

Ethical Approval Policy & Procedure



Last approved: April 2024

Approved by: REC

Next review due: April 2028

Scope

This Policy & Procedure applies to all students and staff at BIMM University and to anyone from outside the university wishing to undertake research with University students or staff.

Objective

The university aims to ensure that all research projects are conducted ethically.

Procedure

The procedure for ethical approval of primary research is outlined below. All primary research involving human participants requires ethical review.

1. The researcher will complete the Ethical Approval Form as appropriate:
 - [Ethical Approval Form – Undergraduate Projects \(Word\)](#) -for undergraduate students of BIMM University who will be assisted in completing the form by their supervisor.
 - [Ethical Approval Form – Postgraduate Educational Research \(Word\)](#) -for postgraduate students, staff and external researchers conducting educational research.
 - [Ethical Approval Form – Postgraduate Research Projects \(Word\)](#) -for postgraduate students, staff and external researchers conducting practice-based/led research.
 - The forms above can also be accessed from the [Research & Enterprise page](#) on the BIMM University website.

Risk assessment

In each form, there is a risk assessment that will result in a judgement of 'low' or 'high' risk and for undergraduate proposals, only 'low risk' projects will be approved by the student's Research Supervisor with a copy of the completed ethical approval form being submitted to the Course Leader to maintain a formal record of the ethical review process.

For postgraduate students and university staff, 'the researcher's supervisor may approve low-risk projects and 'high-risk' projects must be submitted for review to EthicalReviewGroup@bimm.co.uk.

For external researchers, all projects must be submitted for ethical review if the research subjects are BIMM University students or staff or if the research uses university data or takes place on university estate. Researchers must submit the relevant ethical approval form to EthicalReviewGroup@bimm.co.uk.

External research must also be sponsored by a member of the university's Executive Management Committee.

The role of the university Research Supervisor

For undergraduates and postgraduates, taught students' research supervision is conducted by the relevant lecturer or module/course leader, who can also provide guidance on ethical review and is empowered to authorise 'Low Risk' projects on behalf of the Ethical Approval Committee.

For university staff research projects, where there is no formally appointed university Research Supervisor, the Head of School or Faculty Dean can advise on ethical review and is empowered to authorise 'low Risk' projects on behalf of the Ethical Approval Committee.

All 'High Risk' projects will be submitted by the supervisor, Head of School or Dean to the Ethical Approval Committee for review.

Important notes

- Research must not commence until ethical approval has been granted.
- Research projects that are not approved cannot be undertaken.
- Breaches of this policy by staff or students may result in disciplinary action.
- Breaches of this policy by external researchers will result in the withdrawal of permission to conduct research at BIMM University.
- Please allow sufficient time for approval forms to be considered before research commences (3-4 weeks is a good general guide, depending on the project).