

Making changes to your project after approval - The Amendment process

From time to time it may be necessary for you to make changes to your project after it has been approved. This could range from simple things like adding or removing investigators to more complex things like adding procedures, requesting additional animals, changing dose rates or methods of administration of substances.

It is important to understand that ALL changes to a project MUST be approved by the AEC prior to the changes being implemented. Failure to do so puts you in breach of your animal ethics approval and could result in withdrawal of your project approval or in some cases criminal charges.

In exceptional circumstances the Animal Welfare Officer alone or after consulting with the AEC chair may approve an emergency change when animal welfare is compromised and the change will improve animal welfare however this is the exception rather than the rule.

For this reason it is important during the initial project planning phase to conduct a "What if analysis" and try to build these scenarios into your project application to save time on future paperwork ie Amendment applications.

For all changes, even minor ones, Amendment paperwork must be submitted to the AEC.

UoW AEC has two amendment request forms. One that is used for addition/removal of investigators and one for all other changes to a project.

Amendment request forms are located on the [Animal Ethics committee webpage](#).

The amendment process

- Additional or removal of investigators are considered by an executive committee of the AEC by email. This is the only type of amendment request that is generally able to be considered via email. Until an investigator has been approved as an addition to the project by the AEC then that investigator may observe research activities but not handle any animals. All new investigators must complete the moodle training prior to working unsupervised and the face to face seminar as soon as possible. (unless they have completed Animal Welfare and Ethics training at another approved institution).
- ARRP (Animal research review panel) - the branch of the DPI that oversees all animal research in NSW has issued a directive that all other amendment requests must be considered at a face to face meeting of the AEC or the AEC executive).

This means that amendment requests are considered either at the full AEC meeting or at the AEC executive meeting that is held approximately 1/2 way between full meetings. For this reason it is imperative that changes are not left until the last minute.

- Amendment requests can be submitted via email as either a signed word or pdf document to the Animal Ethics Officer at RSO-AEC@uow.edu.au. If it is not possible to physically sign the document due to the PI being away, then an email approval may be submitted by the PI.
- On receipt of your amendment request it will be circulated via email to the AEC members who will then submit any questions they have in relation to the request to the Animal ethics officer. The AEO will then forward these questions to you. The initial request and response to any questions will be discussed at the next AEC full meeting or subcommittee meeting.
- You will receive notification after the meeting either in the form of an Amendment Approval Letter or, if the amendment was not approved, further questions or explanation.
- Sometimes Amendments that are submitted to the AEC executive need to be considered by the full committee due to the nature/extent of the proposed changes to the project.

The Animal Welfare officer is able to review drafts of your amendments, if you wish, prior to submission. (E: saraht@uow.edu.au)