

Fieldwork

Department of
Sociology

A Guide for PhD Students

Download guidance & forms

Allow plenty of time
before the submission
deadline



Set aside a good amount of time to **familiarise yourself with the detailed [Sociology Ethics and Risk Assessment for Research Committee](#) guidance**, including the links to more information, their templates and examples, [this video](#), and the University policies associated with your chosen type of research. More specialist guidance can be found in the SERAR form.

Draft your responses to the sections of the SERAR form and send it to your supervisor.

Discuss with your Supervisor

deadline: 31st May
(see below)



While you will have doubtless already been discussing your plans with your supervisor, at this point in the process, you will need to **discuss the approval process and your fieldwork plans in practical, decisive terms with your supervisor. Seek guidance** on anything you are uncertain about. **Revise your SERAR form** as required, referring to policy if appropriate, before returning it to your supervisor. **When your supervisor has signed and dated the form, email it to [Paulina BaltSoukou](#) (Secretary).**

SERAR Approval process

SERAR usually
responds in 3-4
working days
cases involving
high risk, children,
or vulnerable
participants are
referred to other
committees, which can
take up to 3 months



The Secretary checks the form and sends it on to the Committee for review. Following the review, you could be:

Granted approval. However, you need to check the Foreign Office guidance in the week before you travel in case anything has changed.

Asked to revise your application, following commentary from the Committee.

Referred to the School Ethics Committee or in rare cases, the Study Away Risk Assessment Committee.

Refused permission - although this is unusual.

If your research does not require travelling, on approval from SERAR you are free to start work. The following stages are for those travelling for

Apply for fieldwork funding

apply by 2nd July
(additional deadlines
later in the year)



Download the fieldwork funding form and accompanying guidance [here](#). If you have a studentship sponsor, **check if they support fieldwork costs**. If your funder does pay fieldwork costs, you should apply to them and not the Department. **Collect any quotes** you may need to help with cost estimation. Fill out the form with the expense, and **check your totals**. Send your form on to your supervisor for approval, revising if required, and finally **email the approved form to the Postgrad Office.**

PEC approval process

the PEC is held at the
end of July - expect to
hear the outcome by
the end of August



The fieldwork forms submitted by the deadline for that term are included in the papers for the **Postgraduate Education Meeting (PEC)** at the end of the term. Meeting dates are in the Department calendar. Funding is allocated on the basis of the Department's available budget. Any requests that PEC considers excessive, or over the maximum limit, or outside the usual parameters, will not be funded in full.

The Committee gives the outcome in each case, recorded by the Secretary, and then the **Secretary writes to you with the outcome of your application and requests preparatory forms UPS3, visa and a scan of your passport.**

Apply for insurance

to be in place when
you apply for Leave to
Work Away



You can apply for free insurance to cover the period of your fieldwork through the University's Finance division, starting [here](#). This link will give you the guidance you need to apply for insurance and on what is and is not included.

You apply through the Allianz online portal or mobile app, and will receive confirmation of insurance being in place through the app or by email. Send the this on to the [Postgraduate Office](#) if possible.

Apply for Leave to Work Away on Camsis

1 - 2 weeks



This stage can only be done if you have passed your first year probation report. You also need to have obtained ethical approval and risk assessment.

Go to Self Serve on CamSIS and enter the dates of your leave in the Leave to Work Away section. Upload the approved SERAR form and your Insurance documentation, if you are able. This notifies the Postgraduate Office to approve the Leave to Work Away. They will check that you have passed your first year probation report and that the appropriate documents are in place before approving your request on CamSIS.

Apply for the awarded fieldwork funds

4 - 5 working days
for processing, and 5
working days for the
bank transfer



The funds will only be released once Leave to Work Away is approved and you have passed your first year probation report.

Send the Postgraduate Office your filled in UPS form from the PhD Moodle folder [Fieldwork funding forms](#) and a scan of your passport along with any visas required. The Postgraduate Office checks the form against the award amount, and checks all approvals are in place. If satisfied, they send the UPS form and passport to the Faculty Accounts team. The Accounts team processes the payment and send it to your bank account. You will receive information on handling receipts and reconciling the funds on your return.

While on fieldwork



Stay in regular contact with your supervisor and ensure your emergency contacts are in place. In an emergency, the insurers have a 24 hour hotline Healix on +44 (0)1483 265 696 and you should contact your supervisor, who will speak to the Department. You can also contact University Security on 01223 767444.

Keep your receipts and document them by photographing or scanning them. Follow the processes you agreed with the ethics committee to ensure compliance with data protection and ethics guidelines. Keep in mind your travel risk assessment, and take all precautions to keep yourself safe.

Return from fieldwork

within 1 month



Fill out the expenses form and collect your receipts together in an emailable format to submit within 1 month of your return. [Send these to the Postgraduate Office](#) who will record them, and forward them to the Accounts team. You will be emailed a note regarding reconciling the award and may be asked to return unspent funds for use by another student in the future.

Please contact your supervisor as soon as possible on your return to debrief and discuss your next steps.

Some students need additional support on returning from fieldwork. Issues relating to personal welfare may be directed to your Senior Tutor, College Nurse or College Welfare team. Issues of more general concern may be directed to the Department Administrator, [Lara Gisborne](#), or to the [Postgraduate Office team](#), or to the Director of Postgraduate Studies.