

Faculty of Science and Information Technology

Faculty Ethics Methodology Peer Review Committee

Introduction

This Faculty, as required by Senate, has established through its Faculty Board a Faculty Ethics Methodology Peer Review Committee (FEMPRC) as a sub-committee of our Faculty Research and Research Training Committee (FRRTC).

This Faculty has a restricted number of research areas from which research projects for which Ethics approval must be sought. These lie in the School of Psychology, as well as some research programs in the School of Design, Communication and Information Technology and the School of Environmental and Life Sciences.

This sub-committee will have the roles of overseeing and auditing School-based processes, organizing reviewing of human and animal ethics applications where appropriate, and reporting to the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) or the Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC). The intent is not to replace active and successful School-based review programs, but to let them operate under delegation from the Faculty Committee. Where no formal schemes operate, review procedures will be initiated by the FEMPRC committee.

The Sub-Committee will have three permanent members, one of whom will act as chair of the Sub-Committee and is either a member of the FRRTC or else will serve on the FRRTC as a co-opted member with full debating and voting rights

FACULTY ETHICS PEER REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

This committee (FEPRSC) shall be a sub-committee of the Faculty Research and Research Training Committee (FRRTC).

There shall be three members of the FEPRSC sub-committee, at least one of whom shall also be a member of the FRRTC (appointed as an additional member, if necessary)

Membership of the Committee shall be for a two year period.

A current member may be re-appointed for a following term, if they agree.

One member of the FEPRSC shall be the head of the Psychology peer review committee.

The other two members shall be drawn one each from the School of Environmental and Life Sciences and the School of Design, Communication and Information Technology. It is anticipated that these other members will also be chairs of their respective School Committees, when these are formalised.

The FEPRSC shall elect its own Chair.

Members shall be invited and appointed by the PVC, on the advice of the FRRTC.

ROLE OF THE FEMPRC

The FEMPRC, in line with University Senate expectations, shall be the formal Faculty-appointed body for undertaking or delegating peer reviews on research submitted for peer review of methodology prior to seeking ethics approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) or the Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC)..

The FEMPRC shall serve as the body overseeing ethics peer review of methodology processes within the Faculty, and ensuring they operate effectively and efficiently within the guidelines of the University.

The FEMPRC shall meet formally at least once each semester to review both process and performance, and suggest such changes as it sees appropriate to the FRRTC for possible adoption.

It shall ensure that effective and approved mechanisms operate at School level where there is sufficient demand (in Psychology, SELS and DCIT) through a School-based review process.

The FEMPRC will need to review current School-based activity, and may need to take action to establish an effective School-based mechanism in Schools where such a process does not currently operate and where demand is deemed sufficient.

It may also need to conduct either random auditing of the in-School process or else sign-off on School-based reviews by a member of the FEMPRC. (It is up to the FEMPRC to decide the process it will adopt.)

Where there is little call for ethics review (as in Mathematics and Physical Sciences), it shall act as the review committee for such cases as arise from time-to-time. This may include review by members of the sub-committee and/or assignment of projects needing review to members of a panel of assessors maintained by the FEMPRC (with the latter presumed to be the most appropriate course of action).

The FEMPRC shall report to the FRRTC on the level and quality of ethics methodology peer review across the Faculty at least once each semester.

In advice to applicants, a minimum two week period should be allowed for methodology review prior to submission for ethics approval.

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Membership Term: October 2010 – October 2012

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School of Psychology:

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Membership Term: April 2009 – April 2011