

**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE – RESEARCH PASSPORTS
STAFF and PhD STUDENTS**

1. The Research Passport procedure is the mechanism for obtaining an Honorary Research Contract or Letter of Access from the NHS for researchers who fulfil any of the following criteria:
 - a. will have direct or indirect access to NHS patients, their data/health records, tissue, or organs
 - b. will have direct or indirect access to NHS staff or staff data on NHS premises
 - c. require physical access to NHS property

The following do not need a research passport:

- a. Clinical Academics or others who have an NHS substantive contract
- b. Researchers conducting research where the participants are NHS staff and research is conducted outwith NHS facilities
- c. Researchers who already have an honorary research contract with the NHS

Researchers who do not require an honorary contract or letter of access may require additional pre-engagement checks to undertake permitted research activities in NHS organisations. Always check with the relevant NHS R&D office for confirmation of the requirements.

2. The research passport:

- a. confirms the Pre-Engagement Checks required to conduct the proposed research. These could include an up-to-date criminal records check (Disclosure Scotland) check and Occupational Health screening
- b. provides a mechanism for the applicant, his/her employer and a lead NHS organisation to provide, check and confirm the information and checks necessary to allow the researcher access to the NHS
- c. relies on assurances offered by those employers who have already conducted these checks, to be accepted by the NHS hosts as part of issuing honorary research contracts
- d. avoids the need for duplicate checks at other NHS sites where the study is to be conducted

Please note;

- e. The passport must be presented to all NHS research sites to facilitate each site providing the Researcher with an Honorary Research Contract or Letter of Access, as appropriate
- f. The Research Passport process is separate from the NHS Ethics review and the R&D Management Approval process. These must be undertaken as appropriate for the study and R&D Management approval obtained from each NHS site before any research is undertaken

3. How do I get a research passport?

- a. Read the [Guide to Completing the Research Passport Form](#).
- b. Scroll to the 'Documents-Research Passport' section and complete sections 1-3 of the [Research Passport Application Form](#).
- c. Ask your line manager/supervisor (or other authorised person) to complete section 4.

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- d. If you are a **PhD student**, take your application form to the Research Support Team Leader in the Research Support Office, room 223 to complete section 5.
- e. If you are a **Member of staff**, send your application to the Research Support Office on medresearch@st-andrews.ac.uk and the Research Support Team Leader will arrange for HR to complete section 5
- f. You may need to complete occupational health assessments (this is not done by the University), and/or a criminal record disclosure application, and/or provide additional documents.
- g. Your form will be signed off and returned to you.
- h. Complete section 6
- i. Submit the completed Research Passport form with any attachments to the lead NHS organisation who will complete sections 7 and 8. Current contacts are:
 - a. NHS Fife – Fife.fiferesearchapprovals@nhs.scot
 - b. NHS Tayside – tay.tasc@nhs.scot
 - c. NHS Lothian - accord@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

You should also notify the University's Research Governance office that you have applied for your passport researchgovernance@st-andrews.ac.uk. They do not need to see the form.

- j. Once the form has been authorised by an NHS organisation it becomes a valid Research Passport, either for the duration of your research project or for a period of 3 years (the time period is dependent upon your contractual status).
- k. The authorised Research Passport can then be provided to other NHS organisations

For all questions/queries in relation to the procedure for obtaining a research passport/honorary contract or general queries in relation to pre-engagement checks please contact the School Research Support Office.

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