This guide is provided for Head of Departments to signoff on Human Ethics Clearance

Version 1.2

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Human Ethics Application Form

From March 2014, Macquarie University’s human ethics application forms will be transitioning to online forms. This will be accessible through the Integrated Research Information System (IRIS) website using the Research Master Online Network (RMENET).

By logging in to IRIS (using your MQ OneID and password), you will be able to complete the Head of Department signoff and submit the applicants’ Human Ethics Application Form to one of Macquarie University’s Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs) or Ethics Subcommittees.

This user guide will help you to log in, navigate through the form, attach comments, and provide final signoff for each human ethics application submitted by researchers and research students within your department.

There are three (3) key steps for each application – for your convenience, these are numbered in chronological order throughout this user guide.

Browser compatibility

The MQ online forms are most compatible with Mozilla Firefox (any version). Other browser options include Google Chrome (any version), Apple Safari (for iPads only – versions 4 and 5), as well as recent versions of Internet Explorer.

Getting Help

If you do not have a ‘OneID’, please contact:
- Web: Sponsored OneID request
- Phone: +61 2 9850 4357

For login issues, please contact:
- Web: IRIS Login issues
- Phone: +61 2 9850 4357

To report a problem with the online form:
- Web: Report to OneHelp
- Phone: +61 2 9850 4459

For questions regarding the online form:
- Web: Frequently Asked Questions
- Web: OneHelp Inquiries
- Phone: +61 2 9850 4459

To discuss issues specific to your human ethics application, please contact:
- Email: ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au
- Phone: +61 2 9850 4459

For all other technical assistance, please contact OneHelp:
- Web: OneHelp website
- Email: help@mq.edu.au
- Phone: +61 2 9850 4357

Note: You may also want to check the time and date of the next available training.
Who will provide signoff?

If you are the Head of Department (or a similar role),¹ you will be required to signoff to the Human Ethics Application Form submitted by researchers within your department. However, if a conflict of interest is declared (e.g. the Head of Department is part of the research personnel), the application will be forwarded to the Dean for signoff instead.

By logging in to IRIS (using your MQ OneID and password), you will be able to review human ethics applications prior to the commencement of ethical review.

Why is signoff required?

This step in the process is to certify that:

- the department is familiar with this project and endorses its undertaking (pending ethics approval)
- the resources required to undertake this project are available, and
- the researchers have the skill and expertise to undertake this project appropriately or will undergo appropriate training as specified in this application.²

This department signoff initiative is in keeping with best-practice ethical review processes for human research. Applications will not be forwarded to either of Macquarie University's Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs) or Ethics Subcommittees until the department signoff is complete.

How will I be notified?

When a new application has been allocated to you for signoff, the system will automatically send an email to your MQ address. In the first line of the email, the text will make reference to the Application ID number (e.g. 5201401234), the name of the Primary contact in the application, and the Ethics Application Title. These fields will help you to locate the application once you are logged into the system.

What should happen when I go on leave?

It is the responsibility of each signoff party to assign a delegate (within their department) to perform their signoff duties in their absence; i.e. during periods where it is known the signoff party will be on leave or unable to access the internet. Please notify the Research Office in advance of your chosen delegate and the period(s) for which they will be performing the signoff duties for your department.

¹ As some research-active parts of MQ do not follow the Head of Department organisational structure, this signoff role will be fulfilled by other nominated positions in those specific areas.
² These statements are adapted from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).
1. Logging in and locating an application

Go to the IRIS website (https://iris.mq.edu.au/RMENet/) and enter your MQ OneID or Student User Name and Password.

Once you have logged in, the home screen will appear. Select Ethics >> Applications from the main commands across the top (as shown below).

Select For Review (if it has not already been selected) to locate all the applications requiring your signoff – these will be listed in the table.

Select the relevant application by looking at Application ID, the Primary contact, and the Ethics Application Title. Once you have located the application, click on the hyperlink (i.e. Ethics Application Title) to open the application for signoff.
Navigating each application

Once the application is created or opened, you will be presented with several window panes and icons as shown below.

1. **Top-left pane:** Title and Status bar
   This area lists the current formal title of the project, the current application status and workflow state, as well as other Human Ethics forms currently available.

2. **Left-hand side pane:** Form and Action menus
   This pane lists the various sections and pages of the application form under the “Form” tab. The “Action” tab lists the options currently available to the user (e.g. Signoff complete).

3. **Top-right pane:** Icon menu
   This pane contains important navigational icons, available throughout the application (e.g. Next Page, Previous Page, Save, etc.).

4. **Main pane:** Current page
   This pane shows the content of the current page selected in the form.

The details for each of these panes are discussed in the next section.
1. Top-left pane

This pane displays three (3) key features:

1. Application title
This displays the current title as displayed in question 1.1, “What is the formal title of this research proposal?”

Each new application initially appears with the title, “[Main Title]: Sub-title”. Once the new title is saved, this will appear in the top-left pane.

2. Application status
This displays information that describes the progress of the application to date.

The default status for each new application is Draft – indicating that the application is under development and has not yet been submitted.

Once the application has been successfully submitted, this status will continue to change throughout the application process. Some other examples include:
- Pending (internal only – with signoff party)
- HREC Review (under review by HREC)
- Subcommittee Review
- Additional Information Requested
- Resubmission
- Redraft (significant revisions required)

3. Workflow state
This displays information that describes who is currently editing or reviewing the application. To some extent, it also reflects the progress of the application.

The default state for each new application is Draft – indicating that the application is being edited by the applicants. Some other examples include:
- Signoff
- HREC (HUM)
- HREC (MDS)
- Subcommittees
2. Left-hand side pane

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before you begin</td>
<td>Signoff complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Key aspects</td>
<td>Return to applicant(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Position titles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>! Personnel details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ethical review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❓ Purpose of review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ External committees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Funding &amp; support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❓ Conflicts of interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signoff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are **two (2) tabs** visible in this pane:

1. **Form**
   This contains the hyperlink index to each section of the application form.

   There are also options to “Expand” or “Collapse” the list of pages in the form.

   A yellow triangle (†) marks each page that is yet to be viewed by any party.

   When all mandatory questions on a page are completed, this icon will change into a green tick (✓) once the “Save” icon is selected or once you have navigated to another page.

   A red exclamation mark (❗) indicates that there are mandatory fields that have not been completed on the page (including questions within the “table” questions).

   **Note:** The form will determine which sections are required to be completed based on answers to specific questions. Thus some sections will only appear as an application progresses.

   Should the form present you with a question mark (❓) next to any of the pages (while completing or submitting), this is the system suggesting that the answers on these pages may need to be revised before continuing. In some instances, there may be additional questions that require an answer.

2. **Action**
   This contains action links. These will carry out requests that are available to the user at this point in the workflow. Options for signoff are limited to:

   - Signoff complete
   - Return to applicant(s)
3. Top-right pane

The help and navigational icons are as follows (from left to right):

- Previous Page
- Next Page
- Save
- Application Comments
- Reports
- Page Comments
- Page Help
- Exit

4. Main pane

This main pane displays the content of the current page selected in the form. You may click on any of the active links without navigating away from the form.

Asterisk

Any field marked with a red asterisk (*) is a mandatory field and must be completed before the application can progress.

Help Icon

Question help is available for many questions throughout the application by clicking the blue question mark icon. To close the help text, click on the close symbol (X).

Previous and Next Page icons

Selecting these icons will take you to either the previous page or the next page. These icons will also automatically save the current content.

Confirm and Cancel icons

The Confirm (✓) and Cancel (X) icons also appear for table questions (i.e. Personnel, Attachments and Signoff) as well as entering comments.
2. Reviewing an application

While looking at an application, go to the top right-hand pane and click on the Reports icon (binder picture).

Select ‘Ethics Application’ (default option), choose from PDF or HTML, and press ‘OK’.

This will allow you to review the entire application at once.

Depending on your machine’s preferences, this file may open in a new browser tab/window titled Printer Friendly Version or in Adobe Reader (PDF only).

Note: You may want to keep this Report open while adding any comments.

To close the Printer Friendly Version box, select ‘Cancel’ or the ‘X’ symbol at the top-right of the dialogue box.
3. How to complete signoff

To complete the signoff step, navigate to the left-hand side pane and click on the Form tab (if not already selected).

Navigate to the Signoff section and click on the ‘Signoff parties’ page.

Complete the details for each question on this page.

11.5.1 Name of Signoff Party *

[Initial].[Surname]

Please change the default text accordingly.

11.5.2 Date Signoff Accepted *

28/01/2014

Once the “Date Signoff Accepted” field is complete, go to the left-hand side pane once more, click on the ‘Action’ tab and select ‘Signoff complete’.
Commenting and returning to applicants

For comments that apply to specific pages, go to the top right-hand pane and click on the Page Comments icon (small speech bubble on a page).

For comments that apply more generally, go to the top right-hand pane and click on the Application Comments icon (speech bubble picture).

Select ‘New comment’, enter your comment and select the green tick (to confirm).

Select ‘I do not accept’, go to the left-hand side pane, click on the ‘Action’ tab and select ‘Return to applicant(s)’.

When the returned application is sent for signoff once more – after having made the changes requested by the signoff party – the system will again send an email to your MQ address. This resubmission process operates in the same manner.
Instances where you cannot signoff

Conflict of interest

Should you find that you have received an application where you have selected at least one (1) of the following options:

- I am/will be a member of the research personnel on this project
- I am a supervisor of at least one student who is listed in the research personnel
- I am related to/in a spousal relationship with one of the listed research personnel

11.5 By selecting "I accept" below, I certify that:

- I understand the nature of this project
- the resources required to undertake
- the researchers have the skill and experience specified in this application.

At question 11.5, select "I do not accept".

At question 11.5.1, enter your initial and surname.

Go to the left-hand side pane, click on the ‘Action’ tab and select ‘Signoff complete’.

A message will appear and an email will be sent to the Dean, notifying them to provide signoff for this application instead.

You will subsequently be removed from signoff duties for this application.
Incorrect department

Should you find that you have received an application that is not from your department, navigate to the left-hand side pane and click on the Form tab (if not already selected).

Scroll down to the Signoff section and click on the ‘Signoff parties’ page.

At question 11.4, select “Other interest or affiliation (not listed above)”.

At question 11.4.1, select “No”.

At question 11.4.1.1, select the relevant department within your faculty.

If the relevant department is unknown or not listed, please enter this information at question 11.4.2.

At question 11.5, select “I do not accept”.

Go to the left-hand side pane and click on the ‘Action’ tab. Either option will notify the Human Ethics Secretariat that a new signoff party needs to be assigned. You will subsequently be unassigned from signing off for this application.
Exiting and logging out

Go to the top right-hand pane and click on the Exit icon (folder with green arrow pointing upwards).

A warning message will appear asking if you wish to save changes. To save changes to the form when exiting, click the “OK” button. This will take you back to the “Applications” screen.

When you are ready to logout of the system (i.e. IRIS), select the grey “Logout” button at the top-right of the screen. This will return you to the IRIS login page.
## Appendix A: Status table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS NAME</th>
<th>USAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft</td>
<td>Default status for new applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>Waiting for signoff (internal applicants only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretariat Review</td>
<td>Processing External Review applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Review</td>
<td>Scientific review of ethics applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HREC Review</td>
<td>Ethical review of Greater-than-Low Risk applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcommittee Review</td>
<td>Ethical review of Low Risk applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Information Requested</td>
<td>Changes are required before resubmission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redraft</td>
<td>Significant changes are required before resubmission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resubmission</td>
<td>Ethical review of applications that have been resubmitted following a request for additional information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Successful completion of Full Review, Prior Review or Scientific Review form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Approval Noted</td>
<td>Successful completion of the External Review form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Approved</td>
<td>Unsuccessful attempt to complete an ethics application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal Requested</td>
<td>Requesting to withdraw or discontinue an application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>Application withdrawn from the ethical review process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinued</td>
<td>Previously-approved projects that will not be completed and/or have had ethics approval withdrawn by MQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reapproved</td>
<td>Reinstating ethics approval after discontinued by MQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archived</td>
<td>For completed projects that have sent through a final report or for applications that are left inactive for 42 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>