

Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee (AHREC)

Service level report for the period 1 January 2024 – 30 June 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 80th 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
2024 Total	272	54	45	63		
2025 Total	350	58	49	72		
Quarter 1 2026	59	56	57	72	↑ (8)	↓ (13)
Quarter 2 2026	74	56	53	71	↑ (4)	↑ (8)
2026 Total	133	56	55	72	↑ (6)	

Quarter 2 2026 shows a slight increase in first review timeframes against both comparison points. The median was 53 days, which is 4 days higher than the 2025 annual median of 49 days and 8 days higher than the Quarter 2 2025 median of 45 days. This suggests that the Quarter 2 result has not improved compared with either the annual baseline or the same quarter in the previous year.

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 80th percentile).

Quarter	# Final Approval Outcomes	Average Days	Median days	80th PCNT	Trend (Y)	Trend (Q)
2024 Total	223	82	72	109		
2025 Total	321	96	73	119		
1 2026	66	105	80	125	↑ (7)	↓ (18)
2 2026	24	99	87	114	↑ (14)	↑ (17)
2026 Total	90	104	85	124	↑ (12)	

Quarter 2 2026 shows an increase in final approval timeframes against both comparison points. The median was 87 days, which is 14 days higher than the 2025 annual median of 73 days and 17 days higher than the Quarter 2 2025 median of 70 days. This suggests that final approval timeframes were slower in Quarter 2 2026 compared with both the annual baseline and the same quarter in the previous year.

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'.

Period	# Final Approval Outcomes	Conditionally Approved (First Review)	Fully Approved (First Review)	Other Outcome (First Review)
2024 Total	223	83.4%	10.3%	6.3%
2025 Total	321	77.3%	20.3%	2.4%
Q1 2026	66	65.2%	28.8%	6.0%
Q2 2026	24	75.0%	12.5%	12.5%
2026 Total	90	67.8%	24.4%	7.8%

Ethics Improvement Plan

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