St George's University Hospitals NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

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Researchers and their teams are responsible for checking the JREO website for the most recent version. They may print off this document for training and reference purposes.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
Research Passports

SOP Chronology		
SOP Version Number:	**Reason for Change:**	**Author:**
V1.0	New SOP	Lucy H H Parker
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1. Background

The Research Passport procedure is the process by which researchers can obtain an honorary research contract (HRC) or a Letter of Access (LoA). The procedure enables researchers to complete a single set of documents in order to be able to access a single or multiple NHS sites, smoothing out the process of obtaining permission to attend NHS sites.

The system was devised by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and allows all parties undertaking research in the NHS to have clearly defined responsibilities and liabilities as laid out in the Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care. The current source of information is the HR Good Practice (Resource Pack): Information for Researchers, R&D and HR staff in the NHS and HEIs. (www.nihr.ac.uk)

The guiding principles for the system are to ensure that legal liability is clear, should research activity have adverse incidents. To ensure that non-NHS researchers are bound, contractually, to ensure NHS duty of care and to ensure that they follow research governance and regulations, and that most importantly, research participants are protected.

The system can be used by researchers taking part in studies which could have a foreseeable or direct impact on patient care and clearly defines what documentation and checks in-house that should be undertaken without duplicating the checks made by another NHS organisation.

"The research passport" is a single set of a standard form and associated documents. These documents include identity checks, Occupational Health (OH) clearance, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), (formerly Criminal Record Bureau) checks etc. The form will detail what needs to be included with your application,

The Research Passport form and more details can be found at the NIHR website
www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm

The above link also contains any other document that may need to be completed.

It is important that the link above is used to fill out the form as NHS organisations can only accept the latest version of the form and if an older version is used, it will be refused.

2. Joint Research and Enterprise Office (JREO) Policy

All JREO SOPs will be produced and approved in accordance with the JREO SOP on SOPs and must be used in conjunction with local NHS Trust and St George's policies and procedures.
The JREO acts as the representative of both St George's University of London (SGUL) and St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (SGHT). St George's will be the official name used on all SOPs to represent both institutions acting as Sponsor.

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3. Scope

This SOP describes the process for completing the forms necessary for a Research Passport in order to undertake research related activity in the NHS. This SOP is relevant for SGUL and SGHT staff wishing to undertake research related activity both in SGHT and other NHS trusts.

4. Definitions

Not applicable to this SOP.

5. Responsibilities

This SOP is for all researchers intending to conduct research at SGHT who do not have a SGHT contract or those SGUL or SGHT researchers who wish to conduct research at a different NHS organisation. It is that researcher's responsibility to ensure that he/she has the correct documentation to cover their activity. This SOP also outlines what documentation a researcher should expect to receive from either the JREO at St George's or from another NHS Trust.

6. Procedure

The researcher must first assess what activity will be undertaken. NIHR have multiple groups/categories of researchers and there is a different process of application depending on what the researchers are intending to do. This SOP will normally be given to the researcher, and they should decide into which group they and their work falls.

NIHR have an algorithm that will help to determine the type of activity and the researcher should refer to section 6.1 www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm

Once the group/category of researcher has been determined, please refer to section 6.2 and 6.3 for the procedure which should be followed. Section 6.2 refers to Research Passports for researchers wishing to conduct research at St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. For SGUL or SGHT researchers wishing to conduct research elsewhere refer to section 6.3 in addition to section 6.1

6.1 NIHR Researcher Groups.

Group 1

Researchers who have substantive university employment contracts and no honorary NHS clinical contract. Their research activities will have a direct bearing on the quality of care.

Group 2
Post graduate students with substantive university employment contracts, no NHS clinical contracts. They are clinically qualified and experienced and do not need direct clinical supervision. Their research activities will have a direct bearing on the quality of care.

Group 3
Researchers with substantive NHS contracts.

Group 4
Researchers who have a substantive university contract and an honorary NHS contract (e.g. clinical academics)

Group 5
Researchers who have substantive university employment contracts and no honorary NHS clinical contract . Their research activities will not have a direct bearing on the quality of care. The university therefore retains liability for research activities that do not affect the NHS' duty of care.

Group 6
Researchers such as GPs who are independent contractors and are employed by an NHS organisation.

Group 7
Researchers such as GPs who are independent contractors and are not employed by an NHS organisation, even if they are working under contract for services to the NHS.

Group 8
Researchers with other substantive employment contracts with local government or charities such as social workers.

Group 9
Post graduate students with substantive university employment contracts, no NHS clinical contracts. They are clinically qualified and experienced and do not need direct clinical supervision. Their research activities will not have a direct bearing on the quality of care.

Group 10
Students conducting research as part of their placements.

Group 11
Researchers from a commercial organisation.

6.2 Procedure to follow – Researchers coming into SGHT

- **Group 1 and Group 2 Researchers**

Researchers in this category must obtain an honorary research contract. Please contact SGHT Human Resources (HR).

- **Group 3 Researchers**

Researchers do not complete a Research Passport form. They must send a copy of their CV, the name of the person designated as their manager within SGHT, and the NHS to NHS Proforma confirmation of pre-engagement checks. (www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm

This Proforma must have been completed by the Human Resources (HR) department of their **substantive** employer.

All the documentation should be sent to the JREO Research Governance Officer responsible for processing their research application.

Once the JREO has checked the documentation, the researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to the researcher's substantive employer informing them of the researcher's activities at SGHT.

A copy of the Letter of Access and all the documents obtained from the researcher will also be sent to the SGHT HR department. The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study. Appropriate information must be entered into the JREO ReDA database to allow for tracking and to enable the researcher to be contacted when necessary. A copy of the list of LoAs issued should be sent to SGHT HR for their records at the end of each quarter.

- **Group 4 Researchers**

Researchers do not complete a Research Passport form. They must send a copy of their CV, the name of the person designated as their manager within SGHT, and the NHS to NHS Proforma confirmation of pre-engagement checks. (www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm)

This Proforma must have been completed by the Human Resources (HR) department of the NHS organisation who issued them with the honorary clinical contract.

All the documentation should be sent to the JREO Research Governance Officer responsible for processing their research application.

Once the JREO has checked the documentation, the researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to the NHS organisation who issued them with an honorary clinical contract informing them of the researcher's activities at SGHT.
A copy of the letter of Access and all the documents obtained from the researcher will also be sent to the SGHT HR department.
The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study. Appropriate information must be entered into the JREO ReDA database to allow for tracking and to enable the researcher to be contacted when necessary. A copy of the list of LoAs issued should be sent to SGHT HR for their records at the end of each quarter.

- Group 5 Researchers

A Research Passport Form is required. The researchers should submit their CV, the name of their nominated Manager in SGHT and their Research Passport form (with all the relevant sections completed and signed by their substantive employer and others where appropriate) and applicable associated documents as evidence of checks required, to the JREO.

All the documentation should be sent to the JREO Research Governance Officer responsible for processing their research application.

The JREO will validate the research passport form and issue the researchers with a LoA. A copy of this letter will be sent to the researcher's substantive employer informing them of the researcher's activities at SGHT. A copy of the letter of Access and all the documents obtained from the researcher will also be sent to the SGHT HR department.

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study. Appropriate information must be entered into the JREO ReDA database to allow for tracking and to enable the researcher to be contacted when necessary. A copy of the list of LoAs issued should be sent to SGHT HR for their records at the end of each quarter.

- Group 6 Researchers

Researchers do not complete a Research Passport form. They must send a copy of their CV, the name of the person designated as their manager within SGHT, and the NHS to NHS Proforma confirmation of pre-engagement checks. (www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm)

This Proforma must have been completed by the Human Resources (HR) department of the NHS organisation who issued them with the honorary clinical contract.

All the documentation should be sent to the JREO Research Governance Officer responsible for processing their research application.

Once the JREO has checked the documentation, the researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to the NHS organisation who issued them with an honorary clinical contract informing them of the researcher's activities at SGHT.

A copy of the Letter of Access and all the documents obtained from the researcher will also be sent to SGHT HR department.

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study. Appropriate information must be entered into the JREO ReDA database to allow for tracking and to enable the researcher to be contacted when necessary. A copy of the list of LoAs issued should be sent to SGHT HR for their records at the end of each quarter.

- Group 7 Researchers

No Research Passport Form, no Honorary Research Contract or Letter of Access is required. It is the responsibility of the contractors to check that the professional indemnity covers the proposed research activities. Please contact the JREO for further information.

- Group 8 Researchers

No Research Passport Form, no Honorary Research Contract or Letter of Access is required. It is the responsibility of the contractors to check that the professional indemnity covers the proposed research activities. Please contact the JREO for further information.

- Group 9 Researchers

A Research Passport Form is required. The student should submit their CV, the name of their nominated local line manager (usually the Principal Investigator) in SGHT and their Research Passport form (with all the relevant sections completed and signed by their substantive employer, the university and others where appropriate) and applicable associated documents as evidence of checks required to the JREO.

All the documentation should be sent to the JREO Research Governance Officer responsible for processing their research application.

The JREO will validate the research passport form and issue the student researcher with a LoA. A copy of this letter will be sent to the researcher's substantive employer or university informing them of the student's activities at SGHT. A copy of the letter of Access and all the documents obtained from the researcher will also be sent to the SGHT HR department.

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the student researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study. Appropriate information must be entered into the JREO ReDA database to allow for tracking and to enable the researcher to be contacted when necessary. A copy of the list of LoAs issued should be sent to SGHT HR for their records at the end of each quarter.

- Group 10 Researchers

No Research Passport Form, no Honorary Research Contract or Letter of Access is required.

- Group 11 Researchers

Model agreements between commercial and non-commercial organisations should be used. The Research Passport will not be used. Please contact the JREO contracting team for further information.

6.3 Procedure to follow – SGHT or SGUL Researchers going to a different NHS Trust

- **Group 1 and Group 2 Researchers**

Researchers in this category must obtain an honorary research contract. Please contact the HR department of the NHS Trust that the researcher wishes to go to for further information. Alternatively, that NHS organisation's R&D department should be able to advise as to who to contact.

- **Group 3 Researchers**

Researchers do not complete a Research Passport form. They must send a copy of their CV, the name of the person designated as their manager within that NHS Trust and the NHS to NHS Proforma confirmation of pre-engagement checks. (www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm)

This Proforma must have been completed by the Human Resources (HR) department of SGHT

The researcher must check with the R&D office of the NHS Trust that they wish to attend where and whom to send the documents to.

The researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to HR at SGHT informing them of the researcher's activities at that NHS Trust.

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study.

- **Group 4 Researchers**

Researchers do not complete a Research Passport form. They must send a copy of their CV, the name of the person designated as their manager within that NHS Trust, and the NHS to NHS Proforma confirmation of pre-engagement checks. www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm

This Proforma must have been completed by the Human Resources (HR) department of the NHS organisation who issued them with the honorary clinical contract. This may or may not be St George's. If it is, please contact your normal HR representative.

The researcher must check with the R&D office of the NHS Trust that they wish to attend as to where and to whom to send the documents.

The researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to the HR department of the NHS organisation who issued them with an honorary clinical contract informing them of the researcher's activities at that NHS Trust. .

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study.

- Group 5 Researchers

A Research Passport Form is required. The researchers should submit their CV, the name of their nominated Manager within that NHS Trust and their Research Passport form (with all the relevant sections completed and signed by the HR department at SGUL (contact your normal HR representative and others where appropriate) and applicable associated documents as evidence of checks required.

The researcher must check with the R&D office of the NHS Trust that they wish to attend as to where and to whom to send the documents.

The researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to the HR department at SGUL informing them of the researcher's activities at that NHS Trust.

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study.

- Group 6 Researchers

Researchers do not complete a Research Passport form. They must send a copy of their CV, the name of the person designated as their manager within that NHS Trust, and the NHS to NHS Proforma confirmation of pre-engagement checks. (www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm)

This Proforma must have been completed by the Human Resources (HR) department of the NHS organisation who issued them with the honorary clinical contract. This may or may not be St George's. If it is, please contact your normal HR representative

The researcher must check with the R&D office of the NHS Trust that they wish to attend as to where and to whom to send the documents.

The researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to the HR department of the NHS organisation who issued them with a honorary clinical contract informing them of the researcher's activities at that NHS Trust.

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study.

- Group 7 Researchers

Not applicable.

- Group 8 Researchers

Not applicable.

- **Group 9 Researchers**

A Research Passport Form is required. The student should submit their CV, the name of their nominated Manager within that NHS Trust and their Research Passport form (with all the relevant sections completed and signed by their substantive employer, the university (with all the relevant sections completed and signed by the HR department at SGUL (please contact your normal HR representative and others where appropriate) and applicable associated documents as evidence of checks required.

The researcher must check with the R&D office of the NHS Trust that they wish to attend as to where and to whom to send the documents.

The researcher will be issued with an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (LoA). A copy of this letter will also be sent to the HR department at SGUL informing them of the student's activities at that NHS Trust.

The Letter of Access will be for a specific time and it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the LoA remains valid for the length of the study.

- **Group 10 Researchers**

Not applicable.

- **Group 11 Researchers**

Not applicable.

7. References

www.nihr.ac.uk/policy-and-standards/Research-passports.htm

HR Good Practice: Information for Researchers, R&D and HR staff in the NHS and HEIs (Resource pack) www.nihr.ac.uk

8. Appendices

No appendices for this SOP