# Terms of Reference,

The School of Health and Social Care (SHSC) Research Ethics Committee is one of the RECs within the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences. The SHSC REC was originally the college of health and human science REC, which was established as an independent College review body in 2017. The School committee is chaired by Ingrid Pritchard and is directly answerable to the *University Research Ethics & Governance sub-committee*. Although structures will be looked at in the future, currently, the SHSC comprises of a main committee and a low risk sub-committee (see Fig 1). The main committee deals with all applications, apart from those allocated to the sub-committees. The sub - committee reports to the main committee.

***Sub - Committee***

* Low risk sub - committee composed of SHSC REC Chair Ingrid Pritchard and SHSC deputy chair: Liv Kosnes. Those applications designated as low risk by the SHSC main committee Chair are reviewed by this sub-committee. Examples of such applications could include applications which include online questionnaires, staff interviews.

FIG.1: SHSC Committee Structure

Main SHSC Committee

Low risk sub-committee

# SHSC REC Role:

1. The primary function of the SHSC REC is to provide ethical review of research which involves human participants and data that are not publicly available. We also provide review of SHSC students’ service evaluations proposals.
	1. **SHSC Students**: To ethically review all research with human participants and/or data not publicly available. We also provide review of student and staff service evaluation proposals.
	2. **SHSC Staff**: To provide ethical review for research with human participants and/or data which is not publicly available.

We do not review educational evaluations unless students are required to participate in activities outside any usual evaluation.

**Students**: An application for SHSC REC approval must be completed by SHSC students who are conducting research with human participants or reviewing data which is not publicly available. All student applications should be authorised by academic supervisors prior to submission. Where SHSC students are intending to conduct research with NHS patients, then the applications should be reviewed by the student's supervisor and approval sought from the relevant NHS LREC Committee (via IRAS). This will not usually require additional submission to SHSC REC where NHS REC approval has been granted. Students can discuss with the Chair of the SHSC REC if they have queries. Any research being conducted by students oversees will require approval by SHSC REC.

**Staff**: Staff researching with SHSC students or other populations should seek approval from the committee if research does not involve NHS patients. Where SHSC staff are intending to conduct research with NHS patients, then approval should be sought from the relevant NHS LREC Committee (via IRAS). This will not usually require additional submission to SHSC REC where NHS REC approval has been granted. Any research being conducted by staff oversees will require approval by SHSC REC.

1. Any application considered by the committee will either be: (a) given a favourable ethical opinion (b) given a favourable ethical opinion pending Chair’s action, (c) determined to be in need of revision and re-submission, (d) not given a favourable ethical opinion (i.e. rejected).
2. The Chair of the committee has the final decision. The role of the Chair also encompasses leading on strategic direction, implementing governance procedures and regular review of submission processes. The Chair is responsible for preparation of a termly report to the *University Research Ethics & Governance sub-committee*. This would include through put data with special note of high risk and debated / contested applications.

# Membership:

The committee is comprised of a lay member and a body of SHSC staff members with relevant expertise and knowledge of various kinds of research and health-care practice, healthcare law and ethics. The committee may co-opt external members and administrative support where special expertise not present within the committee is needed. The chair, in consultation with the committee reserves the right to form sub-committees where particular courses/domains of research give rise to large numbers of applications. Where this is deemed necessary, the proposal to form a sub-committee will be put before the SHSC committee to agree on specific terms of reference and membership.

Members are normally appointed by the Head of School, or by a nominee of the Head of School, for a tenure of 2-3 years in the first instance.

The current membership and expertise of the SHSC committee 2022 are as follows: Chair: Ingrid Pritchard

**Members**

Ingrid Pritchard, Chair

Dr Liv Kosnes, Deputy Chair

Dr Deborah Morgan

Dr Liv Kosnes

Dr Julia Terry

Dr Christian Beech

Dr Tracey Maegusuku-Hewett

Dr Payal Sood

Ioan Humphreys

Marc Thomas

Dr Julian Hunt

Dr Aimee Grant

Adam Miguel

Dr Ian Beech

Elizabeth Hayday

Lay member;

Victoria Morgan-Beattie

# Meetings

The main committee will meet bi monthly (on the first and third Monday of the month) and the dates announced at the start of each academic year. Any application to be considered by the committee should be submitted via email to the Chair of the committee one week prior to one of its bi-monthly meetings. chhs-ethics@swansea.ac.uk

All applications should be signed by the applicant and in the case of students, the student and their academic supervisor(s). The Chair reserves the right to refuse applications where there is no authorisation.

All ethical reviews should be forwarded electronically to the Chair 7 days before the meeting. Meetings are quorate if 4 members are present, including the Chair, Deputy Chair, or a Chair’s nominee.

All meetings will be documented and the minutes stored for 7 years (or more, subject to the requirements of relevant legislation).

# Committee Decisions

Decisions are made by majority vote with the Chair having the casting vote.

# Appeals

Applicants have a right of appeal against committee decisions. Such appeals should be submitted via the Chair within 10 working days of receipt of the decision. The committee will then re-consider the application. The committee may invite the applicant to discuss the application further at a committee meeting.

# Terms of office:

Committee members will normally serve for a two to three year period. There is no maximum tenure for members, but membership will be reviewed every three years to try to share the benefits and burdens of membership across SHSC REC. Members are expected to attend at least 6 meetings per academic year. The Chair’s appointment will be reviewed every three years. The Chair has the right to review individual membership.

# Process for ethical approval:

1. Discuss the application with your supervisor and research team. Applications should be reviewed by the supervisor for the overall quality of the application and relevant paperwork
2. Identify any ethical issues raised by the research and discuss these with your supervisor/research team.
3. Complete an application on the standard SHSC pro-forma (available on SHSC public folders) and send it electronically by e-mail attachment to the e-mail committee address in one document, and should include all other relevant documentation such as PIS, consent form, Debrief etc.. The application must be signed by the researcher and their supervisor where relevant. Once Infonetica has been formally introduced then all applications will be sent via the Infonetica system.
4. The Chair will check through the applications and decide whether they will be assessed via the full committee or the sub-committee. Any immediate queries will be sent via email to the research applicant.
5. Applications will then be made available to committee members.
6. A committee member will be nominated by the Chair to present the application at the relevant meeting (to summarise the application, any relevant points, make recommendation).
7. The application will then be considered by the committee during the meeting in respect of ethical issues arising in the application
8. A decision will be agreed between committee members. This will be that the application has been:
	1. Given a favourable ethical opinion (b) given a favourable ethical opinion pending chair’s action, (c) judged in need of significant revision and resubmission, (d) not given a favourable ethical opinion (i.e. rejected).
9. The Chair will usually convey the decision to the applicant within 5 working days.

# Ingrid Pritchard (Chair) 30/01/2023