

Quality Assurance – Guidelines

What is Quality Assurance?

Quality Assurance (QA) encompasses any activity which is undertaken for the purpose of improving patient care through monitoring or improvement of current service delivery. QA and Research have much in common; they share a rigorous approach to methodology in terms of design, procedure, analysis and interpretation of data. QA is the starting point on a continuum of continuous improvement that may evolve into research into new ways of doing things.

Research leads to new knowledge

Quality assurance evaluates what is currently being done

Key characteristics of QA

- Review of current practices and procedures
- Identify areas for improvement – may raise questions that lead to research into trialling new practice
- Testing current service delivery (current standard protocols or equipment)
- Evaluating current standards in line with what is considered best practice
- Does not evaluate new services or treatments or generate new knowledge
- Generally, clinicians undertaking the QA activity have access to the data in question as part of their clinical role. No data is being accessed outside of their daily scope of practice.
- Minimal risk, burden, or inconvenience to participants
- **QA Activities may include** (but aren't limited to) – clinical audits, practice review, satisfaction/knowledge survey, program evaluation.

The role of HREC in Quality Assurance

Upon submission of a HREC exemption the project will be reviewed in accordance with the definition of research on page 6 of the National Statement. If the project is recognised as QA activity a formal exemption will be provided by the HREC Chairperson. The HREC may deem some projects beyond current standard of care and may recommend HREC review be sought via the low and negligible risk review pathway.

How do I determine whether my project is Research or Quality Assurance?

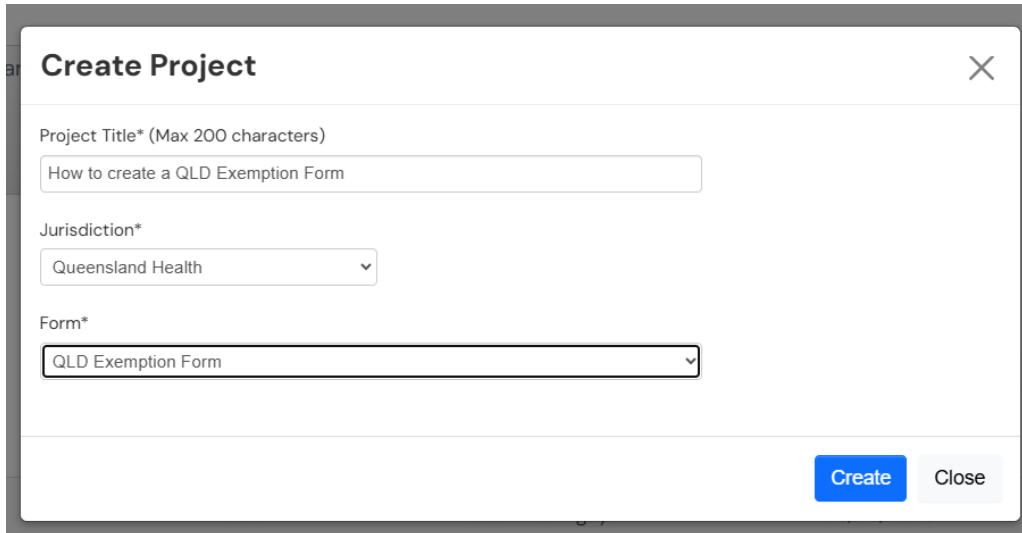
Below is a flowchart to assist with determining whether a project is considered as research or quality assurance. Please see page 3.



Quality Assurance Submission ERM:

ERM Sub form instructions:

- You will need to access your ERM database. From the workarea click on '+ Create Project'
- Enter your project title
- Click on "Queensland Health" and then select "QLD Exemption Form"



- Click on the "Navigation" tab
- Click on "Introduction" and continue clicking "next" to complete the form
- Click on the Hyperlink – "General Project Information" to start the form
- Once you hit the "Project Details" sections, you will be able to upload your documents

Required Documents:

- Cover letter addressed to HREC Chair with an outline of the proposed project and justification as to why the project qualifies for exemption of HREC review. **TIP: Use the flowchart on page 3 for assistance.**
- Protocol
- Signed Head of Department letter of support

Creating an SSA from "QLD Exemption Form":

You will need to create a sub-form from the QLD Exemption Form.

- From the workarea click on the title of your project, then click on "+ Create SubForm".
- Select the 'SSA Form QLD' sub-form.
- Upload all documents approved by the HREC under the 'Documents' section

The Principal Investigator for the site should sign the SSA under 'PI Declaration' and upload a copy of the letter of support from the HOD before you submit the SSA to RGO office.

The Governance Office will get in touch with the PI/study contact as soon as the SSA has been reviewed.

CHQ Quality Assurance Flowchart

