

Research Review and Ethics Screening Committee Internal Procedures

1. What is the purpose of this document?

This document outlines the internal procedures used by the SONMS Research Review and Ethics Screening Committee (RRESC) once research and practice development proposals, and proposals for internally published reports, have been received by the SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration.

2. Research proposals

2.1 Overview

RRESC reviewers and applicants submitting their plans to RRESC are reminded that this committee fulfils six distinct responsibilities with respect to the research proposals it receives. The context in which research projects are proposed determines which combination of these responsibilities are discharged in each case.

Further information can be found in the document *RRESC – Outline of Functions and Overview of Procedures*, which can be downloaded from the RRESC website:

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/sonms/research/peerreview/>

2.2 Research review rota

To facilitate the timely review of research proposals a monthly rota of RRESC reviewers is maintained. For each month a senior RRESC member plus an alternate is identified, plus two other members of the committee and their alternates. This rota is maintained by the SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, to whom changes should be notified.

2.3 Projects led by members of staff which are not connected with the award of postgraduate qualifications

In these cases research proposals are submitted to RRESC for:

- consideration of approval for the use of SONMS resources;
- scientific review;
- consideration of approval of costings (if project is being prepared for submission to a GAB);
- ethics screening;
- consideration of approval to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation (if appropriate).

Process

1. Staff member electronically submits proposal, front sheet and any supporting documents to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration based at EGH.
2. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration extracts front sheet information for projects database.

3. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration forwards documents electronically to lead reviewer and two other reviewers as per monthly rota, and adds this information to projects database.
4. If research project includes plan to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation, SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration also forwards documents to Director for Quality Enhancement, as an *ex officio* member of RRESC, considers the approval of research access on the committee's behalf in all cases where this is requested.
5. Two RRESC reviewers (*not* the lead reviewer at this stage) complete independent reviews using *RRESC – Scientific Review and Costings Assessment of Research Proposals*.
6. Within three working days of proposal having been sent to reviewers, reviewers electronically forward their reviews to lead RRESC reviewer and to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration.
7. Lead reviewer completes ethics screening using *RRESC – Ethics Screening Form*.
8. Lead reviewer draws on reviews completed by RRESC colleagues and on her/his independent assessment of the proposal (which *could* be made using a third copy of *RRESC – Scientific Review and Costings Assessment of Research Proposals*) to inform construction of feedback letter for applicant.
9. Lead reviewer forwards feedback letter including decision made (or comments to be inserted into letter template) to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within two working days of receipt of both sets of comments from RRESC reviewers.
10. Director for Quality Enhancement forwards decision on research access to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within four working days of receipt of project proposal.
11. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration inserts feedback into letter template and emails outcome to applicant. This to happen within five working days of application having first been received.
12. Database updated, and information tabled at next full meeting of RRESC for record keeping purposes.

2.4 Projects led by researchers who do not work in SONMS but which include members of SONMS staff as collaborators

In these cases research proposals are submitted to RRESC for:

- consideration of approval for the use of SONMS resources (including consideration of the level of research income which it is proposed will be attributed to SONMS if GAB funding is secured);
- verification that ethics review procedures have been followed;
- consideration of approval to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation (if appropriate).

Process

1. Staff member electronically submits proposal, front sheet and any supporting documents to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration based at EGH.
2. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration extracts front sheet information for projects database.
3. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration forwards documents electronically to lead reviewer.
4. If research project includes plan to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation, SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration also forwards documents to Director for Quality Enhancement who, as an *ex officio* member of RRESC, considers the approval of research access on the committee's behalf in all cases where this is requested.
5. Lead reviewer confirms that project is consistent with the School Research Strategy, and verifies that ethics review procedures have been completed.
6. Lead reviewer forwards feedback letter including decision made (or comments to be inserted into letter template) to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within four working days of receipt of both sets of comments from RRESC reviewers.

7. Director for Quality Enhancement forwards decision on research access to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within four working days of receipt of project proposal.
8. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration inserts feedback into letter template and emails outcome to applicant. This to happen within five working days of application having first been received.
9. Database updated, and information tabled at next full meeting of RRESC for record keeping purposes.

2.5 Projects proposed by SONMS students as part of their studies

In these cases research proposals are submitted to RRESC for:

- ethics screening;
- scientific review;
- consideration of approval of costings (if project is being prepared for submission to a GAB);
- consideration of approval to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation (if appropriate).

Process

1. With the agreement of their supervisor, student electronically submits proposal, front sheet and any supporting documents to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration based at EGH.
2. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration extracts front sheet information for projects database.
3. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration forwards documents electronically to lead reviewer and two other reviewers as per monthly rota, and adds this information to projects database.
4. If research project includes plan to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation, SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration also forwards documents to Director for Quality Enhancement who, as an *ex officio* member of RRESC, considers the approval of research access on the committee's behalf in all cases where this is requested.
5. Two RRESC reviewers (*not* the lead reviewer at this stage) complete independent reviews using *RRESC – Scientific Review and Costings Assessment of Research Proposals*.
6. Within three working days of proposal having been sent to reviewers, reviewers electronically forward their reviews to lead RRESC reviewer and to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration.
7. Lead reviewer completes ethics screening using *RRESC – Ethics Screening Form*.
8. Lead reviewer draws on reviews completed by RRESC colleagues and on her/his independent assessment of the proposal (which *could* be made using a third copy of *RRESC – Scientific Review and Costings Assessment of Research Proposals*) to inform construction of feedback letter for applicant.
9. Lead reviewer forwards feedback letter including decision made (or comments to be inserted into letter template) to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within two working days of receipt of both sets of comments from RRESC reviewers.
10. Director for Quality Enhancement forwards decision on research access to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within four working days of receipt of project proposal.
11. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration inserts feedback into letter template and emails outcome to applicant, with copy to supervisor. This to happen within five working days of application having first been received.
12. Database updated, and information tabled at next full meeting of RRESC for record keeping purposes.

2.6 Projects proposed by members of SONMS staff proposing projects in their capacity as students of other Cardiff University Schools or other Higher Education Institutions

In these cases research proposals are submitted to RRESC for:

- verification that ethics review procedures have been followed (if project is being proposed in the course of studying for a postgraduate degree awarded by a Higher Education Institution other than Cardiff University);
- consideration of approval to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation (if appropriate).

Process

1. Staff member electronically submits proposal, front sheet and any supporting documents to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration based at EGH.
2. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration extracts front sheet information for projects database.
3. If staff member is proposing their project in their capacity as a student of another HEI, SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration forwards documents electronically to School Ethics Officer (or designated alternate in the SEO's absence) for verification that ethics review procedures have been followed.
4. If research project includes plan to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation, SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration also forwards documents to Director for Quality Enhancement who, as an *ex officio* member of RRESC, considers the approval of research access on the committee's behalf in all cases where this is requested.
5. School Ethics Officer notifies SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration of outcome of ethics verification within four working days of receipt of project plans.
6. Director for Quality Enhancement forwards decision on research access to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within four working days of receipt of project proposal.
7. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration inserts feedback into letter template and emails outcome to applicant. This to happen within five working days of application having first been received.
8. Database updated, and information tabled at next full meeting of RRESC for record keeping purposes.

2.7 Projects proposed by researchers not otherwise connected with SONMS who wish to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation

In these cases research proposals are submitted to RRESC for:

- verification that ethics review procedures have been followed;
- consideration of approval to access SONMS staff, students or resources for the purposes of data generation.

Process

1. Researcher electronically submits proposal, front sheet and any supporting documents to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration based at EGH.
2. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration extracts front sheet information for projects database.
3. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration forwards documents electronically to School Ethics Officer (or designated alternate in the SEO's absence) for verification that ethics review procedures have been followed.
4. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration forwards document to Director for Quality Enhancement who, as an *ex officio* member of RRESC, considers the approval of research access on the committee's behalf in all cases where this is requested.
5. School Ethics Officer notifies SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration of outcome of ethics verification within four working days of receipt of project plans.

6. Director for Quality Enhancement forwards decision on research access to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, within four working days of receipt of project proposal.
7. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration inserts feedback into letter template and emails outcome to applicant. This to happen within five working days of application having first been received.
8. Database updated, and information tabled at next full meeting of RRESC for record keeping purposes.

3. Proposals for internal reports

The three required reviewers for internal report proposals will be identified at RRESC's termly meetings.

Process

1. Staff member submits their proposal and front sheet electronically to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration based at EGH.
2. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration extracts front sheet information for projects database.
3. SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration forwards proposal to Chair of RRESC, and adds proposal to agenda for next full meeting of the committee.
4. Three reviewers are identified at next RRESC meeting, with one identified as lead reviewer. If necessary, RRESC can agree to invite a non-RRESC member to act as third reviewer.
5. Reviewers complete independent reviews using *RRESC – Scientific Review of Internal Report form*.
6. Lead reviewer liaises with other two reviewers to agree single set of feedback for applicant.
7. Lead reviewer communicates feedback and decisions made to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, who adds this information to projects database.
8. Where review team agrees that manuscript should be revised, this decision to be communicated electronically to author by SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, using agreed comments and feedback template.
9. Staff member submits revised manuscript to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, who forwards new document to original reviewers.
10. Process continues as from (5) above, until lead reviewer – informed by assessments made by the two other reviewers – recommends internal publication.
11. This decision is emailed to SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration and to Chair of RRESC, for placing on the agenda of the next RRESC meeting.
12. Reviews from all three reviewers relating to final version of manuscript are tabled at RRESC meeting, where final decision on publication is made.
13. Database information updated for record keeping purposes.

4. Maintaining database of expertise

Pro forma emailed to all SONMS staff via email distribution list on an annual basis by SONMS Executive Officer: Research Administration, and database updated in response to information provided.

5. Annual meeting

Standing items to include reports on activity in the following areas:

- Review of terms of reference
- Review of proposals received and decisions made since last meeting