



Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose Statement

The primary responsibility of the Australian National University (ANU) Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) is to ensure, on behalf of the University, that all activities relating to the care and use of animals are conducted in compliance with the *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 2013* (the Code).

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 review proposals, 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.

Accountability

The ANU Animal Ethics Committee is accountable to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) who is delegated with the oversight of research ethics at the University.

Terms of Reference

These terms of reference have been developed to comply with the Code, and the *ACT Animal Welfare Act 1992*.

They include, on behalf of the Institution, the provision to:

1. Approve and monitor all research and teaching activities undertaken by ANU staff and students that involve the care and use of animals.
2. Review applications, procedures, policies and guidelines for activities associated with the care and use of animals and approve only those activities that are ethically acceptable as specified by clauses 2.1.5, 2.3.2, and 2.3.26 of the Code.
3. In the process of examining and approving written proposals to use animals for scientific purposes, require modifications to proposals, and place conditions on approvals or reject proposals.
4. As per Section 2.3.2 of the Code, conduct follow-up review of approved projects and activities through post approval monitoring (i.e. through the review of annual reports, inspections, veterinary reports, meetings and other communications), and allow the continuation of approval for only those projects and activities that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the Code.

5. Take appropriate actions regarding unexpected adverse events (UAEs) in line with Section 2.3.24 of the Code.
6. Suspend or withdraw the approval of any project not being undertaken in accordance with the approved protocol and/or the Code.
7. Take appropriate action regarding non-compliance as per 2.3.2vi and 2.3.25 of the Code.
8. Approve the procedures for authorising the humane killing or emergency treatment of any research animal.
9. Inspect and approve facilities where research animals are to be housed including housing conditions, practices and procedures involved in the care of animals in facilities. Examine and comment on all institutional plans and policies which may affect the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes. Inspections should include at least one Category C or D member as per 2.3.20.
10. Examine and endorse plans to modify existing animal facilities or 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. Provide advice and recommendations to the University on any measures needed to ensure that the requirements of the Code are met.

The Animal Ethics Committee must:

11. Maintain a record of proposals, projects and minutes from every formal AEC meeting.
12. Declare any conflicts of interest and manage conflicts of interest in accordance with the Code, AEC Operating Procedures and University Policies.
13. Monitor the University's compliance with meeting reporting obligations as required by the Code and state and territory Governments.
14. Report directly to the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Research & Innovation) on all matters affecting research and teaching involving animals at the University.
15. Submit a written report annually on its activities to University Council. The report will be in accordance with clause 2.3.29 of the Code.
16. Undertake a review of the operation of the AEC annually with the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and the Chair of the Committee as per Section 2.1.9 of the Code.
17. Undertake all duties and responsibilities as specified in the Code.
18. Act in line with its Operating Procedures.

In order to meet the requirements of the Code the ANU will arrange an independent external review at least every four years to assess the institution's compliance as per Section 6 of the Code.

Animal Ethics Committee Membership

Membership is determined by the ACT animal welfare legislation and that of any state/territories with ethics agreements in place in addition to chapter 2.2 of the Code. The ANU Research and Innovation Services (RIS), Research Ethics Office in close consultation with the Chair, monitors the membership of the ANU AEC to ensure it meets the requirements of legislation and the Code at all times.

Conditions of Appointment

- Appointments to the Animal Ethics Committee will be made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).
- Members will be advised in writing of their appointment to the AEC and the conditions of their appointment.
- The Australian National University will provide legal protection for all AEC members, in respect of liability that may arise in the course of the bona fide conduct of their duties as members.
- A person's membership of the Animal Ethics Committee may be withdrawn by the University at any time during the period of appointment. Any such decision will be advised in writing where possible.

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 AEC.

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

Membership Quorum

In order to ensure compliance with the Code and ensure an effective quorum, ANU appoints at least two members per mandatory category with at least one third of the membership being Category C and D members at all times. Formal meetings of the AEC 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 Minutes of each meeting.

Committee Executive

The AEC may agree to establish an AEC Committee Executive as per 2.2.23 of the Code. This must include the Chairperson and at least one member from Category C or D. The Committee Executive is approved to review minor amendments that **are not likely to cause harm to animals or change the level of the pain and distress as outlined in the original application.** The operation of the Committee Executive is detailed in the ANU AEC Operating Procedures.

Version	Date	Author	Approved By	Date
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