Ethics Committee Decision Procedure

Review by the School of Technology Ethics Committee will normally be the third stage in an ethical review process. Prior to this, Individual self-assessment and departmental review should be undertaken. Departments are, in most cases, able to provide the necessary level of review; projects for which this is not possible are referred to the School.

**Application**
- Application forms are completed by the senior primary applicant and accompanied by mandatory supporting documents.
- The School Ethics Committee will only accept applications signed off by the Chair of the departmental (or the University) Ethics Committee. Applications are to be sent to ethics@tech.cam.ac.uk by the relevant committee, not directly by the applicant.

**Application submitted**
- School Office acknowledges receipt (providing reference number) by e-mail.
- Office considers whether full enough information has been provided in order to determine who should conduct ethical review.
- Office makes decision as to whether research requires ethical review and if School of Technology Ethics Committee is appropriate assessor.

**School Office accepts**
- Secretary to Ethics Committee checks that all documentation is included and complete.
- Any advice - legal, HR, specialist - is sought and a report written as appropriate.
- Any correspondence with the applicant to ensure full understanding of the research and completeness of application takes place.
- Appropriate panel selected by the Chair of the Ethics Committee and approved by the committee by circulation.
- Application, and any accompanying advice, is circulated to Panel.

**Committee Review**
- Applicant or expert may be invited to attend meeting to present to Panel as required.
- Discussion of, and decision on, application takes place at a meeting of Panel members (minimum of three) only, without interested parties present.
- A review, and decision, by circulation may be possible at the discretion of the Chair.

**Decision**
- In most cases, a decision is made on the application within two months of receipt of full information.
- Applicant is informed of the Committee's decision by letter (sent electronically)
  - This decision may ask the applicant to address particular concerns of the Committee - these may require minor amendment or major revisions.
  - The applicant is required to address any concerns in a letter, outlining any changes to information previously submitted.
  - Committee sends further letter of decision where revisions are made.

**After approval**
- Any approval from the Committee is valid for research to commence within one year of decision letter date.
- Applicants are required to inform the Committee, in writing, of any changes made to research after approval, or any ethical concerns which arise during the project.
- A new application for ethical review would be required as a result of any substantial, non-administrative, changes.