Faculty of Science Human Ethics Committee (Science FHEC)

CSU has a two tiered system to review Human ethics applications. The Faculty of Science Human Ethics Committee considers Ethics Applications that are of low risk (the only foreseeable risk is one of discomfort) [National Statement 2.1.6].

If your ethics application is not low risk, you must submit it to the University Human Research Ethics Committee ethics@csu.edu.au. Please note that the contact details on any paperwork such as Information Sheets and Consent Forms will be different if you submit to the HREC rather than the FoS Low Risk Human Ethics Committee. All undergraduate projects must be low risk.

Submission Process

Use the website http://www.csu.edu.au/research/ethics_safety/human to access all forms for either level of risk:

- low risk proposal FHEC
- higher risk proposal HREC

For further information refer to the NHMRC website for guidelines (http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

To determine if your research is low or higher than low risk, complete the Low Risk Review Form (Form 2) which is on the CSU website. All questions are to be answered. If after completing the form and your research is low risk, complete the National Ethics Application Form (NEAF) and scan it together with the Low Risk Review Form (Form 2) and email them to the Faculty of Science Human Ethics Committee scienceFHEC@csu.edu.au. DO NOT press submit on the NEAF form as this will not forward the form to CSU.

If after completing the form your research is deemed not to be low risk, complete the National Ethics Application Form (NEAF) and email it to the University Human Research Ethics Committee (ethics@csu.edu.au).

Submit all supporting documentation with the original application. These include:
- Participant Information Sheets view guidelines
- Participant Information Sheets Template
- Participant Consent Forms view guidelines
- Participant Consent Forms Template
- interview questions
- focus group questions
- questionnaires/surveys
Before you apply...What you need to do:

1. Don’t leave your ethics application to the last minute. Plan when your research is intended to start. Begin your application months before this. When being assessed by the committee feedback may take many weeks. The committee does not meet in January.

2. Fill in the Low Risk Review Checklist
   i. Have you answered yes to any of the questions?
   ii. If you have and you still think the research is low risk, make sure you fill out the “special case” in section 6.

3. Log on to National Ethics Application Form (NEAF) site. Fill out the NEAF
   i. Keep within the word limits of each section of the NEAF.
   ii. Please provide a reference list with your literature review - it does not have to be extensive but relates to the currency of your research.
   iii. Please note that the University Human Research Ethics Committee recommends that the minimum requirement for data storage is at least FIVE years after the last publication arising from the data. This is a MINIMUM requirement and you may keep the data for longer.
   iv. Undergraduate student’s data storage response should allow just the recommendation of 1 year as per the NHMRC guidelines if the data is not going to be used in subsequent research.

4. When finished, save the NEAF as a PDF
   - Make sure all the forms are reviewed and signed by the appropriate parties. Printed and hand signed then scanned and attached as a separated page is acceptable
   - Email the documentation to the scienceFHEC@csu.edu.au
   - Dates for agenda closing are posted on What’s New and News or in S Drive /common/90days/FOSethics
   - Templates and proformas for Information Letters and Consent Forms can be found on the University Human Research Ethics Committee page
5. Information Sheets and Consent Forms

The contact information for information Sheets /consent forms / progress reports etc for projects approved by the faculty committee is

Executive Officer
Faculty of Science Low Risk Human Ethics Committee
Charles Sturt University
Locked Bag 49
Dubbo
NSW 2830
scienceFHEC@csu.edu.au
61 2 68857327

Waiver of Consent

If requesting a Waiver of consent the application must be submitted to the University HREC.

Approved prior by another Institution’s Ethics Committee

If your application has already received ethics approval from another fully constituted committee, fill in the appropriate form (Projects Already approved by Another HREC) on the University Human Research Ethics Committee page and submit it to the University HREC.

Tips for responding to a reviewed application

You will receive a written response from the committee within 7-14 days of the application being reviewed. If you are unclear about anything the committee has asked you to do, please contact the Executive Officer. The faculty committee is comprised of a member from each school in the faculty, a Chair, an external member and an executive officer.

Your application will either be:

- approved
- approved pending clarification of minor points or grammatical corrections by committee members
- resubmission - requiring it to be considered at a committee meeting once research/ethical issues are addressed or altered
- Not approved – the committee cannot approve it and it may be forwarded to the main HREC

If you are asked to review or amend your submission - you should provide your responses in a table such as that below and highlight any changes that have been made within the NEAF [using Adobe Acrobat PRO or using a word table].
For example....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Comments</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 3.1.1 Please clarify the funding source</td>
<td>Your response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6.4.2 Will other researchers have access to the data?</td>
<td>Your response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Letter – needs to state that the return of anonymous survey is implied consent</td>
<td>Your response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In considering your application:**

A response from the committee will take up to 14 days, so your expected time to begin data collection should be at least 14 days post the meeting date to which you are submitting.

- **Do not** submit an ethics application without proof reading and completing all relevant sections.
- **Students must** make sure that their supervisor has reviewed and signed their ethics application before submitting the application.
- **Chief Investigators must** make sure that they have read and reviewed applications prepared by other parties, such as research assistants, before signing and submitting the application.
- For further information refer to the NHMRC website [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/e72)
- Approval is for one year. Reports or extension requests need to be submitted before the one year anniversary.