

## Using Worktribe Ethics for Research Ethics Applications in the Law Faculty, Oxford

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**The University's Research Ethics application process is moving to an online system: [Worktribe Ethics](#).**

In the Law Faculty we can currently use either the new online system or the existing email system. **From 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024, we will all have to use the online system.**

Law is the only department in the Social Sciences Division that does not have its own Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC). Our applications are therefore assessed by the Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee (SSH IDREC). With the current email system, some but not all applications are reviewed by the Senior Research Facilitator before being sent to SSH IDREC. However, the Senior Research Facilitator is available to advise on all research ethics applications from staff and students in the Faculty.

As we do not have our own Research Ethics Committee, we have discussed with SSH IDREC how the new online system will work for us. Please see below.

### **Worktribe roles (all in bold) and process**

In Worktribe, the **Applicant** can add multiple **Editors** to assist with the application.

All applications when submitted will go to the **Law Ethics Officer**. This role will be filled by the Law Faculty Senior Research Facilitator.

In the Law Faculty (**excluding** the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies) we will follow this process:

- **Applicant** starts the form.
- **Applicant** adds **Editors**. This may include colleagues or a supervisor or anyone else the applicant would like to invite to read the application.
- Optional: **Applicant** asks **Law Ethics Officer** for support by email.
- **Applicant** submits on Worktribe and the application reaches the **Law Ethics Officer**.
- **Law Ethics Officer** adds comments and returns to the **Applicant**  
or
- **Law Ethics Officer** sends to the **SSH IDREC Ethics Officer** for formal review and comments.

In the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies we will follow this process:

- **Applicant** starts the form.
- **Applicant** adds **Editors**. This may include colleagues or supervisor, and reviewers in the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (or anyone else the applicant would like to invite to read the application).
- Optional: **Applicant** asks **Law Ethics Officer** for support by email.
- **Applicant** asks Centre reviewers by email to comment on or approve application.
- **Applicant** submits on Worktribe and the application reaches the **Law Ethics Officer**.
- **Law Ethics Officer** sends to the **SSH IDREC Ethics Officer** for formal review and comments.

There is an option to add **Reviewers** in Worktribe, however, this is to be used only by departments having a Research Committee in place (which, again, we do not). We therefore **will not** use this option. ***Students/staff wishing for someone else to read their applications should add all readers as Editors for the application.***

**This process will be reviewed at the end of Michaelmas Term 2024.**

### **Processing times.**

Note that the time frames below refer **only** to the part of the research ethics review process handled by the Law Faculty. There is another part which is under the control of the Divisional Research Ethics Committee. In total, securing research ethics clearance can take **at least 30 days in cases where your research does not entail complex ethical issues, and at least 60 days for cases where it does** (such issues could include, but are not limited to, recruitment of **people whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question**, risk to participants of criminal prosecution or use of **deception** methodology).

The aim is for the Law Ethics Officer to respond within the following time frames:

- Up to 2 working days – to an initial email request for support with an application.
- Up to 5 working days – to an initial email request for review of an application.
- Up to 3 working days – to email requests for additional reviews.

Within Worktribe, the aim is for the Law Ethics Officer to respond within the following limits:

- Up to 2 working days – to submit an application from the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies to the SSH IDREC Ethics Officer.
- Up to 2 working days – to submit an application from the Faculty that has already been reviewed by the Law Ethics Officer to the SSH IDREC Ethics Officer
- Up to 5 working days – to review an application that has not already been discussed with the Law Ethics Officer.

In all cases, the Law Ethics Officer will secure departmental endorsement for each application before referring these to the Divisional Committee (IDREC) through the online system.

If you have any questions, please approach [karen.eveleigh@law.ox.ac.uk](mailto:karen.eveleigh@law.ox.ac.uk) and/or [armando.romanzozaya@law.ox.ac.uk](mailto:armando.romanzozaya@law.ox.ac.uk)