Animal Ethics in Teaching and Research Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) The University of Queensland (UQ or the University) is committed to the promotion of a culture of ethical, humane and responsible care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes. University Staff, Students and Title Holders working with animals have a moral obligation to treat animals with respect and take into consideration all aspects of the animals' welfare when designing and conducting research and teaching activities.

(2) This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the:

a. Responsible Research Management Framework Policy; and
b. Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (Animal Use Code).

(3) Each state in Australia has established legislation for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. Individuals associated with the University who are conducting research or teaching activities must ensure compliance with the relevant state or territory legislation as well as the Animal Use Code.

(4) Staff and Students at the University are required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018, the Animal Use Code, and the standards set out in the relevant UQ code or charter:

a. Staff and Title Holders: Staff Code of Conduct Policy.
b. Students: Student Code of Conduct Policy.
c. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates: Higher Degree by Research Candidature Charter Policy.

(5) This Procedure applies to all Staff, Students and Title Holders who:

a. use animals (or cause animals to be used); and/or
b. are responsible (refer to clauses 40-45 of this Procedure) for the care of animals for scientific purposes.

(6) This Procedure also applies to external individuals who use University animal facilities and/or University Animal Ethics Committees (AECs).

(7) Individuals who use and/or are responsible for the care of animals for scientific purposes are referred to as Investigators and/or Animal Carers throughout this Procedure for alignment with the Animal Use Code.

Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(8) The respect for animals must underpin all decisions and actions involving the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.

(9) Animal welfare must be maintained through compliance with the Animal Use Code and with the relevant legislation in the state/territory and/or the country in which the activity is being conducted (Queensland legislation includes the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 (Qld) and Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2012 (Qld)).

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(10) All activities, including projects, that involve the care and use of animals for scientific purposes must be applied for through MyResearch and:

a. be subject to ethical review, approval and monitoring by an AEC;
b. commence only after approval has been granted by an AEC;
c. be conducted in accordance with AEC approval; and
d. cease if approval from the AEC is expired, suspended or withdrawn.

(11) The requirements in clauses 8-10 also apply to the immediate use of animals for the diagnosis of unexplained and severe disease outbreaks, or morbidity/mortality, in animals or people. In such circumstances an expedited review process is available.

(12) Approved research on laboratory animals may only be conducted in approved and certified UQ Biological Resources facilities. Laboratories may be proposed for the holding of animals in accordance with the 'Requirements for Holding Laboratory Animals Outside of UQ Biological Resources Facilities' provisions (clauses 25-28) of this Procedure.

(13) The University may, at its discretion, support individuals who are not affiliated with UQ through its institutional registration as a user of animals for scientific purposes. Chief Investigators of projects will usually be UQ staff, except where UQ is acting as an external/nominated AEC for another institution in accordance with the Animal Use Code.

(14) Complaints will be handled through the appropriate University process as outlined in the 'Complaints' provisions (clauses 29-31) of this Procedure.

Section 3 - Key Requirements

Governing Principles for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes

(15) Respect for animals must underpin all decisions and actions involving the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. This respect is demonstrated by:

a. using animals only when it is justified;
b. supporting the wellbeing of the animals involved;
c. avoiding or minimising harm, including pain and distress, to those animals;
d. applying high standards of scientific integrity;
e. applying replacement, reduction and refinement (the 3Rs) at all stages of animal care and use; and
f. knowing and accepting one's responsibilities.

(16) The obligation to respect animals, and the responsibilities associated with this obligation, apply throughout the animal's lifetime, including acquisition, transport, breeding, housing, husbandry, use of the animal in a project, and provisions for the animal at the conclusion of their use.

UQ Animal Ethics Committees (AECs)

(17) The role of an AEC is to provide judgement as to whether a proposed use of animals is ethically acceptable and ensure all activities relating to the care and use of animals are conducted in accordance with the Animal Use Code. The AEC is the approving body for animal ethics applications for scientific use purposes.

(18) All individuals associated with the University using animals in any form (including Biological Material derived from animals) or undertaking a research or teaching activity that involves the use, handling or observation of animals, or any activity that affects the habitat of animals, must obtain approval from a UQ AEC before commencement of the

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work. Where an individual is named on an approval granted by a non-UQ Australian AEC, the UQ approval may be in the form of an administrative review conducted by the relevant UQ AEC in order to provide ratification of the approval from the external AEC. This requirement applies regardless of the location of the project within Australia (for work conducted overseas see 'Activities Involving Animals Conducted Overseas' provisions (clauses 22-24) of this Procedure).

(19) AEC approval is limited to the specific details included in the original application (including, but not limited to project scope, procedures, timeframe, location, and named personnel). An amendment to the original approved project or activity must be reviewed and approved by an AEC or AEC Executive prior to any change being implemented. Where the primary approval is from a non-UQ AEC, modifications approved by that AEC must be ratified by a UQ AEC.

(20) Further information on the University's AECs is available on the Animal Ethics website.

(21) An application for the use of animals for scientific purpose must be made through MyResearch. Applications for ratification of approval granted by a non-UQ AEC must be made through MyResearch by the lead UQ investigator and include all UQ participants in the project.

Activities Involving Animals Conducted Overseas

(22) All individuals associated with the University who plan to use animals for scientific purposes in another country must obtain approval from a UQ AEC prior to commencement of their hands-on work with animals. Investigators that cause animals to be used for scientific purposes (e.g., are leading a project conducted overseas by other parties) must obtain approval from a UQ AEC prior to the project commencing. Applications must be made through MyResearch.

(23) If the activity is conducted in collaboration with an overseas organisation and the country in which the research is conducted has an established regulatory framework, it may be possible for the relevant UQ AEC to ratify the approval of the collaborating institute's AEC or equivalent body. Applications for ratification must be made through MyResearch by the lead UQ investigator and include all UQ participants in the project.

(24) Australian investigators using animals for scientific purposes in other countries must comply with the Animal Use Code as well as local regulatory requirements. If there are no regulatory requirements in the overseas location/s, the minimum standard of the Animal Use Code must be adhered to.

Requirements for Holding Laboratory Animals Outside of UQ Biological Resources Facilities

(25) The holding of laboratory animals outside UQ Biological Resources facilities constitutes a potentially significant risk to the University and its personnel, including risks relating to animal welfare, occupational health and safety and regulatory compliance. The holding of laboratory animals is contingent upon there being a sound scientific or animal welfare justification and that the period of holding is of the absolute minimum duration.

(26) Laboratory animals may only be held outside of UQ Biological Resources facilities if:

a. the proposed laboratory has been inspected and assessed as complying with animal welfare and workplace health and safety requirements;
b. the proposed laboratory has been approved by Health, Safety and Wellness Division - Biosafety;
c. the proposed laboratory is certified to the appropriate standard relevant to the required physical containment category of animal; and
d. AEC approval to hold the animals outside of UQ Biological Resources has been granted.

(27) If all approvals are not obtained, then the approved project or activity involving laboratory animals must be

conducted in a UQ Biological Resources facility.

(28) The Holding Laboratory Animals Outside Biological Resources Facilities Guideline further explains the requirements around approvals, facilities and animal welfare.

Complaints

Concerning the Care and Use of Animals

(29) Complaints concerning the care and use of animals will be handled through the appropriate University process.

Relates to an activity or project that:	Process
Has the potential to adversely affect animal wellbeing, beyond that approved by the relevant AEC.	Referred to the AEC to assess welfare implications and may result in immediate cessation of the activities.
Would normally require AEC approval.	Referred to the AEC to assess welfare implications. See also 'Raises the possibility of a breach of the Animal Use Code' (below).
Raises the possibility of a breach of the Animal Use Code (research activities).	• Staff and Title Holders: Managing Complaints about the Conduct of Research Procedure • HDR candidates: Managing Complaints about the Conduct of Research - Higher Degree by Research Candidates Procedure • Students other than HDR candidates: Student Integrity and Misconduct Policy
Raises the possibility of a breach of the Animal Use Code (teaching or non-research scientific purposes).	• Staff and Title Holders: University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2021-2026 or as amended or replaced. • Students and HDR candidates: Student Integrity and Misconduct Policy
Spans more than one institution and/or AEC.	Dealt with on an individual basis per the agreement with that institution or, if no agreement exists, in negotiation with the other institution.

Complaints About the AEC Process

(30) Complaints concerning the AEC process should be progressed to the Director, Research Ethics and Integrity. The ultimate decision regarding the ethical acceptability of an activity lies with the AEC and cannot be overridden by the University.

Conscientious Objection

(31) Complaints relating to the conscientious objection of the use of animals for scientific purposes should be directed to the Director, Research Ethics and Integrity. In the case of teaching activities, the complaint will be progressed to the relevant Course Coordinator.

Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

(32) In accordance with the Animal Use Code, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) is the delegated officer of the Governing Body, The University of Queensland.

UQ Animal Ethics Committee (AEC)

(33) The primary responsibility of an AEC is to ensure that all activities relating to the care and use of animals are conducted in compliance with the Animal Use Code.

(34) AECs must review and approve new and ongoing projects and activities, monitor the care and use of animals, take action regarding unexpected adverse events or matters of non-compliance, approve guidelines for the care and use of animals, provide advice and recommendations to the University, and report to the University on its operations at least annually.

(35) The full details on the requirements and responsibilities of AECs are available in the Animal Use Code, chapter 2.3 and the terms of reference for the AEC.

Director, Research Ethics and Integrity

(36) The Director, Research Ethics and Integrity is responsible for receiving complaints concerning the processes of AECs that are not able to be resolved informally between the AEC and the investigator. The Director, Research Ethics and Integrity will aim to resolve the complaint. A resolution may require consultation with other relevant parties. The Director, Research Ethics and Integrity also manages complaints relating to the conscientious objection of the use of animals for research purposes.

Research Ethics and Integrity

(37) The Research Ethics and Integrity animal ethics team is responsible for:

a. the management of the University's animal ethics review processes;
b. supporting the work of the University's AECs and provision of administrative support to AEC executives; and
c. the provision of education, advice and support for individuals using animals for teaching and research.

Biological Resources

(38) The UQ Biological Resources is responsible for:

a. the housing and maintenance of animals used for research, teaching and breeding purposes at prescribed UQ facilities;
b. the animal management database to reflect the holding of animals outside of UQ Biological Resources facilities; and
c. assistance to AECs and HSW Division to uphold this Procedure.

Health, Safety and Wellness Division (HSW) - Biosafety

(39) HSW-Biosafety is responsible for the assessment and certification of a proposed laboratory for the holding of laboratory animals.

Individuals Using Animals for Scientific Purposes

(40) Individuals using animals for scientific purposes fulfil the role and responsibilities of investigators in the Animal Use Code.

(41) In accordance with the Animal Use Code, investigators must:

a. apply the principles of the Animal Use Code in all aspects of the care and use of animals, including planning, conducting and reviewing projects;
b. follow relevant policies and procedures established by the University and the AEC;
c. comply with relevant laws, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics guidelines and institutional policies including when conducting activities overseas;
d. apply for and obtain written approval from an AEC before commencing a project or activity that involves the use

of animals, or an amendment to an approved project or activity;

e. conduct a project involving the use of animals in accordance with the conditions and requirements of AEC approval, and cease the project or activity if approval from the AEC is suspended or withdrawn;
f. undertake education and training, and competency assessment, in accordance with University and AEC policies and procedures;
g. ensure that procedures using animals are performed competently;
h. maintain records of the care and use of animals; and
i. report to the AEC as required.

(42) If laboratory animals are being held in a facility outside of UQ Biological Resources, investigators must also follow the Holding Laboratory Animals Outside Biological Resources Facilities Guideline and ensure:

a. the welfare of laboratory animals being used for their project. Welfare includes providing and documenting, at the very minimum, daily animal care;
b. all personnel have completed required training before handling the animals and are listed on the animal ethics approval for the project; and
c. that information regarding animals is regularly provided to UQ Biological Resources in order to ensure they are tracked on a central database once removed from Biological Resources facilities and the database is immediately informed of their fate. This is irrespective of the length of time between removal and final fate.

(43) The full details on the requirements and responsibilities of investigators are available in the Animal Use Code, chapter 2.4.

Animal Carers

(44) In accordance with the Animal Use Code, and within the scope of their responsibilities, animal carers must:

a. apply the principles of the Animal Use Code in all aspects of the care of animals;
b. follow relevant policies and procedures established by the institution and the AEC;
c. undertake projects and activities in accordance with the conditions and requirements of approval from an AEC;
d. take measures to ensure that the animal's environment and management is appropriate for the species and the individual animal, and support the animal's wellbeing;
e. ensure that steps are taken to safeguard animal wellbeing by avoiding and minimising harm, including pain and distress;
f. consider the application of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement (the 3Rs) in all aspects of the care of animals for which they are responsible;
g. ensure that their duties are performed competently;
h. liaise with investigators and relevant project team members on all matters relevant to the wellbeing of the animals involved;
i. maintain records of the care of animals; and
j. report to the AEC as required.

(45) The full details on the requirements and responsibilities of animal carers are available in the Animal Use Code, chapter 2.4.

Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(46) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) is responsible for the development, compliance monitoring

and review of this Procedure.

(47) The University will conduct an annual review of the operation of the AEC to ensure that it is effective and consistent with the Animal Use Code and University policies. The annual review will be conducted in line with the Animal Use Code, section 2.2.37.

(48) An independent, external review will be conducted at least every four years to assess the University's compliance with the Animal Use Code, and to ensure the continued suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the University's procedures to meet its responsibilities under the Animal Use Code. The external review will be conducted in line with the Animal Use Code, section 6.

Section 6 - Recording and Reporting

Recording

(49) All meetings of UQ's AECs are minuted and records of all decisions maintained. The University records all breaches of the Animal Use Code.

Reporting

(50) All individuals associated with the University must fulfil all reporting requirements, including submission of documents to Research Ethics and Integrity or an AEC as appropriate.

(51) Reporting requirements include:

a. submission of mandatory annual reports by the due date;
b. reporting of unexpected adverse events in a timely manner (within 72 hours unless under exceptional circumstances such as fieldwork);
c. providing a completion report as soon as possible after completing or no longer working on a project;
d. providing reports regarding the creation and maintenance of genetically modified animals as required;
e. providing records of animal care and use when requested by an AEC, the University or authorised external reviewers; and
f. any other reports or responses required by an AEC or Research Ethics and Integrity.

(52) All AECs must submit a written report on their operations at least annually to the University Senate.

Section 7 - Appendix

Definitions

Terms	Definition
3Rs	The replacement of animals with other methods, the reduction in the number of animals used, and the refinement of techniques used to minimise the adverse impact on animals.

Terms	Definition
Animal	(a) a non-human live member of a vertebrate animal taxon; (b) a live pre-natal or pre-hatched creature as follows if it is in the last half of gestation or development: (i) a mammalian or reptilian foetus; (ii) an avian, mammalian or reptilian pre-hatched young; (c) live marsupial young; (d) a live invertebrate creature of a species, or stage of the life cycle of a species, from the class Cephalopoda. A human being or human foetus is not an animal. Please note: should animal research be conducted in Australian states other than Queensland, or overseas, this definition may vary.
Animal Ethics Committee (AEC)	A committee constituted in accordance with the terms of reference and membership laid down in the Animal Use Code.
Animal Ethics Committee Executive	A sub-committee of an already licensed AEC, established to streamline the animal ethics process. Decisions and recommendations must be ratified at the next quorate meeting of the AEC.
Animal Carers	The people involved in the care of animals that are used for scientific purposes, including during their acquisition, transport, breeding, housing and husbandry.
Animal Welfare	An animal's quality of life, which encompasses the diverse ways an animal may perceive and respond to their circumstances, ranging from a positive state of wellbeing to a negative state of distress.
Animal Use Code	Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.
Biological Material	Includes, but is not limited to, blood, blood products, tissues, body fluids and any derivatives produced by chemical or physical means; micro-organisms – wild type or mutant.
Facility	Any place where animals are kept, held or housed, including yards, paddocks, tanks, ponds, buildings, cages, pens and containers.
Individuals associated with The University of Queensland	A collective term for staff, students and title holders using or caring for animals for scientific purposes. For the purpose of this Procedure, this definition also expands to individuals from external organisations who use animal facilities managed by UQ and/or University AECs.
Investigator	Researchers, teachers, undergraduate and postgraduate students involved in research projects, and people involved in product testing, environmental testing, production of biological products and wildlife surveys.
Laboratory Animal	Rats, mice, guinea pigs and rabbits.
MyResearch	The enterprise platform for the management and administration of research projects.
Research	the concept of research is broad and includes the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.
Scientific Purposes	An animal is used for a scientific purpose if it is used in an activity or in connection with an activity performed to acquire, demonstrate or develop knowledge or techniques in a scientific discipline (for example, diagnosis, environmental studies, field trials, producing biological products, product testing, Research (including the creation and breeding of a new animal line where the impact on animal wellbeing is unknown or uncertain), or teaching).
Staff	Continuing, fixed-term, research (contingent funded) and casual staff members.
Students	A person enrolled as a student at the University or undertaking courses or programs at the University.
Teaching	Any action or group of actions undertaken with the aim of achieving a scientific purpose, where the scientific purpose is imparting or demonstrating knowledge or techniques to achieve an educational outcome in science, as specified in the relevant curriculum or competency requirements.
Title Holders	Visiting academics, academic title holders, industry fellows, emeritus professors, adjunct and honorary title holders, and conjoint appointments.

Terms	Definition
Unexpected Adverse Event	An event that may have a negative impact on the wellbeing of animals and was not foreshadowed in the approved project or activity.
Use[1]	Generally means to cause or permit to be used. This includes to: - acquire or purchase an animal; - accommodate, provide for, or care for an animal; - breed with an animal; - identify the animal (e.g. microchip, ear tag, brand); - dispose of an animal; or - drive, load ride, transport or work an animal. Please note: should animal research be conducted in Australian states other than Queensland, this definition may vary.

[1] Further information on this definition is available on the Queensland Government, Business Queensland website.

Status and Details

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