



**APPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW  
USING THE ONLINE ETHICS SYSTEM 'ERM'**

**GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS  
OF STUDENT APPLICATIONS**

March 2020

## TEESSIDE ONLINE RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW SYSTEM: 'ERM'

### GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS OF STUDENT APPLICATIONS

The 'ERM' is an online system for making and reviewing applications for research ethics review for any project defined as 'research' in the University's *Policy and Procedures on Research Ethics*. The system completely replaces the old process using paper forms from 20 January 2020. The online system is designed to work on any web browser and works well on both PC and tablet screens. It will also work on a phone browser, but some of the web screens are complex and working on a phone will not be simple using text and documents in the application. The system works particularly well on Safari on an iPad.

As a member of academic staff, you may make an application for your own research or you may be supervising a student who is making an application for ethics review of student work. **This current guide relates only to the supervision of student applicants.** The guidance for making an application as a member of staff is contained in the *Applicant Guide for Staff*. **You will need to use the ERM in order for your students to send you signature requests and for you to authorise their applications.** You need not use ERM for anything else if you are not making your own applications. You must **access the ERM on a web browser while logged into your Teesside University account with your University user-name and password.** If you are logged into your University account, the ERM will allow you to access without further user-name or password being required. **If you access the ERM remotely when not logged into your University account you will be required to enter your University email address/user name and password via a University account log-in page.** Your log-in details for ERM are always the same as your University user name and password and will also be what you are required to enter into the ERM in order to "sign" student applications.

You will also receive signature and sharing requests from your students **by email with a link to the requested application.** If you click on links sent to you by email and are logged into your University account, you will be able to access the ERM via those links without further log in. Remote access will take you via a log-in page. Once inside the ERM, you will **receive notifications** alerting you to **signature requests made by your student supervisees** and the ERM will also allow you to have your student supervisees' applications shared with you prior to final authorisation in order that you can advise them on their applications.

#### Supervisor Guide Contents

- 1 Accessing an ERM Account
- 2.1 Overview of your Account
- 2.2 Reviewing a student application: application form navigation
- 3 Authorising student applications via a signature request
- 4 Follow up actions for student applications following ethics review
- 5 Obtaining help and support

There is also an online help menu available within your account, containing various forms of help and FAQs.

## 1 ACCESSING AN ERM ACCOUNT

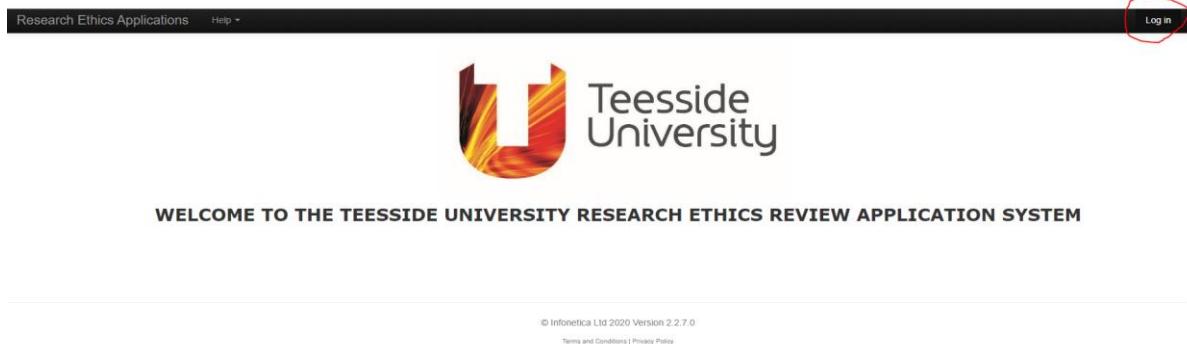
The application system is accessed by setting your browser to the URL:

<https://apply-ethics.tees.ac.uk/>

Bookmark the URL as you will be returning more than once to this page.

If you are accessing the URL while logged in using your Teesside University user name and password, you will automatically have access to an ERM account. The system will verify your user credentials and log you in to the ERM. If you access the URL remotely, you will be taken to a University sign-in page to enter your University username and password for access. Whenever you need to access your account, such as from links in emails that you will receive, as long as you are logged in with your University username and password, you will be taken directly into your account and your applications.

The landing page for the URL above is:



Clicking on the 'Log In' link at the top right of the landing page will take you into the ERM.

If you access the ERM remotely, you will be taken to a standard Teesside University log-in page, where you must enter your University user name and password.

## 2.1 OVERVIEW OF YOUR ACCOUNT

Your account allows you to receive shared applications being made by your student supervisees for research ethics review and then receive and act on requests from your supervisees to authorise their applications for submission via a 'signature request'. Everything you may need to do with your students' applications can be managed within your account online, including a complete record of all activity and all your signatures, but you will also receive email notifications referring to our applications. Links within email notifications will provide direct access back to your account for any actions.

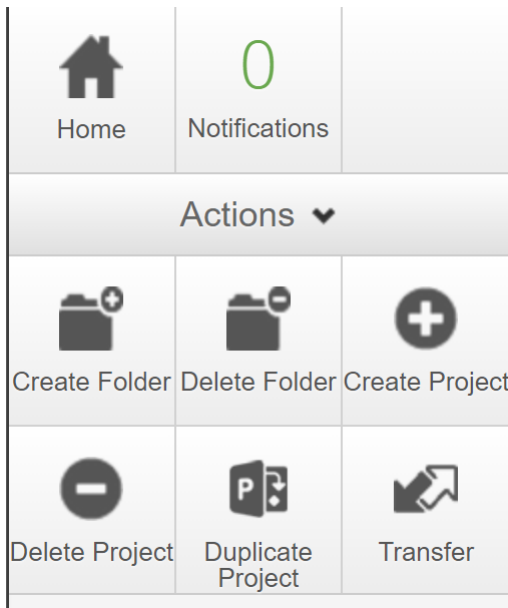
The main page of your account is arranged in what is called the '**WORK AREA**'.

When you first create your account, you will see a webpage that looks like this:

The screenshot shows the 'Work Area' dashboard for 'Research Ethics Applications'. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Contacts', and 'Help', along with the user profile 'Mr New Account (tudemo.erm@gmail.com)'. The main content area is divided into three sections: 'General', 'Projects', and a sidebar. The 'General' section displays four summary cards: 'Notifications' (0), 'Signatures' (0), 'Transfers' (0), and 'Shared' (0). The 'Projects' section features a search bar and a table with columns for 'Project Title', 'Project ID', 'Owner', 'Date Created', 'Date Modified', and 'Transfer Status'. A yellow message bar indicates 'There are currently no projects listed'. The sidebar on the left contains a 'Work Area' dropdown, 'Home' and 'Notifications' buttons, and an 'Actions' dropdown with buttons for 'Create Folder', 'Delete Folder', 'Create Project', 'Delete Project', 'Duplicate Project', and 'Transfer'. The footer contains copyright information: '© Infonetica Ltd 2019 Version 2.2.1.1' and links for 'Terms and Conditions', 'Data Controller Privacy Policy', and 'Data Processor Privacy Policy'.

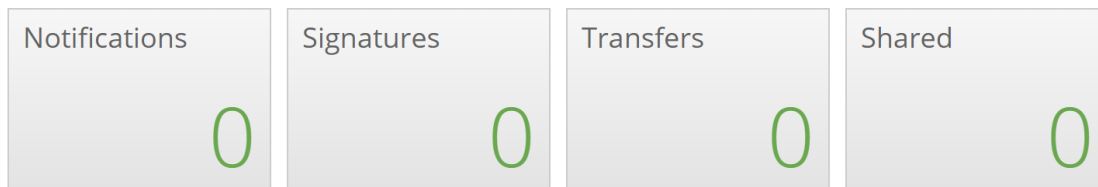
The Work Area is divided into three main sections.

The **left-hand Sidebar** contains various buttons to take actions. Any applications in your account shared by your students can be filed in folders as you choose, or may be retained in a simple unsorted list. To create folders use the 'Create Folder' button.



At the **top** of the Work Area under the heading 'General' are four large oblong **Tiles**, each with a number on their face. When you first create your account these will all show '0' but as activity takes place, the numbers on some tiles will change.

## General



The 'Notifications' Tile shows when you have been sent notifications and will tell you how many notifications have been received. **'Signatures' is used when authorising signatures are requested. 'Shared' will show you applications shared with your by your students, which allows you to advise them on their applications prior to them being finalised and your authorising signature being requested.** If your use of the account is only to supervise student applications, you are unlikely to use 'Transfers'.

Notifications will communicate many different types of information to you. The Tiles below show that one notification has been received and one signature request:

# Work Area

## General



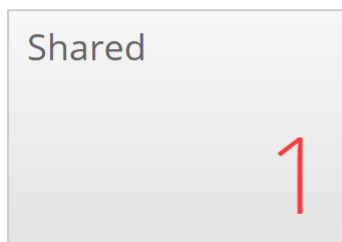
Clicking on the **Notifications** tile will take you to a list containing notification(s). Clicking on any of the notifications in this list will bring up a pop-up window with further information and a button taking you to the application form to which the notification applies.

In the example below, the notification shows that a student has shared their application with you and is asking you to accept the invitation to be take on a co-role as applicant for their application:



You will also receive all the communications sent via notifications to your email address, so you do not have to monitor your account continually. However, notifications in your account are detailed and easily accessed when you are logged in. These emails will inform you when a student has either shared and application with you or has requested your signature for their application.

### Receiving a shared application from a student



If the 'Shared' tile has numbers appearing on its face, this means that students have shared an application with you for you to assist them in completing prior to submission. Clicking on the tile brings up a list of what has been shared:

## Shared Forms



Project Title	Project Id	Form Title	Access	View Form	Reject
UREIC example	138	Application for Teesside Research Ethics Review	Read, Write, Receive notifications	<a href="#">View Form</a>	<a href="#">Reject</a>

Showing 1 to 1 of 1 entries

◀ Previous Next ▶

Clicking on 'View Form' will allow you to review the student application form. If 'Access' shows as 'Write', you will be able to amend anything in the form. Shared student applications will always have this access switched on by default. If the application has been shared by mistake with you, you may reject the share request by clicking 'Reject'.

Any applications that have been shared with you will also appear in the project list at the bottom of your main Work Area page. In order to organise projects, you may create folders using the 'Create Folder' button on the Sidebar.

## 2.2 Reviewing a student application: application form navigation

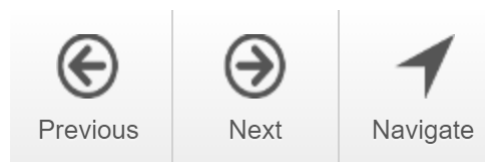
### Navigation in the application form

The application form consists of a series of questions over of number of web screens. The number of questions depends on responses are made to each question. Some question pages are short consisting of only a single question. Other pages may have multiple questions. Screen pages may increase in length as other questions appear below. **Guidance** on some questions is provided. If available, guidance is shown by an 'i' in a circle to the top right of the question:



Clicking on this symbol will bring up a pop-up box with help for that question.

**Always scroll down to the bottom of each page, then use the 'Next' button located at the top of the left hand sidebar to progress to the next page of questions.** To go back to the previous page of questions, use the 'Previous' button. To return to the top page of the project, use the 'Navigation' button.



**All questions are mandatory:** questions that do not need to be answered will not be shown. Submission cannot be made unless all mandatory questions have been completed. Use the 'Completeness Check' button on the left hand sidebar to check if all questions are completed. A final pre-submission check will also run prior to accepting submission and incomplete questions will be identified.


**Document uploads may be required** at certain points in the application form. **If uploads are required, templates for the required document are available to download from the form itself.**



### 3 Authorising student applications via a signature request

If a student requests your signature, you will receive an email alert. The email will contain a link.

Once in your account, clicking on the Signatures tile in your Work Area tile will show you a list of requested signatures:

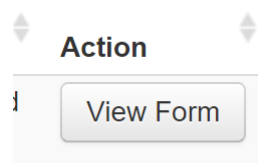
Signatures 

Search Signatures

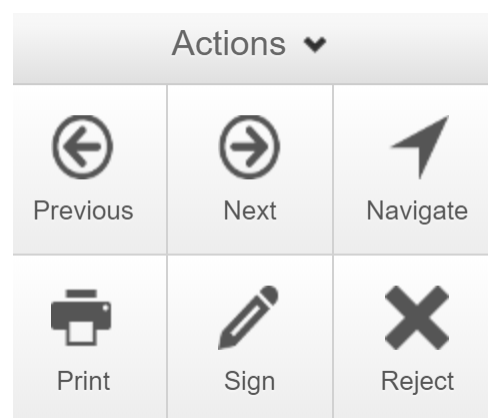
Type	Project Title	Project ID	Requesting User	Message	Requested Date	Response Date	Status	Action
Applicant signature	Form Example 2	118	Dr Test Chair2	Please review and sign my application	29/11/2019 15:49		Requested	<a href="#">View Form</a>

Showing 1 to 1 of 1 entries

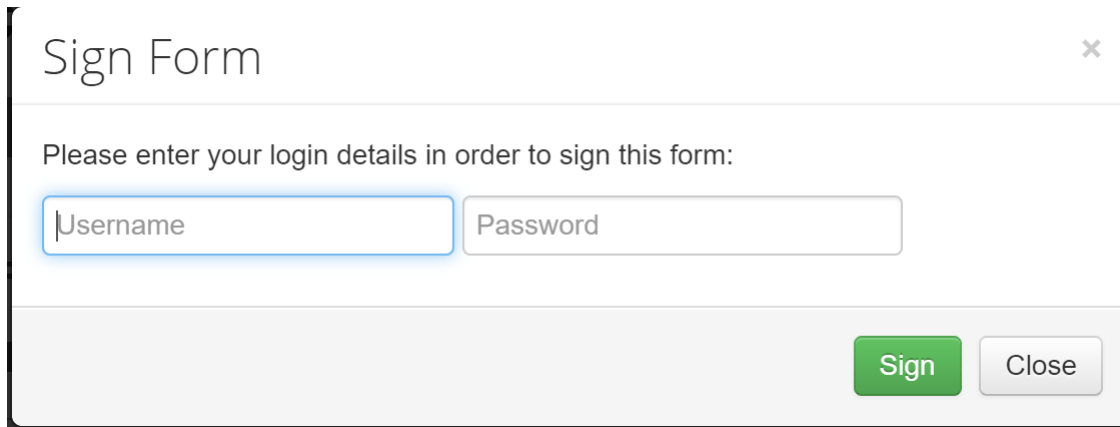
Information about the applications for which these requests apply will be provided. To review the application and access the signatory page, use the 'View Form' button on the right:



This button will take you into the student's application form. See section 2.2 for a brief overview of navigation inside an online form in order to review it. If you have already been working on the application with the student via a shared application, then you will be able to sign the application directly without further review by clicking the 'Sign' button. To reject the request, click the 'Reject' button.



If you have clicked 'Sign', then a pop-up window will appear, into which you will electronically sign the application using your email user name and password:



Sign Form

Please enter your login details in order to sign this form:

Username Password

Sign Close

To authorise the application submission by your student who has requested your signature, click the green 'Sign' button.

## 4 Follow up actions for applications following ethics review

### 4.1 Receiving decisions

Once a submitted application has been reviewed, a decision will be made about the status of the application. Emails will be sent to both the student applicant and copied to the named supervisor, as well as notifications in the ERM accounts of both student applicant and supervisor. Emails will normally also have an attached document.

Confirmation of ethics Clearance emails look like this:

#### Confirmation of research ethics Clearance

Dear Dr Andrew Rawnsley

RE: Staff New Project 2019-0119-107

Your application has been reviewed and I can confirm that this study has received ethics review Clearance and can proceed as soon as you receive this confirmation.

The attached letter can be used as evidence of authorisation

Good luck with your study

Yours sincerely,

Change requests for applications can be either 'major' or 'minor' and in the ERM these are called 'Major Conditions' or 'Minor Conditions'. The way that both of these required changes are handled is the same, the only difference is the amount of changes required. If this decision is reached, then an email alert confirms this decision:

#### Review Decision: Minor Conditions - changes to application required

Thank you for your application to the Social Sciences REC . Your application has been reviewed and the reviewers would like to offer comments below to inform minor changes that must be made to your application before it can receive a favourable opinion and ethics review Clearance. **All the review comments are also enclosed in the attached document.**

Please respond to each of the comments made.

The reviewer comments are assigned by referring to the title of each relevant section of your electronic application form. You must address each change by entering the referenced section of the form and making changes to respond to the comments. You may do this by using the 'Navigation' area of your application account page for this project. Click the live project link below and then use the section links to enter the section where changes are required. You may also click on the 'Reviewer Comments' tab (left hand side of your project screen) which will bring up each comment in your form for you to make changes. Any changes made will then be stored in your application.

If previously uploaded documents require changes, then please revise those documents according to the comments made and then assign any revised documents with an updated version number (ie: Version 2) before uploading the revised versions.

## 4.2 Responding to and acting on decisions

At the bottom of an email message communicating a decision, there will be a '**Live Project Link**', which will take you to the application, via log-in to your account, if you click it.

The email will also have an attached document containing the text of the email and the list of comments, which will be useful for reference when making changes in the ERM account:

The screenshot shows an email notification. A red circle highlights the 'Live Project Link' section, which includes the text 'Live Project Link:' followed by the URL <https://teesside.forms.ethicalreviewmanager.com/Project/Index/121>. Below this is a 'Comments:' section with a table. The table has two columns: 'Title' and 'Comment'. The first row has 'Use of secondary data' in the title and 'Please provide details about the source of the secondary data' in the comment. Both the title and comment cells in this row are highlighted in yellow.

Title	Comment
Use of secondary data	Please provide details about the source of the secondary data

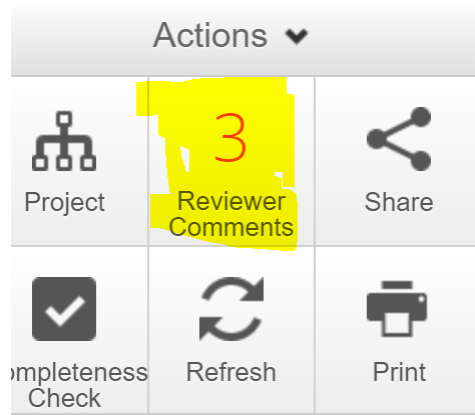
In this case, the section of the application where the change is required is the section 'Use of secondary data', and the comment notes what needs to be changed or added.

The same information is available directly in the ERM account via a notification that Minor Conditions are required. The screen shot below shows a longer list of notification for an application, where Minor Conditions was required at two points:

The screenshot shows a list of notifications in the ERM account. The list has columns for 'Message', 'Attachment', 'Title', and 'Time'. The notifications are as follows:

Message	Attachment	Title	Time
Confirmation of ethics clearance Your proposed research project has received ethics clearance.		Staff New Project	16:49
Your submission of an application for research ethics review has been received.	None	Staff New Project	16:48
Minor Conditions		Staff New Project	16:35
Your submission of an application for research ethics review has been received.	None	Staff New Project	16:18
Minor Conditions	None	Staff New Project	16:08
Your submission of an application for research ethics review has been received.	None	Staff New Project	16:01

Inside the project application, the **left-hand sidebar** will show the comments which have been attached to the application during review. Below is shown an application for which three comments have been made that require changes:



Clicking on the 'Reviewer Comments' button in the left-hand sidebar will bring up a pop-up window in which each of the comments will be displayed:

**Overall Reviewer Panel Comments** x

Show Previous Comments

Title	Comment	Date Added	Submission
Methods	Please tell us more about the methods you plan to use	29/11/2019 at 16:07 PM	Latest Submission
Aims	Much more detail about your aims is required	29/11/2019 at 16:07 PM	Latest Submission
Length of project	The length of project does not appear to be realistic given what you have stated in your application	29/11/2019 at 16:08 PM	Latest Submission

Close

**Clicking on each comment in the pop up window, will take you directly to that section of the application in which changes are required.** Inside the application form, the section referred to by the comment will then be outlined in red, as below:

Fully describe the **methods** you will use to achieve your research aims

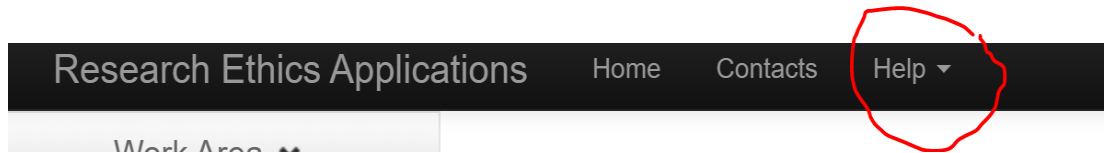
You do not need to complete this field if you have attached a document above. If so, then please enter "see attached document" in this field.

Once all changes required have been made, **the application must be re-submitted and your signature to authorise must be made in the same way as for original submission** of the application.

## 5 OBTAINING HELP AND SUPPORT

Help is available at all times from within your account.

In the top bar of your account, there is a 'Help' drop down menu:



This drop-down contains:

**Contact Information:** [ERMHelp@tees.ac.uk](mailto:ERMHelp@tees.ac.uk)

**Help page:** With basic navigation information

**FAQs:** Organised by topics, which include:  
All of this applicant guidance  
Some guides to question types  
Detailed training material on research ethics

**Templates:** Templates for uploaded documents

**About:** Details