NATIONAL RESEARCH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NRIMS)

Step-By-Step Guide to make your Protocol Submissions to the Research Ethics Committee(REC) for approval to conduct research in Uganda

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The **National Research Information Management System (NRIMS)** is a secure, web-based platform developed by the **Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST)** to streamline the management of research protocol submissions and approvals. This system is designed to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and integrity of research ethics workflows across institutions in Uganda.

As a **researcher or applicant**, NRIMS provides you with a centralized digital space to prepare, submit, and track your research protocols for ethical review and regulatory approval. It also supports post-approval processes such as safety reporting, renewals, and revisions.

This user manual is specifically intended to guide **Principal Investigators (PIs)** and **Co-Investigators** through each step of the research application process within NRIMS.

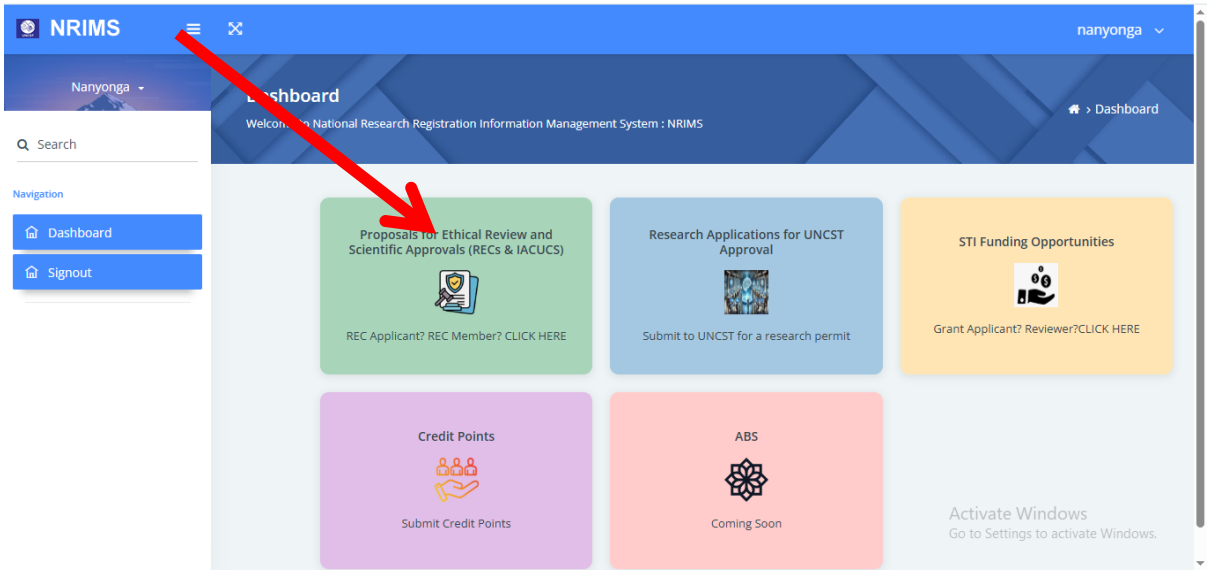
Key Features of the User Manual

- Submission of new research protocols to accredited Research Ethics Committees (RECs)
- Viewing and responding to completeness checks comments
- Tracking protocol status and REC decisions in real-time
- Managing post-approval submissions (e.g., SAEs, renewals, amendments)

STEP 1:

Accessing the NRIMS Application for REC Review

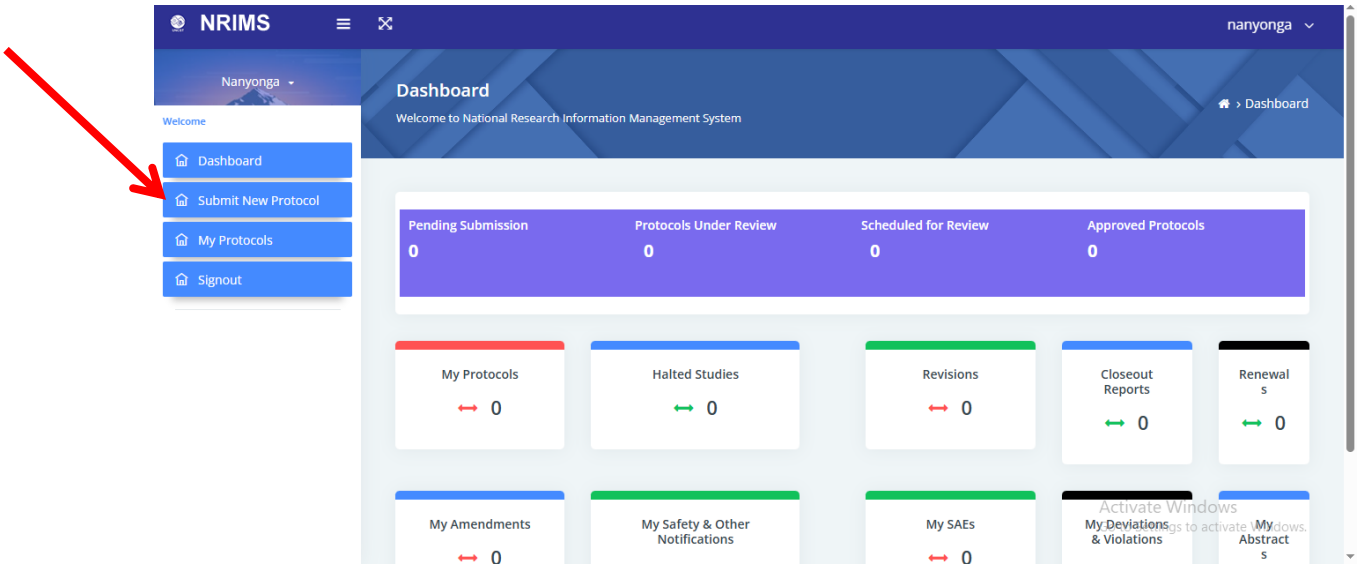
1) After successfully logging into the system, you will be redirected to the **Welcome Page**.
2) On the Welcome Page, all available **UNCST applications** will be listed.
3) Locate the first application titled **"Proposals for Ethical Review and Scientific Approvals."**
4) Click on the **Application** to open it.



STEP 2:

Submitting a New Research Protocol for REC Review

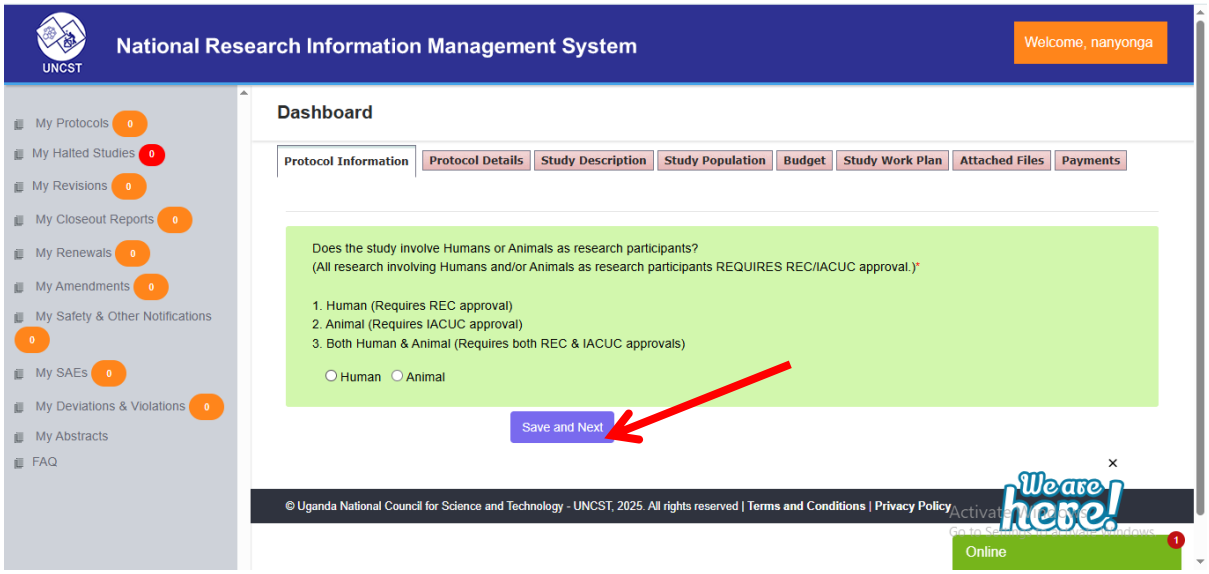
1) Once logged in, you will land on the **NRIMS Dashboard**.
2) Look at the **left-hand side menu** on the dashboard.
3) Click on **"Submit New Protocol"** from the menu options.
4) This will open the **protocol submission form**.
5) Begin entering **detailed information** about your study for REC review and approval.



STEP 3:

Specifying Research Participant Type and Proceeding to Next Step

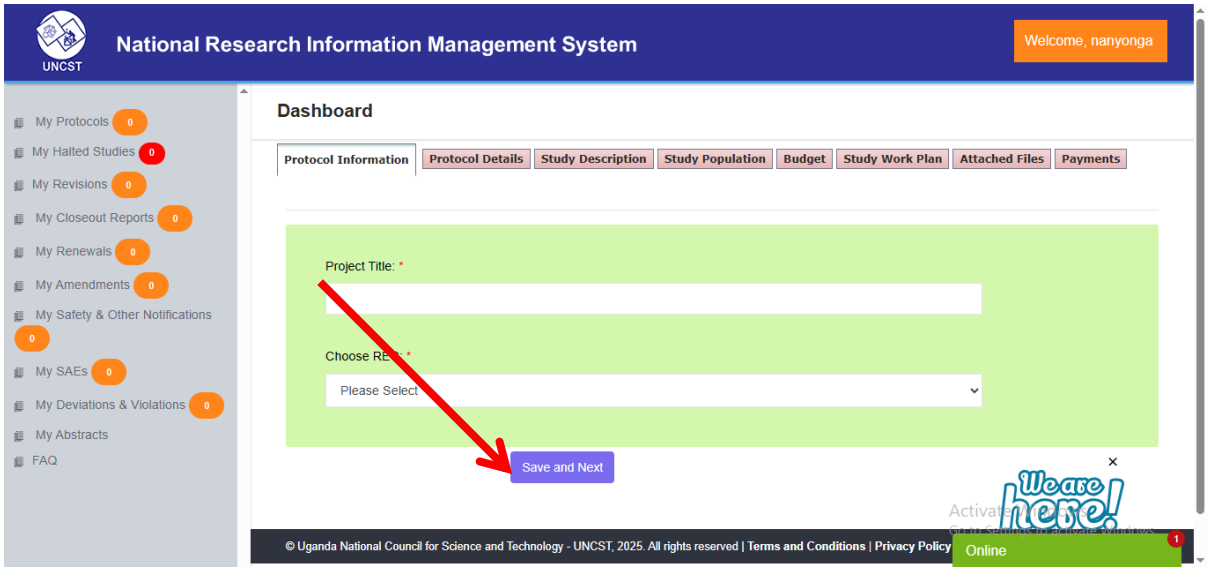
1) After clicking **"Submit New Protocol"**, you will be redirected to the **Protocol Information** page.
2) The system will prompt you to indicate the **type of research participants** in your study.
3) Select the appropriate option by clicking the corresponding **radio button**.
4) Click the **"Save and Next"** button at the bottom of the page.



STEP 4

Entering Basic Protocol Information and Selecting the Reviewing REC

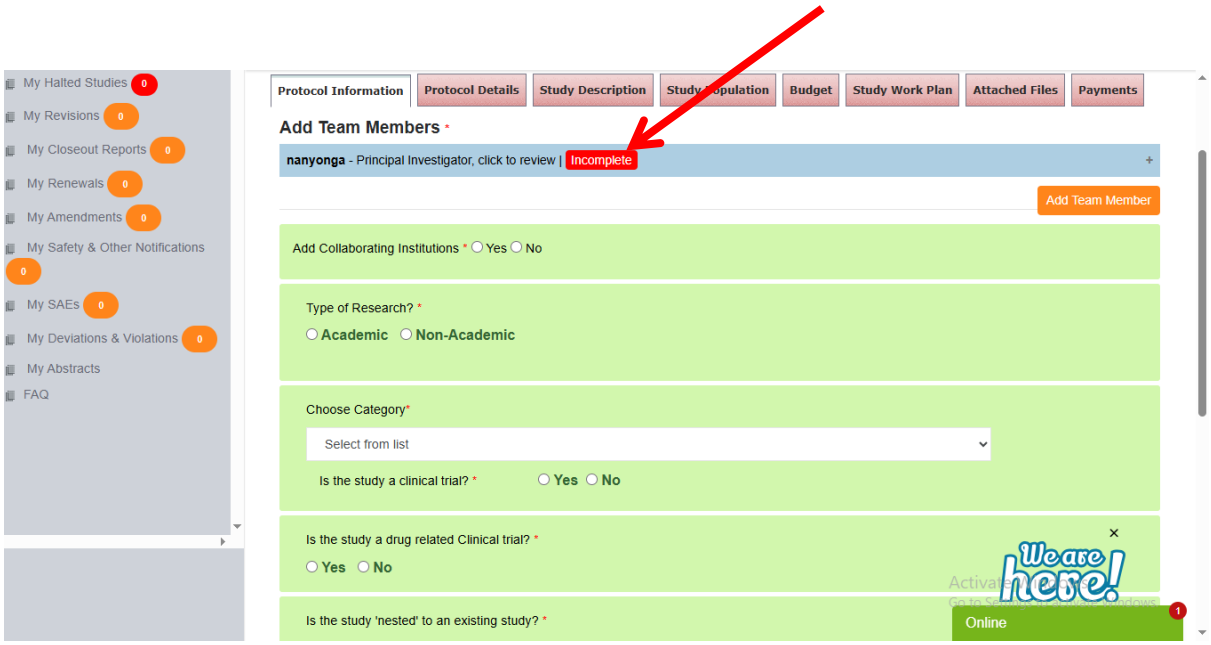
1) After clicking **“Save and Next”**, you will be taken to the **Basic Protocol Information** page.
2) In the **Project Title** field, type the official title of your research project as it appears in your study documents.
3) Use the **dropdown menu** to select the accredited **Research Ethics Committee (REC)** that will review your protocol.
4) Confirm that the correct REC is selected, as this determines who will assess your submission.
5) Click the **“Save and Next”** button to proceed to the next section



STEP 5:

Completing Principal Investigator (PI) Details

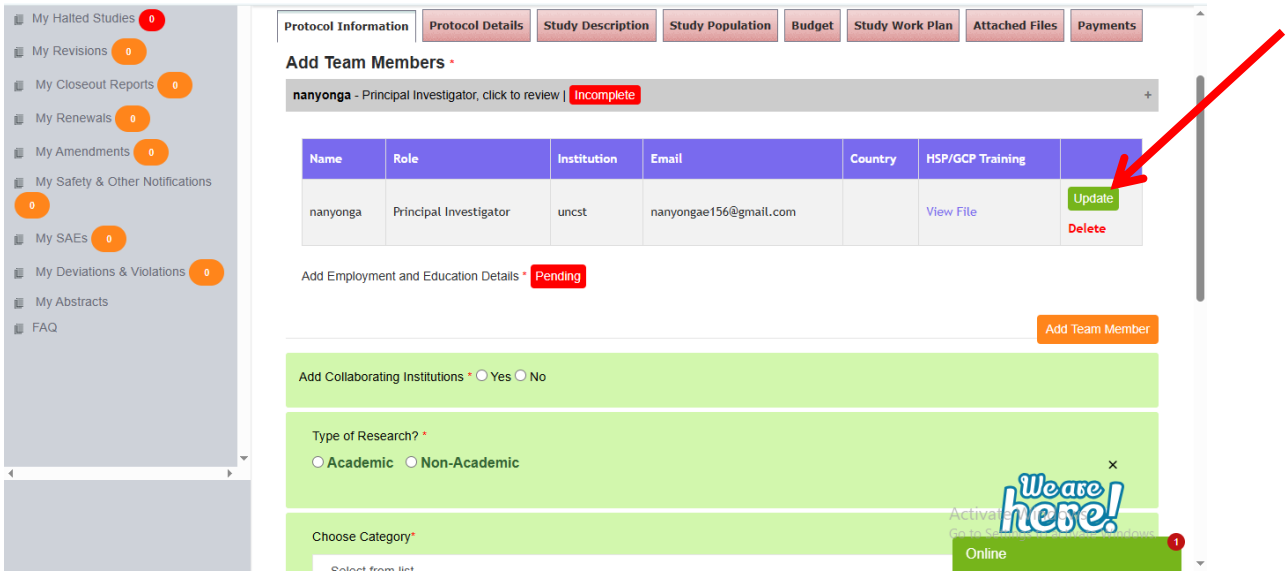
1) You will be redirected to the **Protocol Information** tab page.
2) Locate your name listed under the **Principal Investigator (PI) section**.
3) Click on the **"Incomplete"** link next to your name.
4) By default, the person submitting the protocol is automatically assigned as the **Principal Investigator**.



STEP 6:

Updating Principal Investigator Profile Information

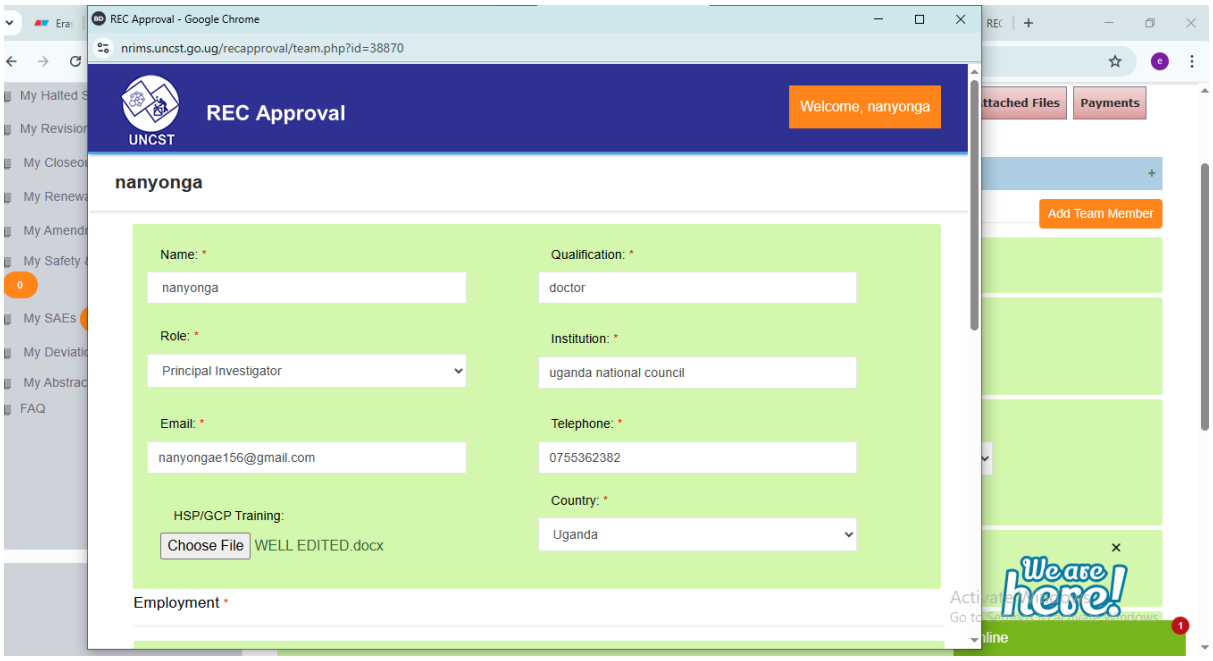
1) In the **Personnel table**, locate your name listed as Principal Investigator.
2) Click the **"Update"** button.
3) A pop-up window will appear for you to complete your **Principal Investigator profile information**



STEP 7:

Completing and Saving Principal Investigator Details in the Popup Form

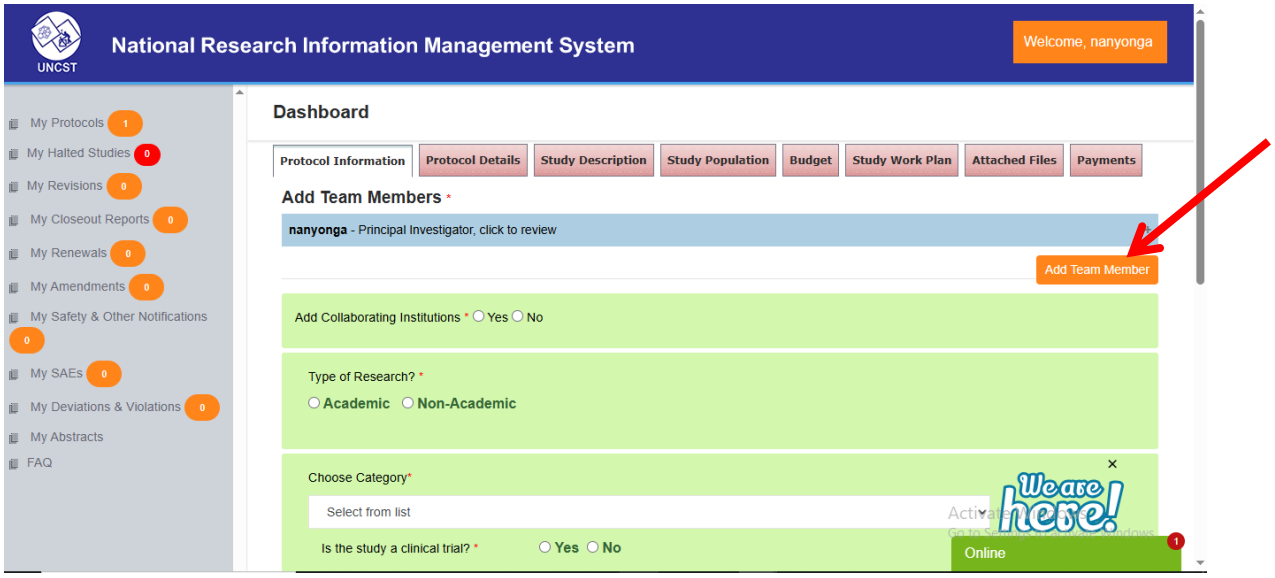
1) After clicking the **"Update"** button, a **popup window** will appear on the screen.
2) Fill in **all required fields** in the popup form with accurate PI details
3) Click the **"Save and Next"** button at the bottom of the popup to continue.
4) If you are the only one submitting the protocol, you are automatically recognized as the **Principal Investigator** and don't have to add a team member.



STEP 8:

Adding Research Team Members (If Applicable)

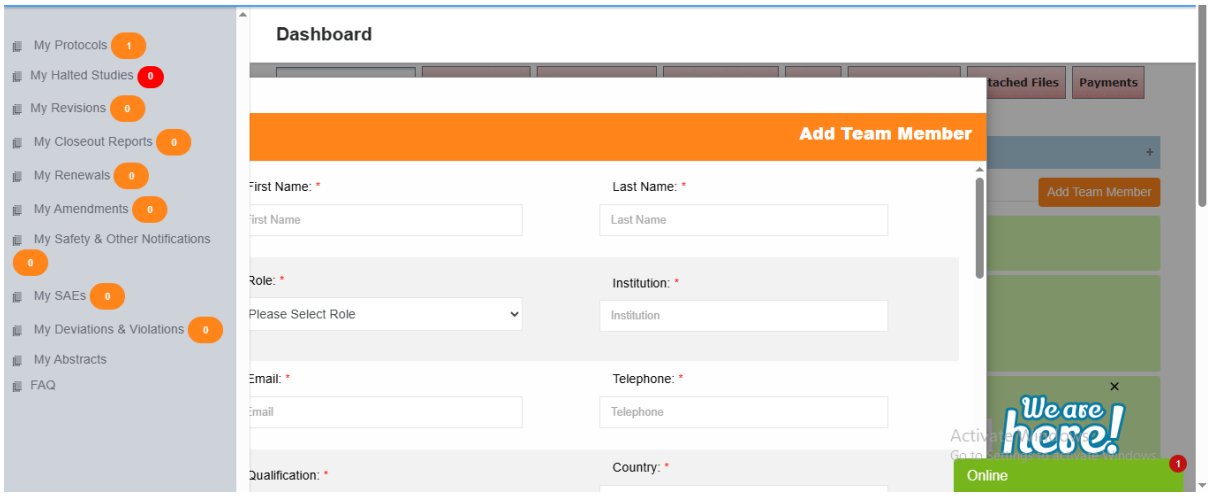
1) Once you have completed the **Principal Investigator details**, check if your study includes other team members.
2) If your protocol involves **multiple team members**, click the **"Add Team Member"** button.
3) Enter their information as prompted to include them in your submission.
4) If you are working **alone**, **skip** the team member addition step.
5) Proceed to fill in the remaining sections



STEP 9:

Entering Details for Additional Team Members

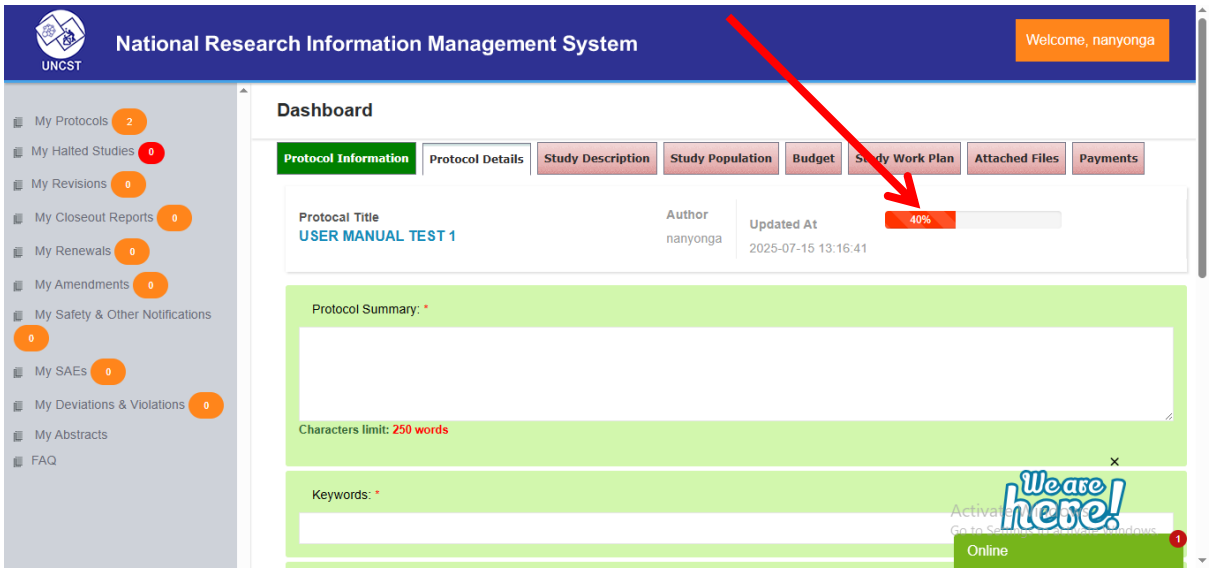
1) Click the **“Add Team Member”** button below the Personnel table.
2) A **popup window** will appear prompting you to enter the team member’s details.
3) Fill in **all required fields** in the popup, such as name, email, qualifications, and affiliation.
4) Click the **“Save”** button to add the member to your protocol team.
5) The added member will now appear in the Personnel table.
6) Proceed to complete the **remaining sections** of the protocol submission form.



STEP 10:

Tracking Completion Progress across Protocol Submission Tabs

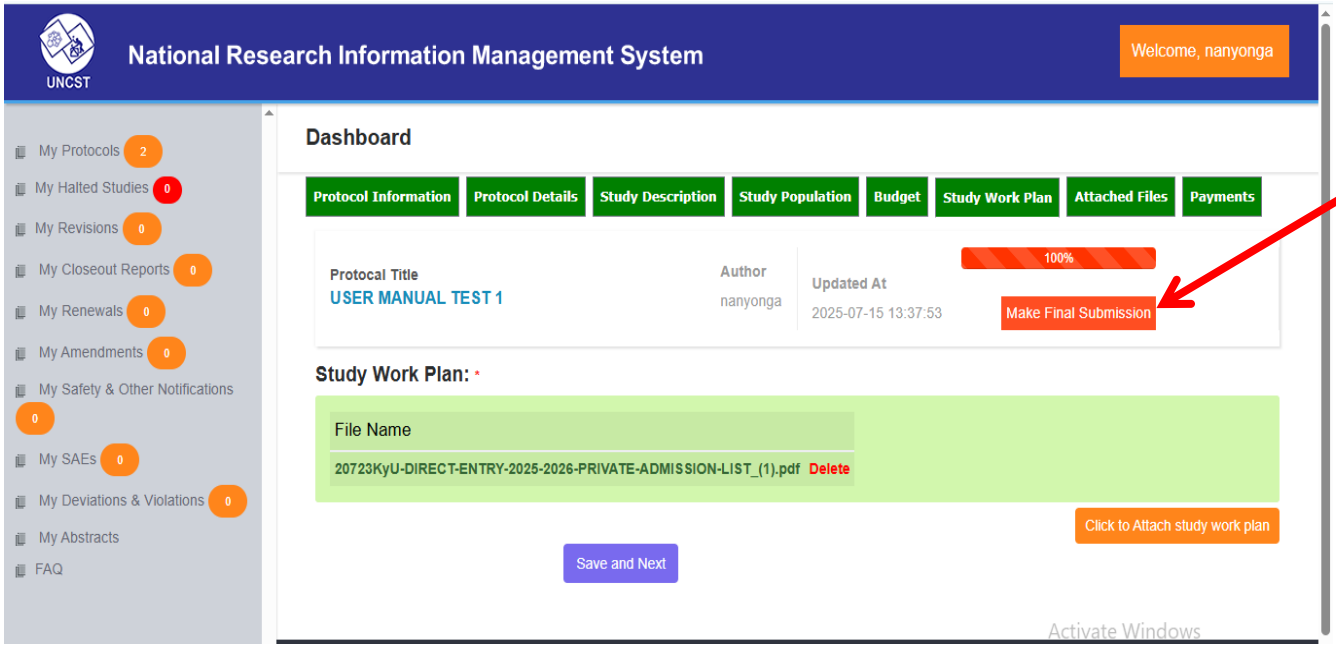
1) After filling in all required fields under the **Protocol Information** tab, the tab will automatically change from **pink to green**.
2) A **completion percentage** will appear at the top of the page to help you track your submission progress.
3) Proceed to the next tab in the form to continue entering protocol details.
4) As you complete each tab, it will also change from **pink to green** to indicate it is fully filled out.
5) Make sure that **all tabs are green** before attempting to submit the protocol



STEP 11:

Finalizing and Submitting Your Protocol for Review

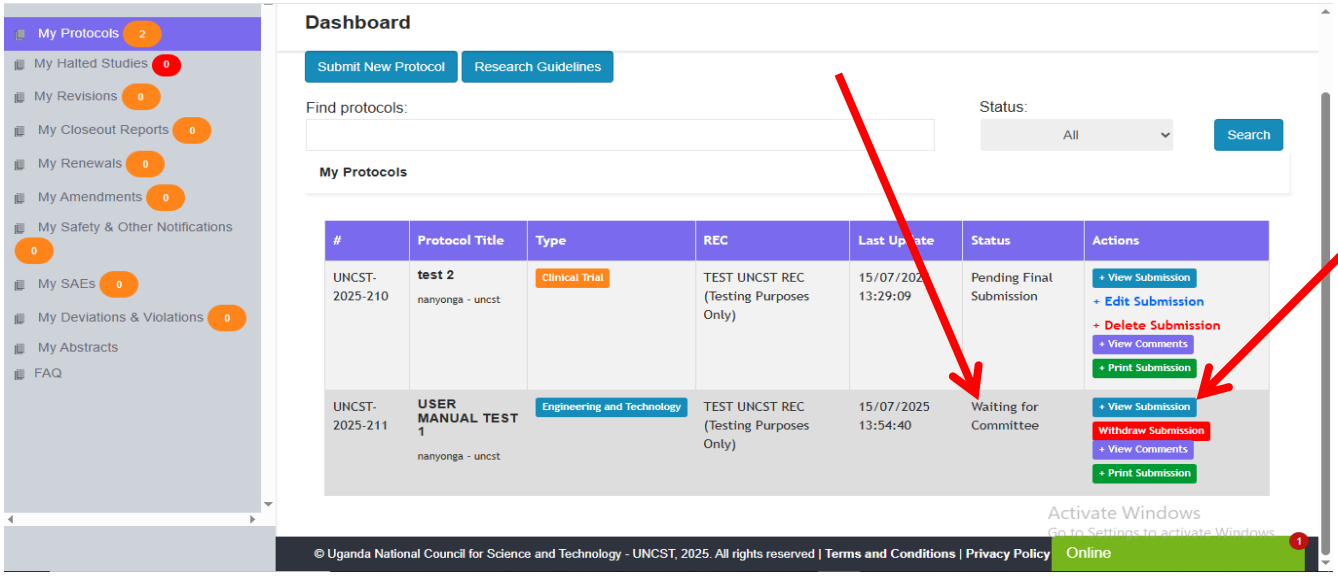
1) Complete all sections of the protocol form until **every tab turns green**.
2) When your **completion percentage reaches 100%**, the system will display the **"Make Final Submission"** button.
3) You can now proceed to click the button to submit your protocol for REC review.



STEP 12:

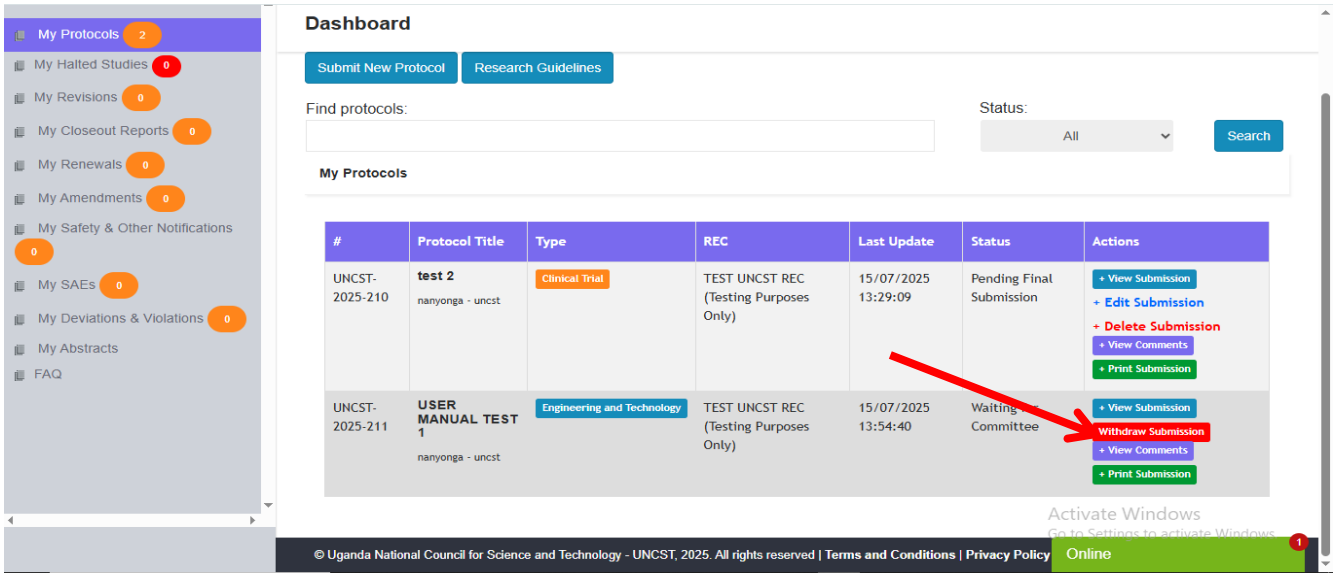
Viewing Your Submitted Protocol and Submission Status

1) After clicking **"Make Final Submission"**, you will be redirected to your **Dashboard**.
2) Your protocol will now appear in the **list of submissions** displayed on the dashboard.
3) The **status** of the protocol will show as **"Waiting for Committee"**, indicating it is pending review by the Research Ethics Committee (REC).



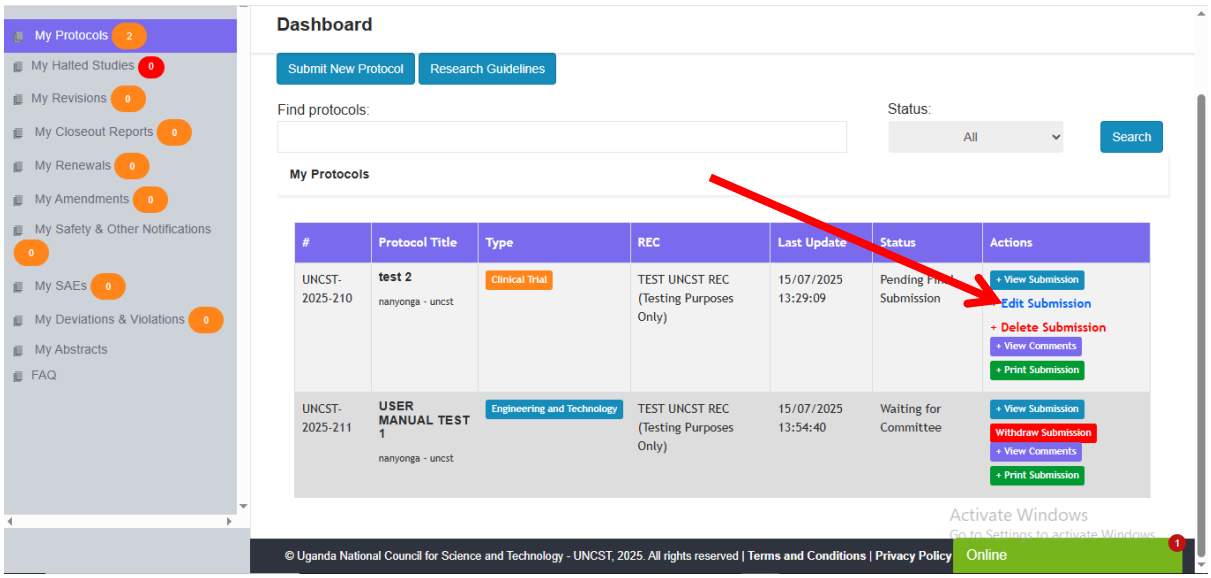
EDITING A SUBMITTED PROTOCOL:

1) Go to your **Dashboard** and locate the protocol you have already submitted.
2) Click the **"Withdraw Submission"** button in the row of that protocol.
3) The button will now change to **"Update Submission."**
4) Click **"Update Submission"**
5) Open the tab inside which you want to edit and make the necessary edits



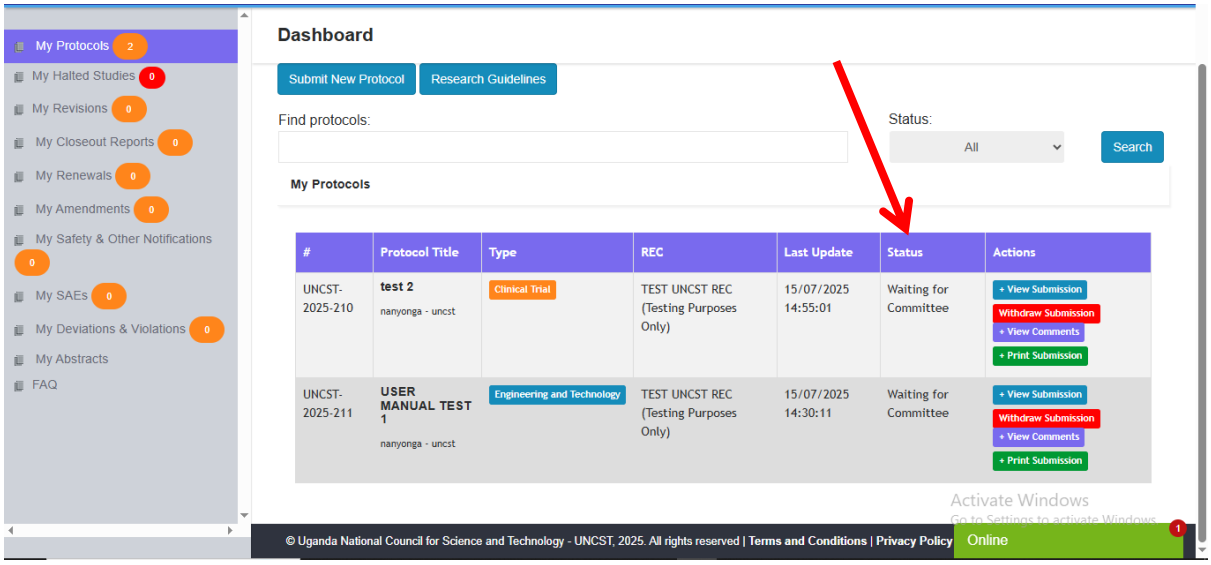
RESUMING AN INCOMPLETE PROTOCOL SUBMISSION:

1) Log in to the system and go to your **Dashboard**.
2) Locate the protocol listed under your **Submissions** section.
3) In the **Action** column, click the **"Edit Submission"** link for that specific protocol.
4) The system will load your **previously saved progress**.
5) Continue filling in the remaining sections from where you left off.



MONITORING YOUR PROTOCOL STATUS:

1) After completing your **final submission**, return to your **Dashboard** at any time to monitor your protocol.
2) Find your protocol listed under the **submitted protocols** section.
3) Look at the **"Status"** column to view the current stage of your submission.
4) Immediately after submission, the status will show **"Waiting for Committee."**
5) This means your protocol has been successfully submitted and is pending review by the assigned REC.
6) Keep checking the **Status** column regularly to track progress as your protocol moves through the review process.



EMAIL NOTIFICATION AFTER COMPPLETENESS CHECK:

After the REC Administrator completes the **completeness check**, the system will automatically send an **email notification** to the protocol applicant, informing them of the outcome.

There are two possible scenarios:

If the Protocol is Complete:

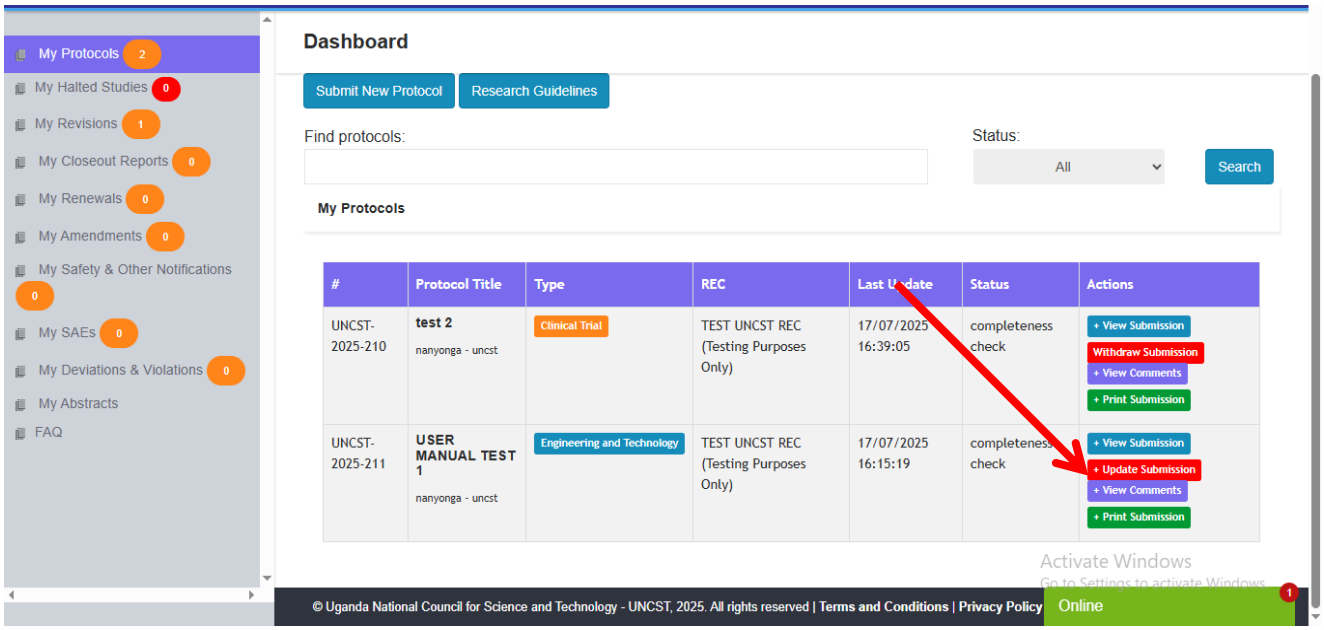
- The protocol status will change to **"Completeness Check"**, indicating it has passed the administrative review.
- The applicant will receive an email stating that the protocol is **complete and ready for further review**.

If the Protocol is Incomplete:

- The status will still show as **"Completeness Check"**
- The applicant will receive an email stating that the protocol requires **additional changes or documentation** before proceeding.

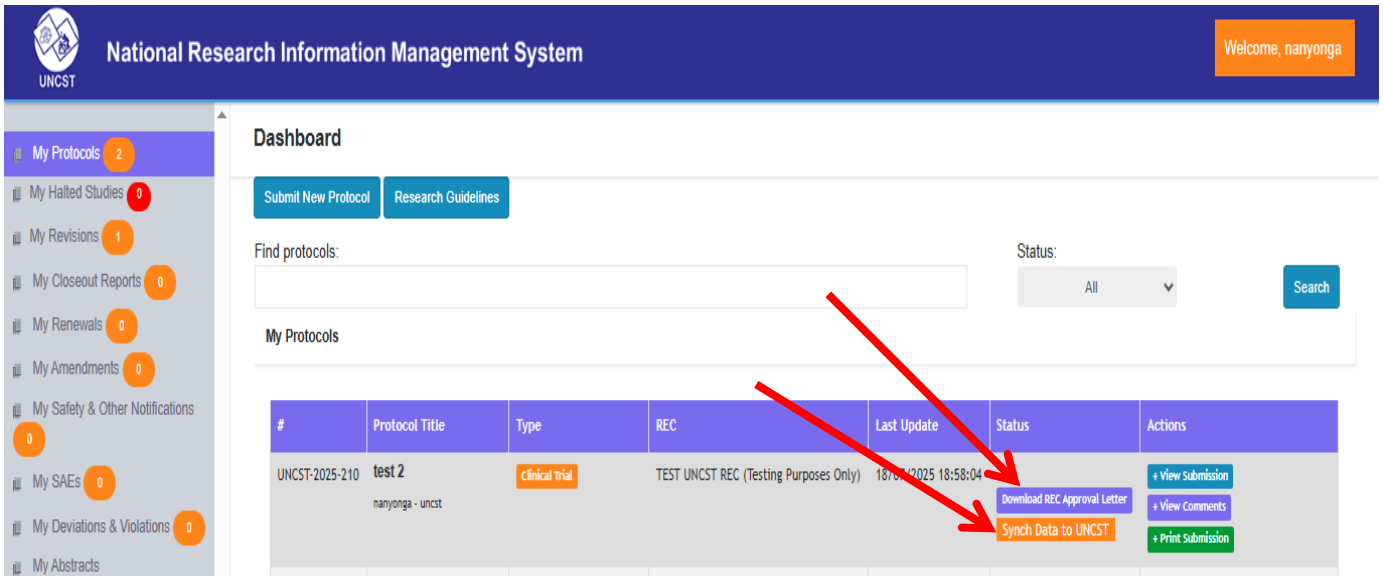
EDITING A SUBMISSION THAT WAS MARKED INCOMPLETE

1) Go to the **Protocols** page on your **Dashboard**.
2) Find the protocol that was marked as **incomplete**.
3) In the **Actions** column, click "**Update Protocol"** button.
4) To view the required changes, click on the **"View Comments"** link in the **Actions** column.
5) Once all necessary updates are made, click the **"Resubmit"** button to send the revised protocol for a second **completeness check**.



AFTER APPROVAL: DOWNLOADING APPPROVAL LETTER AND STARTING PERMIT APPLICATION

1) Once your protocol is **approved**, go to your **Dashboard**.
2) Locate your approved protocol in the list of submissions.
3) In the **Status** column, click on the **"Download Approval Letter"** link to get your approval document.
4) After downloading the letter, locate and click on the **"Synch Data to UNCST"** link.
5) You can now proceed to apply for a **research permit** within the UNCST module.



SUBMITTING SPECIFIC POST APPROVAL REQUESTS

1) Navigate to the appropriate **post-approval module** from the left-hand menu (e.g., **My SAEs**, **My Renewals**, or **My Revisions**).
2) From the list displayed, select the **specific submission** you wish to work on.
3) Click the **green button** labeled **"Click to submit [Type]"** to begin the submission process for that post-approval category.
4) A form will appear specific to the selected type (e.g., **SAE**, **Renewal**)—complete and submit the required fields as instructed.