University of Leicester Research Governance Office

Standard Operating Procedures

TR-SOP-1 UoL

Processing Trusted Research Enquiries

Version 1.0

Effective Date: 2024

This SOP will be implemented in line with this document's effective date for all UoL research.

Please note the appendices associated with this SOP may be subject to interim changes. Please ensure that appendices are downloaded from the RGO webpages prior to use to ensure the latest version of the document is being used.

1.0 Introduction and Scope

This SOP describes how Trusted Research enquires are processed by the Research and Enterprise Division (RED).
‘Trusted Research’ is a research and innovation sector term for protecting the UK’s intellectual property, sensitive research, people and infrastructure from potential theft, manipulation and exploitation, including as a result of interference by hostile actors. The principles apply to all research and innovation activity, funded, unfunded and ‘informal’.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose is to clearly identify when Trusted Research input is required and the importance of encouraging researchers to engage with the process.

Trusted Research aims to support the integrity of the system of international research collaboration, which is vital to the continued success of the UK's research and innovation sector.

The SOP will explain how enquiries are identified as needing further discussion to explore the background and scope of the proposed research so the University of Leicester can consider;

- The potential risks to the research and innovation, and outline them
- How to help researchers, and industry partners to have confidence in international collaboration and make informed decisions around those potential risks
- How to protect research and staff from potential theft, misuse or exploitation

3.0 Non-Compliance

Where it is identified that the Trusted Research process detailed below has not been followed, this will be raised with the Trusted Officer. Further discussions will be held within the Research Governance Office . Ongoing non-compliance will be escalated to the Head of Department/School and managed by the Director of Research and Enterprise Division (or their delegate).

Non-compliance with Trusted Research processes will be considered Research Misconduct in line with the Research Code of Conduct under section 8.2.7 - Failure to meet ethical, legal and professional obligations and will be handled in line with the Code of Conduct.

4.0 Trusted Research Process

Action	Undertaken by	Activity
Completion of Trusted Research form	CI/Academic	• Enquiries come in via completion of the Trusted Research form. Email

Action	Undertaken by	Activity
		notification received by Trusted Research team via trustedresearch@leicester.ac.uk • Where necessary the Trusted Research team may initiate the process & completion of the form on behalf of the CI/Academic.
TRA setup	TR Team	• A TRA number and MS Lists line are automatically created on the Trusted Research Enquiry Log. • TRA ref is TRA-Year-Next number in sequence-CI surname. • If Trusted Research Team are required to add a new entry line, then add the new line on MS lists & add full details provided. • In this instance TRA should auto populate. • Create a new folder in the queries and applications folder on SharePoint, renaming by adding the TRA reference. Copy the link to the SharePoint folder and add to MS list "files" line.
Allocation of Trusted Research file	TR Team	• Review the entry and allocate to the relevant member of the Trusted Research team by selecting 'Assign to' and adding persons' name on the Trusted Research Enquiry Log. • The allocated person will then be able to search for this and their other allocated requests by filtering & selecting their name on the spreadsheet.
Review and highlight key areas on TRA form	TR Team	• TR team to read fully the TRA response, scoping the research & deadline dates if given. TR team to always question, is there enough information? And to request more information form applicant if needed. • TR team to conduct any further research needed to support the TRA form and engage with person/s via email or via arranged meetings.

Action	Undertaken by	Activity
		• TR team to use relevant & specific SOP for each stage.
Assessment, follow up and escalation of TRA form	CI/Academic & TR Team	• Use the relevant SOP to assess each area and choose the status (Set out in Annex 1). • Use the "Status" button to advise the overall status of the enquiry (Set out in Annex 1) on the Trusted Research Enquiry Log. • If it is set to out, also select a follow up date. At most this would 2 weeks from current date of TRA. • If no response after 2 follow ups with CI/Academic, on the third follow up copy in head of school/department. • Within the correspondence advise the record will be closed in 2 weeks if they do not respond, highlighting the importance & risks and that no activity must start without completion of the relevant TR process. • If there is deemed to be a significant risk to the University, a non-compliance procedure as set out in 3.0 above, will begin. • For all follow ups completed, a comment explaining the actions is added on the list line and is to set out what has been done and why.
Successful recording and filing of TRA form and whole enquiry	TR Team	• Throughout the whole process TR team are to ensure all relevant documentation, advice and emails are saved in the SharePoint folder as PDFs and is fully up to date and as it could be necessary for the request to be completed by a different team member at any time. • TRA team to also ensure the folder & information is relevant for audit purposes.

5.0 Development and approval record for this document

This table is used to track the development and approval of the document.

Author	Job title	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date approved
Reuben Sneller	Trusted Research Officer	Shaun Monkman – Ethics Manager	Cat Taylor - Head of Research Governance	Nov 27, 2024

6.0 Review Record

This table is used to track the changes made across document revisions.

Date	Version number	Reviewed by	Description of changes (If any)

ANNEX 1

Trusted Research Log Statuses

Status	Use
Not Started	*New request, needs reviewing.*
Action Required	*For when this is an action for the Trusted Research team to complete.*
Out (Internal)	*For when an action is sitting with someone internally to the University of Leicester (e.g. CI).*
Out - External	*For when an action is sitting with someone externally to the University of Leicester (e.g. ECJU).*
Complete	*For when an assessment has been reviewed and we are happy a project can proceed without the need for any further monitoring.*
Monitor	*For projects that can proceed, but we would like to regularly keep tabs on. Always use if an export control licence has been granted.*
Did Not Proceed (Abandoned)	*For projects that did not proceed due to being stopped by the CI.*
Did Not Proceed (Stopped)	*For projects that did not proceed due to being stopped by the University.*
Closed	*For use when there has been a duplication or similar where we haven't needed to investigate a record.*

Export Control	Use
Not Required	*The TRA has been reviewed and we have determined an export control licence is not required.*
Checking	*We need to do some more research as to whether an export control licence is required.*
Monitor	*Although a licence isn't required at this time, we should monitor this as it may be required during the project.*
External Advice Requested	*Discussing with RCAT, ECJU or any other external parties.*
Licence Required	*We believe an export control licence is required.*
Licence Application - Submitted	*We have submitted a licence application.*

Licence Application - Received	*We have received an export control licence (or have given details for relevant OGEL).*
Licence Application - Refused	*An export control licence application has been rejected.*
Licence Application - Not Required	*We have been informed by ECJU that an export control licence application is not required.*

NSI	**Use**
Not Required	*The TRA has been reviewed and we have determined an NSI notification is not required.*
Checking	*We need to do some more research as to whether an NSI notification is required.*
External Advice Requested	*Discussing with RCAT, ECJU or any other external parties.*
Voluntary Notification - Drafting	*We are drafting a voluntary notification.*
Mandatory Notification - Drafting	*We are drafting a mandatory notification.*
Voluntary Notification - Submitted	*We have submitted a voluntary notification.*
Mandatory Notification - Submitted	*We have submitted a mandatory notification.*
Notification - Can Proceed	*We have been informed that, after a notification, we can proceed.*
Notification - Called In	*A notification we have made has been called in by the UK Government.*
Notification - Cannot Proceed	*We have been informed that, after a notification, we cannot proceed.*

ATAS	**Use**
Not Applicable (No Visitor)	*For when there are no visitors involved in an assessment.*
Not Required (Nationality)	*ATAS isn't required because of someone's nationality.*
Not Required (Subject)	*ATAS isn't required because of the subject area. (If they are from an ATAS relevant country, an internal visitor due diligence should be conducted regardless of the subject)*
Checking	*We need to do some more research as to whether ATAS is required.*

External Advice Requested	*Discussing with RCAT, ECJU or any other external parties.*
Waiting for Certificate	*Waiting for sight of someone's ATAS clearance.*
ATAS Granted	*ATAS clearance has been granted.*
ATAS Refused	*ATAS clearance has been refused.*

Reputational	**Use**
No Concerns	*When the organisation is considered low risk when it comes to us or due diligence has already been done.*
TR Conduct Due Diligence	*For use when we would like to conduct a due diligence within the Trusted Research team.*
PAC Conduct Due Diligence	*For use when we would like PAC to conduct a standard due diligence.*
Concerns Raised	*For use when concerns have been raised around the organisation*
RED - Approved	*The RED Due Diligence Group have approved this partner or project.*
RED - Escalated	*The RED Due Diligence Group have escalated this partner or project further.*
SDD - Approved	*The Strategic Due Diligence Group has approved this partner or project.*
SDD - Not Approved	*The Strategic Due Diligence Group have not approved this partner or project.*

Other	**Use**
Yes - Conflict of Interest	When we believe there is a risk of conflict of interest
Yes - Ethical	When we have ethical concerns over the partner or project.
Yes - Sanctions	When we have concerns around sanctions.
Yes - Multiple	If more than one of the above apply.
No Other Concerns	When you don't have other concerns.

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Final Audit Report 2024-11-27

Created:	2024-11-27
By:	Cat Taylor (cat.taylor@leicester.ac.uk)
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