

How to make changes to your ethics application after you have received ethics clearance

Sometimes your research plans change and you need to alter your study in some way. The Ethics Committee (at either the university or school level, whoever dealt with your particular application) needs to be informed of any significant changes that may potentially impact on the risk category of your study. Any change on your ethics application documents is termed an *amendment*.

Where you need to make an amendment (i.e. where we need to be informed)

- If you want to add/remove an instrument of data collection,
- If you want to change your interview or survey questions,
- If you want to change your method(s) of data collection,
- If you want to add/remove a certain participant group,
- If you want to add/remove any additional researchers,
- If you want to add a new site of investigation that may require an additional permission letter,
- If you are substantively changing the project title (not just a word here or there).

Where you do NOT need to make an amendment (i.e. where we do not need to be informed)

- If you are changing your aims or objectives,
- If you are changing your supervisor.

How to make an amendment

You need to send documents by email to the ethics committee secretary/chair who had previously dealt with your application. The documents needed are:

- A letter of motivation, stating clearly what you want to change and why,
- A copy of the original clearance certificate/clearance number,
- Any additional forms (information sheets, consent forms, drafts of the instruments to be used),
- Any additional permission letters, if appropriate,
- An updated application form that reflects the changes you want to make (please contact Shaun Schoeman who will open the online system for you to enable these changes, if you have applied to the main committee).

What happens next

The amendment documents will be sent to the two reviewers who considered your original application, and you will receive feedback by email if the documents provided need to be changed. If everything is in order, you will be informed by email and the documents including the amendment will be added to your application.

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