Module 2: Understanding research ethics approval

Seeking research ethics approval 2

I feel fully confident in this area & This is relevant to my research

- Knowing whether ethics approval is needed
- Understanding the relevance and purpose of RECs

I'm informed but not fully confident & This is relevant to my research

- Understanding the REC approval process
- Understanding what needs to be prepared for REC approval
- Knowing which is the relevant REC

For all types of projects, it is essential that the groundwork has been conducted, the proposal has been refined, the practical details have been considered and all accompanying documents have been finalised before submission to an REC. Otherwise, the REC will pick up on missing information or inconsistencies and return the application for further work.
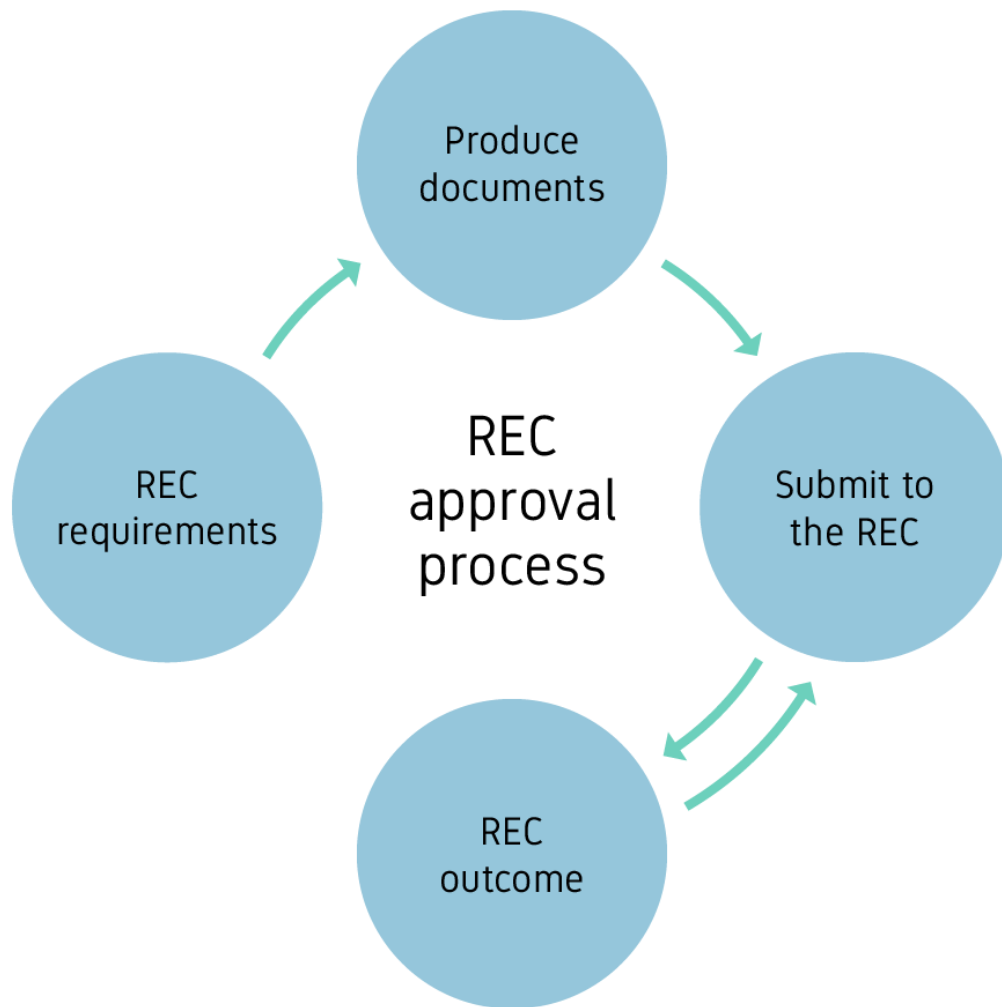
> Click through the screens for an overview of the REC approval process.

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REC requirements

The first step in this process is to determine the relevant REC and what its requirements are. For many, this is simply their institutional REC. For others, this will mean use of the HRA IRAS system for NHS/HSC projects either in place of, or in addition to, the institutional REC. For projects that take place in another country, or in two separate locations, this may mean submission to two different RECs (institutional plus

Even experienced researchers often receive conditions or recommendations from the REC because there are so many issues to consider and things to prepare. So do not be surprised if, as a novice researcher, the REC approval process is a bit daunting.

> Consider the relevance of each of the following topics to your research and then evaluate your level of confidence by selecting the relevant item from the drop-down menu.

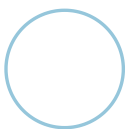| Responses	Selections
Understanding the relevance and purpose of RECs	⌄
Knowing whether ethics approval is needed	

	⌄
Knowing which is the relevant REC	⌄
Understanding the REC approval process	⌄
Understanding what needs to be prepared for REC approval	⌄

Feedback

Which came first? The research or the ethics?

Before you develop the accompanying documents for REC approval, you will need to have a refined and realistic protocol. Therefore, it might appear that you should work on your protocol before considering ethical matters. However, ethical considerations should not be regarded as an add-on or an afterthought.

The development of the protocol and the consideration of ethics should be integrated throughout, so that you do not end up with an unethical or unworkable project. Remember to keep ethical considerations at the heart of your development from the very beginning.

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