

Murdoch University ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the AEC, which are publicly available, must ensure the following provisions (AC 2.3.2):

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ETHICAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The primary responsibility of the MU AEC is to ensure, on behalf of the institution for which it acts, that all activities relating to the care and use of animals are conducted in compliance with the Code.

The AEC must:

- Review applications for projects and approve only those projects that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the NHMRC Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes (*Animal Code*);
- 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 approve only those activities that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the *Animal Code*;
- Review all proposals for the use of animals in teaching or research (Scientific Purposes (as defined in the *Animal Code*) at Murdoch University (MU) and for any other organization(s) for which MU acts as AEC by referring to the:
 - *Animal Code*;
 - *Animal Welfare Act*;
 - relevant state and national industry codes of practice; and
 - other relevant policies, procedures, guidelines and standards developed for the ethical treatment of animals.
- Conduct follow-up review of approved projects and activities and allow the continuation of approval for only those projects and activities that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the *Animal Code*;
- Recommend to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (DVC (R&I)) the approval, amendment, and recession of animal ethics policies, including their review every five years or in alignment with the *Animal Code* revision;
- Approve procedures, guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for the care and use of animals (Scientific Purpose);
- Provide advice and recommendations on the care and use of animals (Scientific Purposes) to MU.

2. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MONITORING

- Monitor the care and use of animals in approved projects, including housing conditions, practices and procedures involved in the care and use of animals through:

- Visitation and communication via the Animal Ethics Office, including the Animal Ethics and Animal Welfare (Research and Teaching) Advisors;
- Visitation by members of the AEC when appropriate;
- Reporting and supply of animal monitoring records as requested by the AEC; and
- Through review of annual reporting and completion reports.

Responsibilities also include the following:

- Take appropriate actions regarding unexpected adverse events;
- Take appropriate actions regarding non-compliance.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

The AEC is accountable to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research & Innovation) (DVC (R&I)) of Murdoch University.

4. COMPOSITION OF THE AEC

The Murdoch University AEC comprises:

- The Chair

And at least two members in each of the four categories:

- Category A: Veterinary surgeon
- Category B: Researcher with experience using animals
- Category C: Animal welfare advocate
- Category D: Community member

Categories C and D together represent at least one-third of the AEC membership.

In addition to the above members, the AEC may also include:

- A researcher with experience applying methodology or utilising techniques where animals are not required e.g., a mathematician or statistician; and
- A person responsible for the routine care of animals within the institution (AC 2.2.5) e.g. the MU Farm Manager;
- In addition to the members specified above, the following positions should attend AEC meetings to provide appropriate support and advice (non -voting members);
 - Animal Ethics Advisor
 - Animal Welfare Advisor
 - Ethics Officer

The AEC may request advice from people with specific expertise as required and in accordance with confidentiality requirements as outlined in this document.

5. REQUIREMENTS FOR MINIMUM MEMBERSHIP – ESTABLISHING A QUORUM

At least one member from each of the Category’s A, B, C, and D will be present at meetings to establish a quorum. Categories C and D must together represent at least one-third of the members present. If unable to establish a quorum, the meeting will be rescheduled.

Additional to note:

- The Chair does not ordinarily count as part of the quorum but may do so if eligible.
- The Chair does not ordinarily occupy any of the Category’s A, B, C or D during a meeting.
- When acting on the AEC Executive, the Chair may occupy any of the Categories as appropriate to his/her qualifications and employment status.
- If the Chair has a conflict of interest, the Deputy Chair will normally take over as Chair.

In the rare event that both the Chair and Deputy Chair have conflicts of interest, the AEC shall elect a temporary Chair or the Animal Ethics, or Animal Welfare Advisor, shall take over as Chair.

6. MECHANISM OF REPORTING

- Report on its operations at least annually to MU through the DVC (R&I), and to Commonwealth and State government authorities, as required;
- Be subject to an annual review of its operation, including an assessment of its Annual Report at a meeting between the Chair and the DVC (R&I); and
- Be subject to a formal external review at least every four years, as required by the *Animal Code* and WA scientific regulators.

Reviewed by	Date of review	Next review date	Summary of updates
Cree Monaghan	April 16, 2024	Approved 28 May 2024 AEC	Sectioned into ToR categories as defined by the Code Addition of scientific purpose wording
Cree Monaghan	13 June 2024	Pending	Addition of overarching statement 2.3.1 of the Code.
Peter Eastwood	15 July 2024	Approved	