

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

For the Use of

Animals for Research, Testing and Teaching

Version 1.0

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Contents

1. Introduction / Background on the Activities of the Applicant.....	3
2. Establishment, Functions, Powers and Membership of the Animal Ethics Committee	3
3. AEC Procedures.....	6
4. Approval of Projects by the AEC	9
5. Responsibilities of AEC Approved Projects	13
6. Animal Facilities	15
7. Monitoring	16
8. Arrangements for External Parties to Use the CEC and AEC	17
9. Complaints Procedures	18
10. Process to Amend, Suspend or Revoke the CEC	18

1. Introduction / Background on the Activities of the Applicant

1.1. Scope of Activity

Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) and the organisations parented under the VUW Code of Ethical Conduct (CEC) undertake animal work for the purposes of research and teaching, with the principle aims of educating students and furthering knowledge on conservation practices, behaviour and addiction, and the molecular and cellular mechanisms of disease that can only be answered using animal models.

1.2. Research, Teaching, and the Three Rs

Victoria University is committed to the principles of the Three Rs (Reduction, Refinement, and Replacement), and all work carried out under the CEC shall only be approved once the VUW Animal Ethics Committee (“the AEC”) is satisfied that the work is in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and its Amendments and all other Acts of Parliament, regulations and by-laws relating to the obtaining, holding, possession, care and treatment of animals.

1.3. Responsible Persons

The Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) Code of Ethical Conduct (“the Code”) is to be administered by the AEC, which is responsible to the Code holder, the Vice-Chancellor.

1.4. Persons/Organisations under the CEC

The CEC applies to all staff and students working for Victoria University of Wellington and any other organisation parented under the CEC.

2. Establishment, Functions, Powers and Membership of the Animal Ethics Committee (AEC)

2.1 Functions, duties and powers of the AEC

2.1.1. The use of animals for teaching and research within VUW by staff and students shall be controlled by the Animal Ethics Committee of VUW. No member of staff or any student shall use animals for teaching, testing, or research without the prior approval of the appropriate AEC.

2.1.2. The AEC shall review written or on-line applications for the use of animals for teaching and research. The AEC will issue approval for a proposed animal use only if the AEC judges that the proposed use is in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act 1999, its Amendments, and all other Acts of Parliament regulations and by-laws relating to the obtaining, holding, possession, care and treatment of animals. The AEC may set, vary, and revoke conditions of project approvals as the AEC deems necessary for compliance with New Zealand law.

2.1.3 The AEC will conduct routine monitoring of all activities in which animals are used for research, teaching, or testing.

2.1.4 The AEC shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with the CEC and has the power to require a University staff member or student, through the chairperson of their School to either modify (as directed by the AEC) or stop their teaching or research programme involving live animal use.

2.2 Membership of the AEC

2.2.1 Composition of the AEC

The AEC will consist of a minimum of nine members including:

Four statutory members:

- A senior member of the academic staff capable of evaluating proposals involving animal manipulation to act as the convenor and chair appointed by the Code holder for a period of up to 3 years, with the option of reappointment;
- An animal welfare representative nominated by an approved animal welfare organisation (the Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RNZSPCA)), who is not employed by or associated with VUW, or involved in the use of animals for research and teaching;
- A layperson nominated by a territorial authority or regional council, not employed by or associated with VUW, or associated with the scientific community or an animal welfare agency;
- A veterinarian nominated by the New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) who is not employed by or associated with VUW to act as the AEC Veterinarian;

Additional organisational members:

- A representative member of a student's organisation at VUW
- An academic representative appointed by the director of the main Animal Facility of the University
- The head animal technician of the University
- The manager of the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research Animal Facility (BRU)
- A Victoria University staff member acting as Secretary for the AEC
- A Deputy convenor capable of evaluating proposals involving animal manipulation
- A contracted IDAO veterinarian.
- Additional organisational members appointed by the Chair with approval from the Vice-Chancellor or their representative.

2.2.2 Organisational members

University members of the AEC will be appointed from within VUW or any parented organisation subject to the CEC. Organisational members must have experience working with animals, and have knowledge of the CEC and the Animal Welfare Act. Positions may include,

but are not limited to, technicians working with animals, welfare advisors, directors of animal facilities, or science advisors. Appointment is subject to endorsement by the AEC.

The veterinarian contracted by VUW for signing Institutional Drug Administration Orders and conducting monitoring visits of research labs and animal facilities (IDAO veterinarian) may sit on the AEC as a voting member.

2.2.3 External members

The Layperson, Animal Welfare Representative, and AEC Veterinarian will be reimbursed for their travel in the Wellington region at the standard University rate, and will receive no less than \$200 per meeting for their time.

2.2.4 Additional members

The Chair shall have power to co-opt additional members who add knowledge or specialist experience that will aid in the evaluation of applications or have experience in areas that are currently poorly represented which may include, but are not limited to: welfare, ethics, husbandry, physiology, pharmacology, immunology, pathology, surgery, health, nutrition, ecology and statistics.

2.3. Appointment Procedures

The Chair shall be appointed by the Vice Chancellor or their representative, subject to endorsement by the AEC. Appointments will be for a period up to three years, with the option of reappointment.

The Chair of the AEC is responsible for contacting external agencies for nominations to fill the positions of the Layperson, Animal Welfare Representative, NZVA Veterinarian. The Chair may appoint any nominations subject to endorsement by the AEC for a period of up to three years. Members may be reappointed for additional terms with the approval of the nominating body.

The IDAO Veterinarian position is appointed by the Chair subject to the endorsement by the AEC and approval of the Code holder or their representative.

The Deputy chair is appointed by the Chair from within the standing membership of the Committee.

All other members of the AEC shall be appointed by the Chair of the AEC subject to endorsement by the AEC and approval of the Code holder or their representative, for a period of up to three years. Members may be reappointed for additional terms as appropriate.

2.4 Vacancies

In the event of a prolonged, unexpected, or continuing absence of a member of the AEC (such as non-attendance at the majority of the meetings in a calendar year or such that it affects the quorum of the AEC) the Chair may request permission from the AEC Code holder or their representative to appoint a replacement.

2.5 Induction and Training of New Members

New AEC members shall be provided with copies of the VUW CEC, policies and additional National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) training resources by the AEC Secretary. Where appropriate, a mentor from the AEC may be nominated to answer any enquiries from the new AEC member.

2.6 Term of appointment

Appointments are subject to endorsement by the AEC for a period of up to 3 years in the first instance. Members may be reappointed for additional terms, subject to approval by the Code holder and/or the nominating body.

3. AEC Procedures

3.1 AEC meetings

The AEC shall meet to assess any applications, major modifications, notifications, correspondence of importance, or monitoring reports for the use of animals in research or teaching submitted by applicants and will assess any complaints made to the AEC regarding animal welfare.

3.2 Frequency of Meetings

- The AEC shall meet four times annually, typically in March, June, September and December.
- The date of the next AEC meeting shall be agreed at the close of each AEC meeting.
- The meeting date may change, by prior notification and general consent of the AEC.

3.3 Timing for Circulation of Agenda and Minutes

The AEC meeting agenda shall be prepared and distributed by the AEC Secretary. Meeting documents will be distributed electronically to the AEC members generally two weeks or more prior to the AEC meeting. The AEC minutes shall be kept by the AEC secretary and distributed prior to the subsequent meeting for AEC approval.

3.4 Quorum

Decisions on protocols can only be made if a quorum is present at a meeting. A quorum consists of greater than 50% of members and must include at least two statutory external members.

3.5 Decision Process

Decisions on protocols shall be made by consensus. If the AEC is unable to reach a consensus then the applicant may be contacted to provide additional information to support their application or be invited to speak directly to the AEC regarding their research protocol.

3.6 Conflict of Interest

In cases where members of the AEC have conflicts of interest, such as when their own protocols are under discussion by committee members, the members may on occasion be asked to leave the meeting while the application is discussed. In most cases, however, members will remain at the meeting and contribute to the discussions on their own protocols. VUW Staff are bound by the VUW Conflicts of Interest Statute. All conflicts of interest will be included in the minutes.

3.7 Effective Input of AEC Members

The Chair shall conduct the AEC meetings in a way that ensures external members of the AEC have opportunities to comment on protocols being considered.

3.8 Confidentiality

Unless requested otherwise by the applicant, the AEC may release some or all of the details in an application as necessary to meet the university's obligations under NZ law. Where appropriate, names and details will be withheld to maintain the safety of the researchers or to protect commercially sensitive information, subject to legal advice.

3.9 Use of Tele/Video Conferencing

AEC meetings are held in person; however, applicants invited to talk to the AEC may be via tele/videoconferences at the discretion of the Chair when attendance in person is not possible.

3.10 Consideration Between Meetings

Urgent matters, such as requests for information and complaints that arise between meetings may be dealt with by the Chair, and/or Secretary (refer to section 4.3).

3.11 Public Presence at Meetings

Meetings are not open to the public and attendance is by invitation only.

3.12 Applicant Presence at Meetings

Applicants may be invited to speak directly to the AEC at a meeting at the discretion of the Chair, and Secretary. Applicants will be requested to leave prior to the AEC making any decision on an application.

3.13 Secretarial Support

The Senior Risk and Compliance Advisor will act as the Secretary of the AEC and as the administrator for the online application process.

3.14 Record Keeping and Information Management

All use of animals approved by the AEC will be recorded. Individual users shall, on behalf of the AEC, maintain the records for their use and make them available as required in terms of the regulations. These records shall be kept for a minimum of seven years and shall comprise the records required under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 as stipulated on the Animal Use Statistics Application/Final Return Form provided by MPI and shall include a record of

- (a) The type of animal manipulated or used
- (b) The number of animals of each type manipulated or used
- (c) The source of supply of each animal used
- (d) The status of each animal used
- (e) The purpose for which each animal was used
- (f) The previous history of use of the animal
- (g) The grade or degree of manipulation of the animal
- (h) The fate of each animal used

Any physical copies of forms shall be held by the AEC Secretary or the VUW Archivist for at least the minimum period specified in the Animal Welfare Act. Online forms submitted through the designated VUW systems will be held in accordance with the VUW Information Technology Service security and maintenance policies.

3.15 Reporting of Statistics to MPI

Applicants are responsible for providing accurate animal numbers used and manipulation grades with the final report for each project, using the Animal Manipulation Figures form supplied by MPI. The AEC Secretary is responsible for collating and reporting the animal use numbers to MPI. Outside organisations using the VUW CEC can elect to have the VUW AEC report their animal use statistics to MPI, or can report their own use directly.

3.16 Process to amend the CEC

Amendments to the CEC shall be subject to the approval of the Director-General of the Ministry for Primary Industries as required in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act. The AEC, through

the Chair, may recommend to the Code holder that amendments be made to the CEC, with notification sent to MPI for approval of any such amendments.

4. Consideration of Projects by the AEC

4.1 Criteria for Consideration

4.1.1 Approval for use of animals must be sought with respect to the following types of animals, as defined in the Animal Welfare Act 1999

- 1) all mammals (including any marine mammal)
- 2) all birds
- 3) all other vertebrate animals (including reptiles, amphibians, and fish)
- 4) any octopus, squid, crab, or crayfish (including freshwater crayfish)
- 5) any other member of the animal kingdom that is declared from time to time by the Governor General, by Order in Council, to be an animal for the purposes of the Animal Welfare Act 1999.
- 6) The above animal types include any mammalian foetus, or any avian or reptilian pre-hatched young, in the last half of its period of gestation or development, including marsupial pouch young but not including human beings or other prenatal, pre-hatched, larval, or other such developmental stages of animal types other than mammals, birds, and reptiles.

4.1.2 Manipulations requiring approval

Beginning in 2018, approval shall be required for all procedures involving animals, including the killing of animals for dissection or for use of their tissues and the breeding of animal welfare-compromised animals. In particular, approval for use of animals must be sought if the animal is subject to one of the following, defined as a manipulation by the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

- Any interference with its normal physiological, behavioural, or anatomical integrity by
 - i) Deliberately exposing it to any parasite, microorganism, drug, chemical, biological product, radiation, electrical stimulation or environmental condition.
 - ii) Subjecting it to enforced activity, unusual restraint, abnormal nutrition, or surgical intervention.
 - iii) Depriving it of its usual care.

Any therapy or prophylaxis necessary or desirable for the welfare of any animal will not require approval.

Note: Where the application of this CEC is uncertain, the AEC encourages informal consultation with the AEC.

4.1.3 Animals used for experimental purposes must be lawfully acquired, properly cared for, of appropriate species, and used in suitable numbers. The animals must also be of suitable health status. Detailed guidance on these issues can be obtained from the NAEAC's Good Practice Guide for the Use of Animals in Research, Testing and Teaching. Overall, the benefits of the use

of animals must be balanced against any harms that may be caused to them by a manipulation. These objectives must be clearly stated in an application in plain, non-technical language, and the extent to which the objectives have been met must be included in the final report on the results of the study. The AEC reserves the right to rescind approval if it considers that the stated objectives do not reconcile with outcomes for reasons that were within control of those involved with the application. (See section 7.5)

4.1.4 Information to be provided by applicants

In considering whether to approve an application for animal use, the AEC must be satisfied with respect to the following, each of which the applicant is specifically required to address in making application to the AEC.

- i. The application shall state why the proposed use of animals is desirable and whether there are any practical alternative approaches that avoid the use of animals and yet achieve the identical goal. The applicant should directly state how they have considered the principles of the Three Rs: Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement.
- ii. The application shall state whether the species is appropriate on scientific, technical, humanitarian and educational grounds for the procedures proposed, to allow extension of the body of knowledge in the case of a research proposal or to provide the desired educational aim in the case of a teaching proposal. The AEC will not approve use of an endangered or threatened species unless the findings are expected to assist the management and conservation of that species, and only if Department of Conservation approval has been obtained.
- iii. (a) In the case of a research protocol, the application shall include an assurance that the number of animals used will be the minimum required to ensure an unequivocal interpretation of the findings. An indication of the maximum number of animals to be used shall be given in the application. The AEC must be satisfied that the experimental design is adequate.

(b) In the case of a teaching protocol, an assurance must be given that the number of animals to be used is the minimum compatible with the educational objective.
- iv. In the case of a research protocol there must be good reason to believe that the findings will add to the scientific understanding of biological functions and behaviour, or will extend the body of knowledge aimed at improvement in the health and welfare of humans or animals or the productivity of animals.
- v. In the case of a research protocol the investigator shall state whether the protocol is a duplication of previous work. Duplication shall in general only be considered ethical if evidence is provided that the original study requires scientific validation, or if the study was flawed or inadequate such that the conclusions were invalid.

- vi. Teaching is a prime function of VUW. With respect to applications for teaching purposes, in general, live animals may only be used when there is no alternative satisfactory method to achieve an appropriate educational objective.
- vii. Graduate education is an essential role of the University, and applications for the use of animals for research towards a dissertation or thesis shall be made by the supervisor and shall be considered with respect to both educational and research objectives.
- viii. In general the AEC will not approve multiple procedures on a single animal but recognizes that in certain experimental or teaching exercises multiple procedures may be necessary. Excessive intervention shall be grounds for not approving an application.
- ix. The application shall state whether the animal has been lawfully acquired and whether the source of animal is appropriate for the proposed use. Where possible, animals should be used that have been specifically bred for research and teaching.
- x. The application shall provide details of where and how the animals are to be housed, who is to care for them, who is to perform any manipulations and who has primary responsibility for their care and for the experimental work/teaching. The AEC must be satisfied that the facilities are adequate to allow for the general health and welfare of the animals at all times, that the personnel have the appropriate training and expertise to care for the animals and to perform the manipulations. Where people from organisations other than those on the VUW campus are undertaking manipulations, proof of their ability/training will be required by the AEC before protocols are approved.
- xi. The application shall state the proposed fate of the animal at the end of the experiment/teaching. If the animal is to be killed, either as part of the manipulation or subsequently, the means of euthanasia and the personnel involved must be approved by the AEC. The means of euthanasia and disposal must comply with the methods considered by the AEC to be humane and generally in accord with standard practice.
- xii. The applicant shall provide details and satisfy the AEC that the animals will be inspected at frequent intervals by persons with sufficient expertise to recognise any animal in ill health or distress. Appropriate means must be available to keep pain and distress at a minimum, or within reasonable levels and in the case of post-operative care consistent with the accepted practice of veterinary surgeons. Facilities must be available, provision made in the protocol and authority given to those in immediate care of the animal to allow for immediate humane destruction of an animals if pain and distress cannot be held within reasonable levels.
- xiii. The AEC must be satisfied that during surgical procedures, appropriate anaesthetics are used to eliminate sensitivity to pain. Where recovery from anaesthesia is not intended, the animal must be killed in a humane way at the conclusion of the experiment.

- xiv. The AEC will not approve the use of a neuromuscular blocking agent without concurrent use of an anaesthetic except in exceptional circumstances.

4.2 Outcomes for Consideration

The AEC will either:

- (a) approve an application;
- (b) approve an application in principle, subject to the provision of minor or technical modifications to the Secretary;
- (c) approve an application subject to the provision of specified details to the Secretary and that are acceptable to the Chair of the AEC or a specified sub-group of the AEC;
- (d) defer an application subject to the provision of specified details for consideration by the full AEC;
- (e) not approve an application.

Decisions will be provided in writing to the Principal Investigator.

4.3 Approval of Projects Between Meeting Dates

Interim approval for projects rated A-C may be given when necessary by an Interim Approval Subcommittee of the AEC consisting of the AEC NZVA veterinarian, a second statutory external member of the Committee, and a third organisational member of the AEC. Projects rated D or E are not eligible for interim approval.

4.4 Maximum Approval Period

Approval shall be given for a period of 3 years or any lesser period requested or a period the AEC shall determine. Where on-going projects extend beyond 3 years, a new application for the work is required, and any publications that have resulted from the work to date reported.

4.5 Power to Suspend, Revoke and Vary Approvals

The AEC retains the power to suspend or revoke approvals or set, vary or revoke conditions of project approval in the event that new information relating to the project comes to the attention of the AEC, or as a result of the AEC's monitoring of work undertaken, or where the AEC has concerns for the welfare of the animals being used in the experiments not accounted for in the original application.

The AEC reserves the right to cancel or suspend a protocol if the chief applicant fails to comply with the reasonable requests of the AEC in a timely and satisfactory manner.

4.6 Changes to Approved Applications

Modifications and amendments to an approved protocol can be made by submission of the appropriate form to the AEC for approval. Approval for major changes to a protocol will be

decided by the full Committee; minor changes such as changes to personnel, timeline changes or minor changes in procedural detail may be approved by the AEC Secretary and/or the Chair. All minor non-personnel changes not seen by the full Committee will be re-assessed at the next full meeting of the AEC.

4.7 Protection of AEC Members

No member of the AEC will be personally liable for any act done or omitted by the AEC in good faith in the course of its operations as specified in section 104 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

5. Responsibilities of AEC Approved Projects

5.1 Compliance

5.1.1 Responsibility

The Principal Investigator or course organiser must accept primary responsibility for work undertaken, including the training of personnel in animal handling and surgical procedures, selection of an appropriate animal species, the choice of the number of subjects, the nature of the procedures and all matters related to the continuing welfare of the animals and their ultimate disposal according to the principles outlined in the CEC.

5.1.2 The AEC or its appointed representative shall have the right at any time to inspect the facilities in which the animals are housed, the procedures being used, the expertise of the personnel, and the condition of the animals, for the purpose of ensuring research or teaching involving manipulation of any live animal is carried out in accordance with the CEC.

5.1.3 The AEC shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with the CEC and can require a University member through their Head of School to either modify (as directed by the AEC) or stop their teaching or research programme involving live animal usage. Failure of University staff and students to comply with the Animal Welfare Act, regulations or bylaws pertaining to the care and treatment of animals shall be dealt with under the VUW Conduct Statutes. Penalties for offences under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 are outlined in Section 119 of the legislation. These conditions also apply to parented organisations using the VUW CEC.

5.2 Appropriate Qualifications

The Principal Investigator must provide to the AEC at the time of the application sufficient evidence of the experience of the personnel manipulating animals and undertaking experiments. The Principal Investigator or course organiser must accept primary responsibility for work undertaken, including the selection of an appropriate animal species, the choice of the number of subjects, the nature of the procedures and all matters related to the continuing welfare of the animals and their ultimate disposal according to the principles outlined in the CEC.

The AEC may at any time undertake monitoring to assess the competency of staff and students performing animal manipulations.

5.3 Transportation of Animals

Where animals are transported as part of work approved by the AEC, Principal Investigators must ensure that animals are transported in containers that are purpose-built for their type of species and meet recommended international best practice.

5.4 Housing of Animals

Animals must be housed so as to ensure that their general health is safeguarded and that undue stress is avoided. Sufficient space, according to the species, should be allocated for each animal. Environmental needs such as appropriate temperature, humidity, ventilation, lighting and social interaction should also be consistent with the needs of the species concerned. Animals must receive a supply of food appropriate to their requirements and the quality and quantity required to preserve their health, with free access to water, unless the object of the experiment is to study the effects of variation in these nutritional requirements.

The AEC must be satisfied that facilities are adequate to allow for the general health and welfare of the animals at all times, and that the personnel have the appropriate training and expertise to care for the animals.

5.5 Sick and Injured Animals

Sick or injured animals should immediately, according to circumstances, either receive appropriate veterinary care or be euthanized. When untoward outcomes occur or unplanned euthanasia of animals is required or unplanned deaths of animals occur as a direct result of the research or teaching procedures, the outcomes must be reported in writing to the AEC as soon as practicable with a summary of the steps being taken to avoid further outcomes of this type. Animal facility managers shall periodically monitor the health of the animals to ensure that sick animals can be treated or euthanized to prevent diseases from spreading to other healthy animals in the facility.

5.6 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

New or significantly amended SOPs relating to standard operation of a facility or experimental procedures shall be submitted in writing to the AEC for evaluation by the Standard Operating Procedures Sub-Committee. Approved SOPs will be added to the register of approved protocols and where appropriate, made available for reference to all animal users.

5.7 Adverse Events

Where adverse events occur that impact on the welfare of the animals being manipulated, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to take immediate action to resolve the adverse event. Any event that arises shall be communicated to the Chair or Secretary via an incident report form as soon as practicable. The AEC will evaluate the incident and steps will be taken to resolve the issue and if necessary take further action to prevent a repeat of the reported incident. In the event of an act of God or other natural disaster outside the control of humanity, such as a flood, earthquake or fire, VUW or the affected facility will enact its emergency management plan to ensure the welfare of the animals held as soon as it is safely possible.

5.8 Grading

Applicants at the time of submitting an application must indicate to the satisfaction of the AEC the impact grading of the proposed manipulations of the animals. Where appropriate, the AEC may adjust the grading to more accurately reflect the impact on the animals. An applicant may appeal a change of grading decision by the AEC, but after re-consideration of the appeal, the AEC final decision stands. Guidance is available to applicants to aid with their impact grading within the online application forms.

5.9 Euthanasia for tissue collection/dissection

Where animals are being euthanized for the purpose of tissue collection/dissection, the AEC requires that all euthanasia conforms to current approved SOPs for animal euthanasia (refer to section 4.1.2).

5.10 Notification of work not requiring formal approval

The AEC shall be notified in writing of animal work being carried out that does not require formal approval by the AEC, for the purpose of ensuring that the AEC is aware of any such work.

6. Animal Facilities

6.1 Management of Animal Facilities

All animal facilities overseen by the AEC must have a quality management plan outlining the management of the facility and its general operation such that its operation is in accordance with good practice. Additionally, all animal facilities must be covered by an emergency management plan that outlines the steps that will be taken in an emergency event.

6.2 Development of SOPs

The AEC reserves the right to request and review SOPs for the operation of animal facilities at VUW for review and revision by the Standard Operating Procedure Sub-Committee.

6.3 Monitoring Animal Facilities

The AEC or its appointed representative shall have the right at any time to inspect the facilities in which the animals are housed as specified in section 5.1 and section 7. Any member of the University or other persons may bring to the attention of the AEC any concern regarding compliance with the CEC. A written record of all inspections will be kept by the AEC for later reference.

7. Monitoring

7.1 Powers of the AEC

The AEC has the power to inspect all animals, animal treatments, and animal facilities under AEC review. The AEC requires animal users to keep records of animal health and manipulations and the AEC reserves the right to review such records at any time. Between meetings, this power is vested in the Chair or his/her nominee.

Any member of the AEC can request access to animals or facilities at any time, subject to the approval of the Chair. Facilities will be inspected routinely at least annually by AEC members and a report supplied to the AEC. The AEC can require a Principal Investigator to either modify (as directed by the AEC) or stop their teaching or research programme involving live animal usage if appropriate procedures are not in place.

7.2 Frequency of Monitoring

The AEC may elect to undertake inspections of animal facilities or site visits to evaluate investigator competency at its discretion. Site visits may be initiated by a number of events, including, but not limited to:

- 1) receipt of complaints;
- 2) at the request of the AEC when evaluating a protocol, modification, or report;
- 3) at the request of the Secretary/Chair/IDAO Veterinarian for routine evaluation of the facility at a frequency of one or more visits a year;
- 4) at the request of a member of the AEC;

7.3 Monitoring of Low, Medium and High Impact Manipulation Projects

The AEC will monitor at least 10% of projects graded A or B. When protocols involve an impact grade of C or higher, the AEC may request interim reports or periodic site visits to evaluate the experiments underway. All protocols of impact grade D or E will be monitored by the AEC. When AEC members are visiting an animal facility, they may assess experiments underway and notify the AEC if any concerns arise. The Principal Investigators shall report any unanticipated welfare concerns back to the AEC as they arise to allow the Committee to reassess the project as required.

7.4 Monitoring by Nominated Veterinarians

The IDAO veterinarian or the NZVA veterinarian may at their own discretion or by the direction of the AEC undertake monitoring of procedures and techniques for the purpose of assessing competency of researchers or welfare of the animals. Any monitoring shall be reported back to the AEC in a written report and the records kept on file.

7.5 End of Approval Reporting

At the completion of an approved project, the Principal Investigator will, unless directed otherwise by the AEC, complete and return a final report for the project specifying the outcomes of the project, any animal welfare concerns, and stating any improvements that could be made for future manipulations of the same nature. Where final reports are not submitted in a timely fashion the AEC may elect to reject any future applications from a Principal Investigator until a satisfactory report is supplied.

7.6 End of Approval Grading and Statistics

At the completion of an approved project, the Principal Investigator must return, in conjunction with the final report, a completed animal statistics form to the AEC specifying animal numbers used and the impact grades. External parties using the VUW CEC, with approval from the AEC, may elect to collect and report animal statistics separately from VUW; however, any such information shall be supplied to the AEC at the time of the annual return to MPI. Where animal statistics information is not supplied in a timely fashion, the undue delay may be dealt with as misconduct under the VUW Animal Ethics Policy.

8. Arrangements for External Parties to Use the CEC and AEC

The AEC may on occasion provide assistance to external organisations. Such arrangements with outside organisations shall be considered on a case-by-case basis. The AEC will accept such arrangements only if it believes the Committee has the appropriate expertise to review the application. The conditions for monitoring of animal manipulations, as set out by the AEC, are confirmed with the applicant. A VUW academic, postdoctoral fellow, or other permanent employee will act as Principal Investigator for the project and thus be responsible for adherence to the VUW CEC.

An external applicant shall be required to complete the standard animal use application form, but submission must be through the VUW Principal Investigator. Members of the AEC shall perform local supervision. Distant supervision may be by arrangement with personnel contracted to act on behalf of the AEC. Such contracted personnel shall have appropriate qualifications and experience, as determined by the AEC, to be able to satisfactorily monitor manipulations performed on animals. Formal written reports shall be used to document all monitoring activity of the organisations contracted out by the AEC.

All arrangements by external parties to use the VUW CEC shall be notified in writing to the Director-General, MPI. Such outside organisations shall comply with the CEC, and the arrangement must be re-confirmed when a new CEC is approved.

9. Complaints Procedures

9.1 Reporting of Complaints

Complaints about the AEC or any matter relating to animal welfare and the use of animals for research or teaching by VUW or a parented organisation shall be addressed in the first instance to the Chair of the AEC and shall be in writing.

9.2 Procedural Complaints

Any member of the AEC who believes that the AEC itself or the Code holder is failing to comply with the Animal Welfare Act, regulations under the Act, or the CEC may lodge a formal complaint in writing to the Chair or to the AEC Code holder or to the Vice-Chancellor, or their representative. In exceptional circumstances a report may be made directly to the Director-General, MPI, as detailed in section 103 of the Animal Welfare Act.

9.3 Animal Welfare Complaints

Animal welfare complaints received by the AEC from members of the public, employees or AEC members, shall be considered by the Chair who may consult with the members of the AEC as appropriate, and may call a special meeting of the AEC to resolve the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved within the Committee, it shall be reported to the Code holder or their representative. A complaint made with regard to the Chair should be reported directly to the Code holder. Where possible the AEC shall treat complaints as confidential.

10. Process to Amend, Suspend or Revoke the CEC

Amendments to the CEC shall be subject to the approval of the Director-General of MPI (as required in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 1999). The AEC, through the Chair, has the right to recommend to the Code holder that amendments be made to the CEC, with notification sent to MPI for approval of any such amendments.

Draft code prepared by: Adrian Bibby
Senior Risk and Compliance Advisor
Organisation: Victoria University of Wellington
Application Date: 16/10/2017

Code holder: Grant Guilford
Vice Chancellor of Victoria University of Wellington

Approval date: 9/11/2017
Valid from: 22/11/2017
Valid to: 21/11/2022