Imperial College Research Ethics Committee (ICREC)

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were approved by the ICREC committee at a meeting in September 2006 and amended in 2014. The adopted Terms of Reference are listed below.

The Imperial College Research Ethics Committee shall:

1. Review research projects requiring ethical approval to be carried out by College staff, or students under the supervision of College staff, unless:
   a. They fall under the remit of the NHS or Clinical Trial Regulations on human subjects, tissues or databases of personal information.
   b. They involve animal subjects.

2. Following review:
   a. Approve the proposal without requiring any amendment;
   b. Require clarification or modification to any part of the proposal;
   c. Reject the proposal in part or in whole.

3. Demand or initiate another review at any point in the life of a project previously approved by the Committee or a Head of Department, and revoke approval if necessary, in circumstances where:
   a. There have been relevant or material changes to the personnel or the protocol.
   b. The Committee has concerns about the conduct of the researchers or of the research.
   c. Adverse events have been reported to the Committee (in line with the ICREC SOP).
   d. More than 5 years have passed since the last ethical approval.

4. Establish, implement and keep under review the codes of practice, procedures and policy guidelines for the consideration, approval and monitoring of research projects, including adherence to the International Conference on Harmonisation’s Good Clinical Practice (ICH GCP) guidelines.

5. Use the criteria for the evaluation of proposed research activities as set out in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) guidelines for the conduct of research involving human subjects and the associated NIH Multiple Project Assurance.
6. Ensure applicants have made arrangements for independent peer-review of their research projects, via the Peer Review Office prior to submission (if required).

7. Where ICREC is concerned with the review and approval of ethical issues relating to participant safety and research integrity, the committee requires that Head of Division and/or Academic Supervisor take responsibility for any general health and safety aspects of the research activity and conduct.

8. Assess the ethical concerns of research projects submitted for review and approval by ICREC.

9. Escalate serious concerns regarding research compliance or adverse events to the approving Head of Division and advise on corrective actions.

10. Review the Terms of Reference at the first Committee Meeting of each calendar year.