

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

ANIMAL WELFARE & ETHICAL REVIEW BODY

CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

The Secretary of State requires that an ethical review process be established and maintained in each establishment designated under Section 6 or 7 of the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, revised November 2012. The University has determined that the Committee will also approve all research work involving the use of protected animals, in compliance with its Policy on the Use of Animals in Scientific Procedures outside the UK and within the UK where the research does not reach the threshold for A(SP)A regulation. The main points of which are :

1. All procedures as described in the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 conducted by staff or students at the University, whether taking place under a Home Office licence in the UK or outside the UK, will require ethical approval from the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body.
2. The Ethical review will be based on the principles of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986 and its associated codes of practice and guidelines, regardless of the location of the activity (i.e. within the UK or outside). The intention is to ensure that UK standards of care are applied no matter where the research may be carried out.
3. The University will comply with the expectations set out in the "Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research: expectations of the major research council and charitable funding bodies", statement.

Procedure at Newcastle

1. The Committee for the ethical review process (the Animal Welfare & Ethical Review Body) shall be:
 - Chairperson*
 - Deputy Chairperson
 - Director of Comparative Biology Centre (or deputy)
 - Named Veterinary Surgeon (or deputy)
 - Convenor of Researcher Group for Main Campus
 - Convenor of Researcher Group for the FGU
 - Member of GM Committee
 - Named Animal Care & Welfare Officers**
 - Training and Competency Officer (or deputy)
 - Named Information Officer
 - Colony Manager
 - Statisticians***
 - Lay Members***
 - Personal Licence Holders***
 - Project Licence Holders***
 - Secretary to the Committee/Home Office Liaison Contact

**The Chairperson will be either a lay person or a researcher, if directly involved in research using animals a suitable statement covering any potential conflict of interests will be put in place. A Chairperson from within the University must be a senior member of staff.*

***The appropriate Named Animal Care & Welfare Officer would attend a meeting, depending on the animals involved when possible, however a NACWO must be present.*

**** Appointed by Establishment Licence Holder, for the purposes of this Committee the term 'Lay' refers to a person who is not currently involved in research using animals nor has been involved in research using animals for more than 10 years.*

2. The quorum shall be 7 members, and shall include at least the following:
 - a) Chairperson
 - b) Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS)
 - c) One Training and Competency Officer
 - d) Two Researchers (Personal or Project Licence Holder)
 - e) One Lay Person
 - f) NACWO*

3. Terms of membership would be 5 years for the Chairperson and 3 years for other members. The Establishment Licence holder will review the Chairperson's position at the end of the term and either extend for another term or source a replacement. Other members terms would be reviewed by the Chairperson and any extended term would be recommended to and approved by the AWERB.

4. A member of the Animal Welfare & Ethical Review Body shall also sit on the University Ethics Committee.

5. The following members can nominate a Deputy to attend in their place :
 - a) The Chairperson
 - b) Named Vet
 - c) NACWO,
 - d) NTCO
 - e) HOLC
 - f) CBC Director

6. The Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body shall normally meet once a month.

7. All project licence applications (new and major amendments to existing licences) will be subject of an AWERB pre-meeting review before being tabled at a full committee meeting. The pre-meeting review group shall consist of:
 - a) Lay person
 - b) Named Veterinary Surgeon
 - c) NACWO
 - d) A Scientist

Minor amendments to existing Project Licences may be approved by the Chairman or nominee plus one other Committee Member. Where any doubt exists as to the degree of amendment required, the proposal will be brought to the main Committee. A document detailing the amendments which can be approved by Chair's Action is appended as Appendix 1.

8. The Terms of Reference of the Committee shall be as follows:
 - 8.1 To examine proposed applications for new Project Licences and amendments to existing licences, taking into account the extent and nature of benefits related to the cost of projects in terms of animal welfare" and to identify and advise on the 3Rs.
 - 8.2 To promote the appropriate use of animals including reduction, replacement and refinement alternatives, acquisition, accommodation, care and use;
 - 8.3 To promote the education and training of staff and users in best practice and relevant legislation;

- 8.4 To review projects retrospectively and throughout their duration and to identify and advise on the 3Rs;
- 8.5 To review care and accommodation standards for all animals;
- 8.6 To monitor the management and reporting systems relating to the proper use of animals and suggest improvements where necessary.
- 8.7 To advise on re-homing schemes and appropriate socialisation prior to re-homing.
- 8.8 To approve all animal work undertaken by Newcastle University staff and students, whether licensed or unlicensed (including that undertaken outside of the UK).
- 8.9 Aligning with the University Research Ethics Policy (July 2023), to be responsible for the formal ethical consideration of activities conducted by University staff/students that involve animals.
- 8.10 Provide support, guidance and oversight for any non-research University business which involves animals (e.g., teaching activities, engagement activities).
9. The Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body shall report to the Registrar as Establishment Licence Holder and to the University Ethics Committee.
10. The NVS, NTCO and NACWO will provide guidance to applicants producing applications for consideration by the Committee.
11. Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body members will receive training to cover:
 - a) Legislation
 - b) Guidance as to what they should be looking for in a project
 - c) Explanation of a recent project licence application, to include discussion of the cost benefit analysis
 - d) Requirements for the non-technical summary
12. All forms will be provided electronically either through the Home Office electronic application site or via local systems, completed forms submitted to the CBC electronically or via the application site.
13. The operation of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body will be reviewed regularly (at a minimum of 2-yearly intervals) at the request of the Establishment Licence Holder.
14. Any decisions will be based on a majority decision. In the event of a tied decision, the Chairman will have the casting vote.
15. If the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body is not satisfied with a licence application, it will be returned to the applicant together with any amendments and queries marked on the form. The Committee will then either reconvene to consider the answers/amendments, or, if they are classed as minor amendments, the Chairman or his nominee will approve amendments by Chairman's Action. There will be no appeal against the final decision of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body.
16. Users of the University's registered premises are informed of the Ethical Review process by means of the CBC intranet site.
17. If problems are identified during a review of a project, initial discussions will be held with the Project Licence Holder and recommendations for change be made. The Home Office and Registrar (Establishment Licence Holder) will be informed, and the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body will monitor the situation regularly. If no improvement is affected, the Registrar as Establishment Licence Holder will be notified.

18. Retain records of advice given and records taken for 3 years, after the completion of the project.

19. To make records available to the Home Office upon request.