



**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND  
ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEE  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

***Decision-making***

The Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) is obliged to consider all ethical and welfare aspects, as well as the scientific or educational value of the use of animals for research and teaching purposes, in accordance with the UNE AEC Constitution and associated Governing Provisions, and specifically, in accordance with the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013 (Code). These terms of reference should be read in conjunction with the AEC Constitution. In particular, the AEC must:

1. review applications for projects and approve only those project that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the Code
2. review applications for activities associated with the care and management of animals in facilities, including procedures applicable to breeding programs integral to the maintenance of an animal line, and approved only those activities that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirement of the Code
3. conduct follow-up review of approved projects and activities , and allow the continuation of approval for only those projects and activities that are ethically adaptable and conform to the requirements of the Code
4. monitor the care and use of animals, including housing conditions, practices and procedures involved in the care of animals in facilities
5. maintain a record of proposals and projects
6. comply with the reporting requirements of the University and the Code
7. take appropriate actions regarding unexpected adverse events
8. take appropriate actions regarding non-compliance
9. examine, comment and approve guidelines and plans for the care and use of animals on behalf of the University
10. provide advice and recommendations to the University
11. report on its operations to the University
12. require that all members declare any Conflict of Interest and deal with situations in which a conflict of interest arises
13. perform all other duties imposed on the University by the Australian Code of Practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes
14. consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Vice-Chancellor or the Academic Board.

## **Reports to**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the AEC also provides the University with an annual report on all projects conducted in the previous year.

## **Chair**

Appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), in consultation with the Committee, following a selection process. The Chair is appointed in addition to the Category A to D members, for a two-year term, renewable as deemed appropriate by the Vice-Chancellor. The period may be extended with the approval from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) in consultation with the Committee.

## **Deputy Chair**

Appointed from the membership and elected by the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Researcher) in consultation with the Committee. The person must be a UNE employee (i.e. a Category B member). The Deputy Chair will hold office for the term of their appointment to the AEC.

## **Membership**

The Governing Provisions currently stipulate four categories of AEC members:

- (i) three Category A members (persons with qualifications in veterinary science and with experience relevant to the activities of the institution. Veterinarians who lack this experience must familiarise themselves with the biology and clinical characteristics of the species of animals used.);
- (ii) three Category B members (persons with substantial recent experience in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities. This will usually entail possession of a higher degree in research.);
- (iii) three Category C members (persons with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who are not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution, and who are not involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. While not representing an animal welfare organisation, a person should, where possible, be selected on the basis of active membership of, and nomination by, such an organisation; and
- (iv) three Category D members (persons who are both independent of the institution and who have 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).

Additional members can be appointed to assist the AEC to function effectively these should include a person responsible for the routine care of animals within the University and others with skills and background of value to the AEC.

## **Quorum**

At least one member from each of the membership categories A, B, C and D must be present at meetings to establish a quorum for a meeting, and must be present throughout the meeting. Categories C and D together must represent at least one-third of those members present.

## **Term of Membership**

Category A to D members will hold office for a two-year period and may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms unless invited by the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Research) to continue as a member for an additional period, in the event that no suitably qualified alternative members can be identified. If a Category A to D member vacates office prior to the conclusion of their term, their replacement will be appointed for a new two-year term.

New members are recommended for appointment in writing to the DVC(R) by the AEC Executive, with the AEC's endorsement. For Category C members, this occurs after appropriate consultation with animal welfare organisations. 2.2.1 code Terms of Reference – must address retirement/resignation how it is done i.e. member advises DVC/AEC in writing.

## **Obligations of Members**

Committee members are obliged to treat AEC business as confidential and to declare any conflict of interest to the Committee. Members are required to complete a Confidentiality Acknowledgement and Conflict of Interest Undertaking prior to their appointment. If members have any questions or concerns about an application they may seek clarification from the researcher, prior to the meeting, after consulting the Chair.

The Committee will deal with situations in which a conflict of interest arises by:

- Requiring members to disclose the nature of their interest and conflict as soon as practicable after they become aware of anything that may be reasonably considered to be a conflict of interest.
- Requiring a member whose objectivity may be influenced by an interest (including consideration of a proposal submitted by that member) to leave the meeting at an appropriate time (certainly during the decision making process).
- Considering and responding to any concern raised by a researcher that an AEC member has an interest that may have influenced the objectivity of an AEC decision. In this instance, the Chair must advise the complainant, in writing, of the AEC's response. If the complainant is not satisfied with the AEC's response, a grievance may be lodged, in accordance with the UNE AEC Grievance Procedures.

## **Executive**

The AEC delegates certain powers to its Executive (Refer to UNE AEC Powers of Executive) which consists of the Chair, the Secretary and four other members. The members must be selected by the full AEC, so that the Executive includes someone from either Category A or B, and someone from either Category C or D. The Deputy Chair acts as a reserve member for the Chair. The Secretary serves on the Executive, as on the Committee, in a non-voting capacity.

The Executive may not approve new proposals but it may approve minor modifications to existing projects for review at the next AEC meeting. It will also review responses to conditions set down by the AEC.

## **Frequency of Meetings**

The Committee will meet once each month.

## **Self-Review**

Once in every twelve-month period, the Committee shall devote at least part of one meeting to a review of its policies, practices and procedures over the preceding 12 months.

## **Support**

Research Services will provide support.