Guidelines for Chair’s Action – Senate Research Ethics Committee

In general all research applications are to be submitted via REO for consideration by all members of the Committee during a formal meeting of the Committee.

‘Chair’s action’ refers to the consideration by the Chair that takes place outside formal meetings of SREC. In such instance, the Chair acts on behalf of SREC in deciding whether to approve, require amendments or reject research ethics applications.

All research involving children (those under 18), those unable to give informed consent, minority groups, vulnerable categories (e.g. adults at risk, migrants), pregnant women or women in labour, and persons with a physical or mental disability, must be referred to a Research Ethics Committee (local or SREC) and cannot be approved through Chair’s action.

Senate Research Ethics Committee Policy for Chair’s Action

Subject to the above, the Chair of Senate Research Ethics Committee may consider taking Chair’s Action in consultation with the Deputy Chair, in the following cases:

1. Addenda to previously approved research proposals (e.g. change or add a researcher to the project or change a supervisor for student projects);
2. An extension of an approved study;
3. Approval of a previously tabled research proposal where the Committee agreed that the Chair could approve the requested amendments by Chair’s Action’ were requested;
4. Where a strict, tight funding deadline has to be met, and it is not possible to schedule the application within a timetabled SREC meeting and there has been insufficient time to review the application by virtual committee.

When Chair’s action has been taken, the details of any outcome(s) will be communicated to the full Committee and recorded in the minutes of a SREC meeting.

For information about when local Research Ethics Committees may consider Chair’s action, please see local policies and procedures.

Proposed: Circulated to SREC members for consideration: 23/04/2020

Approved by SREC: 04/05/2020