

## Terms of Reference Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee

### Purpose Statement

The Australian National University Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee (AEEC) operates to ensure that the University complies with the standards required under *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 2013* (NHMRC, CSIRO, UA). The Committee also ensures that the University operates within the *ACT Animal Welfare Act 1992* and the legislation of other jurisdictions where the ANU is licenced to undertake animal based research. The broad functions of the Committee are to emphasise the responsibilities of both investigators and institutions using animals and to ensure compliance of research with animals undertaken at the ANU with relevant legislation.

### Terms of Reference

The ANU AEEC's terms of reference conform with the NHMRC's *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition 2004* (the Code), and the *ACT Animal Welfare Act 1992*.

The AEEC Terms of reference include, on behalf of the Institution, the provision to:

1. In accordance with the Code, approve and monitor all research and teaching activities undertaken by ANU staff that involve the use of animals, on campus, in the field or at other approved locations.
2. Approve procedures for the care, breeding, acquisition, transport and housing of research animals.
3. Examine and approve written proposals to use animals for scientific purposes, require modifications to proposals, and place conditions on approvals or reject proposals.
4. Approve only those studies for which animal use has been justified and conform to the requirements of the Code.
5. Suspend or withdraw the approval of any project not being undertaken in accordance with the original approval and/or the Code.
6. Maintain a record of proposals, projects and minutes from every formal AEEC meeting.
7. Approve the procedures for authorising the humane euthanasia or emergency treatment of any research animal.
8. Inspect and approve facilities where research animals are to be housed.
9. Examine and comment on all institutional plans and policies which may affect the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes.
10. Examine and endorse plans to modify existing animal facilities and construct new facilities to ensure animal welfare requirements have been met as set out in the Code; this includes communicating any concerns to the University.

11. Recommend to the University any measures needed to ensure that the requirements of the Code are upheld.
13. Declare any conflicts of interest and manage conflicts of interest in accordance with the Code, AEEC operating procedures and University Policies.
14. Monitor the Universities compliance with meeting reporting obligations as required by the Code and state and territory Governments.
15. Undertake all duties and responsibilities as specified in the Code.

## **Animal Ethics Committee Membership**

Membership is determined by the animal welfare legislation. Research Services, in close consultation with the Chair, monitors the membership of the ANU AEEC to ensure it meets the requirements of legislation at all times.

### **Mandatory Membership**

**Chair** — Institutions must appoint a chairperson of the AEC. Institutions should consider appointing a chairperson who holds a senior position in the institution. If the chairperson is an external appointee, institutions must provide the chairperson with the necessary support and authority to carry out the role. The chairperson may be appointed in addition to Category A to D members. Institutions should consider appointing a chairperson who is independent of the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.

**Category A**—a person with qualifications in veterinary science that are recognised for registration as a veterinary surgeon in Australia, and with experience relevant to the institution’s activities or the ability to acquire relevant knowledge.

**Category B**—a suitably qualified person with substantial and recent experience in the use of animals for scientific purposes relevant to the institution and the business of the AEC. This must include possession of a higher degree in research or equivalent experience. If the business of the AEC relates to the use of animals for teaching only, a teacher with substantial and recent experience may be appointed.

**Category C**—a person with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who is not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution, and who is not currently involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. Veterinarians with specific animal welfare interest and experience may meet the requirements of this category. While not representing an animal welfare organisation, the person should, where possible, be selected on the basis of active membership of, and endorsement by, such an organisation.

**Category D**—a person not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution and who has never been involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, either in their employment or beyond their undergraduate education. Category D members should be viewed by the wider community as bringing a completely independent view to the AEC, and must not fit the requirements of any other category.

## **Other Membership**

**Animal Care Technician:** Institutions should appoint to the AEC a person responsible for the routine care of animals within the institution.

**Special members:** Institutions may appoint additional members with skills and background of value to the AEEC

**Advisors:** non-voting members that can advise the AEEC on specific aspects of animal based research. Advisors may include the ANU Veterinarian and experts in fields such as alternatives to the use of animals and wildlife studies.

In order to ensure compliance with the Code, and ensure an effective quorum the ANU appoints at least two members per mandatory category with at least one third of the membership being Category C & D members at all times. Formal meetings of the AEEC must be quorate in order to proceed, at least one member from each mandatory category must be present. Attendance of members is formally recorded in the official Minutes of each meeting.

## **Appointment of Committee Members**

The ANU is responsible for nominating and appointing all members. The Chair is appointed by the ANU Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVC-R). The nomination of Category C Members should be supported by an animal welfare organisation. Suitable candidates for the other categories are organised by Research Services through close consultation with the Chair, Director Research Services and the Committee. Once a suitable candidate is identified the Executive Officer organises the relevant documentation for consideration by the DVCR, including a copy of the candidate's Curriculum Vitae and may also include referee reports. The nomination for appointment is approved by the DVC-R.

### **Term of Appointment**

Membership is for an initial term of six months, followed by an offer of three years if all parties are in agreement for membership to continue. The initial six months allows new members time to familiarise themselves with the Committee's business and operations, ensure that the time commitments are understood, without making a long-term commitment, and also enables the ANU to ensure new candidates are suited to the role.

### **Induction of new members**

Induction of new members is undertaken to ensure a smooth transition of new members onto the Committee, providing the support and resources required to fulfil their new role.

Induction of new members is undertaken by the Executive Officer and Chair and includes the provision of relevant reference material. For the initial six months of membership an existing member (where one exists) of the same category mentors the new member.

### **Re-appointment**

Before a three year appointment ends the Chair, in consultation with the Director Research Services, considers the benefits of recommendation of another term of appointment, and provides the recommendation to the DVC-R as per the recruitment procedure above. Members will be notified in writing by the Chair when their term has expired.

## Professional Development of Members

### Purpose

The University is committed to providing equal opportunities to individuals, including committee members, to acquire and enhance skills, knowledge and abilities through specific development opportunities that are assessed as being suitable and assists with their particular role. This support is provided within the limits of available opportunities and budget.

### Development program principles

1. In determining the most appropriate development opportunities for AEEC members, consideration will be given to the value to be obtained from the various training opportunities on offer and to ensure these opportunities are offered equitably to all members.
2. A range of appropriate development opportunities will be identified based on suggestions by AEEC members, and approved by the Director Research Services in consultation with the Chair and subject to the availability of funds.
3. An equitable process, using agreed criteria, will be implemented to target professional development to areas of greatest need and value. The criteria will include considerations such as professional development needs, training opportunities already afforded to the member, and availability of funds.
4. The level of funding available for professional development will be determined in part by the opportunities identified and the number of members attending each event. It will also be dependent on other divisional budgetary considerations. It is anticipated that members will be asked to nominate for specific events in advance.

Version	Date	Author	Approved By	Date
1.0	19 August 2016	Research Services	DVC-R	27 August 2016