

Policy Guideline: External Researchers

Policy 006903: External Researchers

This guideline outlines the process for requesting and granting access to a Metro North Facility for research purposes. All those involved in engaging external researchers are expected to read this guideline in its entirety prior to requesting or authorising access a Metro North facility for research purposes.

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Metro North Health's vision

Creating healthier futures together—where innovation and research meets compassionate care and community voices shape our services.

Who is an external researcher

External researcher refers to:

- individuals not employed by Metro North or Queensland Health who request access to a Metro North facility for the purposes of research; or,
- students enrolled with a recognised research, teaching or academic institution who request access to a Metro North facility for the purposes of research, including students:
 - enrolled in a research higher degree, including a research honours degree, research masters or doctoral program (PhD); or,
 - enrolled in a higher degree/postgraduate degree with a significant or substantial research component, research project or dissertation; or,
 - students undertaking a research placement/project or gaining research experience not covered under the Queensland Health Student Placement Deed.

External researcher does not refer to an employee of Metro North undertaking research activities as an employee. As per Section 139A of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* (Qld) all public service employees are considered designated persons.

Who is not an external researcher?

Clinical placement students

External researcher does not refer to students being educated or trained at a public sector health service facility as part of the requirements for:

- registration, enrolment or other authorisation (however described) to practice as a health professional; or,
- completion of a course of study qualifying a person for registration, enrolment or authorisation to practice as a health professional; or,
- a person providing education or training at a public sector health service facility to a clinical placement student.

Queensland Health provides opportunities for pre-entry clinical health professional students to satisfy the practical training requirements related to their course or module of study in which they are enrolled with their education provider by undertaking required clinical placements. These pre-entry clinical placements in Queensland Health facilities require education providers to establish and maintain a Student Placement Deed. Clinical placements cannot occur without these Deeds. Students undertaking clinical placement or supervised practice at a Metro North facility, including research conducted as a component of that clinical placement, must be listed in the Queensland Health Student Placement Deed schedule. A [list of education providers with current Deeds](#) with Queensland Health is available on the [Clinical placements | Queensland Health website](#).

The Queensland Health clinical placements program provides a legal, governance and operating framework that enables health professional students to undertake pre-entry clinical education and training placements in Queensland Health facilities. Medical, nursing, midwifery, dental and allied health placements are supported under the program. Clinical placement students are permitted to undertake approved research whilst they are on an approved clinical placement with Metro North and are not required to submit an external researcher access form as they will be engaged under the clinical placements program. However, clinical observerships, research-only placements and work experience placement are considered [other placements](#), and are not covered under the Queensland Health clinical placements program. Students who are not covered under the Student Placement Deed are considered external researchers and must follow the External Researchers policy.

The Student Placement Deed is a legal document authorised under the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* (HHBA) Section 139A Meaning of a designated person which states that a designated person is a person who is being educated or trained at a public sector health service facility as part of the requirements for (i) registration, enrolment or other authorisation (however described) to practice as a health professional; or (ii) completion of a course of study qualifying a person for registration, enrolment or authorisation to practice as a health professional. Whilst on clinical placement, students are expected to learn through clinical practice so access to Queensland Health information systems, including those containing patient information, may be required. In all cases, access to patient information by

a clinical placement student must have a lawful basis. Students and Metro North clinicians are expected to be aware of any comply with the confidentiality obligations as outlined in Part 7 Confidentiality of the HHBA.

External health professionals

External researcher does not refer to external health professionals. As per the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* (Qld) (HHBA) health professional means:

- a) a person registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law; or
- b) a person who provides a health service, including, for example, audiologist, dietitian or social worker.

Health professionals who are engaged in delivering a public sector health service and who are not public service employees are considered external health professionals. Such individual are not considered to be external researchers and are outside of scope of the Metro North Policy External Researchers. Metro North engages external health professionals under the professional streams - Medical Services, Nursing and Midwifery Services, and the Allied Health professions.

The HHBA provides the legislative basis for Metro North to engage external health professionals in the delivery of a public sector health service. There are many reasons Metro North engages external health professionals, and it may be appropriate for these health professionals to undertake approved research activities whilst engaged by Metro North as an external health professional delivering a health service.

Credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice

Credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice (SoCP) supports patient safety and clinical governance. It ensures health professionals practice within the bounds of their role/position, education, training, experience and competence, and within the capacity, capability and available support of the facility or service in which they are practising. It provides governance of external health professionals engaged by Metro North.

It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure the requirement for Credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice is determined by the relevant profession specific delegate, as per the [Health Service Directive Credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice \(QH-HSD-034:2014\)](#).

In all cases, the relevant profession specific delegate (Chief Medical Officer, Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, Chief Allied Health Officer, or authorised delegate) must determine whether the external health professional requires credentialing and defined SoCP, including setting out the authorised activities.

Credentialing processes are handled by the professions. Metro North Research does not provide guidance nor answer questions in relation to credentialing processes.

While a student is enrolled in a degree which will qualify them as a health professional, credentialing and SoCP processes do not apply, as the credentialing process is applicable to qualified health professionals only. Please refer to the section Students above, and on page 2 of the External Researchers Policy.

Where a professional delegate determines the individual is not engaged as an external health professional, they are considered an external researcher and are expected to comply with the External Researchers policy.

If it is determined that credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice is required, please refer to your profession specific guidelines for further information. The pre-engagement processes for credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice cover the mandatory requirements outlined in the External Researchers Policy.

Where an external health professional has been credentialed by the relevant professional discipline, they are not required to complete an external researcher access form and the responsibility for professional and operational governance of the external health professional sits with the relevant professional delegate.

If an individual is engaged by Metro North as an external health professional (ie, they have qualifications that meet the definition of a health professional above) and they are also a research student, then they should discuss with their relevant profession specific delegate to determine whether they require credentialing and defined SoCP. This determination will be influenced by the proposed scope of the research activities.

Please refer to the External Researchers Policy (External health professionals, page 2), discuss with your Metro North Contact, and read the below resources for further guidance on each health profession.

Allied Health

Information regarding the Allied health credentialing process and requirements for external health practitioners to apply for credentialing and defined SoCP within Metro North Health facilities is available on the website. The credentialing external allied health practitioner flowchart provides a visual guideline of the process. The Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Award - State 2015 contains a full list of eligible disciplines in Schedule 2 - Health Practitioner and Dental Officer Streams.

Medical Services

As per the Health Service Directive all senior medical officers and visiting medical officers employed or otherwise engaged by the HHS must have a current documented SoCP covering all work performed. The Medical careers - Metro North Health website provides links to the facility based Medical Careers webpages where further information regarding credentialing and defined SoCP can be obtained from the facility based Medical Workforce Teams. Metro North staff can refer to the Credentialing and Scope of Clinical Practice | Medical Services| Metro North HHS (health.qld.gov.au) for further information and guidance.

Nursing and Midwifery

As per the Health Service Directive (HSD) - Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice (QH-HSD-034: 2014), Hospital and Health Services (HHS') are to ensure that privately practicing nurses working within Queensland public health facilities, but not employed by Queensland Health, are credentialed and have a current documented SoCP covering all work performed. Metro North staff can refer to the fact sheet MNHHS Research Nurse Credentialing Process | Metro North Hospital and Health Service for further information on how external research nurses can apply for credentialing.

Conjoint appointments

External researcher does not refer to Conjoint Appointments with a contractual arrangement between Metro North and a collaborating organisation regarding the appointment of the researcher to interrelated roles across both institutions.

There are, in principle, three models by which Conjoint Appointments may be arranged. Where the Conjoint Appointee is employed in a position established by:

- The collaborating organisation, Metro North will commonly make a financial contribution to a portion of the researcher's salary and/or costs; or,
- Metro North, the collaborating organisation will commonly make a financial contribution to a portion of the researcher's salary and/or costs; or,
- Both organisations, the individual will be appointed to two separate positions within each organisation, and will be considered an employee of both Metro North and the collaborating organisation.

Where the Conjoint Appointee is not employed by Metro North (Conjoint Appointment model 1, as above) the individual is not considered an employee as per the Hospital and Health Boards Act Qld (2011) Section 139A Meaning of a designated person Subsection (1) (b) a health service employee.

The agreement terms and conditions for Conjoint Appointments are expected to cover the mandatory requirements outlined in this policy. As such, where the agreement terms and conditions for individual Conjoint Appointment arrangements meet the minimum requirements of this policy the Conjoint Appointee is not required to complete the External Researcher Access form.

External researcher access form

It is the responsibility of the external researcher to complete and submit the External Researcher Access Form.

Contact details

External researchers will be asked to provide their:

- Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address

Personal information collected by Metro North Hospital and Health Service is handled in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Metro North Research is collecting personal contact details in order to facilitate access to a Metro North facility as an external researcher. All personal information is securely stored in QH REDCap and is only accessible by Metro North Research staff. Personal contact details will be provided to relevant external research contacts, including the Metro North contact, Head of Department, Executive Director and Collaborating Organisation in order to facilitate site access. Your personal information will not be disclosed to other third parties without consent, unless required to do so in order to comply with legislation.

For information about how Metro North Research protects your personal information, or to learn about your right to access your own personal information, please refer to our Privacy Policy.

Collaborating organisation

Where an external researcher undertakes research activities:

- under the direction of their employer and as a part of their employment; or,
- as a research student under the direction of the University/Institution at which they are enrolled,

The employer/University/Institution is generally considered the collaborating organisation and is responsible for ensuring the external researcher complies with all aspects of the Metro North Policy External Researchers in its entirety.

The Queensland Government Insurance Fund (QGIF) does not extend Property, General Liability, Professional Indemnity, Medical Indemnity, Personal Accident and Illness insurances and indemnities to other parties. As such, external researchers are not insured or indemnified by QGIF when accessing a Metro North facility for the purposes of undertaking research activities.

Where an external researcher undertakes research activities at a Metro North facility under the direction of a collaborating organisation, the collaborating organisation shall maintain insurances (Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident and Illness Insurance) in relation to the conduct of the external researcher in such amounts as a prudent person would maintain given the substance and nature of the external researcher's visit.

By selecting a collaborating organisation from the list provided, the application will be forward to the nominated delegate at the collaborating organisation for authorisation. If you are unsure about the best contact, we recommend contacting your Collaborating Organisation for advice before submitting the form.

It is the responsibility of the external researcher to liaise with the collaboration organisation prior to submission of this form, and to ensure the appropriate delegate is nominated from the collaborating organisation to authorise the application.

External researchers with no collaborating organisation

Where an external researcher undertakes research activities at a Metro North facility under any of the below conditions they are broadly considered to have no collaborating organisation:

- outside of any third-party employment arrangement (e.g., self-employment);
- outside of working hours, during periods of leave or otherwise not engaged by a collaborating organisation;
- where the employer's indemnity and insurance arrangements will not cover the activities or are not considered sufficient or appropriate for the research activities;
- where the research student's University/Institution at which they are enrolled will not cover the indemnity and insurance arrangements or are not considered sufficient or appropriate for a placement/research project

External researchers with no collaborating organisation are required to provide additional evidence.

- Cover Letter/Application
- Reference/referee statements x 2
- Evidence of personal insurance and indemnity in such amounts as a prudent person would maintain relative to the scope of proposed research activities
- Evidence of mandatory vaccine preventable disease (VPD) compliance (relative to the scope of research activities)

- Criminal history clearances
- International external researchers - proof of appropriate visa (for example, a student visa)

Facility Access

Access may only be requested to one facility at a time.

If you require access to more than one facility, you will need to submit a NEW External Researcher Access Request form.

Metro North Contact

In order to request access to a Metro North facility as an external researcher you are required to nominate a Metro North employee as the contact person who will assist with the process.

The external researcher is responsible for discussing the planned research activities with the contact person prior to nominating them.

The Metro North contact person ensures the external researcher is aware of and abides by the:

- Metro North Policy External Researchers, including the requirements for orientation, mandatory training, and ongoing supervisory requirements, as determined by the scope of the research activities; and,
- Metro North Policy Research; and,
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Code); and,
- Relevant policies and procedures of Metro North and the collaborating organisation, including expectations for ethical and responsible behaviour.

The Metro North contact person will liaise with the external researcher to submit the requisite forms, including the ID Badge request, Proximity card request (where required) and any criminal history clearance paperwork (where required).

The Metro North contact person is expected to assist the external researcher in identifying the relevant Head of Department and is responsible for identifying an appropriate cost centre (where required) for requests.

The Metro North contact person may be the Principal Investigator on the research project the external researcher is engaged on.

Please note, the Metro North Office of Research and Metro North Research Governance Officers are not considered Metro North contact persons for the purposes of this process.

External researcher activities

Authorisation to access a Metro North facility as an external researcher does not constitute authorisation to commence or conduct research.

All research conducted with or about people in Metro North, or their data or tissue, must first obtain the following approvals prior to commencing:

- Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) review from an appropriately certified HREC, and
- Site-Authorisation by the Chief Executive (CE) or relevant delegate by submitting a Site-Specific-Assessment (SSA) application for approval to a Research Governance Officer (RGO).

The Principal Investigator (PI) of a research project must ensure all requisite approvals are in place and include, or are amended to include, the external researcher prior to commencing or undertaking any research.

It is an expectation that external researchers will be engaged on research that is supported by and involves Metro North.

External researchers may be engaged to support pre-approval activities for research projects, including (but not limited to) preparing ethics and governance submission documents, undertaking literature reviews or writing research protocols.

The proposed research activities on the external researcher access request form are not considered an exhaustive or final list of research activities, nor do they constitute authorisation to undertake or commence any research.

External researchers may be engaged across multiple research projects or activities while they have been granted access to a Metro North facility. It is a requirement that every research project an external researcher is involved with obtains the relevant authorisations. The external researcher access form does not need to be updated to include new research activities, as the oversight for research approvals is managed via Metro North ethics and governance processes.

The External Researcher access form only authorises access to a Metro North facility for research. The policy sets the mandatory requirements and defines the conditions under which additional oversight or approvals, such as criminal history clearances, evidence of vaccine preventable diseases compliance or credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice, might be required.

At all times, it is a condition of access to a Metro North facility that external researchers will consider whether research activities, including authorised research that is not listed on the external researcher access request form, will require additional approvals and oversight.

For example, an external researcher may have received authorisation to access a Metro North facility to undertake a series of research activities that do not require interaction with patients.

While undertaking this research, they have been working with Metro North colleagues to collaboratively develop a new research project where they plan to provide care to Metro North patients as a health professional and principal investigator on the project.

In order to do this, they must first seek a determination from a professional delegate as to whether they should be engaged as an external health professional and undertake credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice.

The professional delegates decision is to be included in the ethics and governance submission.

Vaccine preventable diseases (VPD) compliance

Compliance with following Queensland Health VPD documents is a mandatory requirement:

- [Health Service Directive: Vaccine Preventable Disease Screening for Contractors, Students and Volunteers QH-HSD-047:2016](#)
- [Health Service Directive Protocol: Protocol for Vaccine Preventable Disease Screening for Contractors, Students and Volunteers QH-HSD-047-1:2016](#)
- [Guideline: Vaccination of healthcare workers](#)

It is a condition of access to a Metro North facility that you determine the requirements for vaccine preventable diseases (VPD).

Please refer to the [VPD Risk Role Checklist](#) to determine the VPD requirements for the proposed research activities. This should be considered for each research project an external researcher is engaged on.

For further information on please refer to the [Queensland Health mandatory vaccinations](#) website.

Where it is determined the external researcher is in a VPD risk role and VPD evidence is required, the collaborating organisation:

- Warrants that the external researcher meets the VPD screening requirements as set out in the relevant VPD Documents.
- Must keep an up-to-date record all VPD Applicable Personnel's vaccination history or evidence of non-susceptibility to a Specified VPD.
- Agrees that Metro North may at any time require the collaborating organisation to produce documentary evidence of vaccination or proof of non-susceptibility to a Specified VPD of the VPD Applicable Personnel to Metro North's satisfaction and the collaborating organisation will immediately comply with the request.
- Acknowledges that failure to comply with this requirement is considered a breach of this Policy.

Where it is determined that Specified VPD evidence is required and there is no collaborating organisation, the external researcher must refer to the [Queensland Health - Providing evidence](#) website.

The Metro North contact can refer to the [Vaccine Preventable Diseases](#) website for up to date documentation.

Criminal history clearance

It is a condition of access to a Metro North facility that a criminal history clearance is provided where the [Human Resources Policy Employment Screening B40 \(QH-POL-122\)](#) specifies it is required. Refer to Attachment 1 - Criminal history checking requirements to determine the requirements for criminal history checking relevant to your planned research activities.

The requirements for criminal history checking must be determined and undertaken before an external researcher may access a Metro North facility. In principle, where an external researcher is engaged for a period of greater than one month, a general criminal history check will be required.

Where it is determined a criminal history check is required and Queensland Health/Metro North is responsible for obtaining the criminal history check:

The external researcher must sign the relevant criminal history check consent form and return to the Metro North Contact with all requisite documents.

The Metro North Contact or a nominated delegate is responsible for obtaining the relevant criminal history check clearance.

The clearance email must be provided to the authorising delegate when submitting ID Badge and Proximity Card application forms for signature.

Refer to the [Queensland Health Criminal history checking](#) website for further information, including instructions on how to submit a request and the requisite forms.

Interaction with Metro North patients

Nothing contained within the Metro North Policy External Researchers constitutes authorisation or approval to contact and/or influence the care of Metro North patients.

When considering pre-screening, recruitment, survey or observation of patients:

- all engagement with patients for research purposes, including study recruitment, must have appropriate ethical approval from a certified Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and site-authorisation; and,
- a Metro North employee, preferably the treating clinician or care team, is to initially approach patients to seek their permission to be contacted regarding consent to participate in research.

Where an external researcher is a health professional and patient contact is expected, it is the responsibility of the external researcher to ensure the requirement for credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice is determined by the relevant profession specific delegate.

Access authorisations

Metro North contact person

The external researcher is responsible for discussing the planned research activities with the contact person prior to submitting the external researcher access request form.

When the External researcher access form is submitted, the Metro North contact will receive an email with instructions from MetroNorthResearch@health.qld.gov.au to the Queensland Health email address that was provided.

The Metro North contact will be asked to:

- approve or not approve the application. and
- provide the correct contact details for the relevant Head of Department.

If the access request is approved, it will be forwarded to the Collaborating Organisation for authorisation. The External Researcher will receive a notification email with confirmation the request has been progressed.

If there is no collaborating organisation, the request will be forwarded directly to the Head of Department for authorisation.

If the access request is not approved, a notification email will be sent to the External Researcher with further instructions and/or a request for further information.

What is my role as a Metro North contact?

The Metro North Contact person will be responsible for submitting the requisite internal forms (for example, ID Badge Request, Proximity Card Request etc) for authorisation. They will act as the primary contact for the external researcher and has a shared responsibility with all Metro North staff for ensuring the external researcher:

- adheres to all aspects of the Metro North Policy External Researchers; and,
- adheres to the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Code) and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (National Statement); and,
- complies with applicable requirements of Australian law, including the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 (Qld), the Public Health Act 2005 (Qld), the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld) and other relevant legislation, ethics obligations and guidelines which may be applicable (including, without limitation, any requirement in respect of the privacy, confidentiality and management of public or patient records); and,
- is aware of and abides by relevant policies and procedures of Metro North and the Collaborating Organisation, including the Metro North Research Policy, the Queensland Health Policy Research Management and Standard Research Management and any other applicable policy, guideline or reasonable request or direction issued by Metro North and/or notified to the collaborating organisation which relates to the information and/or assistance provided by Metro North; and,
- abides by the same legislative requirements and ethical standards as Queensland Health employees, including the areas of workplace health and safety, Code of Conduct, standards of ethical behaviour including declarations of conflict of interest, patients/clients right to privacy and confidentiality, equal employment, anti-discrimination and human rights; and,
- undertakes relevant orientation, mandatory training, and any ongoing supervision requirements as determined by the scope of the external researcher activities; and,
- always wears an ID badge when at a Metro North facility or service and surrenders the ID badge (and proximity card where issued), and any other items belonging to Queensland Health when no longer involved with Metro North.

What if I have been nominated as the Metro North Contact but I am not the right person?

There might be a variety of reasons why you have been incorrectly nominated as the Metro North Contact.

If you have already been in discussions with the external researcher, it may be appropriate to discuss directly with them your reasons why you are not the best contact and potentially nominate a new contact person.

If you are unsure why you have been nominated as the contact person and you are not familiar with the external researcher, it may be most appropriate to not authorise the request and outline your reasons why on the form.

To nominate a different Metro North contact, select "No" to the question I confirm that I am the Metro North Contact Person for this application. You will be prompted to provide the contact details for a new contact person on the request form.

Collaborating organisation

The external researcher is responsible for discussing the access request and planned research activities with the collaborating organisation prior to submitting the external researcher access request form.

When the Metro North Contact has approved the access request, the Collaborating Organisation will receive an email with instructions from MetroNorthResearch@health.qld.gov.au to the collaborating organisation contact email address that was provided by the external researcher.

To approve the request:

Click on the link in the email provided. You will be asked to enter your name and position/role within the collaborating organisation. Press submit.

If the access request is approved, it will be forwarded to the Head of Department for authorisation. The External Researcher will receive a notification email with confirmation the request has been progressed.

If there is no collaborating organisation, the request will be forwarded directly to the Head of Department for authorisation.

What if I am not the right delegate?

There might be a variety of reasons why you have been incorrectly nominated as the delegate for the collaborating organisation.

If you have already been in discussions with the external researcher, it may be appropriate to discuss directly with them your reasons why you are not the best delegate and potentially nominate a new delegate.

If you are unsure why you have been nominated as the delegate and you are not familiar with the external researcher, it may be appropriate to not authorise the request and outline your reasons why on the form.

To nominate a different collaborating organisation delegate, select "No" to the question I confirm I am the appropriate delegate to authorise this application. You will be prompted to provide the contact details for a new collaborating organisation delegate on the request form.

Click on the link in the email provided. You will be asked whether you are the appropriate delegate, please select "No". You will be asked to enter the details of an alternative delegate. Press submit. The request will then be automatically forwarded to the new delegate.

What if I don't know the right delegate?

Discuss with the External Researcher, Metro North Contact and within your organisation. Generally speaking, the delegate will be from the faculty or school or central research office that is coordinating the research the external researcher plans to undertake.

What if I do not support or approve this application?

Click on the link in the email provided. You will be asked whether you support or authorise this application. Please select "No". Provide your reasons for not supporting the application. Press submit. The request will then be returned to the parties involved.

If the application is not approved, a notification email will be sent to the External Researcher with further instructions and/or a request for further information.

What is a collaborating organisation agreeing to?

When authorising a Metro North external researcher access form, as delegate for the organisation you:

- acknowledge the collaborating organisation is responsible for ensuring the external researcher complies with all aspects of the Metro North Policy External Researchers in its entirety.
- acknowledge that Queensland Governance Insurance Funder (QGIF) does not extend Property, General Liability, Professional Indemnity, Medical Indemnity, Personal Accident and illness insurances and indemnities to other parties. As such, the collaborating organisation shall maintain insurances in relation to the conduct of the external researcher in such amounts as a prudent person would maintain given the substance and nature of the visit.
- acknowledge that where the external researcher is undertaking research activities that require evidence of Vaccine Preventable Disease requirements, the collaborating organisation:
 - warrants the external researcher meets the VPD screening requirements as set out in relevant VPD documents
 - will keep an up-to-date record of all VPD Applicable Personnel's vaccination history or evidence of non-susceptibility to a Specified VPD
 - agrees that Metro North may at any time require the collaborating organisation to produce documentary evidence of vaccination or proof of non-susceptibility to a Specified VPD to Metro North's satisfaction and the collaborating organisation will immediately comply with this request
 - acknowledges that failure to comply with this requirement is considered a breach of the Policy External Researchers.
- acknowledge the obligations of the collaborating organisation and the external researcher regarding access to any Queensland Health information system:
 - only access or use the information system for the purposes approved by the delegate

- comply with directions given by Metro North about access to the information system, and with all relevant Queensland Health and State information standards and policies
 - any unauthorised access to or use of Queensland Health information systems or content may result in civil or criminal proceedings against any persons involved
 - the content of the information system is confidential to Queensland Health. The content must not be disclosed nor used for any purpose other than as necessary to the approved purpose.
 - Queensland Health makes no representation or warranty about the availability or continuity of access to the information system, or about the completeness or correctness of any content.
 - Queensland Health may monitor or audit the access to and use of the information system, and may suspend access at any time, with or without giving reasons.
 - Queensland Health has no liability to the collaborating organisation in suspending the access
 - Queensland Health has no liability (whether in contract, tort including negligence, or otherwise) to the collaborating organisation or any other person in respect of the information system or its content, or their availability.
 - The collaborating organisation indemnify Queensland Health against liability to any other person in relation to the use of the information system or its content.
- acknowledge the privacy and confidentiality obligations of the collaborating organisation and the external researcher as outlined in the Policy External Researchers
 - authorise the external researcher to request access a Metro North facility as an external researcher acting under the direction of the collaborating organisation in accordance with the Metro North Policy External Researchers

Head of Department

The external researcher and Metro North contact are responsible for discussing the planned research activities with the Head of Department prior to submitting the external researcher access request. It is expected that external researchers will be engaged on research that is supported by and involves Metro North.

When the Metro North Contact and Collaborating Organisation have approved the access request, the Head of Department will receive an email with instructions from MetroNorthResearch@health.qld.gov.au to the Queensland Health email address that was provided by the Metro North Contact.

The Head of Department will have the option to:

- approve the access request; or
- not approve the access request; or
- provide the correct contact details for Collaborating Organisation delegate.

If the access request is approved, it will be forwarded to the Facility Executive Director for authorisation. The External Researcher will receive a notification email with confirmation the request has been progressed.

If the application is not approved, a notification email will be sent to the External Researcher with further instructions and/or a request for further information.

What does the external research access request involve?

External researcher access requests are intended to provide a consistent approach to authorising individuals who are not employed by Metro North to access our facilities for the purposes of research.

This process was developed to ensure external researchers have the appropriate insurance and indemnity to access our facilities, necessary evidence of vaccine preventable disease compliance is documented, criminal history clearances are sought where required, and that appropriate orientation and mandatory training is provided based on the research activities.

Importantly, this process provides a way for Heads of Department to have better oversight of individuals who request access to our facilities for the purposes of research.

The Metro North Policy External Researchers outlines the full terms and conditions of access requests.

Facility Executive Director

When the Metro North Contact, Collaborating Organisation and Head of Department have approved the access request, the Facility Executive Director (or delegate) will receive an email with instructions from MetroNorthResearch@health.qld.gov.au.

The contact details for the Facility Executive Director (or delegate) are pre-filled and cannot be modified.

The Facility Executive Director will have the option to:

- approve the access request; or
- not approve the access request

If the access request is approved, the External Researcher, Metro North Contact, Head of Department and Collaborating Organisation will receive a notification email with confirmation the external researcher access request has been authorised and further instructions.

If the application is not approved, the External Researcher, Metro North Contact, Head of Department and Collaborating Organisation will receive a notification email with further instructions and/or a request for further information. These instructions may include what information will be required for a new application and the reasons the application was not approved.

ID Badge

It is a mandatory requirement that all external researchers have a current Identification badge (ID badge) with an expiry date of not greater than one year (12 months) for each Metro North facility they access.

Once confirmation the external researcher access request has been authorised by the Facility Executive Director (or delegate) has been received, please liaise with the Metro North contact who will ensure the relevant ID Badge and Proximity Card (where required) forms are submitted.

A Metro North staff member with appropriate delegation may authorise the ID Badge request form and nominate a Metro North cost centre upon receipt of the External Researcher access authorisation email.

All requests must be signed by the Head of Department. Where the request relates to multiple departments the form is to be signed by an individual with delegation across multiple departments.

Access to a facility is not permitted prior to receipt of an ID Badge.

Metro North staff can find the relevant forms on the [New starter | Metro North HHS \(health.qld.gov.au\)](#) intranet.

Proximity Card

A proximity card is not a mandatory requirement for external researchers and must only be issued where there is a genuine requirement for the external researcher to access a Metro North facility with the use of a proximity card.

A proximity card allowing building and facility access for external researchers must:

- only be requested where it is relevant to authorised research activities; and,
- not authorise access to clinical or high-risk areas unless the relevant profession specific delegate has determined the requirement for credentialing and defined scope of clinical practice, or where the individual is not a health professional, the Head of Department has provided requisite approval; and,
- not be authorised for access periods greater than one year (12 months).

For some research projects it may be preferred that the external researcher contacts the local department prior to accessing the facility in order to gain access. All external researchers still require an ID badge and must receive an authorised external researcher access form prior to accessing the facility.

A Metro North staff member with appropriate delegation may authorise a proximity card request form and nominate a Metro North cost centre, once confirmation the external researcher access request has been authorised by the Facility Executive Director (or delegate). All requests must be signed by the Head of Department. Where the request relates to multiple departments, the form is to be signed by an individual with delegation across multiple departments.

Orientation and mandatory training

It is a condition of access to a Metro North facility that the external researcher will undertake any relevant site induction or orientation as directed by Metro North from time to time. The collaborating organisation and the external researcher must:

- Comply with all rules, directions and procedures issued by Metro North, including those relating to security or workplace health and safety, which are in effect at the site or facility.
- Avoid unnecessary interference with the passage of people and vehicles.
- Not create nuisance or unreasonable noise and disturbance.

All external researchers must receive an orientation program upon commencement. At a minimum, the orientation program will include First Response Evacuation Instructions and General Evacuation Instructions (GEI) (required by Fire & Rescue Service Regulation) and any [workplace health and safety requirements](#) relevant to the research activities in all work areas the external researcher is authorised to attend. Refer to the Queensland Health Human Resources Policy Mandatory Training G6 (QH-POL-183) for further guidance on determining mandatory training requirements.

All external researchers must complete the legislative and mandatory training requirements as outlined in the Metro North Policy Legislative and Mandatory Training POL002070 (available to Queensland Health staff only).

iLearn Access

Login: [Queensland Health - iLearn](#)

URL: <https://ilearn.health.qld.gov.au/d2l/login>

For new users that do not have an iLearn account (including any accounts created as a previous staff member, student or external researcher):

- select "[Register here for an iLearn account](#)" at the bottom of the page.
- select "Other" account type
- select "I do not have an iLearn username and password" and click "submit"
- select "Non Queensland Health learner (eg student, trades, contractor, volunteer)"
- select "Register" and provide the requisite details

For users that have an existing account, please login at Login - Queensland Health - iLearn or select "Forgot your password?" to reset your password and access the system.

Enrol in Course: Queensland Health Mandatory Training

Once you have registered for iLearn and logged into the system, search for "Queensland Health Mandatory Training" and click "Enrol In This Program"

All external researchers are required to complete the following modules:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Practice Program (ONLINE MODULE)
- Code of Conduct
- First Response Evacuation Instructions (FREI) & General Evacuation Instructions (GEI)
- Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing Induction
- Infection Control
- Public Interest Disclosure

Generate Certificate

Once the mandatory training modules have been completed, click on "View Awards" and select the relevant modules to access the certificate.

Click on "Generate certificate" and the certificate will be downloaded to your computer.

Upload the course certificates using the link provided in the access approval email.

Refer to the Queensland Health Human Resources Policy Mandatory Training G6 (QH-POL-183) for further guidance on determining mandatory training requirements.

Access expiry and renewal

All external researcher access requests have a maximum authorisation of 12 months.

After such time, the ID Badge and Proximity Card access (where it was authorised) will expire.

Where the external researcher is no longer involved with Metro North, they are required to surrender their ID Badge, Proximity Card, and any other items belonging to Queensland Health.

Where an external researcher would like to request a renewal, they are required to submit a NEW External Researcher Access Request.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are conjoint appointments not considered to be external researchers?

This is because conjoint appointments have a contractual arrangement between Metro North (or Queensland Health) and an external academic partner or collaborating organisation. These contractual arrangements usually cover the mandatory requirements outlined in the External Researchers policy. Where the conjoint appointment agreement terms and conditions meet the minimum requirement of the External Researchers policy, we do not require conjoint appointments to submit an external researcher access form. The individual conjoint appointment contractual arrangement will provide the relevant terms and conditions for the individual.

There are different ways that Metro North and collaborating organisations can enter into conjoint appointment arrangements. In all circumstances, it is important to note that unless Metro North (Queensland Health) is the employer (e.g., the individual has an Employee ID and the conjoint appointment requires that an individual is appointed to an established position within Metro North) then the individual will not be considered an employee as per the Hospital and Health Boards Act Qld (2011) Section 139A Meaning of a designated person Subsection (1) (b) a health service employee.

Am I considered an external researcher if I undertake research whilst I am on a clinical placement?

No.

Please refer to the External Researchers policy, which states that external researcher does not refer to students being educated or trained at a public sector health service facility as part of the requirements for:

- registration, enrolment or other authorisation (however described) to practice as a health professional; or,
- completion of a course of study qualifying a person for registration, enrolment or authorisation to practice as a health professional. This also includes a person providing education or training at a public sector health service facility to a clinical placement student. Students undertaking clinical placement or supervised practice at a Metro North facility, including research conducted as a component of that clinical placement, must be listed in the Queensland Health Student Placement Deed schedule.

More information the Student Placement Deed can be found on the Queensland Health Clinical Placements website.

Does the External Researcher Access form provide me with access to any Queensland Health systems or data?

No.

The external researcher access form is to request access to a Metro North facility for the purposes of research. Access to Queensland Health information management systems is governed by privacy legislation, referenced in the External Researchers Policy.

The external researcher access process does not in any way form an employment relationship with Metro North. It does not authorise you to participate in any research activities without first seeking appropriate authorisation (ie. HREC and SSA Approval), to contact patients without consent, or to access Queensland Health systems or data.

This means you will not be allowed to directly access Queensland Health information systems to screen or identify suitable patients who meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria to consent to participate in a research project. Instead, a Metro North staff member, ideally a member of the patient's treating team, will first need to seek patient consent to be contacted, prior to you contacting them to discuss consent to participate in the research project.

If you are involved in a research project where the ethics and governance approvals involve informed patient consent to participate in a research project and it is clearly specified that the external researcher may have access to the patient information (as outlined in the approved project protocol) the patient information will be extracted by a Metro North staff member and provided as per the approved protocol.

If you are involved in a research project where access to patient information does not involve informed consent, for example observational research requiring retrospective data collection, then in most cases a Public Health Act (PHA) approval will be required.