

ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEE MONITORING POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 CQUniversity's Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) is responsible for assessing, providing clearance and monitoring the use and care of animals for any research or teaching projects undertaken at CQUniversity.
- 1.2 This policy and procedure outlines how the Committee will monitor the progress of approved research projects and teaching activities to ensure compliance with the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#), hereafter the Code.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to Committee members, employees and students conducting research and teaching using animals at CQUniversity.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 The Code and the [Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference](#) requires the Committee to monitor the progress of approved research projects and teaching activities in order to determine that research protocols and teaching practices are preserved in the form in which they were approved. Inspections of all animal housing and laboratory areas must also be conducted regularly by Committee members to ensure compliance with the Code.

4 PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The Committee will monitor approved projects by way of inspections and review of reports [Code 2.3.17].
- 4.2 Where possible, animals should be obtained from breeding and supply facilities that maintain conditions consistent with the Code or relevant industry code. Housing conditions, practices and procedures involved in the care of animals in breeding and holding facilities of the University must be approved and monitored by the Committee.

- 4.3 Investigators and teachers have personal responsibility for all matters related to the welfare of the animals they use and must act in accordance with all requirements of the Code. This responsibility begins when an animal is allocated to a project and ends at the completion of the project.
- 4.4 The chief investigator is responsible for:
- the day-to-day monitoring of the animal/s wellbeing [Code 2.4.16, 2.4.18]
 - maintaining records to verify that the welfare of animal/s has been monitored [Code 2.4.18(vii), 2.4.30–2.4.33, 3.1.22], and
 - notifying the Committee of any unexpected, adverse events that may impact on the wellbeing of an animal in his/her care [Code 2.4.18(ix), 2.1.5(v)(d), 3.1.24–3.1.25].
- 4.5 The animal carer allocated to each project is responsible for:
- animal/s wellbeing prior to the allocation to the project [Code 2.4.5], and
 - liaising with the chief investigator to notify the Committee of any unexpected, adverse events that may impact on the wellbeing of an animal in their care.

Inspections

- 4.6 Committee members will carry out inspections of animal housing facilities and laboratories of the University at least annually, and fieldwork regularly [Code 2.3.18]. The frequency and timing of inspections will be determined by factors such as number and accessibility of sites and the amount, type and variety of scientific and teaching activity [Code 2.3.19].
- 4.7 Inspections of fieldwork conducted at extremely remote sites or where access is difficult, may be performed by a delegate and can be facilitated or corroborated with photographic or video imaging [Code 2.3.23].
- 4.8 Notice will be given to researchers of an intended inspection. Where practicable up to 48 hours' notice will be given.
- 4.9 Notwithstanding section 4.8 above, the Committee reserves the right to carry out random unannounced inspections of approved research projects.
- 4.10 The inspection team where possible, will consist of at least three members of the Committee, one of whom will be a category C or category D member. The Committee may delegate to other independent persons the authority to inspect remote sites and monitor projects [Code 2.3.23].
- 4.11 The inspection team will endeavour to cause the least possible intrusion into the research project or teaching activity.
- 4.12 The inspection team will report its findings in writing at the next scheduled Committee meeting.
- 4.13 The Committee Secretary will maintain a register of inspection visits and reports.
- 4.14 The inspection may cover:
- wellbeing of the animals
 - compliance with the approved ethics protocol
 - adequate record keeping
 - the physical conditions of the facilities, and
 - monitoring of the animal/s transportation and other issues relevant to housing, feeding, treatment etc.

Emergencies

- 4.15 Chief investigators will nominate a person responsible for handling emergencies, including unexpected adverse outcomes, in the absence of the chief investigator.

- 4.16 The Committee Secretary will maintain the contact details for the nominated emergency contact person.
- 4.17 If an emergency welfare intervention is considered necessary for an animal allocated to a project (e.g. treatment or humane killing of an animal), the nominated emergency contact person must take reasonable steps to first contact the chief investigator. However, the welfare of the animal must be the priority at all times and may necessitate immediate intervention. The emergency contact person must promptly advise the chief investigator of the actions taken and the reasons for emergency interventions. The event must then be reported in writing to the Committee Secretary [Code 2.5.6].

Reporting of adverse occurrences

- 4.18 The Committee will ensure that the following condition of approval for any research project/teaching activity is included in any formal advice to the chief investigator:
- “It is a condition of approval of this proposal that you report immediately anything which may warrant review of ethical approval of the project/activity, including:
- serious or unexpected adverse effects on animal/s
 - proposed changes in the protocol and/or project, and
 - unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.”
- 4.19 A written report detailing the adverse occurrence or unforeseen event must be submitted to the Committee Chair within one working day after the event [Code 2.4.18 (ix)].
- 4.20 The Chair will report on any matters involving adverse occurrences at the next meeting of the Committee and will seek ratification of any withdrawal of approval or restoration of approval.
- 4.21 If the Committee agrees on the termination of a project, the Committee will make a recommendation to the Vice-President (Research). The Vice-President (Research) will review the recommendation and relevant documentation and notify the researcher or student and supervisor and the Committee of the decision.

Non-compliance with the Code

- 4.22 Where inspections detect activities of non-compliance with the Code or approval conditions, the inspecting Committee members must report immediately to the Committee Chair.
- 4.23 When projects or activities in breach of the Code are detected, the Committee must ensure that actions are taken to ensure that animal wellbeing is not compromised, the issue is addressed promptly, and activities that have the potential to adversely affect animal wellbeing cease immediately [Code 5.2(i) and 5.4(i)]. Actions may include suspending or withdrawing approval for the project or activity. The following steps will be taken:
- the Chair will contact the chief investigator to address the issues
 - details of the non-compliance will be circulated to the full Committee via email, ahead of a meeting of the full committee being convened to consider the non-compliance
 - where the non-compliance can be rectified without compromising animal wellbeing, the researcher or student will be advised that the project or activity may proceed following confirmation of rectification being effected
 - when considered necessary, recommend to the Vice-President (Research) that a project or activity be suspended, discontinued or that other necessary steps be taken
 - if satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to ensure that a non-compliance does not re-occur, the Committee may restore approval for a research project/teaching activity and advise the researcher or student, the Vice-President (Research) and any other formal parties to the project to this effect in writing.
- 4.24 In the event that the Committee has determined that a project is not being conducted or cannot be conducted in accordance with the approved protocol and that the welfare of animal/s is not or will not be protected, the Committee will:
- formally advise the researcher or student of specified steps to be taken to allow the project to continue

- suspend the project until the Committee is satisfied that the welfare of the animal/s is/are protected and that the approved protocols will be followed, or
- recommend to the Vice-President (Research) that the project be suspended or discontinued.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 The Committee, supported by the Research Division, is responsible for implementing, monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this policy and procedure.
- 5.2 The Coordinator Ethics is responsible for ensuring that this policy and procedure is followed.

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.3 Evidence of compliance is demonstrated by the Committee's Annual reports to:
- [Department of Agriculture and Fisheries](#) (Qld)
 - [Department of Environment and Water](#) (SA)
 - [Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions](#) (Vic)
 - [Department of Primary Industries](#) (NSW)
 - [Department of Natural Resources and Environment](#) (Tas), and
 - Research Committee.

Reporting

- 5.4 No additional reporting is required.

Records management

- 5.5 Employees must manage records in accordance with the [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#). This includes retaining these records in a recognised University recordkeeping information system.
- 5.6 University records must be retained for the minimum periods specified in the relevant [Retention and Disposal Schedule](#). Before disposing of any records, approval must be sought from the Records and Privacy Team (email records@cqu.edu.au).

6 DEFINITIONS

- 6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University's [glossary](#).

Terms and Definitions

Animal: any live non-human vertebrate, that is, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, encompassing domestic animals, purpose-bred animals, livestock, wildlife, and also cephalopods such as octopus and squid.

Animal housing or facilities: places where animals are kept, including yards, paddocks, tanks, ponds and buildings.

Animal welfare: an animal's quality of life based on an assessment of an animal's physical and psychological state as an indicator of how the animal is coping with the ongoing situation as well as a judgement about how the animal feels.

Animal wellbeing: an animal's present state with regard to its relationship with all aspects of its environment, both internal and external. It implies a positive mental state, successful biological function, positive experience and freedom from adverse conditions.

7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Animal Care and Protection Act 2001](#) (Qld)

Animal Ethics Committee Application Guideline

[Animal Ethics Committee Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)

[Animal Ethics Committee Operating Policy and Procedure](#)

[Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference](#)

[Animal Research Act 1985](#) (NSW)

[Animal Welfare Act 1985](#) (SA)

[Animal Welfare Act 1993](#) (Tas)

[Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013](#)

[Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986](#) (Vic)

8 FEEDBACK

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

9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
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Notes	This document consolidated and replaced the Animal Ethics Committee Monitoring Policy (16/11/2016).