



Senate

Paper Title	Appointment of Chair of the Ethics of Research Committee
Outcome requested	Senate is asked to approve the recommendation for the next Chair of the Ethics of Research Committee
Points for Senate members to note and further information	<p>All research involving human participants must have ethical approval. The Ethics of Research Committee (ERC) is responsible, under authority delegated by Senate, for approving the ethical standards of research involving human participants or materials derived from human participants. More generally, it also advises on ethical aspects of research and research policy and implementation - including misconduct, safety, data management and plagiarism.</p> <p>The appointment of the Chair of the ERC is formally approved by Senate, upon recommendation from the Vice Principal for Research.</p>
Questions for Senate to consider	
Regulatory/statutory reference points	This Committee, under an approved Chair, is essential to full implementation of QMUL's research ethics policies.
Strategy and risk	<p>An ERC which does not discharge its duties effectively puts QMUL at risk of failure to conform to its research ethics policies, with consequent potential risks to the subjects of research, research investigators, and the institution's reputation.</p> <p>Assent to the appointment will avoid delays in research projects that require ERC oversight and approval.</p>
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	
Authors	
Sponsor	Professor Bill Spence, Vice-Principal for Research

1. Background

The Ethics of Research Committee (ERC) is responsible, under authority delegated by Senate, for approving the ethical standards of research involving human participants or materials derived from human participants. All such projects throughout Queen Mary should be submitted to the Committee for approval, except those research studies which fall within the remit of the NHS Research Ethics Committee, or other such recognised bodies. More generally, the ERC advises on ethical issues as they arise in all aspects of research and research policy and implementation - including misconduct, safety, data management and plagiarism.

The Committee is currently chaired by Elizabeth Hall, a former member of QMUL Council, who kindly agreed to continue chairing the ERC after the end of her term on Council. Elizabeth's work has been consistently thorough and dedicated, despite an increasing workload, and her commitment has been much appreciated. However, she has now undertaken this role for ten years and wishes to step down.

With the increasing number and complexity of research projects brought to the ERC, and the parallel development of new policies and guidance covering research, both within and without QMUL, there has been a need to expand the ERC, and this has been done over the past few years with new subcommittees, reporting to the main ERC. A number of current members of Senate are on the ERC or its subcommittees, and the experience of long-standing members is highly valuable. Hazel Covill, Secretary to the ERC, has been highly effective in supporting the Chair, and she will continue in post.

Given the workload issue, and the need to appoint a new Chair, it has also been decided to appoint a new Deputy Chair, who can both advise the new Chair as they settle into the role, and also take on some of the workload.

2. Appointment process

The Deputy Chair needs to be an experienced member of the ERC and all members were invited to apply. Dr. Dylan Morrissey, Senior Clinical Lecturer in the William Harvey Research Institute, with a number of years experience in the committee, offered to take this role on, and he will support the new chair upon their appointment.

The Chair role is not remunerated and is normally undertaken by a person who is not a member of QMUL staff, but who has an interest in contributing to QMUL, and in the oversight of research ethics. The vacancy was notified by circulation within QMUL and QMUL Council, with a request to suggest nominations. One candidate was put forward, Dr. Helen Jenner.

Bill Spence, VP Research, and Elizabeth Hall, ERC Chair, met individually and independently with Dr. Jenner to discuss her potential interest in, and suitability for the role. Both were of the view that she is a strong candidate and should be recommended to Senate for this position.

3. Recommended candidate

Dr. Jenner has a BA Hons in Psychology and Education from Warwick University, an Ed. Doctorate from King's College London, and a Level 7 (Masters) Certificate in Executive and Leadership Coaching from the Institute of Leadership and Management.

A summary of her CV is as follows: From 1978-82 Helen was a primary teacher in Sussex and East London, then a Subject Consultant for the ILEA from 1982-1986. From 1986 until

1999 she was a Headteacher in Tower Hamlets, then worked as a Service Head in the Tower Hamlets LEA. Finally, Helen was Corporate Director of Children's Services in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham from 2009-2016. She has diverse additional experience in education and charity work. She has been a Board or Advisory Group member for the Centre for Research in Muslim Education, the Children's Missing Education Project, the GLA Stepping Stones project and the Ten Years On ICAN project. She is the author of numerous agency and local authority reports, a regular speaker on the media and TV and at local, national and international conferences.

Dr. Jenner has expressed her interest in the role as follows:

I have had some excellent support from Elizabeth Hall and have also met with Hazel. I am impressed by the efficiency and effectiveness of the Board. As you know, I have lived locally and enjoyed watching QMUL develop; and I can see the Ethics of Research Committee has clearly developed in line with the QMUL expansion. With this in mind, I would like to express my interest on taking on the role when Elizabeth steps down. I attach my CV, which I hope demonstrates that I have sufficient experience for such an important role. I have chaired a number of Committees and many local government and other meetings, so feel that I should be able to continue Elizabeth's good practice.

My personal interest in research has developed over the years. I have included in the CV some examples of my recent advisory involvement with some current research projects. Having completed my doctorate, I have an understanding of the ethical approval process and how important this is both for the researcher, those participating, and the sponsoring organisation(s) – I hope I would bring this understanding to the role of Chair. I am used to working across disciplines, which I think would also be helpful in sustaining the role of the Committee in promoting good cross-departmental work.

Having just retired from a senior management role at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, and as a long-standing resident of Tower Hamlets, she is keen to continue her substantial contributions to her community, and in this role to higher education within it. In our view, this is an excellent opportunity to involve a highly active and effective external individual in this role within QMUL. The appointment is recommended for a period of five years, beginning with the date of approval of Senate, and normally six months notice period on either side at any stage.