

Process for researchers seeking permission to undertake security sensitive research using University ITS resources

Background

In October 2015, the University Research Governance Committee (URGC) reviewed a University statement that set out the legal requirement of the institution to release confidential research data. As an outcome of this statement, the Research Governance Officer was asked to prepare a *proforma* for completion by researchers to permit access to sensitive material in a managed manner that protected researchers and ensured that individuals with key responsibilities are aware of such activities should agencies such as the Police have queries about their legitimacy.

The following *proforma* (see below) has also been developed in response to queries from researchers working in the area of research into the online activities of extremist groups who align themselves to terrorist activities. The University recognises its statutory responsibilities to engage with the Prevent agenda as stipulated by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act of 2015.

The University also notes the Universities UK document 'Oversight of security-sensitive research material in UK universities: guidance' (October 2012) that proposes a framework for managing sensitive material in parallel with existing ethical review processes.

As part of this process, following ethical review, the researcher agrees to restrict their accessing of any sensitive materials to using specified IT resources and data storage. This serves to help p

however, granted sufficient access to undertake work effectively whilst University has sufficient means to have oversight of the activity and allow ses to queries from both external law enforcement agencies (or similar) sity services (such as ITS and the Office of Planning, Governance and areness of ethically approved research activity.

validity of such research and whether it has been subject to the necessary e addressed to the Research Governance Officer

² in the first instance.

Process

Researchers undertake the following processes sequentially

1. Application for standard ethical review by the relevant C-REC through the online application system on Sussex Direct (High Risk route)

¹ http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2015/9780111133309/pdfs/ukdsiod_9780111133309_en.pdf

² rgoffice@sussex.ac.uk

2. Submission of the *Application for specific University IT resources to enable security sensitive research* form to the ITS helpdesk (rt-its-helpdesk@sussex.ac.uk). The ER number generated by Sussex Direct shall be cited on the *proforma*.
3. Submission of the *proforma* (below) to the **Research Governance Officer** (rgoffice@sussex.ac.uk) following Head of School approval. The applicant shall cite the help desk reference number issued by ITS on the *proforma*.
4. **Review by an ad hoc review sub-committee of the University Research Governance Committee (URGC)** to review requests for access to IT facilities to conduct sensitive research³. Upon approval, a nominated contact in ITS and the Director of Governance, Planning and Compliance shall be informed. The applicant will be notified of the outcome of the review.

Approval shall be granted forant0.5(d)11.2(f)--6. TweDm0.5(d)11.2(fan3 R6.6(ed)11.2od6(o l))-6.6(he)10