



*National Institute for
Health Research*

Research in the NHS – HR Good Practice Resource Pack

Part 2

The Research Passport

What type of pre-engagement check is needed?

This table only applies to researchers who may need a Research Passport. Highlighted activities require a Research Passport.

The NHS organisation hosting the research will confirm:

- if you require a Research Passport;
- if you require an honorary research contract; and
- which checks you need.

Type of research activity researcher will be conducting	Honorary research contract necessary?#	Criminal record check necessary?+	Occupational health clearance necessary?
Direct contact with patients/service users and providing prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness (not children or vulnerable adults)	Yes	Yes, standard or enhanced*	Yes
Direct contact with children or vulnerable adults and providing prevention, diagnosis or treatment	Yes	Yes, standard or enhanced*	Yes
Direct contact with patients/service users but not providing prevention, diagnosis or treatment (e.g. observer)	No	Yes, standard or enhanced*	Yes
Indirect contact with patients/service users and providing prevention, diagnosis or treatment (e.g. some types of telephone interviews)	Yes	Yes, standard or enhanced*	No
Indirect contact with patients/service users but not providing prevention, diagnosis or treatment (e.g. some telephone interviews, postal questionnaires)	No	No	No
Access to identifiable patient data, tissues or organs with likely impact on prevention, diagnosis or treatment	Yes	No	No
Access to identifiable patient data, tissues or organs with no likely impact on prevention, diagnosis or treatment	No	No	No
Access to anonymised patient data, tissues or organs only (including by research staff analysing data)	No	No	No
Working on NHS premises (e.g. laboratory) only	No	No	In some situations
Direct contact with staff (e.g. interviews)	No	No	No
Access to identifiable staff data	No	No	No
Access to anonymised staff data only	No	No	No

Notes

- ID badges should be issued by each NHS organisation where researchers will have face-to-face contact with patients or staff.
- Clinicians must be fully registered with an appropriate professional body and be a member of a recognised medical defence organisation which provides them with appropriate professional indemnity for the research activity.

Where an honorary research contract is not required, a letter of access will be provided.

+ Students who have access to patients in the course of their normal duties will require a criminal record check.

* The level of supervision should be taken into account when determining whether an enhanced or standard disclosure is required. A check under the Protection of Children Act/ Protection of Children (Scotland) Act list may also be required - the NHS organisation will advise on the criterion for the post applied for.