

## **9. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH APPLICATIONS TO EXTERNAL FUNDERS**

### **9.1 Responsibilities in relation to research applications**

- 9.1.1 The University supports and encourages its staff to seek external funding for their research activities and accepts funding for research from a wide and diverse portfolio of sources, in accordance with University Financial Regulations and Ethics Policy. All applications and proposals made, and contracts and awards accepted relating to external research funding, are done so on behalf of and in the name of the University, in accordance with the University's Financial Memoranda and Project Approval (PA) process (see *FIN025 Project Approval and Submission Procedures and Guidelines*, September 2011).
- 9.1.2 It is the responsibility of the UWE Bristol Project Manager (the senior person responsible for the project), normally the Principal Investigator, to ensure that in relation to any application the University's proposal approval process is engaged with adequately and completed in a timely way. It is also the responsibility of the Principal Investigator on an application to ensure that the proposal is of an adequate quality, and that the research proposed would meet legal, regulatory and ethical standards.
- 9.1.3 Advice should be sought at an early stage from the Research Governance Manager for staff and MPhil/PhD student research proposals where:
- the University should act as Sponsor for research under the Department of Health Research Governance Framework;
  - the research is a clinical trial (including trials of interventions);
  - the research involves the use of human tissue, vulnerable groups including children, offenders and victims, or groups likely to fall under the Mental Capacity Act;
  - or involves significant international dimensions in relation to research governance.

Advice is also available to staff researchers who are drafting research applications via the University's research support teams, for example in relation to funders' requirements, ethical, legal and regulatory aspects, and contractual and intellectual property issues.

### **9.2 Responsibilities in relation to decisions about acceptable sources of funding**

It is recognised that there may be circumstances where ethical issues can arise when considering whether or not to apply for or accept funding for research from particular sources. It is important that the interests of staff and the interests and the reputation of the University as a whole are safeguarded when seeking and accepting external funding (see *FIN025 Project Approval and Submission Procedures and Guidelines*, September 2011). While it is outside the scope of this guidance to provide an exhaustive list of specific examples of what may or may not be acceptable sources of funding, circumstances where

the following may occur would cause concern and further advice should be sought from the Head of Research, Business and Innovation in the first instance where:

- i) a third party is involved and the original source of the funding is unknown or cannot be identified;
- ii) a funding organisation wishes to place inappropriate restrictions on publication and exploitation of research;
- iii) a funding organisation is attempting to exert pressure to suppress or alter the results of the research which do not further, or may damage, its interests, commercial or otherwise;
- iv) a member of staff may have an interest in a funding organisation;
- v) Where accepting funds from one source may compromise the ability of the University to apply for or accept funds from another source;
- vi) the practices of a potential sponsor or their motives in commissioning the research may conflict with the mission, aims and objectives of the University;
- vii) the ethical and political implications of undertaking research or accepting research funding from a particular source could result in negative publicity and/or may seriously damage the reputation of the University;
- viii) the conduct of research may harm or place at undue risk members of the public, participants or staff.

Further advice and guidance on any such ethical considerations relating to the application for, or acceptance of, external funding for research activities should be referred to the Head of Research Business and Innovation in the first instance who may seek advice from the Senior Management Team and/or the University Research Ethics Committee, and/or refer the matter to the Vice Chancellor.