

STH Guide to the NHS Research Passport System

What is a Research Passport?

The NHS Research Passport scheme is a UK-wide initiative introduced by the Department of Health. It was created to streamline the process to allow non-NHS staff to obtain an Honorary Research Contract or Letter of Access, in order to carry out research in the NHS. The Research Passport system establishes a common system of pre-engagement checks which conform to NHS employment standards, so that they are transferrable across NHS Trusts.

How does it work?

The Research Passport itself is a package of documents completed by the researcher with their substantive employer or place of study, and then validated by NHS R&D offices. It lists the pre-engagement checks the substantive employer or place of study has carried out. When completed, it can be taken to other NHS organisations, thus removing the need for duplicate checks.

Benefits of the Research Passport System

- Provides clear guidance to all NHS trusts, thereby ensuring consistency
- Is a streamlined standard application system
- Clarifies responsibilities of NHS hosts and university employers
- Research staff can start research in the NHS faster
- Reduces valuable researcher time spent on administration
- Universities will be better informed about the activities of their research staff
- Simplifies the application process by minimising duplication, reducing delay and removing inconsistencies

Who does NOT need a Research Passport?

You will **not** need a Research Passport if:

1. You have a substantive contract of employment with the NHS or you are a student employed by the NHS and you will be undertaking research at STH as part of this role*
2. You have an Honorary Clinical Contract with an NHS Trust e.g. Clinical Academics*
3. You are a student conducting research as part of your healthcare placement
4. You are a medical student at University of Sheffield undertaking an intercalated year

*If you are in category 1 or 2 above, you will require an NHS to NHS Letter of Access (NHS LoA) – see below:

Who needs a Research Passport?

- If you are **not** in any of the above 3 categories and have no contractual relationship with the NHS, you will need a Research Passport in order to carry out research in the NHS.
- Postgraduate students who conduct research within the NHS but who are not part of a healthcare placement need to complete a Research Passport.

STH Process

NHS to NHS Letter of Access

The NHS to NHS LoA gives permission for any research activity to be undertaken at the NHS organisation which hosts the research project. The researcher's substantive NHS employer remains fully responsible for undertaking and updating pre-engagement checks and the research host site can accept their existing relationship with the NHS.

The procedure for researchers who require an NHS to NHS LoA at STH is as follows:

1. An NHS to NHS proforma should be completed and authorised by the HR Department at the applicant's employing NHS Trust. For clinical academics, the University which is the substantive employer should sign and issue the proforma.
2. The applicant should then submit a pdf version of the form along with their CV including 5 years of employment and a completed [STH Pre-Engagement Check form](#) to STH R&D sth.researchadministration@nhs.net
3. The researcher should provide details of what their proposed research activities will be in each NHS site and how long they need access at each site.
4. The STH NHS FT R&D team will then issue an NHS LoA to the researcher.

Applying for a Research Passport

Research Passport Application Form completion instructions (see pages below for detailed help with the form):

1. Sections 1-3 need to be completed by the applicant.
2. After Sections 1-3 have been completed, Section 4 needs to be completed and signed by the applicant's line manager (if staff) or academic supervisor (if student).
3. The form, along with a copy of the applicant's CV and a completed [STH Pre-Engagement Check form](#) then needs to be submitted to the HR Department of the applicant's substantive employer or place of registry if they are a student. They will undertake any required pre-engagement checks and complete and sign Section 5 of the form. This includes DBS and occupational health clearances, if required.
4. Once Section 5 is completed, the completed Research Passport, along with evidence of pre-engagement checks will be returned to the applicant, who will then need to complete the checklist (Section 6) and submit the Research Passport, along with their CV, [STH Pre-Engagement Check form](#), signature email strings and evidence of any pre-engagement checks, such as DBS check (formerly CRB) and Occupational Health check to STH R&D via sth.researchadministration@nhs.net
If applicable to your activity, your original DBS original will not be required at this stage but the STH NHS FT R&D team will require to see the original prior to or on your first day on site.
5. The STH NHS FT R&D team will then validate the Research Passport and issue you with an Honorary Research Contract/Letter of Access, as appropriate.

Research Passport Application Form – Version 5.1 08/Jul/2020

Please refer to the guidance notes before completing the form.

Section 1 – Details of Researcher *To be completed by Researcher*

1. a Surname: [] Prof Dr Mr Mrs
Forename(s): [] Miss Ms Other
Contact Tel: [] Contact Email: []

2. a Date of birth: []

3. a Professional registration details, if applicable (Doctors undertaking any form of medical practice should confirm they have a licence to practise). N/A

4. a Employer: [] or place of study: []
Work Address/Place of Study: []
Post or status held: []

Section 2 – Details of Research *To be completed by Researcher*

5. a What type of Research Passport do you need? Project-specific Multi-project
If you will be conducting one project only please complete the details below. If you anticipate that you will be undertaking more than one project at any one time, please give details in the Appendix.
Project Title: []
Project Start Date: [] End Date: []
Proposed start and end date of 3-year Research Passport: []
Start Date: [] End Date: []

NHS organisation(s): []	Dept(s): []	Proposed research activities: []	Manager in NHS organisation: []
[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]
[]	[]	[]	[]

Section 3 – Declaration by Researcher *To be completed by Researcher*

6. a Have you ever been refused an honorary research contract? Yes No
Have you ever had an honorary research contract revoked? Yes No
If yes to either question, please give details: []

I understand that my data will be used for the purposes described in section 6 of the Information for researchers, R&D and HR staff in Higher Education Institutions and the NHS guidance document. I warrant that the information provided as part of this Research Passport application and the attached documents are a true and accurate reflection.

Signed*: [] Date: []

When Sections 1-3 have been completed, the researcher should forward the form to the appropriate person to complete Section 4.

**It is recommended that the researcher prints, signs and scans the form. Where this is not possible, the researcher should state 'authorised by email', in place of a wet-ink and scanned signature. Where authorisation occurs by email, the full email trail should be presented as evidence with the document for further authorisations and/or in application for an HRC/LoA. Identity and/or other checks may be made using videoconferencing, or other technology, where appropriate.*

Ensure this is complete if you have NMC/GMC registration

Ensure the address is complete, including postcode

Please provide details of your specific research activities on site at STH

You should list the principal investigator for the research study(s) you will be working on as your manager in NHS organisation

Please add your signature here – if an electronic signature is provided, email confirmation should be provided to the R&D team.

Section 4 – Suitability of Researcher *To be completed by researcher's substantive employer, e.g. line manager, or academic supervisor*

7. a Will this person's research activity mean that they may be undertaking regulated activity with children and/or adults as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended (in particular by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)? (please use the Research Passport algorithm to make this judgement) Yes No

7. b I am satisfied that the above named individual is suitably trained and experienced to undertake the duties associated with the research activities outlined in this Research Passport form.

Signed*: [] Date: []
Name: [] Job Title: []
Department and Organisation: []
Address: []
Tel No: [] Email: []
Managerial responsibility for the applicant: []

When Section 4 has been completed, the researcher should forward the form to the appropriate person to complete Section 5.

**It is recommended that the person authorising Section 4 prints, signs and scans the form. Where this is not possible, they should state 'authorised by email', in place of a wet-ink and scanned signature. Where authorisation occurs by email, the full email trail should be presented as evidence with the document for further authorisations and/or in application for an HRC/LoA. Identity and/or other checks may be made using videoconferencing, or other technology, where appropriate.*

Wet ink signature here – if an electronic signature is provided, email confirmation should be provided to the R&D team.

Section 5 - Pre-engagement checks - To be completed by the HR department of the researcher's substantive employer or registry at place of study

8. a	Does the above-named individual's research involve Regulated Activity with children and/or adults as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended (in particular by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	If yes to the above, has the above-named individual been checked against ISA barred lists for adults and/or children, as appropriate and have you received confirmation via the criminal record disclosure that the person is not barred from working with adults and/or children? (NB individuals who are barred from working with adults or children must not undertake a regulated activity in the NHS with the vulnerable group from which they are barred, and you must not submit a Research Passport form in such cases).	Checked against: ISA Adults List? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> ISA Children's List? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
	Can you confirm that a clear criminal record disclosure has been obtained for the above-named individual, with no subsequent reports from the individual of changes to this record? NB for Regulated Activity this must be an enhanced level criminal record check. For non-regulated activity, ensure the criminal record check is at the mandated level.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, please provide details of the clear disclosure:	
	Date of disclosure:	Type of disclosure:
	Disclosure No.:	Organisation that requested disclosure:
9. f	Have the pre-engagement checks described below been carried out with regard to the above-named individual and is confirmation of the necessary checks, including any required satisfactory documentary evidence, available in the employing organisation's/place of study's records?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment/student screening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ID with photograph: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> o two references: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> o verification of permission to work/study in the UK: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> o exploration of any gaps in employment: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> • Evidence of current professional registration: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> • Evidence of qualifications: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> • Occupational health screening/clearance: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 	
	Is the named individual on a fixed term contract or is the contract end imminent? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Please indicate current contract end date: Date	

Where applicable, these checks should all be completed by HR/student registry

Signed:	Date:
Name:	Job Title:
Organisation:	Department:
Address:	
Tel No:	Email:
Please return the form to the researcher.	
<p>*It is recommended that the person authorising Section 5 prints, signs and scans the form. Where this is not possible, they should state 'authorised by email', in place of a wet-ink and scanned signature. Where authorisation occurs by email, the full email trail should be presented as evidence with the document for further authorisations and/or in application for an HRC/LoA. Identity and/or other checks may be made using videoconferencing, or other technology, where appropriate.</p>	

If an electronic signature is provided, email confirmation should be provided to the R&D Team

Section 6 -- Instructions to applicants	
To be completed by Researcher	
Please indicate which of the following documents are attached to this Research Passport.	
Current curriculum vitae, including details of qualifications, training and professional registration (please use the template C.V. at http://www.rdforum.nhs.uk/docs/template_cv.doc)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Researcher's copy of criminal record disclosure. NB where research involves regulated activity with children and/or adults as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended (in particular by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012), the disclosure must include confirmation of a check against the appropriate ISA barred list(s).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of occupational health screening / clearance	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Appendix -- List of projects and amendments	Appendix numbers: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please send the completed form and original documents to the Lead R&D office. The completed form and original documents will be returned to you. This package of documents will be used to validate your completed Research Passport form. You may then, and where relevant, provide the Research Passport to other NHS organisations.</p> <p>You must inform all NHS organisations that have received this Research Passport of any changes to the information supplied above. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of your honorary research contract or letter of access. As part of the quality control procedures for the Research Passport, random checks on the accuracy of the information held on this Research Passport may be made.</p>	

Sections 7 and 8 will be completed by the R&D Departments of the Trust/s you are applying to

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Does the Research Passport allow me to view patient data?

A. An STH NHS FT Letter of Access or Honorary Research Contract (obtained via a Research Passport) outlines the responsibility and accountability of yourself, the Trust and your employer whilst you are on Trust premises. **It does not give you permission to access to patient data.** Research team members outside of the clinical care team can only access patient data if this access is clearly outlined in the ethically-approved patient information sheet and informed consent form, which has been signed by the patient and also covered by suitable data protection arrangements.

Q. I have already submitted my Research Passport to other NHS Trusts. What do I do?

A. If another NHS Trust has already completed Section 8 of your Research Passport application form, then you must send us scanned copies or hard copies of the following:

The completed Research Passport application form

A copy of your CV

A completed [STH Pre-Engagement Check form](#)

Evidence of any pre-engagement checks you have had, such as DBS (formerly called CRB) and Occupational Health

These should be sent via email to sth.researchadministration@nhs.net

Q. I already have a Research Passport for a certain project, but need to add more. What do I do?

A. Complete a Research Passport appendix page for your new project/s and submit it to R&D at each site you need access to for that project.

Q. What if I am not employed by a university or NHS Trust and am not a student either?

A. If you are employed by an organisation which is not a university or NHS Trust, you will need to apply for an Honorary Contract through the Human Resources Department at STH.

The process is as follows:

- Your nominated STH manager would be the project's Principal Investigator (PI).
- You will then need to contact sth.HonoraryContractRequest@nhs.net to request an Honorary Contract Application form. Once you have completed this, please send it to your PI.
- The PI will then need to send completed forms to the Honorary Contract Team: sth.HonoraryContractRequest@nhs.net
- If you require any help with this process, please contact STH Human Resources Department on 0114 305 2503. **Please be advised that the usual turnaround time for Honorary Contracts is 8 weeks from the submission of all completed documents.**

Help and Contacts

Responsibility for obtaining a Research Passport lies with the individual researcher. If you are unsure whether you require a Research Passport, please email sth.researchadministration@nhs.net for advice.

Useful Links and Documents

Further information and guidance is on the [IRAS website](#).

University of Sheffield - Staff

If you are a member of staff and the Research Passport process applies to you, please see the [University of Sheffield website](#)

Your key contact is:

Human Resources Department, University of Sheffield:

Hr Hub hrhub@sheffield.ac.uk

☎: 0114 222 1638 - 0114 222 1611 - 0114 222 1613

University of Sheffield - Students

If you are a postgraduate student and the Research Passport process applies to you, please see the [University of Sheffield website](#)

Your key contact is your academic supervisor and PGR secretary in the first instance. In case of any further queries, contact:

Research Services, University of Sheffield
Lindsay Unwin - Research Ethics & Integrity Manager
l.v.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk
ext. 21443

Sheffield Hallam University - Staff and Students

A flowchart showing the application procedure and useful links for SHU staff/students is [available here](#). (Flowchart courtesy Sheffield Hallam University © All rights reserved)

Your key contact is:

Staff

Jess Short - Senior HR Administrator

Human Resources

j.short@shu.ac.uk

0114 2254133

Students

Your key contact is your academic supervisor and PGR secretary in the first instance.

All other enquiries

Please email sth.researchadministration@nhs.net and ensure you submit an [STH Pre-Engagement Check form](#) with your completed Research Passport application with your STH Reference or IRAS number into the email.