CLINICAL TRIALS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (CTOC)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Remit

The Clinical Trials Oversight Committee (CTOC) is responsible for overseeing the activities undertaken by the University of Birmingham (UoB) in its role as a Sponsor[1], co-sponsor, host institution or partner with other organisations for clinical trials, as defined under the UK Clinical Trials Regulations, the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research and any other relevant national and international standards and regulations. It discharges this responsibility by coordinating the governance and monitoring of clinical trials, and by contributing to the development of the University's research strategy.

The CTOC is specifically responsible for managing the development, implementation and maintenance of an effective clinical trials support infrastructure for all clinical trials, including Clinical Trials of Investigational Medicinal Products (CTIMPs)[2], and trials conducted through the UoB's Clinical Trials Units (CTUs). In addition, the CTOC provides oversight of any clinical research where a UoB Ethics Committee has stipulated that the research must be conducted to the UoB Principles of GCP for Clinical Research (UoB-GCP-POL-001), or where the Research Ethics, Governance & Integrity (REGI) or Clinical Research Compliance Team (CRCT) has identified that an increased level of institutional oversight is required in line with the UoB Code of Practice for Research.

The Terms of Reference, including the membership of the CTOC shall be reviewed every three years. The next review will be April 2026.

Constitution and Membership

Chair

The CTOC will be chaired by a UoB senior academic clinician with experience and detailed knowledge in the conduct of clinical trials, and who is only responsible for a small portfolio of UoB sponsored trials, if any. The CTU Directors will each act as Deputy Chair on rotation as agreed by the CTOC.

Membership

Membership of the CTOC will include at least 3 UoB clinical academics with expertise in the design and conduct of clinical trials; one with experience of conducting trials independently of a CTU, and at least 4 other UoB academic or academic-related staff (ensuring, if not covered by aforementioned members, at least 1 representative from each of the UoB UKCRC registered CTUs and the College of Life and Environmental Sciences (LES)) with collective expertise in trial governance, trial management, trial quality assurance, pharmacovigilance, IMP management, trial pharmacy, GCP compliance in the laboratory. The Head of Research Governance and Integrity, and Clinical Research Compliance Manager and a representative from UoB Legal Services will also be core members of CTOC.

[1] The UK Clinical Trial Regulations define the sponsor as an individual or institution that takes responsibility for the initiation, management and financing (or arranging the financing) of the trial.

[2] Regulated by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority (MHRA).

Current members are defined in *Appendix 1 – Membership List*. Additional attendees, or expert input, may be identified/invited on an *ad hoc* basis at the discretion of the Chair and depending on the content of the meeting e.g. Senior Statistician, Insurance Officer or a lay member as a public-patient representative. The term of office of the chair is extendable on an annual basis subject to satisfactory annual appraisals by the Head of the relevant College with input from the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research.

Secretariat

The MDS Research Office Administration Team will provide secretarial support to ensure effective administration of the CTOC.

The CTOC is quorate when there are members present with expertise in trial design, trial management, quality assurance and Sponsor oversight, as well as the Chair or Deputy Chair and including at least two academic members (of whom at least two should be clinical).

Whenever issues are discussed that may cause a conflict of interest, or an appearance of conflict of interest, for the Chair, the Deputy Chair or delegate, as agreed by members present, will assume responsibility for the relevant section of the meeting.

Where required to deliver the remit of the CTOC, formal working groups will be established to deliver specific activities, as agreed by CTOC members.

Function of the Committee

1. Oversight of the maintenance of the UoB clinical research quality management system (QMS):

The CTOC has oversight of the maintenance of the UoB guidelines, standard operating procedures (SOPs) and policies relating to clinical research sponsored or co-sponsored by the UoB. These documents will provide instructions to investigators on the UoB processes and procedures that ensure adherence to the relevant regulatory requirements and international standards for the conduct of trials/studies and reflect best practice. The maintenance of these documents are managed by the CRCT.

2. Oversight of the development and implementation of the UoB clinical trials training programme:

The CTOC has oversight of the development and delivery of a comprehensive clinical trials training programme. This training programme will ensure all individuals taking on an identified role e.g. Chief Investigator, Trial Co-ordinator, in a UoB sponsored or co-sponsored trial understand their role, the regulatory framework in which clinical trials are undertaken and University's procedures and policies for UoB sponsored or co-sponsored trials.

3. Oversight of sponsorship:

The CTOC has oversight of the criteria used to assess whether UoB is prepared to take on the role of sponsor for a clinical trial and will advise on the procedures for approval of UoB sponsorship. The REGI and delegated authorised colleagues in the CTUs are responsible for formally notifying agreement of UoB sponsorship of clinical trials and assessing any application for UoB sponsorship or co-sponsorship against these criteria.

The REGI will liaise with the CTOC for guidance on specific trials where the criteria are not fully met and/or where issues arise that may impact the ability of UoB to act as sponsor for the trial. The CTOC will determine whether sponsorship by UoB can be provided and advise on additional requirements for sponsorship to be granted.

The CTOC manages the approval and allocation of the UoB budget for the funding of clinical trials insurance premiums that are not covered by the standard UoB insurance policy.

4. Oversight of UoB CTUs:

The CTOC maintains oversight of the UoB CTUs' systems set up to ensure the quality within the CTUs. For this, the CTUs will share their annual Audit Programme and QMS management plan at least annually with the CTOC. The CTUs will also report on their trial portfolio every 6 months through a formal report. Finally, the CTUs will flag up any issues such as changes in resources that may impact on the quality of clinical trials conducted in the CTUs.

5. Portfolio management and oversight:

The REGI will provide a report for every CTOC meeting to enable CTOC members to monitor the number and risk of portfolio trials (co-)sponsored by UoB and studies for which CTOC provides oversight. In addition, CTOC will receive an update on relevant UoB research ethics and integrity activity such as trial transparency reporting.

6. Oversight of compliance review:

During each meeting, the CTOC will receive reports from the CRCT on any major risks to the UoB sponsored or co-sponsored trials and studies (as applicable), trial/study participants and/or the organisation, arising from failure to comply with key legislative requirements and the actions that have been taken. The CTOC will advise on whether further corrective action is required and review and approve the plan to prevent re-occurrence of further similar risks. If an issue cannot be resolved with support from the REGI or the CTOC, this will be escalated through relevant reporting routes.

Compliance review programme for the UoB clinical trials portfolio

The CTOC will provide oversight for the CRCT-led programme of compliance review activities, to include the Audit Programme, the programme of Sponsor Support Visits, and the programme surrounding on-site monitoring activities. In addition, the CTOC reviews reports of audits conducted by the CRCT, including 6 monthly feedback on their review of a selection of the UoB CTUs' on-site monitoring visit reports.

Serious breach reports, external audit reports and inspections

During each CTOC meeting, the CTUs will provide feedback to the CTOC of any serious breaches that have been reported. The UoB CTU will also provide a summary of all compliance reviews conducted/received and any significant findings noted in a 6-monthly report to the CTOC.

Institutional regulatory inspections

The CTOC will support the REGI and the CTUs in their responsibility to effectively co-ordinate, conduct and respond to all relevant institutional regulatory inspections, particularly those undertaken by the MHRA. Resultant action plans and outcomes will be owned by the CTOC who will be responsible for ensuring delivery within agreed timeframes and reporting if risks of potential non-compliance are anticipated; providing timely advice on necessary corrective action to ensure the University can fulfil its role as sponsor.

7. Advisory:

The CTOC may provide advice for any non-UoB sponsored trials if requested. In addition, the CTOC members will be able to direct any queries from Chief Investigators or trials team members to the appropriate body within the UoB, e.g. a UoB CTU, REGI or CRCT.

Meeting Frequency

The CTOC will meet approximately 6-weekly or as required according to need, with a total of at least 6 meetings per year.

Reporting Lines

The Chair of CTOC will be a member of and accountable to the MDS R&KT Executive Committee and will formally report directly to meetings and to the Chair (MDS Pro Vice Chancellor & Head of College) on an ad hoc basis. Where relevant there will be appropriate reporting to other UoB College Boards, as directed by relevant clinical research activity.

The Chair of the CTOC will also be a member of and report to the University Research Governance Ethics & Integrity Committee (RGEIC) that is chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor for Research Knowledge Transfer.

In the interest of complete transparency of processes, the CTOC meeting minutes will be made available to the MDS R&KT Executive Committee, University RGEIC and the UoB Head of Internal Audit.

See also Figure 1 for the current UoB Research Governance Framework, and the UoB Clinical Research Quality Manual (UoB-CQM-POL-001) for further information.

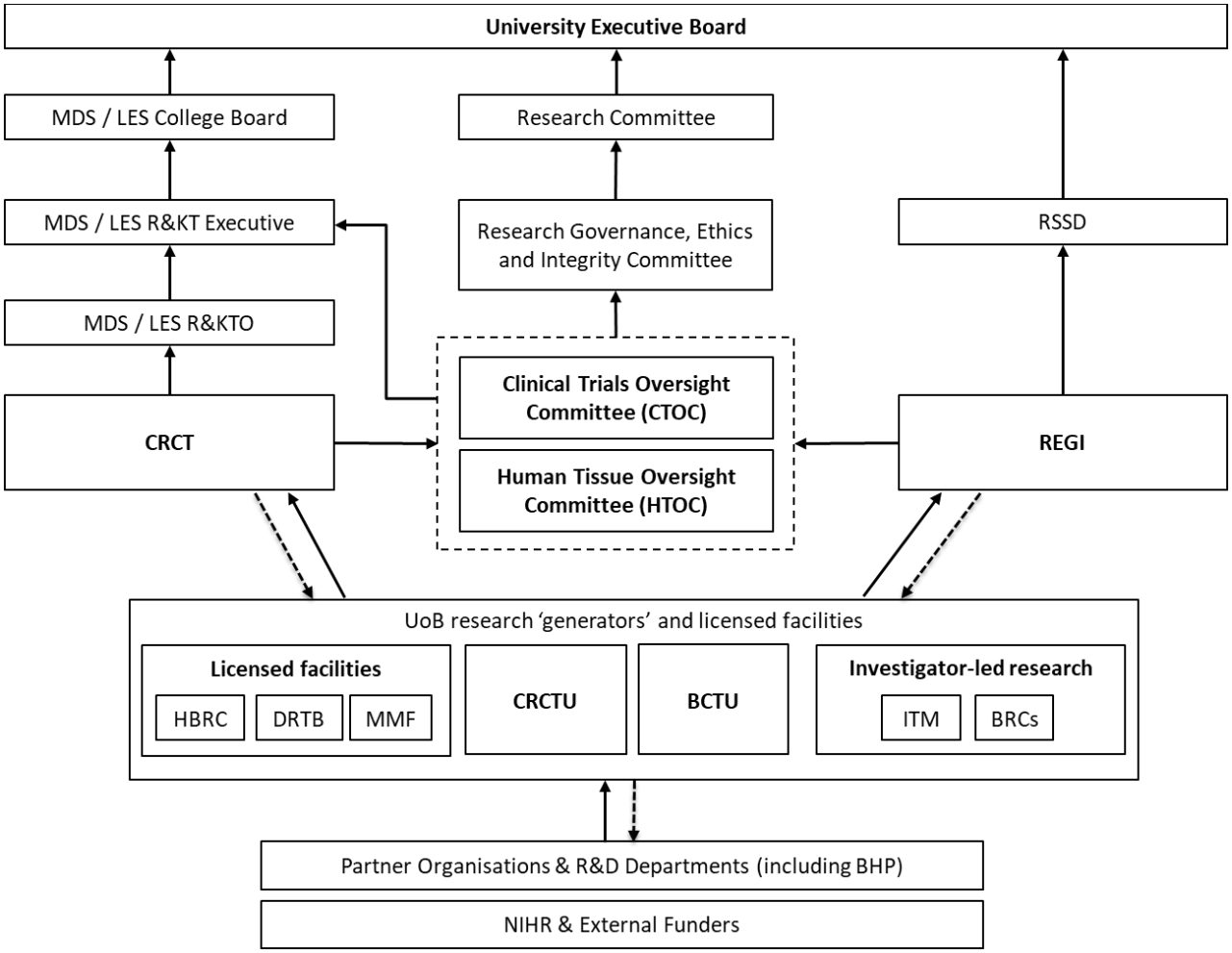

Figure 1. UoB Research Governance Framework. Solid line denotes reporting pathway and dotted line denotes compliance review pathways. Abbreviations: BCTU, Birmingham Clinical Trials Unit; BRC, Biomedical Research Centre; CRCT, Clinical Research Compliance Team; CRTCU, Cancer Research UK Clinical Trials Unit; DRTB, Dental Research Tissue Bank; HBRC, Human Biomaterials Resource Centre; ITM, Institute of Translational Medicine; LES, College of Life and Environmental Sciences; MDS, College of Medical and Dental Sciences; MMF, Medicines Manufacturing Facility; NIHR, National Institute for Health Research; R&D, Research and Development; REGI, Research Ethics, Governance & Integrity Team; RSSD, Research Strategy & Services Division; UoB, University of Birmingham.