

University engagement for quality improvement or research activities

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This document provides information related to Queensland Health engaging a university for the purposes of conducting quality improvement activities or research activities.

Can Queensland Health staff or teams partner with universities to undertake **research**?

Yes. Queensland Health staff can partner with universities to undertake research. The process for Queensland Health staff to undertake a research activity in partnership with a university includes:

1. Submission and approval of a Human Research Ethics Application (HREA) via your local Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and submitted through the Ethical Review Manager (ERM).
 - Some universities may require their own administrative or secondary ethics approval following Queensland Health HREC approval.
 - Your local Research Ethics and Governance office can provide templates for required documents (e.g. Study Protocol, Data Sharing Agreement etc.)
2. Submission and approval of Site-Specific Agreement (SSA) via the relevant Research Governance Office (RGO) and submitted through ERM
3. As part of your SSA submission, you will need to complete a Research Collaborative Agreement (RCA) or Research Agreement (RA). Your local RGO can advise and provide suitable templates.

Can QH staff partner with universities to undertake **quality improvement, service evaluation or service development** (i.e. activities usually considered exempt from ethical review)?

Yes. Queensland Health staff can partner with universities to undertake quality improvement, service evaluation or service development activities. The process for allowing QH staff to undertake this type of activity in partnership with a university includes:

1. Receiving endorsement for the project from your local unit or Department (i.e. line manager, director, Executive Director as applicable).
2. Receiving endorsement for the project from your local quality improvement committee (where possible).
3. A formal agreement between the Queensland Health HHS and the university is also required:
 - Where the activity is **funded**, a standard procurement pathway is to be followed. Please consult your local procurement services department who is best placed to provide advice as to the appropriate agreement.

- Where the activity is **not funded** (or considered in-kind), a Consultancy Agreement or Collaborative Agreement is required. Your local HHS legal services department can provide advice on their preferred agreement pathway.

What is the appropriate approval pathway if it is unclear whether an activity is quality improvement or research?

The Queensland Health team overseeing the activity must seek recommendation from an appropriate QH governing body if there is any involvement of Queensland Health patients, workforce, or data. The local Research Ethics/Governance Office is best placed to advise the most appropriate research or quality improvement approval requirements.

Can a quality improvement, service evaluation or service development project be **published** with a university as a collaborator?

Some quality improvement, service evaluation or service development activities within QH demonstrate potential value in improving health services external to Queensland Health, and formal publication is an avenue for sharing activities and outcomes.

The Queensland Health staff member or team that is undertaking the quality improvement, service evaluation or service development activities, should ensure that the agreement between QH and the university that is established prior to the project includes specific details regarding planned publication.

Following completion of the quality improvement, service evaluation or service development activity, the project lead must seek appropriate local approvals for the dissemination of project outputs and findings external to Queensland Health.

Useful links

The following links may be useful:

- Ethical Review Manager (ERM) - <https://au.forms.ethicalreviewmanager.com/Account/Login>
- Research information for researchers - <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/research-reports/research/researchers>
- How to do research - <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/research-reports/research/researchers/how-to>
- Health Translation Queensland Research Passport Agreement - <https://healthtranslationqld.org.au/resources/research-ethics-and-governance/research-passport>