

INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE



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1 ESTABLISHMENT

The Institutional Biosafety Committee is a sub-committee of the Research Committee, and will provide reports, recommendations and/or advice to the Vice-President (Research) via the Research Committee.

2 FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This Committee's functions and responsibilities, as determined under the [Gene Technology Act 2000](#) (Cwlth), [Gene Technology Regulations 2001](#) (Cwlth), [Gene Technology \(Queensland\) Act 2016](#) (Qld), and [Queensland Biotechnology Code of Ethics](#), take into consideration instruments issued by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee, including but not limited to, the [Guidelines for Accreditation of Organisations](#), [Explanatory Information on the Guidelines for Accreditation of Organisations](#) and the [National Framework of Ethical Principles in Gene Technology 2012](#), are to:

- 2.1 Make recommendations to the Vice-President (Research) via the Research Committee, on matters relating to statutory, professional or other requirements relevant to compliance with biosafety standards, including the development and implementation of appropriate policy documents pertaining to biosafety.
- 2.2 Provide advice to employees and students on work involving genetically modified organisms.
- 2.3 Arrange initial and annual inspections and provide advice on the containment facilities required for work with genetically modified organisms, in advance of any application to the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator for certification of facilities.
- 2.4 Develop procedures and monitor compliance that appropriate records are kept of approved facilities for genetically modified organisms.

- 2.5 Evaluate proposals for teaching and research work involving genetically modified organisms, in terms of risk assessment for planned activities, facilities, training required, and notification to relevant regulatory agencies, etc.
- 2.6 Confirm that proposals for exempt dealings and notifiable low-risk dealings with genetically modified organisms are correctly classified, within current regulations, and communicate the correct information to the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.
- 2.7 Assist employees in the preparation of applications to the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator for licensed dealing with genetically modified organisms, including compliance with any imposed conditions.
- 2.8 Monitor activities through:
 - audit reports, and
 - accident reports relating to activities dealing with genetically modified organisms
- 2.9 Liaise with relevant regulatory agencies on any other relevant aspects of accreditation, compliance and licensing.
- 2.10 Report to the Research Committee after each meeting on matters brought before this Committee.

3 REFERRAL OF MATTERS

This Committee may refer any item to the Vice-President (Research) and/or Research Committee for discussion, consideration and/or action, and may refer relevant matters for action or noting to other committees or officers as appropriate.

4 SUB-COMMITTEES

This Committee may establish standing or ad hoc sub-committees and approve their terms of reference, which must be constructed to ensure consistency and coordination between the functions of all sub-committees. This Committee may co-opt employees to serve on its sub-committees and/or working parties.

The Committee will receive reports from its sub-committees and be responsible for monitoring and evaluating each sub-committee's activities against their functions and responsibilities.

5 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The membership of this Committee will be constituted in accordance with the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator accreditation requirements and with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2243.3 – Safety in laboratories, with knowledge and expertise covering relevant areas of current research and teaching.

Appointed members will be approved by the Vice-President (Research), on recommendation from the Chair. The Vice-President Research), in consultation with the Dean School of Health, Medical and Applied Sciences, will appoint nominated members.

This Committee will comprise:

Ex-officio members:

- the delegated University Health and Safety Officer.

Appointed members:

- a Chair, with relevant qualifications and experience, from the University community
- a bio-containment engineer
- a member of the community, who is independent of the University.

Nominated members:

- a microbiologist from the University community

- a molecular biologist from the University community
- a biomedical scientist from the University community
- a technical officer with knowledge of PC2 laboratories and equipment.

Co-opted members:

- Such other members co-opted by the Chair to provide input into particular issues or applications, where necessary.

All members are expected to represent and maintain effective communications between their business area and this Committee, as appropriate.

New members will, on their appointment, receive relevant induction information and briefings to assist them to meet their Committee responsibilities.

Terms of Office

Ex-officio members will serve for the duration of their appointment. Ex-officio members may send a nominee when unable to attend a meeting, or nominate a standing nominee.

Appointed and nominated members will serve for a term of up to three years, extendable by mutual agreement.

Leave of absence

Where a member is aware that they will be absent from the University and unable to attend Committee meetings for an extended period, the member may apply to the Chair for leave of absence for the period. For the purpose of calculating membership and quorum, the membership will be reduced by the number of members on approved leave of absence at the time of the meeting.

6 RIGHTS OF AUDIENCE AND DEBATE

This Committee may extend rights of audience and debate on a standing or ad hoc basis. Attendees with rights of audience and debate may participate in meetings, but have no voting rights.

The University Senior Executive and University Management Committee members have standing rights of audience and debate.

Employees and external stakeholders may request the opportunity to address the Committee. The Chair will consider and determine these requests.

7 OBSERVERS

Observers are welcome with the Chair's prior permission and provided they advise the Secretary in advance.

Observers are entitled to see and hear the proceedings of the meeting but have no voting rights and no right to speak at meetings, unless invited to do so by the Chair. Observers must leave the meeting when requested by the Chair, or if any matters are to be considered in closed session.

8 CHAIR

The Chair will be appointed by the Vice-President (Research) and will be an appropriately qualified and experienced employee of the University community.

The Chair will serve for a term of office of three years, extendable by mutual agreement.

The members present will elect an alternate Chair if the Chair is unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

9 SECRETARY

The Vice-President (Research) will nominate the Secretary.

10 CASUAL VACANCIES

A casual vacancy for an internal member will be filled by calling for expressions of interest within the University, or by approach to suitably qualified potential members. Recommendation for appointment will be made from the Chair to the Vice-President (Research).

A casual vacancy for an external member may be filled by advertisement via CQUniversity networks or external advertisement calling for expressions of interest. Where specific expertise is sought, individual approach to suitable candidates may be made. Recommendation for appointment will be made by the Chair to the Vice-President (Research).

11 REMOVAL OF A MEMBER FROM OFFICE

This Committee may terminate a person's membership for misconduct by a vote of two-thirds of those present at a Committee meeting called in accordance with these terms of reference, and for which due notice of the motion to terminate the person's membership has been given.

Where a member or their nominee does not attend three consecutive meetings without adequate cause, that person's membership may be terminated. A person who has had their membership terminated may apply to the Committee to have their membership reinstated.

12 QUORUM

The quorum for a committee meeting will be 50 per cent of the membership, plus one.

Where a loss of quorum is identified, the meeting may be adjourned until a time the Chair determines.

13 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members must declare to the Chair any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest they may have with any item on the Committee's agenda. If such absence leaves a gap in professional expertise, the Committee must invite another expert member to join for consideration of the matter. All declarations and actions taken to address a conflict of interest will be reported.

If the Chair or Committee deems a member to have a conflict of interest in a matter before this Committee, the member must not be present when the Committee considers that matter.

Further details on identifying and dealing with a conflict of interest are provided in the [Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure](#).

14 MEETINGS

Committee meetings may be held face-to face, by telephone, videoconference, or other electronic means. Committee meetings will be held at least once per year, convened as business arises, as determined by the Chair.

Committee decisions may be made at a duly called and constituted meeting, or by a resolution in writing to all members and physically or electronically signed by at least 75 per cent of members who are entitled to vote on the resolution other than those on an approved leave of absence.

Committee members will fully prepare for each meeting, read the documentation in advance, and make every reasonable effort to attend each meeting.

15 ACCESS TO RESOURCES

External Committee members will be provided with access to any resources they reasonably require to fulfil their duties as a Committee member.

The University will indemnify the members of the Committee against all claims for damages, compensation or costs, including and legal costs incurred in defending such claims, arising from membership of the Committee.

16 AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Agenda papers will be distributed at least five working days before the meeting. Members will be notified by email of the location and availability of material. Members are encouraged to view the agenda electronically during the meeting.

Only with the Chair's permission will late papers or the tabling of papers be accepted. All papers must be submitted to the Secretary by the specified submission deadline.

Committee records are subject to the Queensland [Public Records Act 2002](#) and must be retained by the Secretary in accordance with the University's [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#).

Minutes are to be prepared from each meeting. The Chair will review the draft minutes and action sheet of each meeting, after which the Secretary will circulate the documents to all Committee members and include them in the agenda papers for the next meeting.

17 EVALUATION AND REVIEW

To ensure the Committee is fulfilling its duties, it will undertake an annual self-assessment of its performance against these terms of reference and provide that information to the Research Committee, along with any information the Research Committee request to facilitate its review of the Committee's performance and its membership.

18 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Australian Standard AS/NZS 2243.3 – Safety in laboratories

[Gene Technology \(Queensland\) Act 2016](#) (Qld)

[Gene Technology Act 2000](#) (Cwlth)

[Gene Technology Regulations 2001](#) (Cwlth)

[Guidelines for Accreditation of Organisations](#)

[Explanatory Information on the Guidelines for Accreditation of Organisations](#)

[National Framework of Ethical Principles in Gene Technology 2012](#)

[Queensland Biotechnology Code of Ethics](#)

19 FEEDBACK

Feedback about this document can be emailed to policy@cqu.edu.au.

20 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Delegated Approval Authority	Research Committee
Advisory Committee	Biosafety Committee
Required Consultation	N/A
Administrator	Vice-President (Research)
Next Review Date	28/10/2024

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	Vice-Chancellor and President 20/11/2007
Amendment Authority and Date	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) 6/04/2011; Vice-Chancellor and President 14/07/2011; Vice-Chancellor and President 2/10/2013; Vice-Chancellor and President 15/07/2015; Minor update to titles 1/07/2016; Executive Research Committee 13/09/2017; Vice-Chancellor and President 04/03/2020; Research Committee 28/10/2021.
Notes	