

# Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee (AHREC)

## Service level report for the period 1 January 2024 – 31 March 2026

A Research Ethics Survey was completed in mid-2024 as part of the [Research Ethics Improvement Plan](#). A key area of feedback in the survey is that researchers would like better information about expected processing timeframes across the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (UAHPEC), Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee (AHREC), Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) and Biological Safety Committee (UABSC). This report details the processing timeframes for AHREC and will be updated quarterly.

### Time to first review

The *time to first review* time point looks at the time between a new application submission date and the first review outcome date. The table below details the total number of applications receiving a first review outcome each quarter over the reporting period and the associated processing timeframes (average, median and 80<sup>th</sup> percentile).

The Trend (Y) column shows whether the 2026 quarterly median is higher or lower than the 2025 annual median. The Trend (Q) column shows whether the 2026 quarterly median is higher or lower than the same quarter in the preceding year.

Period	# First Review Outcomes	Average Days	Median days	80th PCNT	Trend (Y)	Trend Q
<b>2024 Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>63</b>		
<b>2025 Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>72</b>		
Quarter 1 2026	59	56	57	72	↑ (8)	↓ (13)
<b>2026 Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>72</b>		

Although the Quarter 1 2026 Trend (Y) is 8 days higher, this is expected due to the December-January closedown period. The improvement in Trend (Q) of 13 days is largely due UAHPEC holding a meeting in January meeting for the first time in 2026.

### Time to final approval

The *time to final approval* time point looks at the time between the application submission date and the final approval outcome date. The *time to final approval* time point is longer than the *time to first review* time point due to the high proportion of applications that receive a first review outcome of 'Conditionally Approved'. These conditions must be satisfied before a final approval can be obtained. The table

below details the total number of applications receiving a final approval outcome over the reporting period and the associated processing timeframes (average, median and 80<sup>th</sup> percentile).

Quarter	# Final Approval Outcomes	Average Days	Median days	80th PCNT	Trend (Y)	Trend (Q)
<b>2024 Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>109</b>		
<b>2025 Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>119</b>		
1 2026	66	105	80	125	↑ (7)	↓ (18)
<b>2026 Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>125</b>		

As noted above, holding a meeting in January has resulted in a significant improvement to Trend (Q).

### Full and Conditional Approval Rates

The table below shows the number of applications that received a final approval during the reporting period and whether those applications received a Conditional Approval, full Approval or other Outcome at the first review.

The [Research Ethics Improvement Plan](#) is expected to result in an increase in the proportion of applications that receive a first review outcome of Approved (rather than Conditionally Approved) due to:

- introduction of clearer definitions for Standard Conditions, Minor Conditions and Non-Minor conditions,
- confirmation that Conditional Approvals are only required when there are Non-Minor Conditions and that applications with Standard and Minor conditions can be ‘Approved with Comment’.

This trend is evident over the reporting period and is expected to accelerate from Q2 2026 following the introduction of the new Ethical Guidelines and Human Ethics Application Form on 13 April 2026.

Period	# Final Approval Outcomes	Conditionally Approved (First Review)	Fully Approved (First Review)	Other Outcome (First Review)
<b>2024 Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>83.4%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>2025 Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>77.3%</b>	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
Q1 2026	66	65.2%	28.8%	6.0%
<b>2026 Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>65.2%</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>

### Ethics Improvement Plan

For more information about the Research Ethics Improvement Plan, visit the ResearchHub [here](#).

