Ethics RM Applicant User Guide

Version 2.0

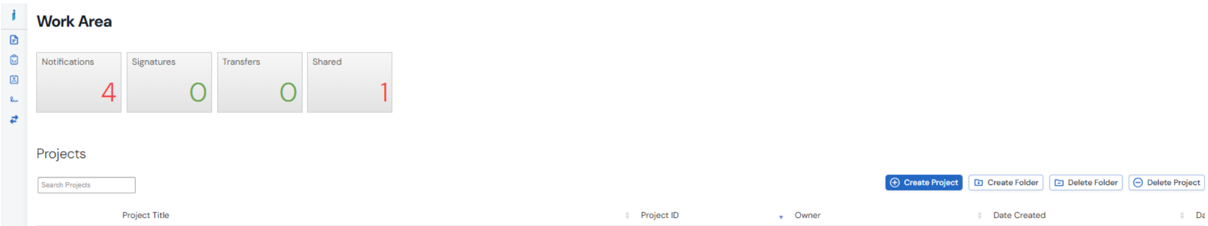
January 2026

How to access Ethics RM

Ethics RM can be accessed at https://ethicsandgovernanceapplications.surrey.ac.uk

You can log in with your UoS email and password, and the platform is compatible with accessibility software.

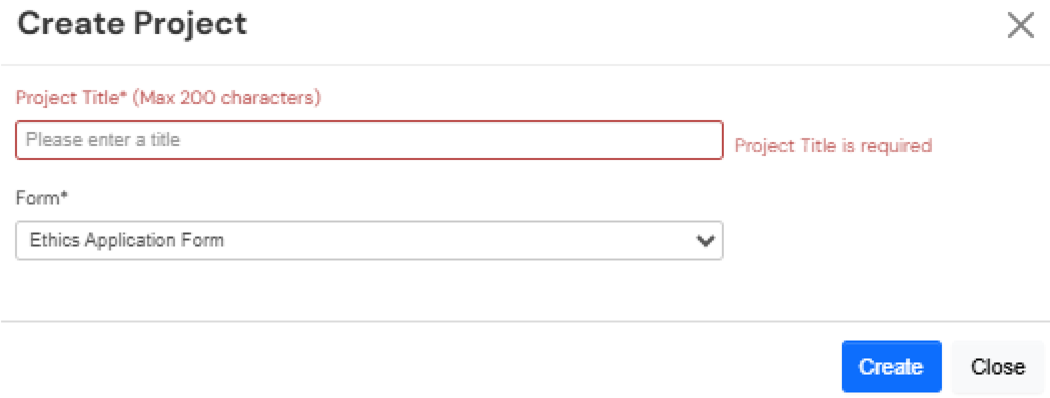
When you log on, you will be taken to your homepage, called the Work Area. This will show the number of projects you have submitted and are involved in.



How to create a new application

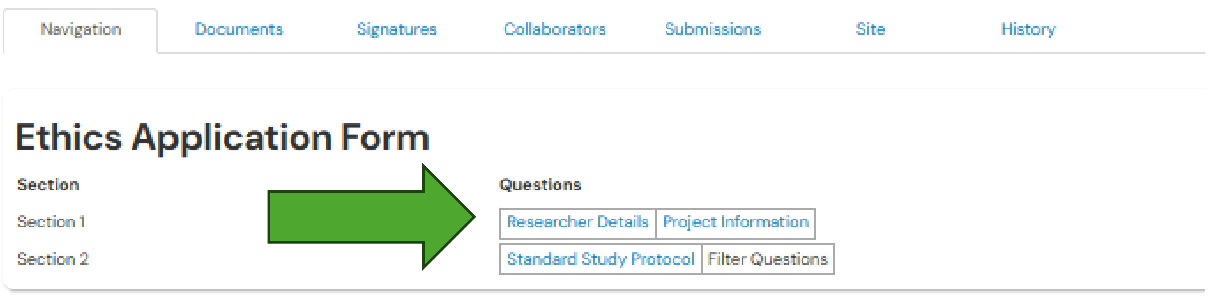
Click on ‘create project’

Enter a short title for your project (you will enter the full title later, if required). Select "Ethics Application Form" from the drop-down menu. Click on 'create'.



Initially, only Section 1 and Section 2 of the application form will appear. More sections will appear depending on the questions you answer and responses you give.

To start, click on Section 1 'Researcher Details'



Your details as applicant will auto-populate. If you are also the lead researcher, you need to re-enter your details in the Lead Researcher section. If you are not the lead researcher, then enter that staff member's name here.

You can use the search by typing their email address. Please note that if they have not previously logged into Ethics RM their details will not appear, and you need to ask them to log into the system so that it recognises them.

The lead researcher is the person who takes responsibility for a research project. This may be a staff member or a student. For student group projects the lead researcher can either be the same student as the applicant or the supervisor. The lead researcher cannot be a different student to the applicant.

As you work through the form you will see that additional information is provided for some questions. Click on the "i" icon to access information for that question. If you still need help completing the form please ask your supervisor in the first instance or contact ethics@surrey.ac.uk

The application will save as you move to the next page, or you can click on the "Save" tile. Please note that the session will expire after 25-30 minutes of inactivity, and you will lose any unsaved work.

To view or review any previous sections, click on the previous/next buttons at the bottom of the screen or the 'navigate' tile to view them all.

You must answer all the questions asked by the platform.

Supporting Documents

When you get to Section 8 you will be asked to upload supporting documents relevant to your project. For most projects, this will include:

- A Study Protocol
- Participant Information Sheets
- Consent Forms
- Interview/survey questions
- Recruitment Material
- Gatekeeper Permission
- Response to queries doc (for resubmissions).

Templates for these documents can be found at https://my.surrey.ac.uk/research/ethics. If you have not provided these documents, please state why your project does not require them in your Study Protocol.

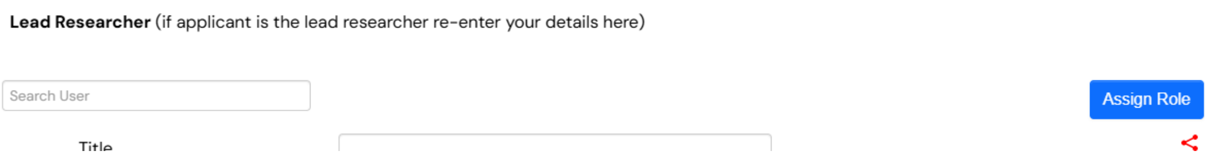
Please ensure that all documents also have the version number and date in the footer (this is called version control). The date and version should match the details you provide when uploading the document.

The most common document types e.g. Word, .pdf, .jpeg, are supported.

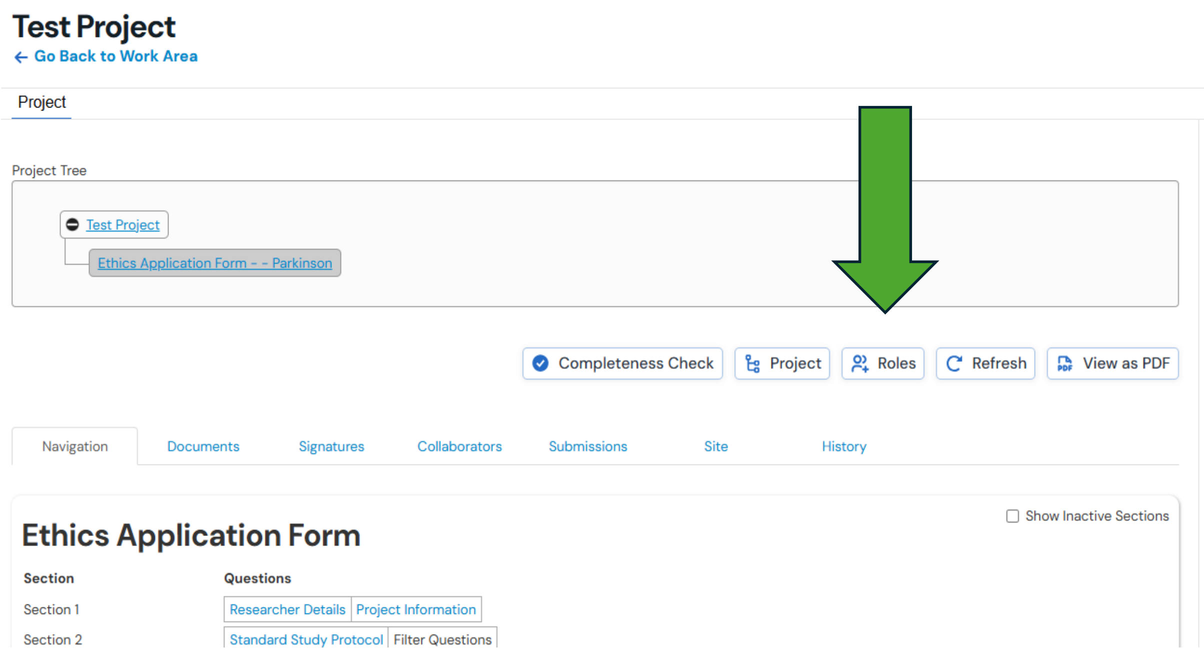
Sharing the form with your supervisor or other researchers

Students should also share the form with their supervisor, so they can check the application and sign the project. If students don't share their project with their supervisor, and just enter the supervisor details in the form, the supervisor will not be notified until the application is submitted. If you are submitting the form on behalf of a lead researcher, the form should be shared with them. You can also share the project with other researchers. There are two ways to share a form:

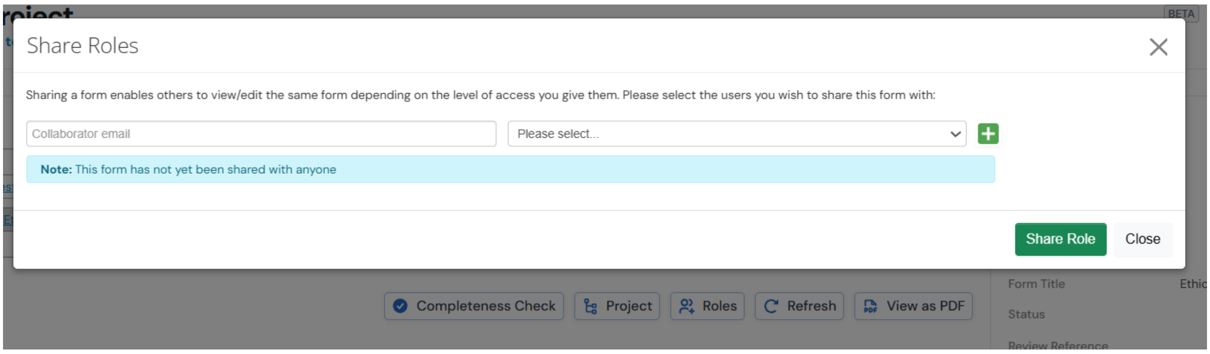
You can use the “Assign Role” button in Section 1, Researcher Details



Or you can use the Roles tile. Click on the Roles icon and search for your supervisor/colleague.



The permissions are set for each role type, so select the correct one from the drop-down menu.



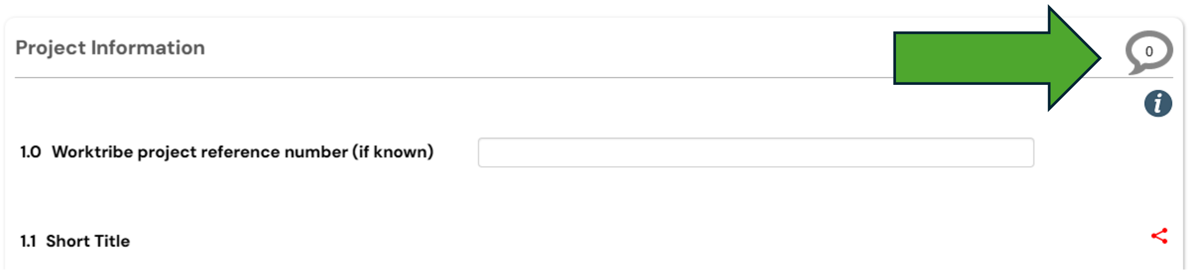
Your supervisor or colleague will be notified that you have assigned them a role your form, and they will then have access to your form.

You can search for your supervisor/colleague, but they will only appear if they are already in the system. If they do not appear, please ask them to log into Ethics RM and the system should then recognise them as a user.

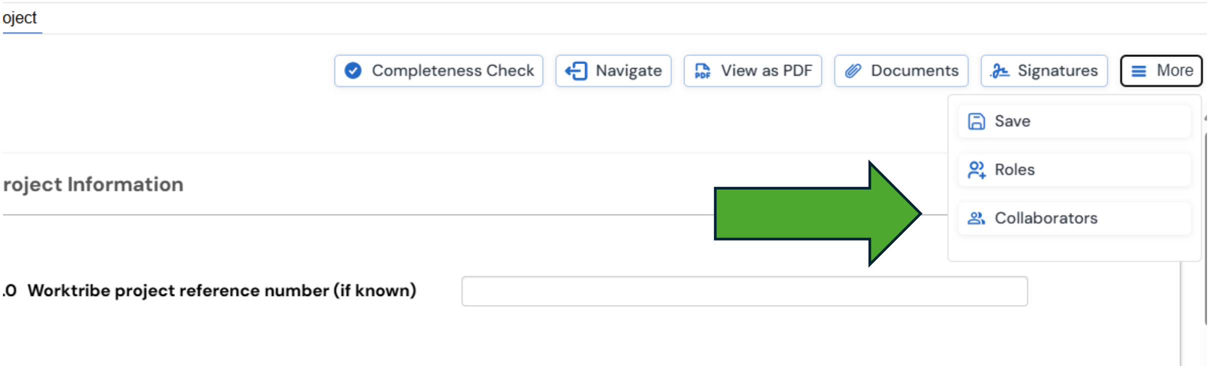
Collaborate with your study team

If you wish to share the unsubmitted form with other members of the study team, use the “Roles” tile function (detailed above). Your project team collaborators will be able to view and edit the form (please note this is only possible for colleagues with a @surrey email account).

Members of the project team can leave messages for each other within the form. Click on the speech bubble on the top of each page to enter a comment which will be visible to all those the project has been shared with.



You can check who has access to the project by selecting ‘more’ and then ‘collaborators’.

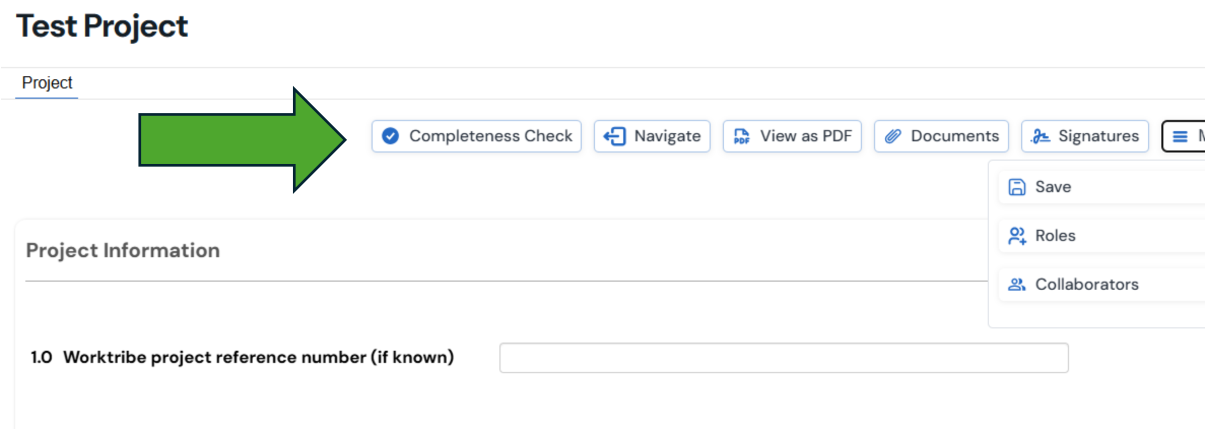


Please note that in Ethics RM collaborators has a different meaning to that which is usually applied to project collaborators. Section 5.0 asks about study collaborators.

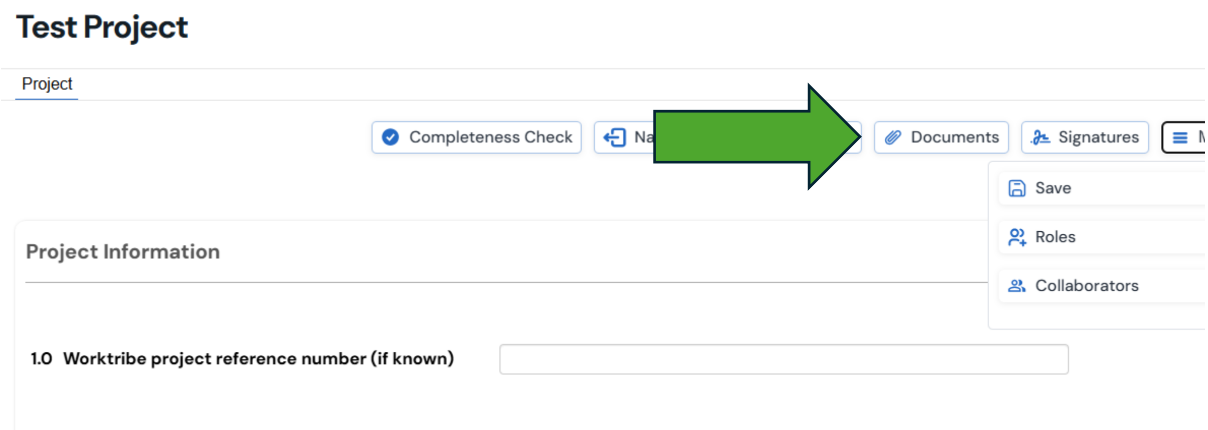
These are other organisations who will be performing some of the study activities. It is not required to detail other members of University of Surrey staff here.

Review your submission

To check whether all questions have been answered and all documents have been uploaded, please click on the "Completeness check" tile. This will identify any mandatory questions which have not been answered.

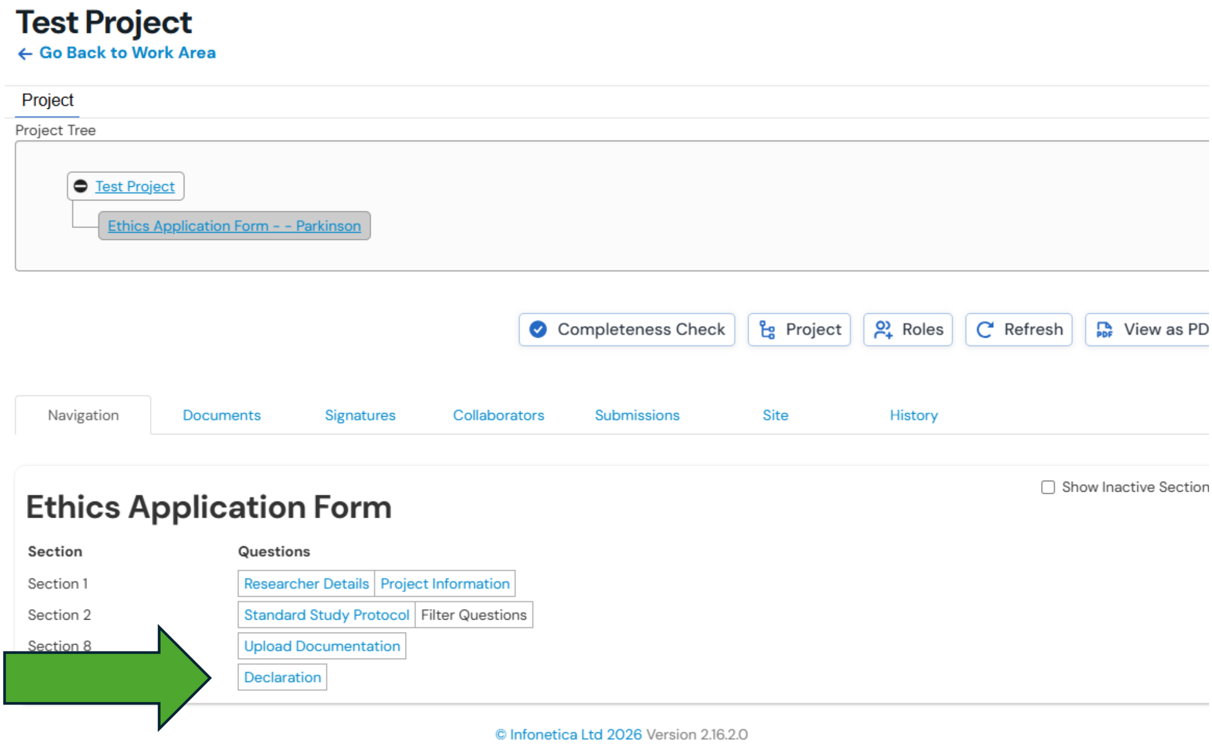


To check the list of documents submitted, click on the "Documents" tile to see the documents that have been uploaded for this application.



Submit your application

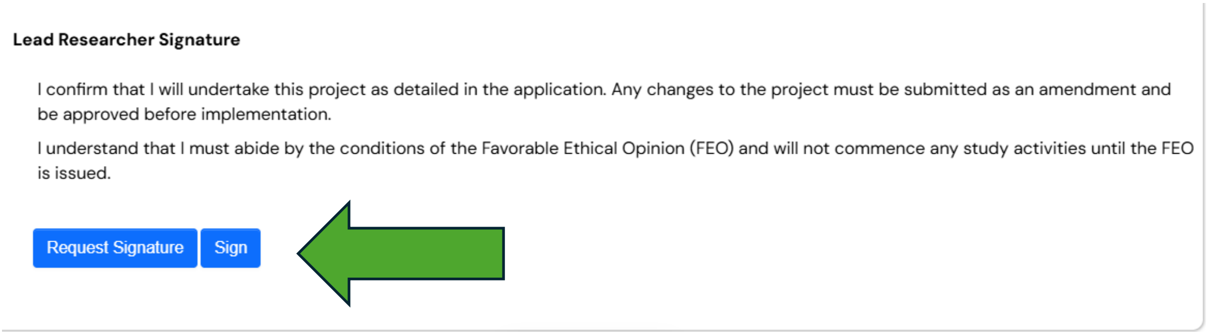
When you are satisfied with your answers you will need to submit your application. Navigate to the "Declaration" section.



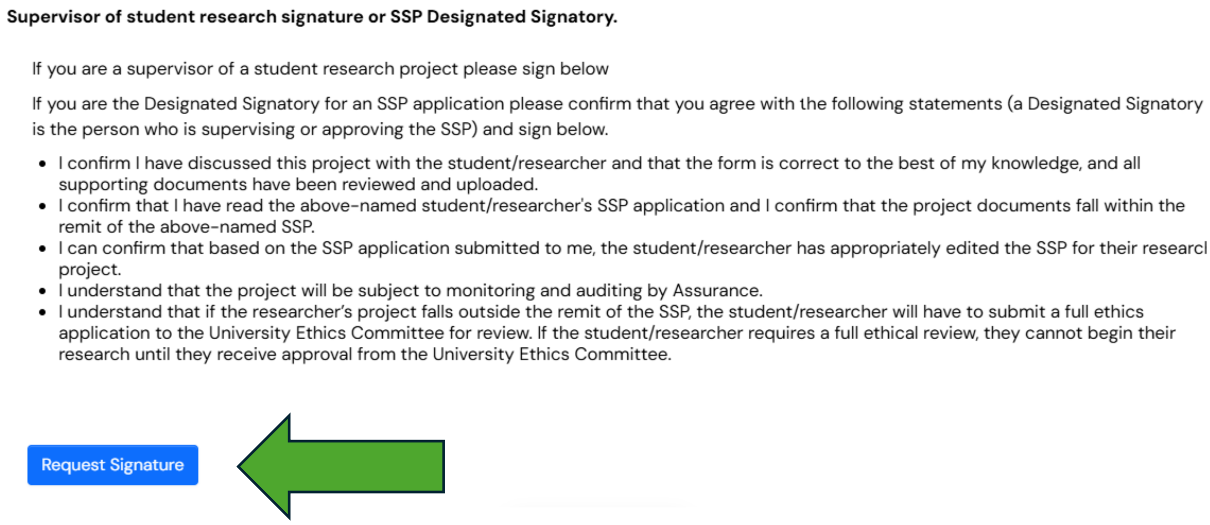
Depending on your answers your study may meet more than one review criteria, in which case you will see a few declaration statements, depending on the answers provided.

Tick the boxes next to each statement to show that you have read the information provided and have understood it.

Then, if you are the Lead Researcher, click on 'sign'.



If you are a student with a supervisor, click on the "request signature" button. You can add a message to the signatory when requesting the approval.



Supervisor of student research signature or SSP Designated Signatory.

If you are a supervisor of a student research project please sign below

If you are the Designated Signatory for an SSP application please confirm that you agree with the following statements (a Designated Signatory is the person who is supervising or approving the SSP) and sign below.

- I confirm I have discussed this project with the student/researcher and that the form is correct to the best of my knowledge, and all supporting documents have been reviewed and uploaded.
- I confirm that I have read the above-named student/researcher's SSP application and I confirm that the project documents fall within the remit of the above-named SSP.
- I can confirm that based on the SSP application submitted to me, the student/researcher has appropriately edited the SSP for their researcl project.
- I understand that the project will be subject to monitoring and auditing by Assurance.
- I understand that if the researcher's project falls outside the remit of the SSP, the student/researcher will have to submit a full ethics application to the University Ethics Committee for review. If the student/researcher requires a full ethical review, they cannot begin their research until they receive approval from the University Ethics Committee.

Request Signature

Once the form has been signed by everyone who needs to sign it, it will automatically be submitted.

Please note that the form will be locked at this point and no changes can be made. You can re-call the signature request if you need to make an amendment up to the point when the approvers have signed. After this time the form will be submitted.

You will then receive an email to confirm your form has been successfully submitted.

Reviewer comments / How to respond to queries

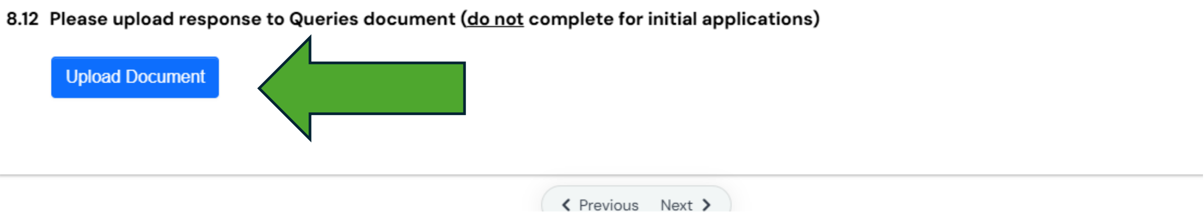
Once your project has been submitted, it will be sent to the validation queue. At the validation stage you may be requested to submit additional documents or clarifications if required.

After the project has been validated, it will join the queue of projects waiting to be sent to review by ethics and/or governance reviewers.

When ethics or governance reviewers have completed their review, you will receive an email with their comments, called a Queries Letter. You should log back into Ethics RM to view the comments and make any required changes directly onto the form or upload amended supporting documents.

If you are making a change to a supporting document, please mark additional text with yellow highlight and deleted text with strike-through, so it appears ~~like this.~~ Remember to update the version control.

The queries letter will ask you to provide a document that shows all the points raised during the review and how you have addressed them. You can do this by copying and pasting the pdf of the queries letter into a word document. This should then be uploaded to Section 8.12 as part of your resubmission.



If you do not include this document and/or mark up the changes you have made in your supporting documents, the resubmission will be returned to you. Within this document, you are welcome to challenge any of the points raised if you feel that an aspect of your application has been misunderstood.

It is usual for all ethics applications to receive queries/amendments. If you do not understand any of the points raised, please speak to your supervisor or ethics@surrey.ac.uk. Please address all queries. If any queries are not addressed in the response to queries letter it will be returned to you.

FEO - Favourable Ethical Opinion (approval)

When the reviewers are satisfied that the study meets ethical standards and governance requirements you will receive a letter confirming Favourable Ethical Opinion (FEO) Or Governance Approval, depending on the type of review the project has had. Keep this letter safe as you may need it when submitting your thesis or dissertation, or when publishing your research.

Some FEOs/Governance Approvals are sent to you with conditions attached. These will be detailed to you in the response/FEO letter, and you should ensure that any amendments are made before starting your research. You do not need to resubmit your application with these changes made.

No review required

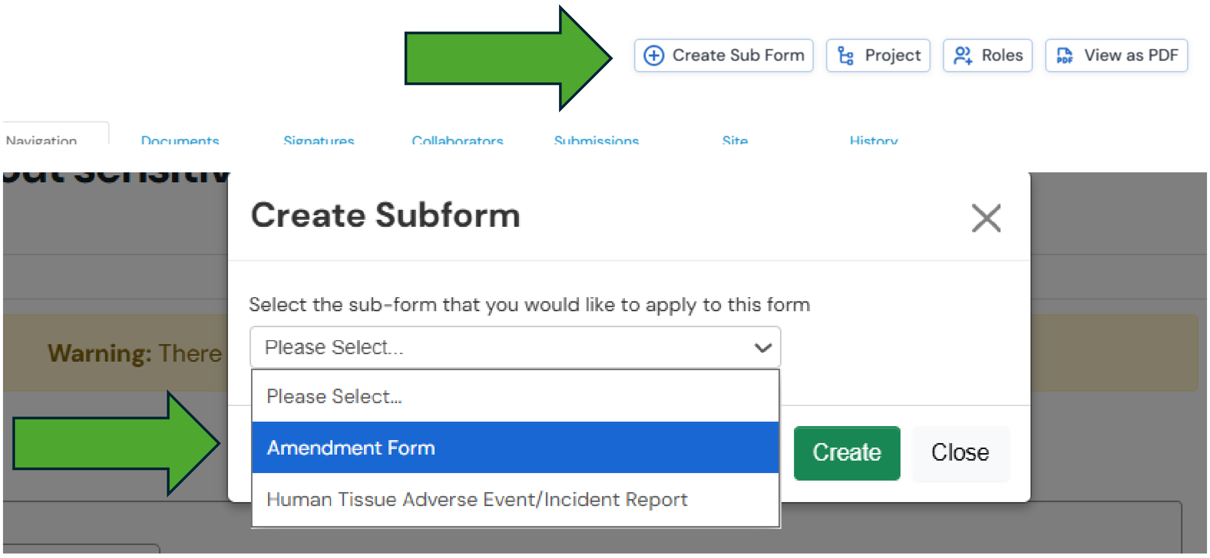
Some simple studies do not meet the criteria for review. If this is the case you will receive an automated email confirming no review was required, followed by a formal letter within 24 hours. You may commence your research but keep a copy of the letter as you may need to submit it with your dissertation/thesis. If there are any changes to your research you should complete a new application, as a review may be required as a result.

SSPs – Standard Study Protocols

Some departments have standardised protocols in place which can be used for some low-risk research. If your supervisor has provided you with these templates, please complete the first part of the Ethics RM application (you will only see the questions you need to answer). Select the relevant SSP from the drop-down menu at Section 2 and upload your documents. You will receive an automated “SSP Registration Confirmed” email once your supervisor has approved your study.

Amendments to ethics applications reviewed after August 2024

If you need to make an amendment to your study open the project application and click on “Sub Form” and select ‘amendment form’.



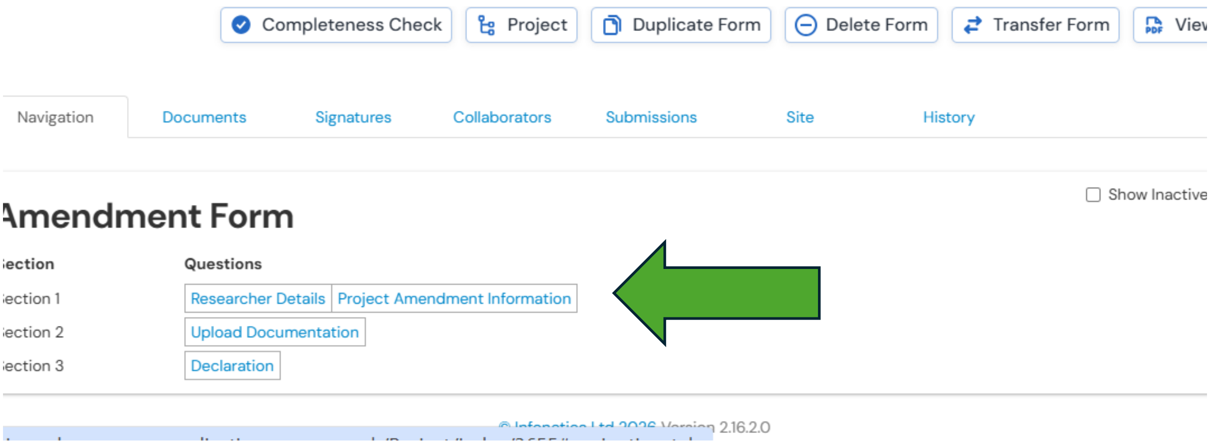
Some of the project details will be copied from the original application. If these details are changing, make the amendment in that section.

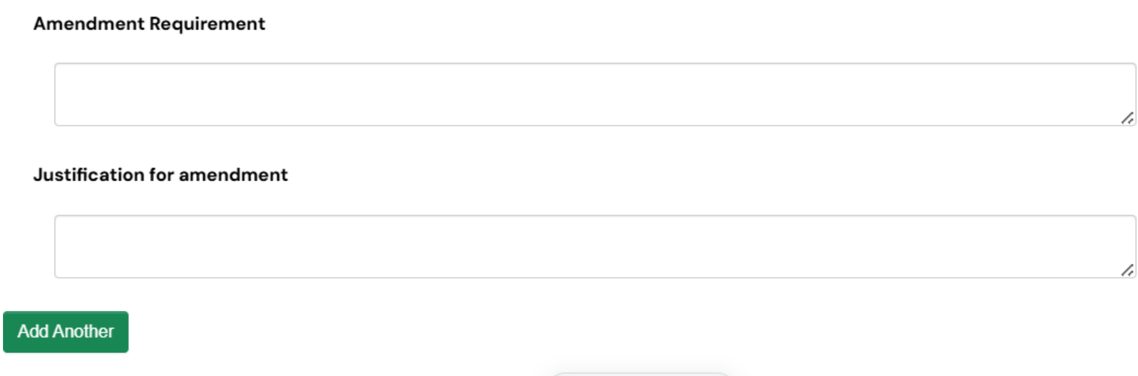
For each change to the study, describe the amendment request and provide justification for making the change. You can add more than one change to a single amendment request, but please enter them separately in the form.

Upload any documents which have been updated because of the amendment. Please mark additional text with yellow highlight and deleted text with strike-through. Remember to update the version control.

Lead researchers and supervisors will need to approve the amendment application before it is submitted.

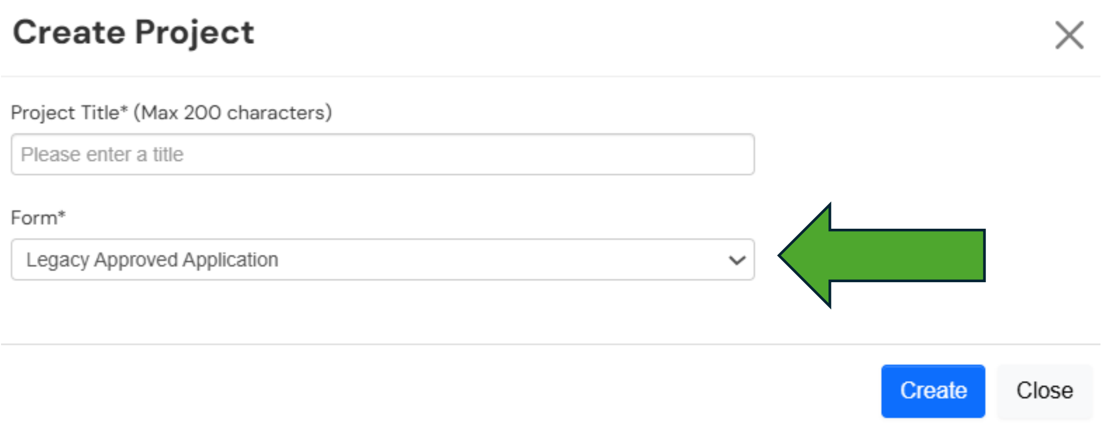
Queries from reviewers should be responded to in the same way as for new studies.





Amendments to ethics applications reviewed before August 2024

If the original review was not conducted through Ethics RM, you will first need to create a new project using the “Legacy Approved Application” form. Click on the ‘Create Project’ tile as if you were creating a new project, and then select ‘Legacy Approved Application’ within the form dropdown menu. Once you have submitted (the legacy approved application will be auto approved) you can then create the amendment sub-form via the ‘Create sub form’ tile’.



Transferring studies

If the applicant is leaving the University but the project is continuing, the study should be transferred to another researcher.

Please note that if the person leaving was the Lead Researcher an amendment must be submitted to formally review and record the change.

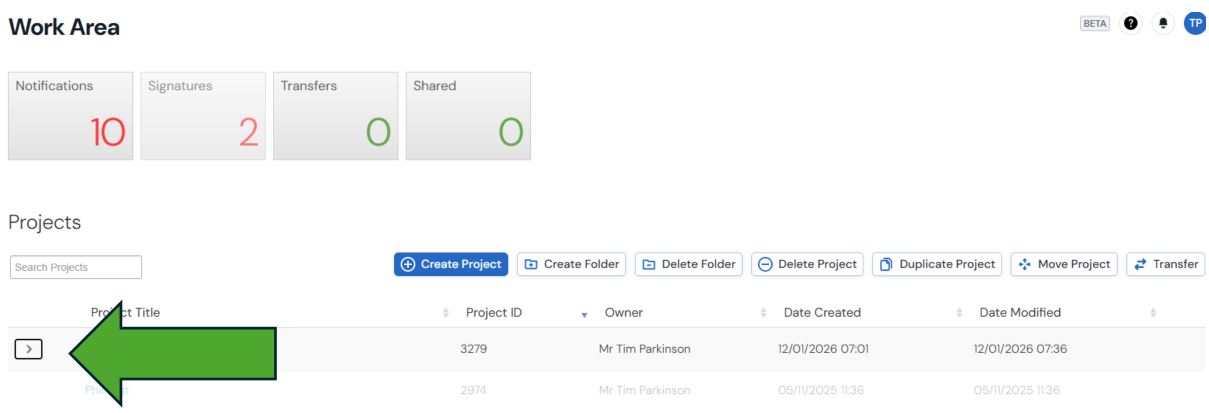
Copying applications

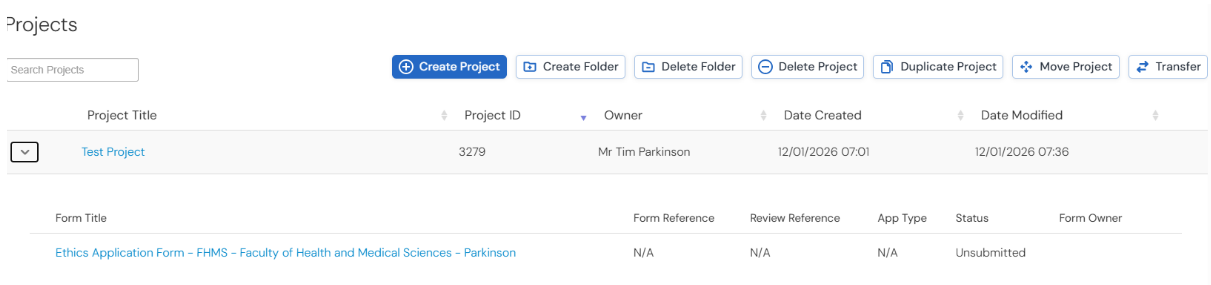
If you wish to create a new study which is very similar to one you have already submitted, you can click on the “Duplicate Project” tile to copy all answers into a new study application.

Make any required changes and upload new supporting documents before submitting your application.

Tracking submissions

The Work Area page lists all the applications you have created. Click on the left-hand arrow to expand and see the status of your project.





Use Project ID or Form Reference when contacting ethics@surrey.co.uk so that they can find your application easily.

'Status' shows the status of the application. This will show if the application has been validated and awaiting reviewers, not submitted, awaiting signatures, currently under review, returned to you to make changes or approved.