



Introduction

Ethical Clearance Committee (ECC) Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya

1. Scope

Universities are expected to conduct high quality research in a responsible manner ensuring that ethical conduct is practiced at all time. Hence, each academic staff member is expected to undertake research in her/ his field of study, develop new knowledge and disseminate such new understandings to relevant stakeholders. Ethical conduct of research carry out by the academic staff of Faculty of Agriculture is to be ensured by an authorized body. The main role of the proposed Ethical Clearance Committee (ECC) is to provide ethical clearance for the research proposals submitted by the academic staff members of the Faculty of Agriculture. The committee is expected to provide an independent and timely review with suggestion for improvement of ethical aspects of objects used in the research, process for data collection and management at the outset of research. Thus, the approval process should serve as supporting mechanism for researchers but not as a barrier for timely submission of proposals, conducting of research and publication of research findings. Committee may also advice on getting approval from relevant regulatory agencies and laws applicable for certain activities of the proposed study.

2. Ethical Clearance Committee (ECC)

The ECC is an independent committee of the Faculty of Agriculture and shall be appointed by the Faculty Board. The committee along with the Faculty Research Committee (FRC) will prepare guidelines and operational procedures adhering to the University policies and giving due consideration to the diverse interests and the needs of the researcher. The guidelines and operational procedures for ethical clearance process have to be approved by the Faculty Board of Agriculture. The committee has a liberty to review the guidelines/operational procedures and update/ modify if necessary, once in every 3 years and obtain the approval of the Faculty Board accordingly.

- The committee will work independently without any interference from the appointing body.
- The committee will be comprised of 12-15 members from the Faculty of Agriculture and from outside representing different disciplines as listed in Table 1.
- Appointment of members is valid for a period of three years. Reappointing for another term will be possible. The Faculty Board reserves the right for reappointment and termination of the membership.
- Provisions will be available to obtain the opinion of an outside expert when the required expertise is not available in the committee.
- If a situation of conflict of interest arises, relevant member/s should refrain from being involved in the review process.

The Faculty Board approved and confirmed the nominations of the following members for the Ethical Clearance Committee for a period of 3 years from 2019 – 2021 (FB - 276).

Table 1. Committee members representing different disciplines (2019-2021)

Discipline	Member
Molecular Biology - Plant Science*	Dr. N.U. Jayawardana, (Secretary), Department of Agricultural Biology, Faculty of Agriculture
Molecular Biology - Animal Science *	Dr. K.K.S.P. Kodituwakku, Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture
Animal Welfare*	Dr. T.S. Samarakone, Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture
Human Behavior*	Dr. S. Kumar, Department of Agricultural Economics & Business Management, Faculty of Agriculture
Social Sciences*	Dr. L.N.A.C. Jayawardena, Department of Agricultural Extension, Faculty of Agriculture
Animal Science*	Prof. J.K. Vidanarachchi, Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture
Animal Nutrition*	Mr. M.B.P.K. Mahipala, Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture
Food & Nutrition of Human*	Prof. D.G.N.G. Wijesinghe, Department of Food Science & Technology, Faculty of Agriculture
Environmental Science*	Prof. M.I.M. Mowjood, (Chairperson), Department of Agricultural Engineering, Faculty of Agriculture
Clinical Sciences	Dr. Arinda Dharmapala, Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine
Medical Sciences	Dr. Eranga Siriweera, Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine
Psychology	Dr. Ramila Usoof-Thowfeek, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts
Legal Aspects	Mr. Romesh Karalliyadda
Chairman/Faculty Research Committee*	Prof. S.P. Nissanka, Department of Crop Science, Faculty of Agriculture

* Preferably from the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya.

3. Disclaimer

Scholarly review, issues with authorship and plagiarism will not be considered by the committee. The committee will not monitor the conduct of research projects unless there is a necessity. The committee will not be responsible on aspects pertaining to the integrity and privacy of data, responsible use of data and interpreting and disclosing of data to public.



Responsibilities of Committee Members

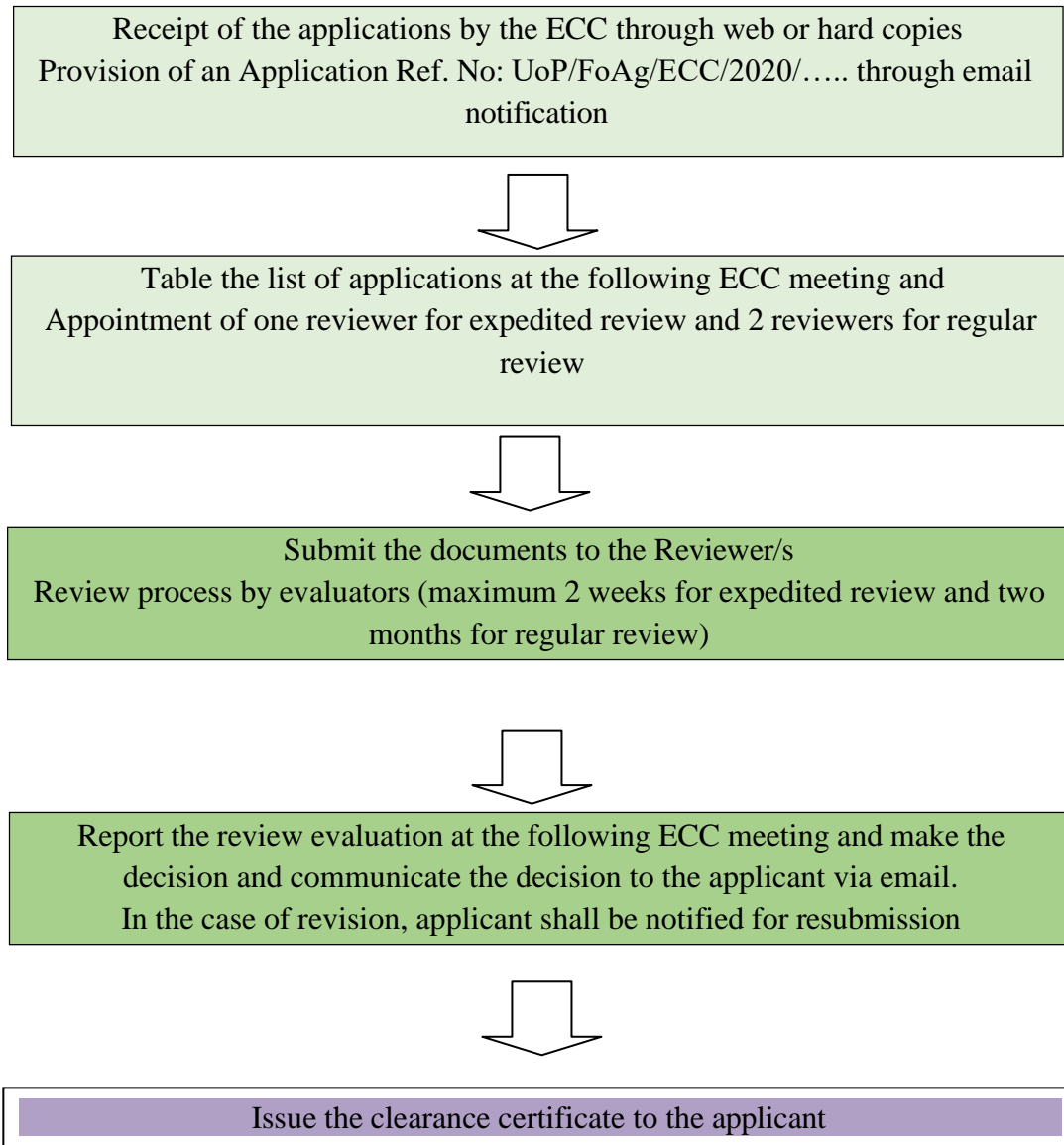
Ethical Clearance Committee (ECC) Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya

- 1) Members agree to follow the general responsibilities to:
 - a) Read and understand their functions as members of the ECC.
 - b) Keep up-to-date with national and international research ethics and regulatory guidance and take part in research ethics-related education.
 - c) Support the functions of the ECC
- 2) With respect to confidentiality, transparency and disclosure of conflicts of interest, members agree to:
 - a) Have their names, designations and affiliations publicly available as members of this committee.
 - b) Maintain confidentiality regarding deliberations during the meetings, applicants and content of the applications submitted.
 - c) Disclose all potential conflicts of interest that may arise with respect to an application that is submitted.
 - d) Remain impartial and objective when reviewing proposal/protocols. Decide independently whether the design and conduct of proposed studies will protect safety, rights and welfare of participants.
- 3) When participating at meetings, members agree to:
 - a) Attend meetings on a regular basis and remain until meetings are adjourned.
 - b) When a member is deemed to have a potential conflict of interest, abstain from reviewing the relevant protocol and leave the room during discussion of and voting on the protocol.
 - c) Present and lead discussions of applications assigned.
- 4) When conducting meetings and the review process, members agree to:
 - a) Respect the views of other members and the deliberative process.
 - b) Perform expedited reviews of minimal risk research.
 - c) Serve as primary reviewers for research in their areas of expertise.
 - d) Actively participate in the decision, by vote or consensus, whether to approve, request revisions, not approve or defer following deliberation at full committee meetings.
- 5) With respect to membership, members are aware of that:
 - a) Members are appointed for a period of three years.
 - b) Membership will lapse if a member fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the ECC without reasonable excuse, unless exceptional circumstances exist.
 - c) A member may resign from ECC at any time upon giving notice in writing. Chairperson shall inform to the Dean to fill the vacancy.



Review process for Ethical Clearance

Ethical Clearance Committee (ECC)
Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya





Guidelines for Application for Ethical Clearance

Ethical Clearance Committee (ECC)
Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya

1. Ethical review shall be conducted only for research projects dealing with human and animal subjects using primary or secondary data.
2. The applicant/principal investigator should be a probationary/permanent staff member of a University or an Institution. With respect to undergraduate or postgraduate research projects, the applicant shall be the research supervisor.
3. Applicants are advised to submit the documents according to the format provided by the ECC of Faculty of Agriculture.
4. Applications shall not be reviewed by the ECC until all the required documents are received (web upload in pdf format or in person submission)
5. The following documents must be submitted for Ethical Clearance.
 - a. Cover letter
 - b. Completed and signed Checklist
 - c. Completed and signed Application form
 - d. Research proposal
 - e. Study instruments and translation into Sinhala and Tamil (if relevant).
 - f. Information sheets, Consent form and Assent form and translation into Sinhala and Tamil (if relevant).
 - g. Review Sheet
 - h. Any other relevant documents
6. Applications must be forwarded to the ECC through proper channel (Head of the Department /Institution).
7. ECC shall issue a reference number upon receiving the application
8. Review process shall take maximum of 2 weeks for expedited review and two months for regular review.
9. The applicant can request for expedited review if there is a tight time frame for the research project and research involves minimal risk to participants. However, the decision remains within the ECC based on the content of the research project.
10. The status (approval/ revision/ rejection) of the application shall be notified via e-mail and an ethical clearance certificate will be issued on approved applications.
11. Retrospective approval shall not be granted for research already started or completed.