

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

S14 – Honorary Contracts for Those Involved in Research Studies

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Controlled document

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It is the responsibility of all users of this SOP to ensure that the correct version is being used. If you are reading this in a paper format please go [on-line](#) to confirm you have the latest version.

DISCLAIMER

This generic R&D Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) must be followed unless a study specific SOP exists.

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Full History			
Version	Date	Author	Reason
1.1	3 January 2014		No significant changes. All occurrences of “CRB” changed to “DBS”. Updated format of SOP.
1.2	18 January 2017	Nichola Sawyer	Copyright symbol removed. New Trust Intranet Link given. Insertion of requirement to attend RDEFT Corporate Induction prior to receiving Honorary Contract/Acceptance Letter
2	9 August 2021	Barbara Gale, Divisional Secretary	Added information on the Honorary Contract end of term process and updated the SOP auditing standards.

Associated Trust Policies/ Procedural documents:	S29 Letters of Access and the Research Passport RD&E The Records Management Policy
Key Words:	Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Honorary Contract Letter of Access Research Passport
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1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the [UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research](#) the Trust is required to ensure that Honorary Contracts are issued to all researcher(s) undertaking research projects within Trust premises who do not have employment contract within the Trust.

2. PURPOSE

If a researcher is planning to participate in any research at the Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (RD&E) involving Trust staff, patients, organs, tissues or data (in any way) they must have an Honorary Contract. They will not be allowed to carry out research in the Trust until they have been issued with an Honorary Contract and will not have indemnity until this is processed.

By issuing non-NHS staff with Honorary Contracts, the Trust ensures that all researchers working on its premises or with staff, patients, organs, tissue or data are contractually bound to abide by the Trust's policies and procedures.

Where researchers wish to undertake work on specific projects, with a specified timeframe (i.e. for 1 year), it may be more appropriate that they follow the Research Passport route. For further guidance please refer to [S29 Letters of Access and the Research Passport](#) or contact the Research & Development (R&D) Department.

3. SCOPE

The researcher must not start work on the project until Honorary Contracts or Honorary Contract Acceptance Letters have been issued. The researcher will be advised to apply for an Honorary Contract at the same time as applying for Trust R&D approval

All necessary Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and Occupational Health (OH) checks must have been undertaken before the Contract or Acceptance Letter can be issued.

4. DEFINITIONS

DBS	Disclosure & Barring Service
GOG	R&D Governance and Oversight Group
OH	Occupational Health
R&D	Research & Development
RD&E	Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

5. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

5.1 The R&D Department:

- Identifying any Researchers(s) not employed by the Trust, who wish to carry out research involving Trust premises, staff, patients, tissues, organs or data.
- Sending out Honorary Contract Application forms and giving guidance to researchers.
- Assisting in identifying a local supervisor (if applicable).
- Reviewing completed paperwork and gaining references.
- Ensuring the appropriate Occupational Health clearance has been obtained.

- Ensuring the Honorary Contractor is booked on to an RD&E Corporate Induction session.
- Issuing the Honorary Contract or Honorary Contract Acceptance letter along with relevant policies and procedures as mentioned in the Contract.

5.2

The Applicant or Supervisor:

- Identifying the need for an Honorary Contract.
- Contacting the R&D Department and requesting the Honorary Contract Application Forms.
- Completing the Honorary Contract Application forms in a timely manner.
- Ensuring a DBS check has been carried out, or ensuring DBS certificates are valid.
- Negotiating costs involved in DBS checks on a project-by-project basis.
- To contact the R&D Administrator before the Honorary Contract expires to either confirm the termination date, or agree a contract extension if required.
-

5.3

The Applicant:

- Attending RD&E Corporate Induction.
- Providing references and copies of inoculation certificates or attending an appointment with Occupational Health if required.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Issuing an Honorary Contract

Upon receipt of all documentation for Trust R&D Approval, where the researcher has not requested an Honorary Contract Application Form, the R&D Department will identify all researchers without a Trust Contract of Employment and will send out an Honorary Contract Form.

Where Researchers are wishing to participate in a study that already has Trust Approval, the researcher or their supervisor must contact R&D for a blank Honorary Contract Application Form as soon as the need to work on site is identified. Researchers **must not** start work on a project on any RD&E site without an Honorary Contract/Honorary Contract Acceptance Letter being in place.

For researchers who do not hold an existing Honorary Contract with an NHS organisation, the form will need to be completed in full according to the guidance and DBS and Occupational Health clearance checks undertaken.

Please note DBS checks are the responsibility of the employing party. Where a higher level of DBS clearance is needed to undertake the research at an RD&E site; the R&D Department will notify the Researcher/Local Supervisor.

For researchers who already hold an existing Honorary Contract with another NHS organisation, the form will need to be completed according to the guidance. In line with Department of Health guidance, if an Honorary Contract has already been issued, the R&D Department will check that the standard of the Contract is

acceptable and that appropriate clearances have been obtained, or are still valid.

Once all these requirements have been met, the R&D Department will send out the Honorary Contract or Honorary Contract Acceptance Letter which the researcher will then sign and return.

Work must not begin until an Honorary Contract or an Honorary Contract Acceptance Letter and R&D Approval Letter has been issued.

6.2 End of Honorary Contract Agreement

Before an honorary contract is due to end the supervisor and researcher are responsible for contacting the R&D administrator to confirm if the honorary contract should terminate at the agreed end date, or if it requires extending.

When terminating an honorary contract, the R&D administrator will coordinate with RD&E IT Services and Staff Identification Cards to end access granted within the honorary contract and in line with its contractual dates.

If the supervisor requests an honorary contract extension for the researcher the R&D administrator will send out a new Honorary Contract or an Honorary Contract Acceptance Letter which the researcher will sign and return.
The retention of Honorary Contract records will be managed in compliance with '[The Records Management Policy](#)' for the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust.

7. DISSEMINATION AND TRAINING

7.1 This SOP and associated templates and forms will be uploaded to the [RDE Research website](#) shortly after having been released.

7.2 All staff whose activities are subject to this SOP should ensure that they take time to read and understand the content of this SOP.

7.3 *If applicable, a training log within the Investigator Site File/Trial Master File should be completed to document that members of staff have read and understood the contents of this SOP.*

8. MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS SOP

8.1 In order to monitor compliance with this SOP, the auditable standards will be monitored as follows:

No	Minimum Requirements	Evidenced by
1.	DBS and OH checks must have been undertaken before the Contract or Acceptance Letter can be issued.	Copies of the DBS certificates and OH checks will be saved on the R&D shared drive.
2.	Researchers must not work outside their Honorary Contract contractual dates.	Monitoring the R&D Honorary Contract database to review contract termination dates.

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- 8.2 Outcomes from audit will be presented to the R&D Governance and Oversight Group (GOG) which will monitor any resulting action plans until all issues have been addressed to satisfaction.
- 8.3 Issues identified via the audit process which require escalation will be referred to the R&D Governance Oversight Group (GOG).

9. ARCHIVING ARRANGEMENTS

- 9.1 The original of this document will remain with the R&D Quality Assurance Coordinator. An electronic copy will be maintained on the R&D section of the Q-Pulse document management system and a pdf copy on the [RDE Research website](#).
- 9.2 Archive copies must be maintained for any documents which have been superseded. Archive copies in electronic format should be retained indefinitely.

10. REFERENCES

[UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research](#)

[NHS Records Management: Code of Practice 2016 for health and social care
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/records-management-code-of-practice-for-health-and-social-care](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/records-management-code-of-practice-for-health-and-social-care)