a CUREC 1A or CUREC 2 must apply. All of the conditions listed in [Annex A](#) must be met. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to make sure that the ethics application is made using the appropriate form.

Applications are to be reviewed and approved by the student's supervisor (if student research) or by a senior colleague within the Department (if staff research) to ensure that research involving human participants is conducted in a way that respects the dignity, rights, and welfare of participants, and minimises risk to participants, researchers, third parties, and to the University itself. The reviewer and applicant are to discuss the research and ensure that the ethical issues have been identified and suitably addressed.

Once an application has been approved, the application form and supporting documents (such as the participant information sheet and consent form) must be emailed to the [Departmental Research Ethics Committee \(DREC\)](#) (for applicants from Computer Science, Education, Geography and Environment, International Development or Sociology) or to ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk (for researchers from Asian & Middle Eastern Studies) so that the DREC or IDREC can maintain a record of the review and approval.

Applicants and reviewers are welcome to contact their Department's [DREC](#) or the [SSH IDREC](#) for advice at any stage.

Timing

While the review is normally be carried out within 10 working days, applicants are asked to allow 30 days if possible. Applicants may be asked to submit clarifications or revise their

application and supporting documents. With this in mind, applications should be submitted well in advance of the intended research start date.

If the reviewer determines the application requires a more in-depth review, applicants may be asked to follow usual application process and submit an application to your DREC or IDREC using a CUREC 1A or CUREC 2 form. To avoid delays, it is incumbent on applicants to apply using the appropriate form.

Annex A

Complex ethical issues	Straightforward ethical issues	Low risk ethical issues
CUREC 2	CUREC 1A	CUREC 1B
Reviewed by (DREC and) IDREC	Reviewed by DREC or IDREC Secretariat	Reviewed by a senior colleague or student's supervisor. The DREC or SSH IDREC Secretariat then log the application and check it meets the criteria for review under this process.
60 days	30 days	10 working days
<p>At least one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prevent Duty relevant. 2. Participants at risk of significant harm and/or criminal prosecution. 3. Vulnerable participants (outside the scope of AP or more than one AP applies). 4. Deception (outside the scope of AP or more than one AP applies). 5. Referred to IDREC by DREC or REM. 	<p>At least one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Permission from a gatekeeper is required for access to the participants. 2. Research involving topics that could be considered sensitive. 3. Any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the researchers or others involved in the project. 4. International or collaborative research where there may be issues of local practice and political sensitivities. 5. Participants taking part in the research without their knowledge and consent (e.g. covert observation). 6. Researcher(s) in a position of authority over participants, e.g. as employers, lecturers, teachers or family members. 7. Potential conflicts of interest. 8. Scope for incidental findings, e.g. concerns for the safety or wellbeing of participants. 9. Third parties collecting data. 10. None of the CUREC 2 criteria. 	<p>In order to be eligible, none of the criteria for a CUREC 1A or CUREC 2 must apply. All of the following conditions must also be met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students must be supervised by a University of Oxford member of staff. 2. The PI and any other researchers must complete either the core or the refresher research integrity training course. 3. Research must be conducted in accordance with relevant professional guidelines. 4. Research must be conducted with participants' informed consent. Information sheets and consent forms must be closely based on the University's templates. 5. Any applicable BPG must be used when planning the research. 6. Personal data must be managed in accordance with the University's data protection requirements and ideally be stored on University servers or within Nexus365 One Drive. 7. Research must not trigger requirement for a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA). 8. Individual participants must not be identifiable from the research outputs without their consent. 9. Risk assessments must be undertaken and authorised by within Department, if required.