

# Queen's Foundation

## Research Ethical Clearance Policy

The Ethical Clearance policy governs *all* research proposals developed at Queen's, at undergraduate, postgraduate or postdoctoral level; both staff and student proposals.

The primary reasons for ethical clearance are:

- to safeguard researchers, participants and the institution;
- to provide a framework for responsible ethical review;
- to help researchers develop robust proposals.

The process of ethical clearance involves a series of stages as follows:

### **Stage 1**

Stage 1 involves the assessment of whether a detailed ethical review is required.

At BA & MA level, this will be assessed by the Dissertation Committee and the supervisor of the dissertation.

At PhD level, the researcher will be required to complete a checklist of questions at admissions.

For students whose research proposals do not require further ethical review, stage 1 completes the process. Students whose research proposals require further review proceed to stage 2.

### **Stage 2**

Stage 2 requires the researcher to complete a more detailed pro forma (the Queen's Research Ethical Clearance Form') giving further information on the research methodology, including information about the participants, data collection, informed consent, data security and retention. The completed pro forma is submitted to the Queen's Ethics Committee.

The student is advised to discuss completion of the pro forma with their supervisor/adviser before submitting it to the Queen's Ethics Committee.

### **Stage 3**

The Ethics Committee will meet to consider submissions as required.

The Committee may:

- Approve the submission without further review
- Approve the submission subject to specified future clearance stages

- Require further information
- Suggest amendments
- Refuse ethical approval

No fieldwork can commence until ethical clearance has been granted by the Committee.