

iRECS Animal Ethics FAQs

Research Ethics and Compliance Support (RECS) is excited to announce the shift of Animal Ethics application, review and compliance reporting to iRECS in late October 2023. There will be a transition period while RECS shifts existing animal ethics processes onto iRECS.

Below are some FAQs which you may find useful:

What is the last date I can submit my application/submission via Animal Ethics Online (AEO)? / When will iRECS be launched? / What is the Animal Ethics transition timeline?

Please refer to the [iRECS Information Page](#) for a summary table outlining the Animal Ethics submission deadline, iRECS launch dates and the transition timeline. Further details can be found below.

What happens to applications/submissions that are in progress after the AEO submission deadline has passed?

New Applications: All new applications received by the AEO new applications submission deadline of Thursday 21 September 2023 (5 pm) will be reviewed via the existing animal ethics review process until the review cycle is completed. For example, if you submit a new Animal Ethics application by Thursday 21 September 2023 (5 pm), the ACEC will review your application (incl. any revision resubmission(s)) until the review cycle is completed (e.g. approval is issued). RECS will be in touch with the nominated CI as the approved record will need to be manually transitioned onto iRECS after iRECS is fully operational (i.e. after 21 November).

Modifications: All modifications received by Friday 10 November (5 pm)* will be reviewed via the existing animal ethics review process until the review cycle is completed. For example, if you submit a new Animal Ethics modification request by Friday 10 November (5 pm), the ACEC will continue to review your modification request (incl. any revision resubmission(s)) until the review cycle is completed (e.g. approval is issued). RECS will be in touch with the nominated CI as the approved record will need to be manually transitioned onto iRECS after iRECS is fully operational (i.e. after 21 November).

It is recommended that any in-progress applications or modifications are actioned as soon as possible before the AEO Modification submission deadline of Friday 10 November to ensure the impact on your research is minimised. Where possible researchers are advised to submit urgent applications to the October meeting or postpone submissions until the December meeting (submission deadlines available via the [RECS Website](#)).

**If you wish to raise an urgent modification request after Friday 10 November (5 pm), please contact the Animal Ethics team (animalethics@unsw.edu.au) for advice. The Animal Ethics team will accept urgent modifications, however, prior communication is required.*

What is the difference between iRECS Soft Launch and Full Launch?

Soft Launch (17 October 2023*): This is the date that the iRECS Animal Ethics module will be available for new submissions only. These new submissions will be included in the November ACECs meeting for consideration. No historical project records will be available on iRECS at this time.

Full Launch (21 November 2023*): This is the date that all active project records migrated from the Animal Ethics Online (AEO) system will become available¹ on the iRECS system. From this date forward:

- All **modifications** to existing projects must be submitted via iRECS.
- **Other submissions** for active projects such as Protocol Deviation Reports, Adverse Event Reports and Condition Reports must also be submitted via iRECS.

¹The migration of attachments/documents for active projects will take place between 24 November COB – 26 November (inclusive) as such, legacy attachments/documents will be accessible in iRECS from 27 November 2023 onwards.

*subject to iRECS system readiness

Will Animal Ethics Online (AEO) External User profiles be transitioned to iRECS?

Due to cyber security concerns, existing external user profiles in the AEO system will not be automatically migrated into the iRECS system. Note that external users will remain listed against any projects that are part of, but they will not be automatically granted access to the iRECS system.

External users who require access to iRECS will need to submit an external account creation request (specifying your reason for request) to the UNSW Animal Ethics team (animalethics@unsw.edu.au). Access for UNSW staff and affiliates will be via UNSW MFA login (i.e. no registration required).

For any Chief Investigators and Second Chief Investigators who have a zID but are currently accessing AEO via an external user ID, please contact animalethics@unsw.edu.au as soon as possible so we can transition you to zID login for iRECS (your AEO login will remain as-is). Doing so will allow you to have a more seamless transition and immediate access to the iRECS system upon launch.

What information will be migrated into iRECS?

Approved Animal Ethics Applications (active as of 14 November 2023) will be migrated from the AEO system with data populated into the new iRECS application form.

Some modification data will also be used to populate the application form e.g., animal numbers, location, and personnel to reflect the most up-to-date data set.

Copies of all associated documents¹ will also be migrated and attached against the project record e.g., PDF of Animal Usage and Compliance reports, modifications, the existing approval letter, and all attachments related to any submission in AEO.

¹The migration of attachments/documents for active projects will take place between 24 November COB – 26 November (inclusive) as such, legacy attachments/documents will be accessible in iRECS from 27 November 2023 onwards.



Will expired or completed projects be migrated into iRECS?

Expired/completed projects (expired/completed as of 14 November 2023) in AEO will not be migrated to the new iRECS system. These records will become inaccessible after 31 December 2023. As such, we strongly recommend that Chief Investigators download any necessary files/forms from AEO **before 31 December 2023**. RECS will maintain records per [UNSW research records retention policies](#) within RAMS.

What happens to the existing Animal Ethics Online (AEO) system and the records in the system?

Due to cyber security concerns, the AEO system will be decommissioned and historical animal ethics applications, modifications and compliance reports will no longer be accessible after it is decommissioned. As such, it is strongly recommended that researchers download any necessary files/forms from AEO **before 31 December 2023**. RECS will maintain records in accordance with [UNSW research records retention policies](#) within RAMS.

How do I complete my Animal Usage and Compliance Report for 2023?

For projects that are active at the time of migration (i.e. active on or after 14 November 2023), you will need to submit the 2023 Animal Usage and Compliance Report in iRECS. RECS will relay the reporting instructions in January 2024.

For projects that were active in 2023 but have EXPIRED or been COMPLETED before 14 November 2023, you will be contacted separately by the Animal Ethics team (animalethics@unsw.edu.au) to submit the 2023 Animal Usage and Compliance Report via the existing AEO system by 30 November 2023.

Will the Animal Ethics Application and Modification requests be lodged through separate forms like they are done in the Animal Ethics Online (AEO) system?

No. In iRECS, the Application and Modification request will be lodged using the same form, where modifications will be made directly to the approved application. iRECS will automatically track all changes (excluding changes made within an attachment).

Note that as per the transition timeline, all modifications must be submitted via iRECS from 21 November 2023 onwards. We will provide instructions on the iRECS modification process closer to launch.

What is the transition timeline for other submissions to the UNSW ACECs?

Existing submission procedures (i.e., via email) for unexpected adverse event reports, condition reports, protocol deviations etc. will remain in place until 21 November 2023.

Upon the full launch of the iRECS system on 21 November 2023, the unexpected adverse event reports, condition reports and protocol deviation forms can be accessed via the "Create Sub-form" button on the iRECS project page. We will provide instructions on this process closer to the launch.

