

## Policy for Research Health and Safety

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. As with teaching, research activities are recognized as a vital element of the University's pursuits. Therefore, the research projects and infrastructure must be managed in a manner consistent with all University's activities.
- 1.2. This responsibility includes managing the health and safety risks associated with such research activities.
- 1.3. Health and safety legislation applies to all work activities including research. There are many differing items of health and safety legislation that can apply to research, but the principal set of regulations to which research must conform is the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999). Guidance published by the Education Advisory Service in the document entitled Responsible Research: Managing Health and Safety in Research (<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Everything/Word/Research-Docs-Links/PDF/responsible-research-managing-h-s-in-research.pdf>) gives guidance regarding how research can attain conformity with these regulations. By conforming to this policy, research can be undertaken without exposing research teams and others to unnecessary risk whilst still allowing for the unavoidable element of the unknown, which represents a feature of many research projects.
- 1.4. Specific guidance for the University of Bolton is contained within the Health & Safety Policy and Manual documents available at: <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Research/Staff-Students-Examiners/Research-Ethics-Framework/Documents/Health-and-Safety-Manual-and-Policy-Revised-Feb-2017.pdf>

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to detail the health and safety management structures for all of the University's research activities. The principal requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations which have an effect on all of the University's research activities are:

- Regulation 3, which requires risk assessments to be undertaken on all work activities.
- Regulation 5, which requires that the University has arrangements in place for the health and safety planning of particular research activities, and also an organizational structure in place for managing the health and safety risks associated with the research, with appropriate risk controls and a management system for the purpose of monitoring the effective control of these risks in place, together with a means of reviewing the effectiveness and success of the above.
- Regulation 13, which requires that persons undertaking research are fully trained in all of the health and safety requirements associated with the pre-specified research project involved.

### 3. **Organisational arrangements**

3.1. It is advisable that the organizational arrangements for managing health and safety risks follow the University's research management structures, rather than creating new structures specifically focused on health and safety.

#### 3.2. Responsibilities

3.3. Overall responsibility for the implementation of all of the health and safety policies and their codes of practice, rests with the University's Board of Governors, with the Vice-Chancellor as the nominated member of the governing body with special responsibility for health and safety. In line with sector guidance for managing health and safety, the Governing Body have devolved this responsibility to appropriate Head of School who oversee allocation of resources. Hence, they have a responsibility for the safe application of the resources under their control.

**Note:** in the case of research which is, or can be, financed by external sources, this responsibility lies with the member of staff who has agreed the financial aspects of the research programme, usually the Principal Investigator. However, Heads of School still have responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy.

3.4. Others having duties under this policy include;

- The Executive Dean – Research and Graduate School
- The Researcher(s) involved
- The project Safety Coordinator (where appointed)
- Technical staff and other specialists involved in the research team
- The University's Health and Safety Advisor

- The Assistant Vice Chancellor with responsibility for Research (in relation to leadership on strategy and policy).

### 3.5. Committee structures

3.6. The University also has committee structures which have a role in the management of research, including health and safety. These are;

- Senate
- Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee
- University Health and Safety Committee (statutory committee)

3.7. If any specialist research activities are undertaken, such as those involving human tissues (for which legislation requires specialist committee approval), or research work involving lasers, nanotechnology, radioactive materials specialist monitoring/advisory groups may need to be established where existing committees cannot undertake oversight competently.

## 4. **Specific Responsibilities**

### 4.1. Heads of School

- To formulate and manage the School's research health and safety policies
- To identify and coordinate relevant health and safety training
- To monitor and review compliance with the policies set out in this document.

### 4.2. Principal Investigators

- To perform risk assessments in advance of the research
- To ensure that the researchers are fully familiar with risk control
- To investigate and report on any accidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences in line with the University's procedures
- To ensure that there is sufficient funding in place for the instigation of any new safety requirements that may arise from operation of the new project.
- To review risk assessments as the research develops

### 4.3. Researchers

- To identify any hazards and risks
- To use the appropriate control systems and necessary precautions
- To undergo any identified training and to conduct research activities safely, in line with the training received
- To consult on any significant changes in the research protocol

- To comply with and conform to all associated University Health and Safety policies and procedures

**Note:** It is essential that specialist advice is sought when the researcher is not fully competent or sufficiently informed to make a fair judgement about any health and safety implications.

#### 4.4. School Health & Safety Co-ordinator

- To assist the Head of School and Principal Investigator in all of the health and safety aspects relating to their research projects
- To advise the Principal Investigator and researcher(s) regarding the implications of any major changes in the research protocol with respect to its implications for health and safety.
- To perform compliance inspections with the Head of School
- To undergo any identified training and to conduct research activities safely, in line with the training received

#### 4.5. Executive Dean – Research and Graduate School

- To work with the University's Health and Safety Advisor in devising health and safety management systems which enable safe application of the University's research programmes
- To undertake, with the University's Health and Safety Advisor, periodic audits of the adequacy of the health and safety research management systems
- To monitor compliance with this policy by those covered by it through specific health and safety inspections or risk assessments.

#### 4.6. University Health and Safety Advisor

- To liaise with the Executive Dean – Research & Graduate School and Heads of School in order to develop suitable research management health and safety systems
- To provide any advice required
- To undertake periodic audits with Heads of School regarding the adequacy of management systems in operation

### 5. **Application**

#### 5.1. General

When a new research project is being developed and proposed, the Principal Investigator must undertake an initial risk assessment in order to determine its particular health and safety requirements. This is detailed in the section 'Risk

Assessment' in the H&S Policy and Manual (<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Research/Staff-Students-Examiners/Research-Ethics-Framework/Documents/Health-and-Safety-Manual-and-Policy-Revised-Feb-2017.pdf>) specifically in Flowchart 2.

If the research work is completely new to the University and is not covered by any existing policies (or there is a requirement for any specialist safety equipment) then this must be approved prior to its acceptance by the University Health and Safety Advisor, including the agreement of or receipt of any funding available.

As part of the risk assessment process, the Principal Investigator should consider whether any member of the research team has any acute or chronic medical condition that might be aggravated, or put them at risk, by carrying out the research.

All health and safety requirements including training must be identified and recorded. If, during the project, new training requirements are identified, such training must be undertaken with a complete record-keeping process performed prior to continuation of the research.

## 5.2. Record forms already including risks assessments

Specialist risk assessment record forms used within a School must be employed and attached to the research record. Researchers have duties as designers of research to give all relevant health and safety information associated with the project to any sponsors or funding bodies.

## 5.3. Training

The degree of training will depend on the research to be undertaken and the health and safety issues associated with the research programme to be conducted. The University's Health and Safety Advisor will provide specific guidance on the training that may be needed and help to source a supplier of such training.

Basic training: All staff undertaking research will require a basic induction in fire evacuation procedures, first aid, manual handling, and the safe use of display screens.

Specialist training: this will depend on the class of issues presented by the research project and the amount of risk associated with it. Examples of higher risk activities are:

- Lone-working
- Off-site working including overseas working

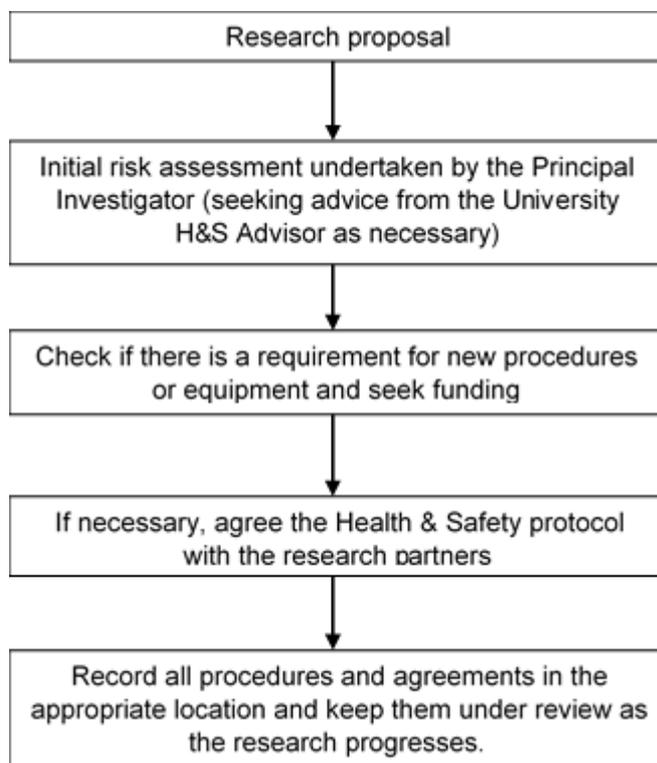
- Specialist work equipment
- Biological hazards
- Violence and aggression
- Radiation hazards
- Chemical hazards
- Risks requiring health surveillance

Guidance on dealing with these types of higher risk activities is contained within the H&S Policy and Manual available at: <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Research/Staff-Students-Examiners/Research-Ethics-Framework/Documents/Health-and-Safety-Manual-and-Policy-Revised-Feb-2017.pdf>.

## 6. Co-operation

If the research project is performed in conjunction with other Institutions, then prior to performance of the work programme, agreement must be made regarding who will take the lead concerning the management of health and safety functions. This must be recorded within the research records. However, any work undertaken either on the University premises, or by University staff must conform to all of the University's policies and procedures.

### Application of Research Risk Assessment Protocol



<b>POLICY FOR RESEARCH HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	
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