

## Why Submit?

Some researchers and research supervisors may wonder why their work would benefit from FoPSE Ethics Committee (EC) approval. These are some reasons.

### The University of Southampton Policy

The University policy is:

"For the avoidance of doubt, ANY research involving human participants, human tissue or data on individuals will automatically require ethical consideration. The same can be said for experimental work involving animals. It is the responsibility of the lead individual to ensure that where appropriate the project is put to an appropriate committee for ethical review."

The FoPSE Ethics Committee (FEC) review process allows human-related studies to comply with University policy.

### The Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act makes it a legal requirement for all public and private organisations to protect any personal information they hold. Breaches of the DPA usually result in the Information Commissioner's Office negotiating an 'undertaking' to improve data security, otherwise an 'enforcement notice' will be issued (often after the issue of a search warrant and the seizure of relevant equipment and materials), with the sanction of a fine, and in the case of repeated failures, the enforced closing of the organisation.

The FoPSE EC provides a first level of scrutiny to ensure that studies involving subject data are DPA compliant.

### The Human 'Good'

The FoPSE EC review process is designed to ensure the protection of participants in research studies. This protection includes the safety and well-being of participants during a study, and the protection of the data derived from those participants throughout and beyond the duration of the study.

Submitting a study to FoPSE EC review satisfies some of the intrinsic 'good' of helping to ensure the appropriate treatment of participants.

### Public Relations and the 'Kite Mark'

Following approval, a research study displays its FoPSE EC Approval Reference Number on all relevant materials, Web pages, documents, etc.

Obtaining such a 'kite mark' following FoPSE EC review assures and re-assures participants and third parties of the professionalism of FoPSE activities in particular and of the University in general.

## Insurance Cover

The University, through its underwriters, arranges insurance cover for its research activities. By submitting studies to the review process you can ensure that appropriate insurance is in place. Principal Investigators (PIs) and other associates involved in unapproved studies may be personally exposed to liability claims in the event of any errors or unexpected outcomes in their dealing with humans or human-related materials.

FoPSE EC approval ensures full insurance cover will be put in place for PIs and Co-investigators.

## Professionalism

As a teaching as well as a research institution, the University, the Faculty, its researchers, and its research supervisors model behaviour appropriate to world-class research, and serve as models and role models for students and new colleagues.

The FoPSE EC review process is a model of current professional standards of research involving humans and human-related materials and data. Engaging with it demonstrates a professional approach to research.

## Funders

Increasingly, grant and other funders are requiring ethical review and approval for their studies. Increasingly, evidence and a track record of routinely obtaining such approval are valued on bid applications. UKRC policy includes:

"Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, the involvement of human participants in research, the use of animals, research or other activity that may result in damage to the environment, and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data."

The FoPSE EC provides the ethical review required or desired to be evidenced in bid proposals and successful bid grants.

## Journal & Other Editorial Policies

Increasingly, publishers are requiring ethical review and approval for the studies they publish.

The FoPSE EC provides the ethical review required or desired to be evidenced in papers, reports, presentations, etc.

Naturally, it is always possible to ask what, *exactly*, might be meant by 'research', 'participation', 'human-related', and to ask how, *exactly*, this might apply in the particular context of and variety that is FoPSE. The FoPSE EC Sharepoint site, and the ERGO submission page, has more information.

<http://blog.soton.ac.uk/fpseethics>

<https://www.ergo.soton.ac.uk/downloads.php>

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