

### **R(D)SVS Policy on Recruitment of Students to Non-University of Edinburgh Research Projects**

The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies has large numbers of undergraduate and postgraduate students and members of staff engaged in research projects which may involve recruitment of our own students as participants, in addition to a number of university wide surveys and projects that are run every year. The R(D)SVS therefore has a policy in place to protect our students from excessive requests to participate in research and surveys either from internal, or external to the University of Edinburgh (UoE), sources.

This means that any internal or external research project targeting R(D)SVS students must first be approved by the school Human (research) Ethical Review Committee (HERC). This is partly to protect our students from harm by preventing student overload and survey fatigue but also to maximise the potential for those surveys or studies which are approved to be effective and collect meaningful data.

As such mass emailing of the student body is prohibited for recruitment as is any other method of recruitment that could lead to students feeling coerced or required to participate. Requests from internal or external parties to simply send on a link via email for a survey to some or all of our students will therefore be denied and researchers will be asked to follow our local approval procedures. All requests should in the first instance be forwarded to the Human Ethical Review Committee (HERC, [Herc.vets@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Herc.vets@ed.ac.uk)) who can provide more information on the screening and ethical approval processes.

To avoid student overload HERC has an initial screening process where the topic and timing of any proposed research study is compared with other research projects or surveys that are currently underway in the student body. If at that time there are no other projects or surveys on similar topics targeting the students then the application may go to the next stage and be reviewed by the committee for approval to go ahead. Applications will need to include any promotional materials and consent forms or statements intended to be used as well as a copy of the questionnaire (if relevant).

Please be aware that due to the number of projects generated locally and within the university, approval is unlikely to be given unless the application is part of a robust educational research study. Additionally as emailing students for recruitment is prohibited, a UoE lead will be necessary in order to provide recruitment opportunities.

Any external researcher that wishes to go ahead with requesting approval to recruit R(D)SVS students to participate in their research should first contact HERC for more information.

HERC contact: [Herc.vets@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Herc.vets@ed.ac.uk)