Guide for Researchers:
Online Human Ethics Application Form

What is Quest

Quest is our comprehensive research management system used to administer and support research activity at Victoria University. All applications for ethical review of research involving human participants must be submitted using Quest.

What is in this document

This manual is intended to provide general tips on using functionality specific to Quest online ethics application forms.

Where to find help

The Quest website offers a number of resources designed to help you complete your application including answers to some commonly asked questions in the FAQs page.

VU Support Hub
For technical help, including logging in, accessing applications and navigating the eForm.

Website: https://vusupporthub.vu.edu.au

- Click the 'Research' tile (scroll down to access)
- Click 'Submit a new ticket'
- Select an item from the Service Catalog
- Enter the details of your request and click 'Review & Submit' > 'Submit'

Ethics Secretary
For any help and further information regarding ethical conduct.

Email: researchethics@vu.edu.au

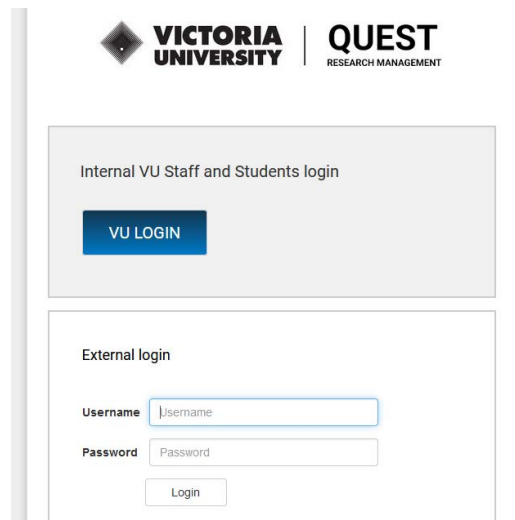Phone: 9919 4781 or 9919 4461

Website: https://www.vu.edu.au/researchers/

Contents

Log in to Quest

Go to http://quest.vu.edu.au/

- **Staff**: Use your regular VU network login (e.g. e1234567 and password)
- **Students**: Use you student ID (e.g. s1234567) and MYVU Portal password
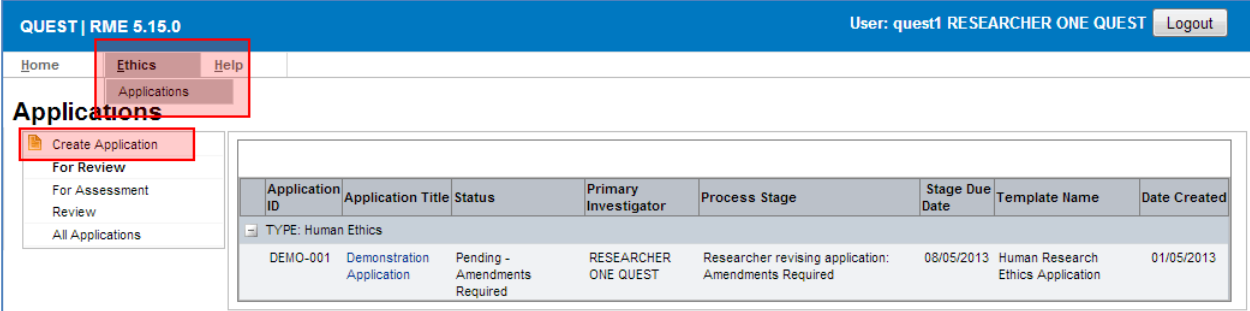

Quest Login Page

If you are having trouble logging in please try the following:
- Ensure you are including the letter (e or s) in front of your ID.
- Change your password in the MYVU Portal as this will force a new password into Quest.
- Be aware that passwords expire after 60 days; if you haven't used MYVU Portal or other login services, your password may have expired.
    - If you think your password might have expired, call the ITS Service Desk on 9919 2777 and ask them to reset your password. This will force a new password into Quest.
- Use the "Request for Access to Quest" form provided on the front page.
- Contact the Quest Service Desk.

Hover over the **Ethics** menu and select **Applications**.
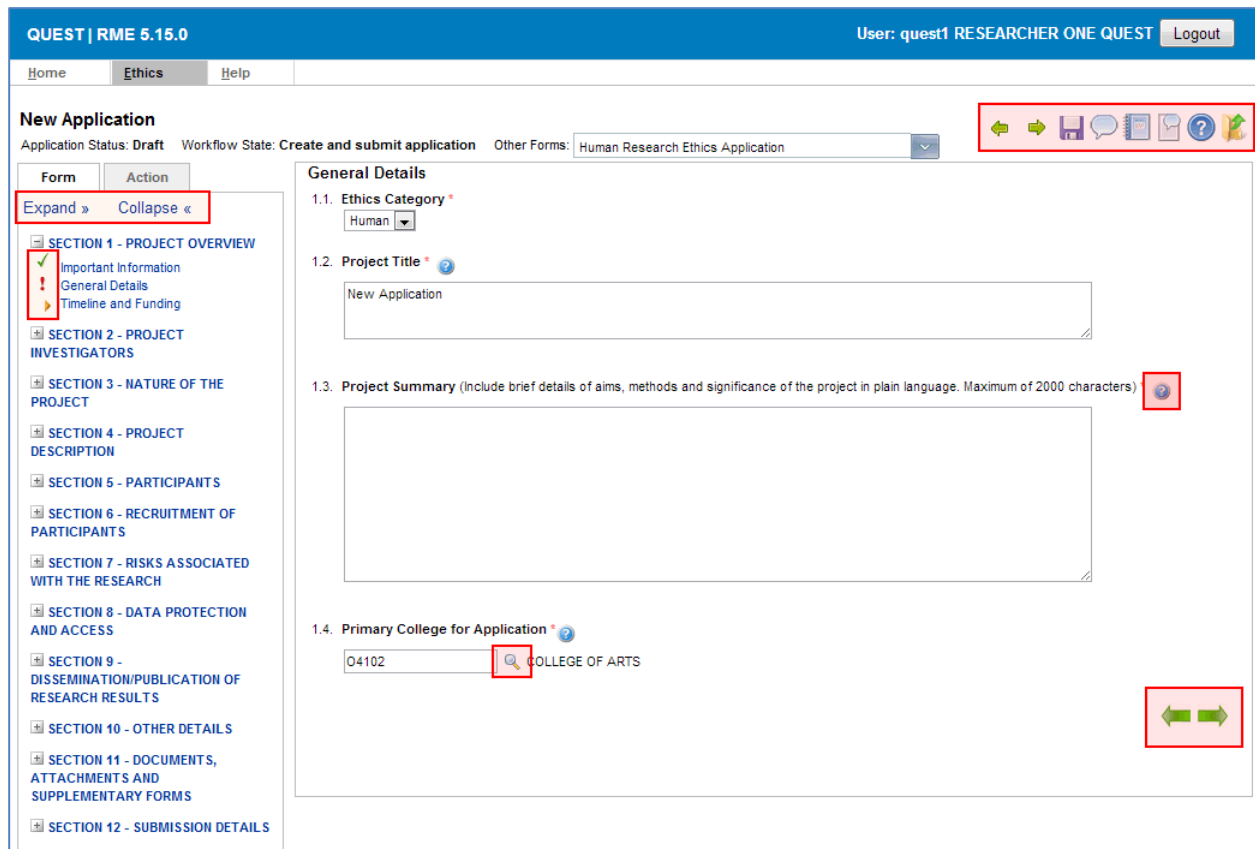

My Applications Page

This page will display all existing online applications which you have previously created or been named in as an investigator. To enter an existing application, click on the title in this table.

To create a new application, click on 📄 Create Application in the left-hand menu.

Navigating the eForm

The eForm is comprised of twelve sections each containing a number of pages. These pages hold several questions concerning your research project. Some pages and questions will only be visible depending on the answers you provide throughout the form.

You can access different functions of the eForm using the toolbar on the top right of the screen.


Example of eForm Layout

Toolbar (top right of screen):

Previous page	Next page	Save	Application comments	Reports (Print)	Page comments	Help	Exit
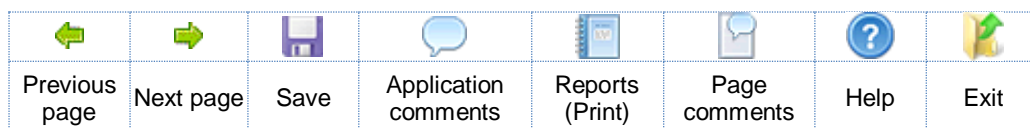
Access help and tips

Some questions contain detailed instructions, be sure to read these carefully. Further guidance and instructions are located throughout the form and can be accessed by clicking the 🔵 help icon.

Help is provided throughout the form at the page level (in the top right toolbar) and also against individual questions.
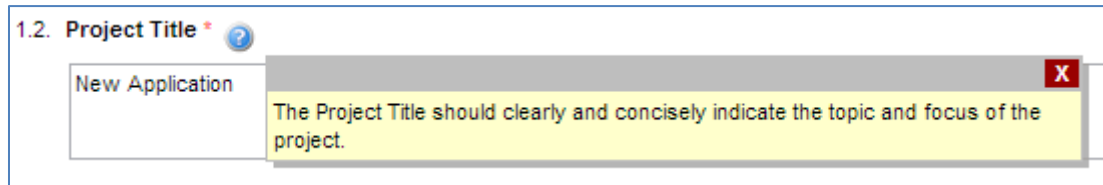
Help text dialog box when help icon has been clicked

Move through sections

The left-hand column contains the form navigation functions. Use the Expand » Collapse « links to view or hide the entire form menu. You can also use the ⊞ expand or ⊟ collapse icons to toggle one section at a time.

Move through pages

The ⬅️➡️ green arrows at the top or the bottom of the screen can be used to move through neighbouring pages in the form.

You can also select any page at any time from the form navigation menu by clicking on the page title.

Save as you go

Save your application at any time using the 💾 save/floppy disk icon. Each page will save automatically as you move through pages using the ⬅️➡️ green arrows, or enter a new page from the form menu.

> *Quest has a timed automatic logout feature. Remember to save regularly to avoid losing any answers.*

You may exit Quest and return to your application at any time. Always remember to click **Save** and **Logout**. When you return, you will find a list of your saved applications under **Ethics** > **Applications.**

Page indicators

The icons next to the page titles in the form navigation menu indicate whether a page has missing or incomplete fields.
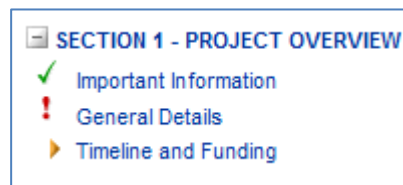
All possible page indicators

Mandatory questions display a red asterisk (*). You may leave questions unanswered while working through the form, but all questions must be complete before submission.

- ✓ = Page is complete
- ❗ = Error or unanswered/incomplete questions
- ▶ = Page is not yet accessed

Using the search function

Some questions may require the use of codes or records already available in the VU database. You can search through and select these records by entering a search term and clicking the 🔍 magnifying glass.

Tip: You can search for people using an ID number, first name or surname. Other records can be found using system codes or keywords.

Enter a search term in order to bring up a short list – it is best to be brief as the system will look for an exact match.

For example: In Question 1.4. *Primary College or Institute for Application,* to return "*College of Sport and Exercise Science*", enter "*sport*" as your search term. Then select the correct option by clicking the code "*P9102"* from the list in the pop-up window.
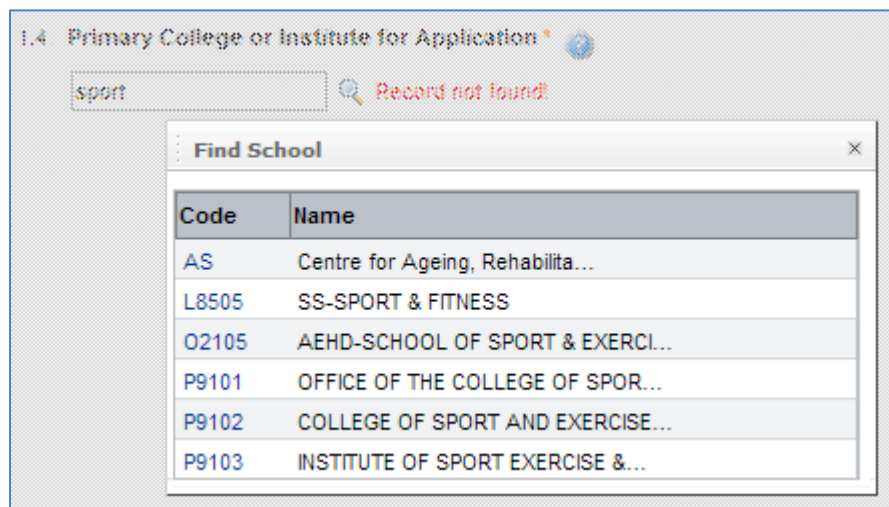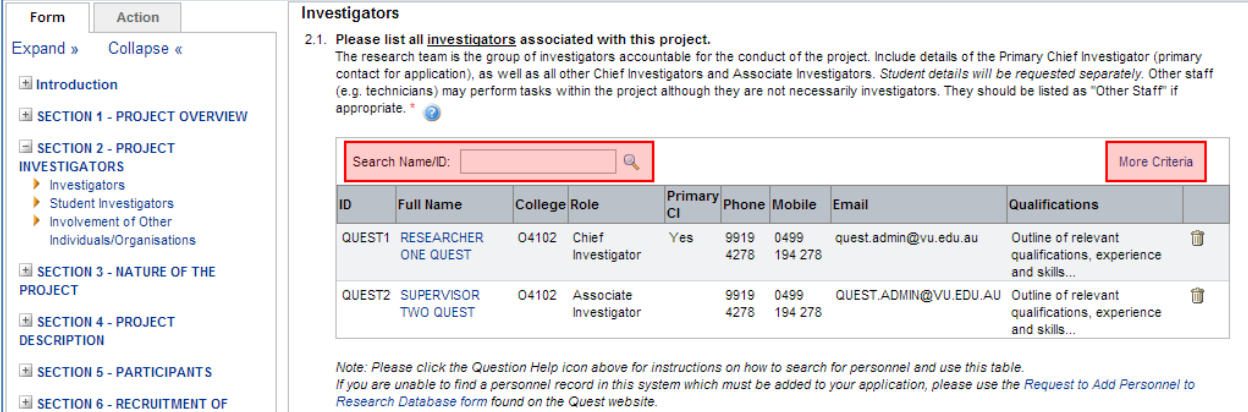

Pop-up search window

Add and edit investigators

You are required to record the details of all investigators and students associated with your project in Questions 2.1. and 2.2.b. respectively.

Once a person is named on the application, they will have system permission to log in to Quest to view and/or edit the application form.

To search for and add a person, follow the same process outlined above in "*Using the Search Function*".

Example of investigators added to an application

To narrow down your search results using defined fields, click on 'More Criteria'.

> *Note: Use the additional information provided in the "Search & Add Person" pop-up window (Staff ID, Classification, School, etc.) to ensure you are selecting the correct personnel record.*

Some records, for example new students and external investigators, may not exist within the Quest database yet. You may request the creation of these personnel records using the "**Request to Add Personnel to Research Database**" form, located on the Quest website. This form can also be accessed via the Investigators page within the eForm.

To enter details about investigators and students click on their name in the record table. The record will expand to allow you to answer the questions.

The first few fields are system generated from the database. The remaining fields are mandatory for all personnel.

> *Important: Please inform a Quest Administrator if information in these system fields is incorrect. The email generated here will be used for all application related communication.*

ID	Full Name	School	Role	Primary CI	Phone	Mobile	Email	Qualifications	
QUEST1	RESEARCHER ONE QUEST	O2104	Chief Investigator				quest.admin@vu.edu.au		🗑

ID Number

QUEST1

Surname *

QUEST

Given Name *

RESEARCHER

Full Name *

RESEARCHER ONE QUEST

School

O2104   AEHD-SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Email Address

quest.admin@vu.edu.au

Role in project *

Chief Investigator ▼

Primary contact for application? ❔

◉ Yes

◯ No

Direct contact number *

Mobile number (for emergency use only) *

Qualifications, experience and/or skills relevant to the project. *

✔ ✖

An example of the Investigator table once opened

To continue, <u>click the</u> ✔ <u>green tick</u> at the bottom of the table to save the record, or the ✖ red cross to exit without saving. You can delete a record by click the 🗑 rubbish bin on the right of the record table.

Add and edit attachments

All supporting documentation can be uploaded in Section 11 - "Required Attachments". The list of required documentation is displayed depending on the answers you have provided in the form. Each of these items are mandatory for your application.

Required Attachments page

To attach a document, click on the upload icon in the 'Soft Copy' column. In the pop-up, click on **Choose File** and browse your computer for the correct document. Click **OK** to save or **Cancel** to return to the form.

> *You may enter a document description; however, the title of the actual file will be the "Reference/Document Title" of the attachment. Please ensure this is appropriately named before uploading.*

The 'Document Descriptions' in this table are provided as a guide. To attach any additional documentation against a particular description or with a new description, click "**Add New Document**" above the table. Enter the relevant 'Document Description' then attach your file as above.

> *Only use the checkbox in the Hard Copy column if you are handing in a physical copy of that particular document to the Ethics Secretary.*

Note: The requirements for declarations are different between form versions V.12-10 and V.13-07. Please check the instructions found on the application form you have created.

For applications using form version V.13-07:

All investigators, students and other staff involved in the research project are required to provide a digital signature by logging in to Quest, accessing the application and completing the declaration table in 'Section 12 – Declaration'. The application cannot be submitted until all members of the research team have separately logged in and completed this declaration.

ID	Name	Role	Type	Declaration signed?	Declaration supplied?	Signed on	Supplied on	
QUEST1	RESEARCHER ONE QUEST	Chief Investigator	Both	☐	☐			🖉
QUEST2	SUPERVISOR TWO QUEST	Associate Investigator	Internal	☐	☐			

Example of Declaration Table before and signatures have been provided

The Needs Signature icon 🖉 shows which records you are responsible for signing. Open the required record by clicking the **personnel name** or the **Needs Signature icon**. You must then agree to the declaration by marking the "**I Accept**" checkbox and **supply the date** you have done so underneath.

ID	Name	Role	Type	Declaration signed?	Declaration supplied?	Signed on	Supplied on	
QUEST1	RESEARCHER ONE QUEST	Chief Investigator	Both	☐	☐			🖉

Staff/Student ID

QUEST1

Full Name *

RESEARCHER ONE QUEST

Role in project *

Chief Investigator ▾

Personnel Type

○ *Internal* ○ *External* ○ *Student* ◉ *Both*

Sign Declaration?
By clicking the checkbox below, you are agreeing to conduct the research project in accordance with the above declaration. *

☑ I Accept

Date Signed *

1/07/2013 📅

✔ ✖
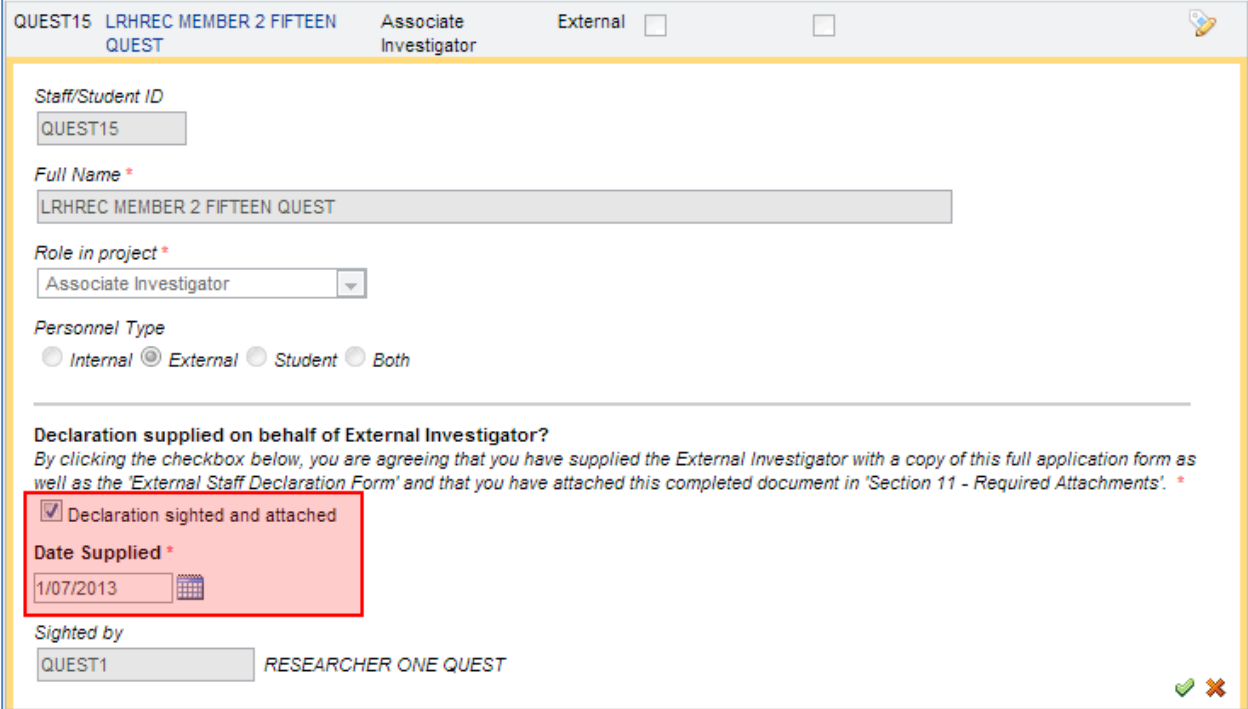
Example of opened Declaration Table for an Internal Investigator

External Investigators do not have access to Quest. The Chief Investigator must supply a completed physical declaration on their behalf by following the steps below:

1. Send the External Investigator a copy of the full application form (including any attachments), as well as the *Declaration Form for External Investigators* document. This document can be downloaded from the Ethics website as well as within the form itself.
2. Once returned, attach the signed *External Investigator Declaration Form* document in 'Section 11 - Required Attachments'.

3. Enter into the External Investigator's record in the declaration table by clicking **their name** or the **Needs Signature icon**, and mark the **Declaration sighted and attached** checkbox to indicate these steps have been completed, include the **date** you have done so. The **sighted by** field will automatically populate with your name.

    Note: Only the Chief Investigator will have permission to complete the declaration table on behalf of any External Investigators.

Example of opened Declaration Table for an External Investigator

For applications using form version V.12-10:

All personnel, including students, involved in an application for ethical review of research involving human participants are required to sign the Declaration Form.
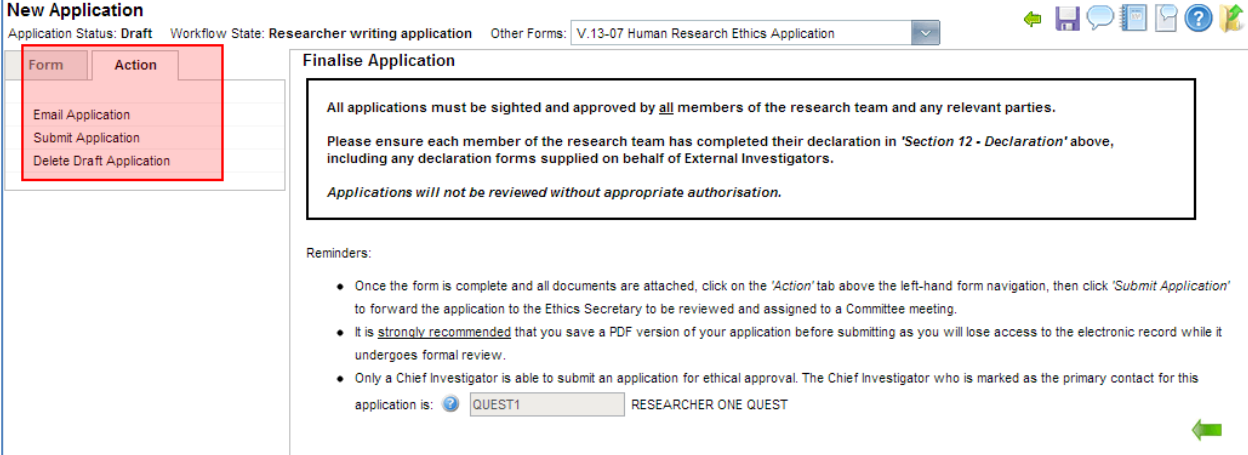
> *The Declaration Form is available for download from the Ethics website as well as within the eForm itself.*

All investigators should sign the same Declaration Form. This single form must then be scanned and attached (uploaded) to the online Ethics Application in 'Section 11 – Required Attachments'. If this is impractical, each investigator may sign and attach their own copy of the Declaration Form.

> *Note: The Chief Investigator is responsible for ensuring that all investigators have signed the Declaration Form before submitting the Ethics Application.*

Once you are confident you have answered all the required fields and have attached all supporting documentation, you may submit your application.

*Finalise Application page with Action tab highlighted*

> *Important*: *Remember to save a copy of your application (see instructions below) as you will lose access to the electronic record while it moves though the formal review process.*

Click on the **Action** tab in the left-hand column then click **Submit Application.** The system will convert the form to a read-only format and notify the Ethics Secretary that the application is ready for review.

To remove the application from the system, click **Delete Draft Application**. You will not be able to delete the application at any other stage.

Print or Save a Copy of Your Application

You can use the ▣ report icon at any stage to generate a printer friendly version of the form.
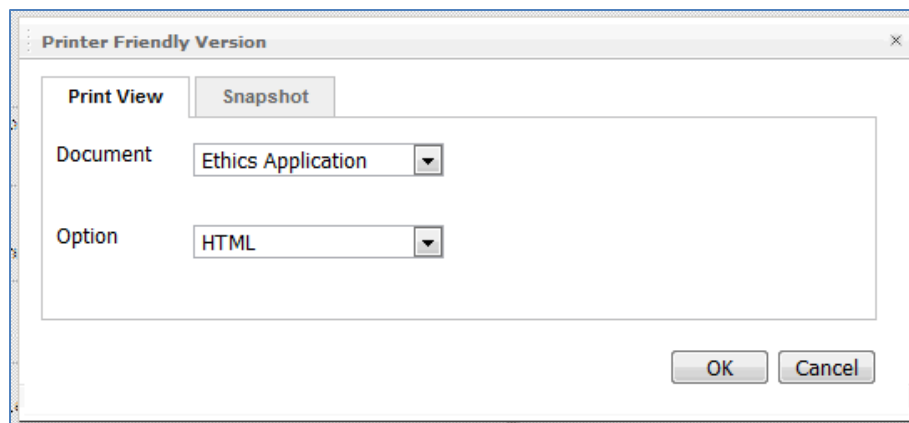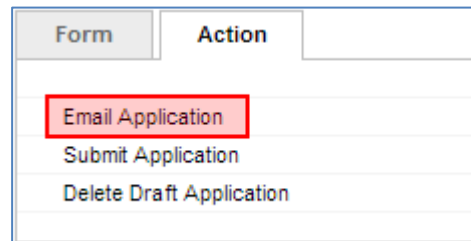

The Report window

Select **HTML** to print to screen. To save as a .pdf file to your computer select **PDF** then save a copy from the pop up screen (how to do this will depend on the PDF Reader you have installed).

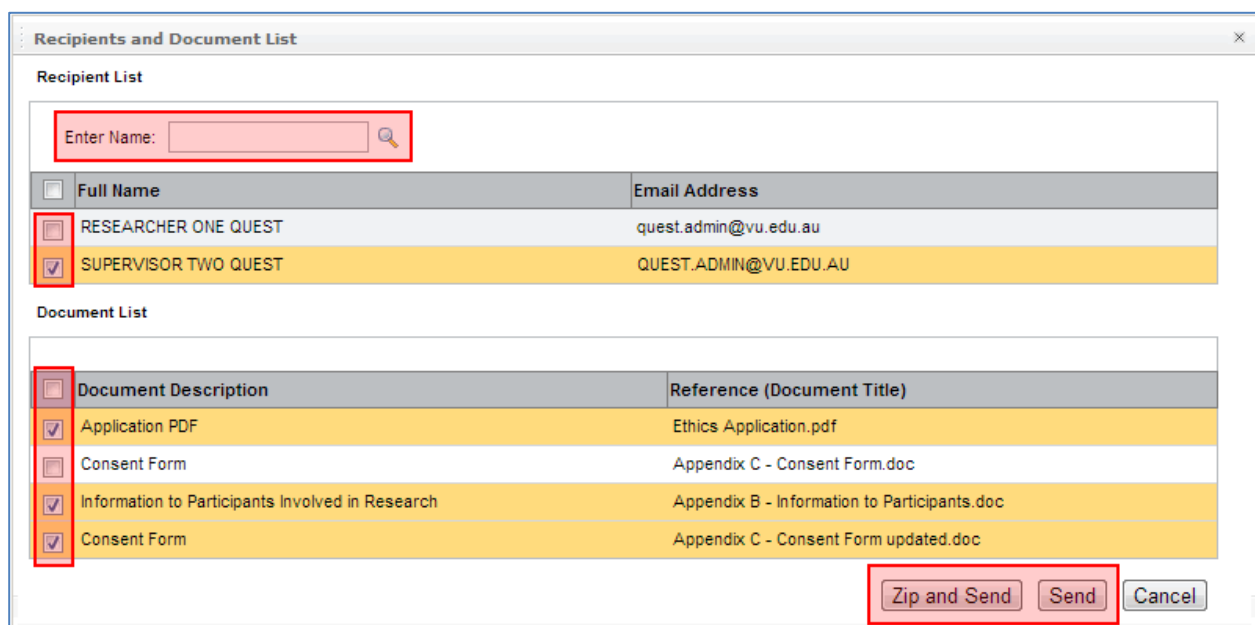*Note: Pop-ups must be enabled in your browser.*

Email a Copy of Your Application

For applications created using form version V.13-07, you may use the provided function at any time to email a copy of the application as well as any current attachments. To begin, open the **Action tab** then click **Email Application**. A new window will pop up displaying the recipients and document lists.

The Action tab

The 'Recipients and Document List' window

Adding Recipients

This window will show all personnel named on the application. You may also select any students or staff members within the VU database by typing a search term into the **Enter Name field** and clicking the 🔍 magnifying glass. To search for and add a person, follow the same process outlined above in "*Using the Search Function*".

Adding Attachments

You may then select which files to attach to the email. The window will list a copy of the completed application form "Ethics Application.pdf", as well as any documents that are currently uploaded in 'Section 11 – Required Attachments'. **Mark the checkbox** beside each document listed to include them in the email.

Email Application

The content of email that is sent uses a pre-determined template. Once you have selected the recipients and attachments, click **Send**. It is recommended that you select **Zip and Send** for larger applications. You will receive a confirmation message on-screen once the email has been successfully sent.

There may be stages throughout the application process in which the Ethics Secretary will instruct you to amend your application form. These amendments will be communicated to you via 'Comments' within the eForm.

Comments can either relate to the application as a whole (Application Comments) or to a specific page or question (Page Comments).

Comment Indicators (Flags)

Coloured flags indicate the type and/or status of the comment, and will appear against the application title or next to the applicable page titles in the form navigation menu. A coloured flag will also appear against each section title where comment exists on a page within it.
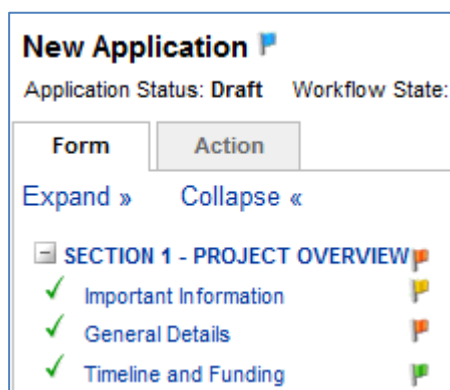
An example of possible Comment Flags

There are two types of comments: 'General Comment' and 'Action Comment'.

A General Comment will appear as a blue flag. General Comments are used to make notes or observations about the application. You do not need to respond directly to a General Comment, but the Comment may help inform you as to how to improve your application overall.

An Action Comment will appear first as a red flag. The red flag indicates that you are required to amend questions in your application in order to proceed with the ethics process.

- Red flag = Action Required: researcher to view comment and make changes
- Yellow flag = Responded: awaiting resolution from Ethics Secretary
- Green flag = Resolved: response deemed satisfactory, no action required
- Blue flag = General Comment: no action required

View All Comments

To generate a list of all comments created within your application, click the 📄 report icon. Select "Comments Report" from the Document drop-down field and click **OK**.

This list will provide you with an overall picture of the changes you are required to make throughout the entire application. Click **Cancel** to return to the form.
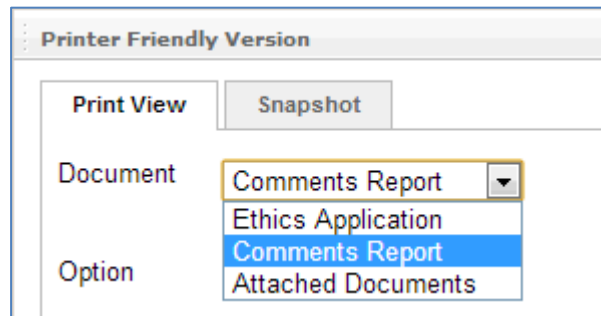
The Document dropdown field in the Report window

Responding to Action Comments

Important: Please follow the instructions below carefully. You are required to: amend the appropriate question within the form, and respond to the Action Comment by creating a new comment, and mark the Actions Comments as responded. You will not be able to submit the application until all points outlined below are completed.

1. View the Comment

To view the comment, open the page which displays a 🚩 red flag, then click the 📄 Page Comments icon. A new window will pop up listing all of the comments against that page. Hover over the comment text to view it, or click on the **comment text** to open it up.
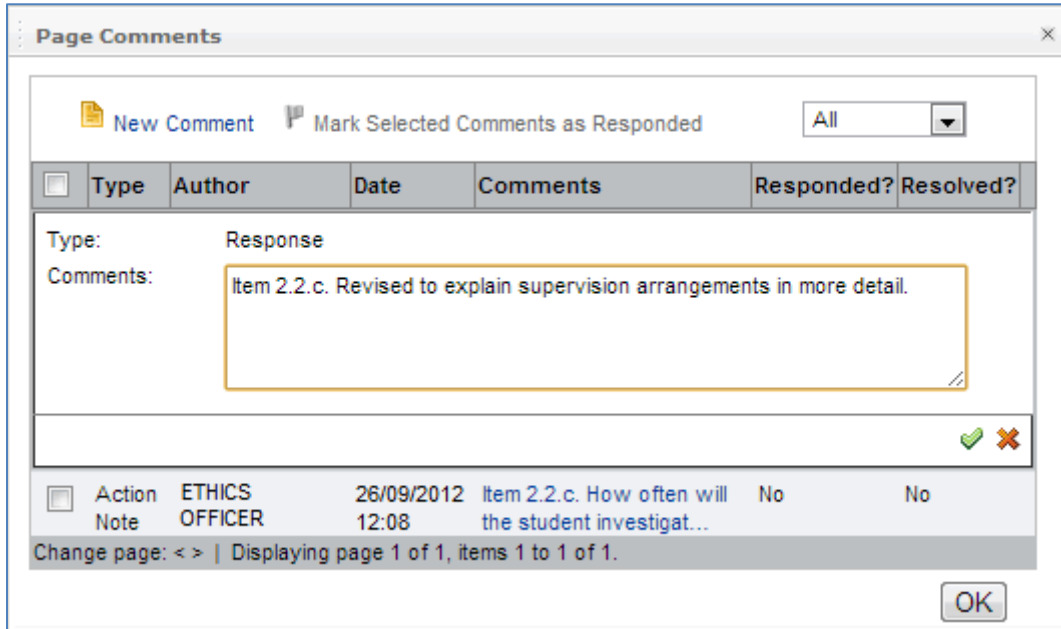

The 'Page Comments' window

2. Amend the Form Answers

Click **OK** to close the Page Comments box to go back to the application form. Amend the answers directly within the application form as per the required changes. Remember to save the page using the 💾 floppy disk icon.

3. Provide a Response

Once you have amended the relevant question inside the eForm, you must provide a response to the Action Comment which briefly outlines to the Committee how you have revised your answer within the eForm.

Reopen the Page Comments box and click New Comment to enter your response.

*Entering a response to an Action Comment*

Remember to click the green tick at the bottom of the table to save your response, or the red cross to exit without saving. You can delete your response by clicking the rubbish bin on the right of the table.

Clicking OK will not save your response. Remember to click the green tick.

4. Mark Action Comments as Responded

When you have finished responding to all of the Action Comments on a page, select each Action Comment using the checkboxes and click "**Mark Selected Comments as Responded**".

The colour of the flag will now change to yellow and the page will become Read Only.
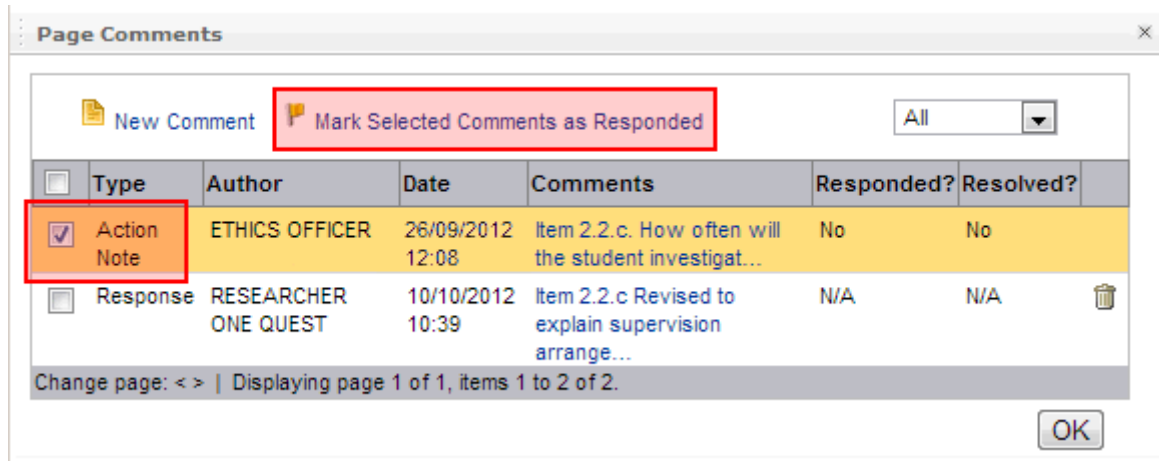
Marking an Action Comment as Responded

> *Important: Do not mark the comments as 'Responded' until you are completely satisfied with your revised answers. You will lose access to edit the page or the comments.*

5. Resubmit the Application

Once you have made all of the required amendments and responded to all of the Action Comments on the application click on the **Action** tab in the left-hand column then choose **Submit Revised Application** to resubmit the application for review**.**