

QUALITY MANUAL

Ethics Policy Section 240

Case Communications Ltd

Controlled Document

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1 Ethics Policy Introduction

This policy sets out our guiding principles on ethics and how we will manage ethical issues in Case Communications. This policy applies to all aspects of our governance, policy, research, commercial, operational and administrative activities.

1.1. Relationships with others

- Relationships with government, the private sector and other funders are open and explicit.
- We respect cultural differences.
- We deal courteously with those who hold opinions that differ from ours.
- Colleagues, stakeholders, customers and suppliers are always treated respectfully and fairly.

1.2. How We Work

- We operate with honesty and integrity in all areas of our work.
- We are open and transparent in making decisions, undertaking activities and allocating funding; if we cannot be, we explain why.
- We work independently of external pressure but are alert to the possibility of internal partiality.
- We work to the standards of UK legislation wherever we are, unless local standards are more stringent.
- We disclose conflicts of interest and actively manage them.
- All our funding decisions are fair, transparent and securely based on defined assessment and selection procedures.
- The intellectual contributions of others are always respected, acknowledged and honoured.
- Potential ethical challenges arising from new or risky research at the limits of our knowledge are considered and debated with stakeholders and society at an early stage.

1.3. Impact on the environment

- The impacts of our decisions and work on the natural environment, on people and animal welfare, are assessed and minimised.
- We always weigh the likely impacts of the work against the expected benefits in the context of contributing positively to sustainable development.

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1.4. Who is covered by the policy.

The policy covers all CASE COMMUNICATIONS LTD staff – in all of our Offices and Centres. We require those organisations whose staff or students receive funding from us to adhere to the policy. We expect those who serve on our decision-making bodies to do the same. All those covered by the policy are personally accountable for operating within the scope and intent of the policy. We wish organisations that we work with to respect our ethical positions.

1.5. What ethics mean to Case Communications

Ethic - A moral principle or set of moral values held by an individual or group.

1.6. Ethics shape our view of the world

Values and ethics shape the way we view the world and how we behave in it. The purpose of this policy and our statements is to provide guidance to staff, fund holders and advisers in assessing the many and sometimes complex decisions they have to make. It will also signal to users and observers of Case Communications that they can have confidence in what we do and the way that we do it.

1.7. Responsibility for ensuring the Ethics Policy is carried out.

All those covered by the policy are responsible for ensuring that activities for which they are responsible comply with this policy. Concerns about research applications, operational activities or breaches of the ethical policy should be raised with line managers in the first instance. Existing mechanisms within the organisation should be used to resolve concerns or refer onwards as appropriate. Serious or unresolved concerns should be referred to the Ethics Board.

1.8. An Ethics Board and monitoring procedures

The Ethics Board will be a small team comprising the Chief Executive, one member from Council and one from the Case Communications Executive Board. Serious issues or breaches of the policy may be referred to the Board at any time, which may then convene, with appropriate additional expertise if needed, to consider the issue. The Board's decision will be final and it will have power to take action it deems necessary. The Board will be accountable to the Chairman of Case Communications.

An annual review will be carried out by Directors through the normal audit procedures to ensure our ethical policy is being applied consistently.

1.9. Communicating the policy

The policy will form part of the NERC induction process and adhering to the policy will be part of everyone's terms of employment. New members of NERC's decision-making bodies will be made aware of the policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. Those receiving grants, funding or fellowships from NERC will be made aware of the requirements as part of the application and confirmation procedures.

1.10. Reviews

This policy, and the principles, will be regularly reviewed, in the light of experience. They will also be kept consistent with any ethical code that Research Councils UK may develop. Comments and contributions from staff, stakeholders and the public with regards to this policy or the statement are welcome at any time (named person/email to be inserted).

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