Holding Laboratory Animals Outside Biological Resources Facilities Guideline

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Guideline supports the Animal Ethics in Teaching and Research Procedure when laboratory animals are held outside of The University of Queensland Biological Resources (BR) facilities. The holding of laboratory animals in facilities or areas outside the oversight of BR 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.

(2) This Guideline should be read in conjunction with:

a. Animal Ethics in Teaching and Research Procedure; and
b. The Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.

Section 2 - Key requirements

(3) In accordance with the Animal Ethics in Teaching and Research Procedure, laboratory animals may only be held outside of BR facilities if the following requirements are met:

a. A UQ Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) has given approval to hold the animals outside of a BR facility (see clauses 6 to 8).
b. The laboratory space has been inspected and assessed as complying with animal welfare, workplace health and safety and Biosafety requirements, and is certified to the appropriate standard relevant to the required physical containment category (see clauses 9 to 13). Such inspections are facilitated by BR.

(4) If these requirements are not met, the approved project or activity involving laboratory animals must be conducted in a BR facility.

General Principles

(5) Laboratory animals should only be held outside BR facilities where:

a. There is reasonable justification on the grounds of scientific purpose or welfare.
b. The duration of holding is kept to a minimum (preferably <24 hours) and monitoring and record keeping is appropriate for the given duration.
c. Clear roles and responsibilities for the daily care and use of animals have been established and communicated to all relevant parties. This should include emergency contacts and veterinary support and contingencies for holding animals over weekends or public holidays.
d. BR Tracking procedures, which identify who is responsible and what movement has occurred, are upheld once the animal leaves the BR facility.

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e. There is adequate provision of appropriate personal protective equipment, clinical waste bins, transport containers and other incidentals.
f. Local approval from the building manager, laboratory manager or floor manager to hold laboratory animals (in a specified location within an approved laboratory) has been obtained.
g. Signage is established notifying occupants that the location is currently holding live laboratory animals and prior notification to all occupants that may share the space (including shared air supply) is provided, regardless of their involvement. Consideration must be given to laboratory animals allergen exposure in accordance with the UQ Health - Surveillance and Management of Laboratory Animal Allergy and Asthma Guideline.

Animal Ethics Committee Approval

(6) Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) approval is required to ensure that any holding of laboratory animals outside a BR facility is ethically acceptable and in accordance with the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 8th edition.

(7) An application for the use of animals for scientific purpose must be made through MyResearch. The MyResearch application must include the request to hold laboratory animals outside a BR facility.

(8) An AEC will consider whether the application is ethically acceptable based on the following information:

a. location in which the animals will be held (e.g. building number, room number);
b. duration the animals will be held in that location (including maximum length of time);
c. justification for holding the animals outside of a BR facility (e.g. specialised equipment, behavioural experiments requiring dedicated space unavailable within the BR facility);
d. any relevant animal care provisions (e.g. type and suitability of animal enclosure, feed, water and environmental enrichment provisions); and
e. logistics considerations (e.g. availability of husbandry/care staff and their competencies).

Inspection of the Laboratory Space

(9) Investigators must contact BR staff to initiate an inspection of the laboratory being proposed for animal holding. BR will facilitate inspection of the laboratory space to assess animal welfare and biosecurity considerations and any associated regulatory compliance requirements. Investigators may engage BR staff before or after animal ethics approval has been received.

(10) BR will coordinate inspections with guidance from relevant University organisational units such as the Health, Safety and Wellness Division, and Research Ethics and Integrity. Investigators are not required to liaise with these units separately and to avoid delays should engage BR as their single point of contact for inspections. The following factors will be considered:

a. Laboratory animal details (e.g. species specific requirements).
b. Specific animal locations and exposures (e.g. exposure to other species, temperature changes, humidity, light, sound and vibrations).
c. Other considerations of routine animal care (e.g. food and water supply, when and for how long animals are held, use of transport containers, labelling/identification of animals, signage of emergency contacts).
d. Hazards associated with the work (including infectious and genetically modified microorganisms, cytotoxic, radioactive and other hazardous materials).
e. Physical Containment (PC) level of the laboratory space (e.g. PC1, PC2).
f. Personnel access control, staff training, competencies, and available personal protective equipment.
g. Communication of intent to hold live animals within the laboratory space (e.g. with the lab manager and other

relevant colleagues).

h. Considerations of UQ Health Surveillance and Management of Laboratory Animal Allergy and Asthma for co-workers within a shared 'air-space'.
i. Biosecurity considerations (e.g. use of humane mouse traps, supply of personal protective equipment).
j. Any other relevant considerations related to human or environmental safety or any associated regulatory compliance requirements.

(11) Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the BR inspection.

(12) An approval may carry certain conditions and limitations (e.g. the laboratory space cannot hold Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO)). Furthermore, some animals may not be permitted to be removed from BR facilities (e.g. Risk group 3 pathogens, which require PC3 containment are unlikely to be permitted to leave a BR facility).

(13) BR inspections should occur on a routine annual basis, following initial approval.

Section 3 - Breaches and Complaints

(14) A failure to maintain the welfare of animals removed from a BR facility, or removing laboratory animals from BR facilities without appropriate approval, may represent a breach of the Animal Ethics in Teaching and Research Procedure. Removing laboratory animals from BR facilities without appropriate approval may also contravene relevant Health, Safety and Wellness policies and procedures and regulatory requirements.

(15) Complaints concerning the care and use of animals will be handled in accordance with the Animal Ethics in Teaching and Research Procedure, clauses 29 to 31.

Section 4 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Animal Ethics Committee (AEC)	A committee constituted in accordance with the terms of reference and membership laid down in the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.
Biological Resources (BR) facilities	Animal containment facilities, managed by The University of Queensland Biological Resources staff, that have been established to facilitate the use of laboratory animals for scientific purposes. For the purpose of this Guideline only, this includes the Steele Building animal facility.
Genetically Modified Organism (GMO)	As defined by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator "an organism that has been modified by gene technology; or an organism that has inherited traits from an organism, where the traits occurred in the initial organism because of gene technology."
Hold/Held	The housing/accommodation of laboratory animals for scientific purposes (excluding that for animal transport).
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 Animals	Rats, mice, guinea pigs and rabbits.
PC1-4	Physical containment levels 1-4, as certified by Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.
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 (e.g. 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).

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Section 5 - Key Contacts

BR Training and Compliance	br.traincomp@uq.edu.au
BR Director	uqbrdirector@uq.edu.au
HSW Division: Biosafety	biosafety@uq.edu.au
Research Ethics and Integrity	animal.ethics@research.uq.edu.au

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Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	3rd September 2021
Review Date	3rd September 2026
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Approval Date	3rd September 2021
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Policy Owner	Sue Harrison Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Enquiries Contact	Research Strategy and Performance

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