



Annual St George's Research Ethics Committee (SGREC) Report 2020 - 2021

This statement has been produced by the Research Ethics and Integrity Officer, St George's University of London, in accordance with the SGREC Modus Operandi. It has been approved by St George's Council and will be made publicly available on the University website.

In accordance with the Modus Operandi, this statement includes:

- a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support the work of the Committee
- the members of the Committee
- the number of meetings
- protocol deviations
- the number of applications submitted and given favourable opinion by the SGREC

All research that is not being reviewed by a nationally recognised Research Ethics Committee (eg: NHS REC), that is being conducted by St George's University London students or staff or research which involves St George's University London students, staff, or data, requires a favourable opinion from the St George's Research Ethics Committee (SGREC) and governance approval by the Research Ethics and Integrity Officer, prior to commencing. We believe that the high quality of the research ethics review is fundamental to our research integrity and culture. This annual statement covers the period 1st August 2020 to 31st July 2021.

1. Summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support the work of the Committee

- i) Research ethics webpage: The webpage has been constantly updated with any new information and updated policies and forms (<https://www.sgul.ac.uk/research/research-ethics>).
- ii) The Research Ethics and Integrity Officer (REIO) provided expert guidance on research ethics and integrity.

Presentations:

- 24/09/2020 – Seminar for 2nd year Clin Pharm and 3rd Year medical students (24 participants)
- 30/09/2020 - Welcome seminar for new staff (9 participants)
- 11/11/2020 – Seminar for Staff – Infection and Immunity (37 participants)
- 16/11/2020 - Seminar for Staff – Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education (5 participants)
- 01/10/2021 - Seminar for Staff - Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education (15 participants)
- 09/02/2021 - Seminar for Staff - Population Health (30 participants)
- 16/03/2021 – Student and Staff Partnership Grant (20 participants)
- 22/04/2021 – Student - MSc Global Health (25 participants)

Workshops (2h):

- 28/10/2020 - Students - MSc Healthcare Practice (12 participants)
- 29/10/2020 - Students -Clinical Pharmacology BSc (40 participants)
- 04/11/2020 – Students - Cardiac and Respiratory physiology BSc students (15 participants)
- 16/11/2020 - Students - MRES (4 participants)
- 17/11/2020 – Students - Occupational therapy and physiotherapy BSc (25 participants)
- 08/12/2020 – Students - Physiotherapy MSc students (26 students)
- 03/12/2020 – 4 h session on Research Integrity - Postgraduate MRC LID Cohort Training (18 participants)
- 17/12/2021 – 4h session on Research Ethics - Students – Postgraduate MRC LID Cohort Training (19 participants)
- 26/04/2021 – ResearchAware – Session on Research Ethics (15 participants)
- 15/06/2021 – ResearchAware – Session on Research Integrity (7 participants)

- iii) The Research Ethics and Integrity Officer (REIO) provided drop-in sessions for students. This year was **92 drop-in session**.

Drop in sessions	
August 2020	2
September 2020	2
October 2020	7
November 2020	12
December 2020	9
January 2021	6
February 2021	19
March 2021	10
April 2021	9
May 2021	5
June 2021	6
July 2021	5

- iv) St George's has renewed the subscription to the UKRIO in this year. The independent charity provides support and free webinars on research ethics, research integrity and culture and research misconduct.
- v) An audit of the St George's University of London Research Ethics Committee (SGREC) was conducted in May 2020 and followed up in 2021. The review was based on the requirements set out in the 'Research Ethics Support and Review in Research Organisations' guidance of UK Research Integrity Office and Association of Research Managers and Administrators (2020). The audit established that the SGREC is 95% compliant with these requirements.
- vi) **The identified fields for improvement in the Audit and actions in 2020/2021:**
- Update the Constitution and Terms of Reference for the ethics committee - *The Terms of Reference and the Modus Operandi was updated in February and May 2021*
The SGREC SOP was updated in May 2021 with the actions for any deviations occurring during a research study.
The Code of Conduct for researchers has been drafted and is awaiting approval
 - Increase the diversity of the SGREC with people from other institutes, St George's NHS Trust medical staff, industry and the local community

The Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form has been introduced to monitoring the diversity of the membership, according to the suggestions of the SGUL Diversity and Inclusion Adviser. New members have been recruited from the NHS Trust, lay members, and student representatives.

The members of the Committee

Name	Position / Rep	Membership type	First meeting attended	3 years	6 years
Bridget Bax	Reader	MCS	10/01/2018	10/01/2021 Extended for 6 years	10/01/2024
Elena Sviderskaya	Senior Lecturer in Cell and Molecular Biology	MCS	14/02/2018 Att.22/05/201 8	14/02/2021 Extended for 6 years	14/02/2024
Irina Chis Ster	Senior Lecturer	I&I	09/12/2015	09/12/2018 Extended for 6 years	09/12/2021
Faaiza Khan	Student representative	STUDENT	21/06/2021 NEW MEMBER	21/06/2024	21/06/2027
Michael Perkin	Senior Lecturer/Consultant Paediatrician	PH	10/01/2018	10/01/2021 Extended for 6 years	10/01/2024
Miguel Sequeira Campos	Surgical Academic Foundation Doctor	NHS Trust	20/05/2021 NEW MEMBER	20/05/2024	20/05/2027
Nahiedh Khan	Lay member	LAY	12/09/2018	12/09/2021 Extended for 6 years	12/09/2024
Paris Ataliotis	Reader & Deputy Chair	IMBE	10/01/2018	10/01/2021 Extended for 6 years	10/01/2024
Phil Cooper	Professor of Epidemiology and Infectious Diseases	I&I	10/01/2018	10/01/2021 Extended for 6 years	10/01/2024
Sue Alexander	Lay member	LAY	12/09/2018	12/09/2021 Extended for 6 years	12/09/2024
Victor Olisa	Lay member	LAY	15/02/2021 NEW MEMBER	15/02/2024	15/02/2027
Damion Bailey	Student representative	STUDENT	20/05/2021 NEW MEMBER	20/05/2024	20/05/2027
Paul Heath	Professor of Paediatric Infectious Diseases & SGREC Chair	I&I	13/03/2019 Att.12/06/201 9	13/03/2021 Extended for 6 years	13/03/2024
Georgia Bullock	Research Development and Governance Manager	JRES	29/11/2019	29/11/2022	29/11/2025
Angelika Kristek	Research Ethics and Integrity Officer	JRES	26/02/2020	26/02/2023	26/02/2026

2. Number of meetings

Date	Discussed studies	Outcomes
17/08/2020	2020.0221 - PREPARE Work Package 3 – Development of a serocorrelate of protection against GBS – Protocol Harmonisation	Favourable conditional ethics opinion
23/11/2020	2020.0311 - EUROlinkCAT survey of the information and support needs of parents of children with congenital anomalies across Europe	Favourable ethics opinion
21/12/2020	2020.0308 Fluconazole plus flucytosine vs. fluconazole alone for cryptococcal antigen positive patients identified through screening: A Phase III Randomised Controlled Trial EFFECT - Efficacy of Flucytosine and Fluconazole as Early Cryptococcal Treatment 2020.0344 - Strategies to reduce vertical transmission of multi-drug resistant pathogens to neonates (NeoVT-AMR)	Favourable ethics opinion for all studies
15/02/2021	Discussion of Annual Report, Update on proportional review process, templates and policies, Audit of the cases	-
16/03/2020	2021.0047 - A qualitative study exploring attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination for Black and minority ethnic healthcare workers in the UK 2021.0078 Them Vs Us. Rectifying cultural imbalance through communication skills teaching at St George's	Favourable ethics opinion for 2021.0047 and 2021.0078
19/04/2021	2021.0112 What are the reasons that lead Italian doctors to choose to be conscious objectors in two Italian regions? A qualitative study 2021.0064 - Interpersonal Skills in Virtual Placement for Graduating Physiotherapy Students Student perspective of interpersonal skills in virtual placement (AUDIT) 2021.0065 - Exploring Barriers and Facilitators in Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) Placements: Insights from Physiotherapy Students Student Insights into TECS Placements (AUDIT)	Favourable ethics opinion for 2021.0112 Audit of low risk studies (reviewed by REIO only)– 2021.0064, 2021.0065
20/05/2021	2021.0128 - Using innovative 'design thinking' approaches to improve vaccine uptake in migrants: a participatory co-design study, Co-designing an intervention to strengthen vaccine uptake in a migrant community	Ongoing, need revise and resubmit the documents
21/06/2021	2021.0154 - NeolPC Unit-level Resistant Bacterial Colonisation Surveillance NeolPC Colonisation Surveillance	Favourable ethics opinion
22/07/2021	2021.0156 - Multidisciplinary investigations of the role of lifestyle and environmental exposures in male fertility, Role of lifestyle and environmental exposures in male fertility	Ongoing, need revise and resubmit the documents

3. Protocol deviations

One protocol deviation has been reported in the period August 2020 to July 2021.

The research group had ethical approval granted for manual transcription of the interview, however after identifying inconsistencies in transcriptions, it was realised a transcription software (otter.ai) was used to transcribe 3 participant interviews. The deviation has been reported to Data Protection Officer and Research Ethics and Integrity Officer. All data has been removed from otter.ai and account deleted. A data incident report has been completed as there are concerns around otter.ai potentially using the data for machine learning to make the software more accurate. No further action needed.

4. The number of applications submitted and given favourable opinion by SGREC for the period August to July

2019/2020 - 2019.0274 - 2020.131

2020/2021 - 2020.0232 - 2021.0183

Type of study	Reviewed by	Number of studies 2019-2020	Number of studies 2020-2021
High risk studies	Full SGREC	8	10
Medium risk studies	Proportional SGREC Reviewed by Chair, Research Ethics and Integrity Officer and one member of the SGREC	0	14
Low risk studies	Research Ethics and Integrity Officer	28	51
Audit of Low risk studies	Reviewed by Research Ethics and Integrity Officer and audited by full SGREC	4	2
Amendment	Chair (high risk) or Research Ethics and Integrity Officer (low, medium risk studies)	4	21
Service evaluation	Registered by Research Ethics and Integrity Officer	8 SE0001-0008	20 SE0009-0029
Clinical audit (from 10/19/2019)	Registered by Research Ethics and Integrity Officer	10 AU0001-0010	3 AU0011-0013

The number of studies increased remarkably from 2019/20 to 2020/21, from 36 research study cases to 75. This is created a higher workload, increased amount of time commitment for the SGREC members. The rise in number of cases may be due to the extended functionality of the Committee, review of Data research, Human Tissue research and, through the presentations/workshops in the Institutes, more visibility of the SGREC and its function/scope.