

Use of Animals in Research Responsibilities of Principal Investigators

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects of the welfare of animals as given in the *VUW Code of Ethical Conduct for the Use of Live Animals for Teaching and Research*. A selected summary of these explicit and implicit responsibilities is given below.

1) Authorisation for Research: It is the responsibility of the PI to obtain approval from the AEC before beginning a programme of research that uses any vertebrate animals or any octopus, squid, crab, lobster or crayfish.

2) Significance of Research: The PI must continually reconsider the value of specific animal manipulations to the overall aim of the study before carrying out each series of tests on animals.

3) Consideration of Alternatives: If a suitable alternative to animal experimentation becomes available, the PI must consider whether or not to accept this alternative procedure in view of the desire to minimise the number of animals used.

4) Notification of Changes in Procedure: It is the responsibility of the PI to notify the AEC in advance before modifying a research programme. Major changes may require approval from the AEC at one of its scheduled meetings; therefore, projects should be planned well before the actual starting date.

5) Training and Supervision of Co-Workers: It is expected that the PI will ensure that all students, technicians, and collaborators are properly trained to carry out specific animal manipulations. Close personal supervision must be maintained until such time that **complete competence** has been attained. This is especially true for the administration of anaesthetics, for surgical procedures, and for post-operative care of animals. An Animal Training Certificate must be completed for each investigator. The PI must ensure that everyone connected with a project, including students, technicians, and collaborators, have read the *VUW Code of Ethical Conduct for the Use of Live Animals for Teaching and Research* and are aware of their individual responsibilities for the welfare of animals they are using. **The ultimate responsibility, however, rests with the PI.**

6) Keeping of Records: The PI is required to maintain accurate records of animal use during a project. On completion of the project, the actual numbers of animals used must be submitted to the AEC, along with a Final Report on the results of the study. Under normal circumstances, the AEC will only liaise directly with the PI and not with other co-workers or students working under the PI's supervision.

7) Publication of Results: Approved research projects are expected to result in publication of results without undue delay in journals of international standing.

8) Submission of List of Research Publications: It is the responsibility of the PI to provide the AEC with a list of publications that arise from a project, even if that project is no longer in force.

9) Respect for Animals: Work done with animals within this University has the purpose of advancing and disseminating knowledge, and the animals are used and sometimes sacrificed to these serious ends. The Animal Ethics Committee expects that at all times, all animals (even after sacrifice) will be accorded respect in keeping with these ends.