



The University of Auckland

Animal Ethics Committee

PROCESS DOCUMENT

For the Use of

**Animals for Research, Testing and Teaching at the
University of Auckland**

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2. Introduction / Background

2.1. Purpose of Document

This document is a practical guide to the steps and responsibilities involved in the implementation of the University Code of Ethical Conduct (CEC). It covers information for both the Applicant and Animal Ethics Committee.

2.2. Scope of Activity

The University of Auckland (the University) Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) was established as a Committee of the University Council and is responsible for ensuring that protocols for use of animals in research, testing and teaching are executed in accordance with legislative requirements. No member of staff or any student shall use animals for research (including tissue collection), testing or teaching without the prior approval of the AEC.

It is also the role of the AEC to ensure that all Acts of Parliament, regulations or by-laws which pertain to the obtaining, holding, possession, care and treatment of animals are complied with by regularly reviewing amendments to relevant Acts and updating documentation and training material.

The University Code of Ethical Conduct (CEC) is designed to comply with all the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 (the Act). Animal species that are specified in the Act may only be used in research, testing and teaching once an application is approved by the AEC. Work may be carried out on the premises of the University, in conjunction with other organisations or in the field. Manipulations requiring approval are any that interfere with the normal physiological, behavioural, or anatomical integrity of the animal. Specific details around this may be found in Section 3 of the Act. Approvals for work given by the University do not override other requirements, such as permissions required by the Department of Conservation or local iwi for work on protected, indigenous species.

The purpose of the CEC is to ensure that members of the University treat all animals in their control with due care and consideration for their welfare, and use animals in research, testing and teaching in such a way as to cause them minimal stress and suffering.

2.3. Research, Testing and Teaching (RTT) and the Three Rs

The University is committed to the concept of the 3 Rs: Reduction, Replacement and Refinement. Careful planning of experiments and manipulations are required to ensure that minimum numbers of animals are used in line with the objectives of the experiment, that replacement of animals with non-sentient or non-living alternatives are sought when ethically and scientifically justified, that approved techniques are designed to minimise harm to animals and techniques to improve welfare are implemented.

2.4. Responsible Persons

The holder of the University CEC is the Vice-Chancellor. Although the University's AEC was established as a committee of Council, in reporting terms it is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVCR).

2.5. Persons/Organisations under the CEC

The CEC applies to members of the University of Auckland. For the purposes of the CEC this includes any lecturer, researcher, technician, or employee of the University, whether paid or unpaid and/or any student (including both undergraduate and postgraduate students) enrolled at the University of Auckland. It also includes any visitors from other national or international institutions using University of Auckland facilities for research, testing or teaching. The CEC also applies to staff from approved parented organisations.

3. Establishment, Functions, Powers and Membership of the Animal Ethics Committee

3.1. Functions, Duties and Powers of the Committee

The functions and powers of the University of Auckland Animal Ethics Committee are set out in the Animal Welfare Act 1999 section 99.

At the University, the use of animals for research, testing and teaching by members of the University is overseen by the AEC, including the use of animals for tissue collection. The AEC may also agree to act on behalf of other organisations.

The AEC reviews written applications for the use of animals for research, testing and teaching, and issues approval for their use only if it is satisfied that their use is in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act 1999, the Animal Welfare Amendment Act 2015, and all other Acts of Parliament, regulations and bylaws relating to the obtaining, holding, possession, care and treatment of animals in a research environment.

3.2. Membership of the AEC

The AEC will consist of a minimum of 10 members including:

- A Chair nominated and appointed by the University's Vice-Chancellor and confirmed by Council, following consultation with the AEC;
- A person nominated by an approved animal welfare organisation (currently, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals New Zealand (SPCA)), who is not employed by or associated with the University, or involved in the use of animals for research, testing or teaching;
- A person nominated by a Territorial Authority or Regional Council, not employed by or associated with the University, or associated with the scientific community or an animal welfare agency;

- A veterinarian nominated by the New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) who is not employed by or associated with the University;
- The Dean of the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences or their nominee;
- The Dean of the Faculty of Science or their nominee;
- A manager of animals or a manager of an animal facility at the University, appointed after consultation with the DVCR;
- Two representatives of the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences;
- One representative of the Faculty of Science;
- The Animal Ethics Committee Administrator (acting as secretary) in attendance;
- The Animal Welfare Officer shall be invited to all meetings in an advisory role.

Organisational members

Nominated members from within the University must be experienced in the fields of research and/or animal management (as applicable) and have a working knowledge of animal ethics applications. At least one of the organisational members will be a senior member of staff capable of evaluating project proposals as well as the qualifications and skills of the applicant, and the scientific or teaching value of a project.

External members

The external members will be paid a fee for every half day attendance at AEC meetings or other AEC business at the University's set rate. This rate is set annually by the University Council according to fees prescribed by the Tertiary Education Commission. External members will also be compensated at Council-approved rates for travel and other visit-related incidental costs.

Additional members

The AEC shall have power to co-opt additional members for a period of up to three years when the Committee requires additional expertise regarding specific areas where the AEC itself may not have sufficient knowledge. These co-opted members will have no voting rights.

3.3. Appointment Procedures

Representatives of the two Faculties and the animal or animal facilities nominee may be identified by the Chair (having regard to their qualifications or experience), or by a member that is resigning, or potential members may declare their interest to a Committee member or be recommended by a Head of School/Department.

The Chair is nominated and appointed for a term of three years by the Vice-Chancellor following discussions with the AEC and the DVCR. When a Chair is external to the University, formal approval of the appointment is given by the University Council upon recommendation from the Chair of the AEC and the DVCR.

Committee members are invited to nominate another member or themselves as Deputy Chair, and if there is more than one nominee, the Deputy Chair is elected by voting. The appointment is notified to the University Council at their next meeting. The Deputy Chair will assume all roles and powers of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

3.4. Vacancies

Where a casual or unexpected vacancy arises, the substitute member appointed to fill the vacancy shall be appointed for the remainder of the term of the internal member being replaced or the period of absence of the Committee member. External members can only be replaced following nomination of a new member from their sponsoring organisation.

3.5. Induction and Training of New Members

The Chair will manage an induction process for all new members. New members meet with the Chair prior to beginning duties and are given an orientation session on the functions and procedures of the AEC, and the roles performed by the members of the Committee. An information package containing CEC information and an induction pack from the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) will be provided. All AEC members are also referred to appropriate literature, including relevant NAEAC, National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) and Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART) publications. New external members are provided with access to University electronic systems and libraries. Members are encouraged and supported to attend conferences, workshops, meetings, etc. The Chair can also facilitate contact of AEC members with outside experts if requested.

3.6. Term of appointment

AEC members are generally appointed for a term of three years and are eligible for reappointment subject to consultation with the member and nominating organisation or Faculty.

3.7. Protection of AEC Members

Members of the AEC will not be held personally liable for any act done or omitted by the member or the committee in good faith in the course of the operations of the AEC.

4. AEC Procedures

4.1. AEC meetings

AEC meetings will be held to assess projects to regulate the use of animals in research, testing and teaching. The Chair will lead the meetings and ensure that each member is provided with ample opportunity to present their views and to respond to the views of other members. Minutes will be taken, distributed to members, and presented at the next meeting. A quorum is required to make any decision.

4.2. Frequency of Meetings

There are ten scheduled AEC meetings per year to review new applications, amendment requests and End of Approval Reports. These meetings are held monthly from February to November, normally on the last Friday of the month. An additional meeting is held in December to discuss reports and any outstanding issues.

Committee members are provided with a meeting schedule for the coming year by the end of the previous year, and the schedule is also available on the AEC and Council webpages of the University website. If a meeting is to be held at a different location, Committee members are notified as soon as possible as well as on the Agenda for that meeting.

4.3. Timing for Circulation of Agenda Items

Meetings are organised by the Animal Ethics Administrator who sets and distributes the Agenda, AEC applications and all other appropriate information to members at least eight days prior to the meeting. Urgent items may be added to the Agenda after that time in consultation with the Chair. The Animal Ethics Administrator will minute all meetings.

4.4. Quorum

A quorum for a meeting of the AEC is half of the appointed members plus one, including at least two of the statutory external members.

4.5. Decision Process

The AEC decision making process is by consensus.

4.6. Conflict of Interest

AEC members must declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting as required by the University's Conflicts of Interest Policy. AEC members will not be able to comment when issues are discussed in which they have a direct conflict of interest. The Chair may request the member to absent themselves from the meeting if that is considered appropriate and the member's absence will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

4.7. Effective Input of Committee Members

Prior to a meeting, external members are provided with information pertaining to an application. All members are strongly encouraged to ask for further information about any part of an application. The Chair will ensure that every external member is provided with the opportunity to present their views, to engage in discussion with the other members of the AEC and to ask other AEC members to explain their assessment. The Chair will endeavour to provide any further information requested by external members.

External members are granted access to the electronic system used by the University to manage submission and review of animal ethics applications. These members also have access to other Committee documentation through a secure AEC shared site.

If hard copies of applications, the agenda and other information pertinent to AEC meetings are required to be distributed, then this will be by tracked postage or couriered to members.

4.8. Confidentiality

All applications and correspondence are treated as confidential. Records are kept secure in University approved electronic systems or in the Animal Ethics Administrator's office.

Requests by members of the public are subject to the Official Information Act (OIA) and referred to the Vice-Chancellor's Office and General Counsel immediately upon receipt. This ensures the 20-working day OIA response period begins in a timely manner. Information requested shall be released by the General Counsel under the OIA but confidentiality on the identity and contact details of some or all applicants will be maintained. Where an application contains commercially sensitive information, the General Counsel through the AEC may request further details in confidence so that the review criteria set out in the OIA can be met and that, if necessary, the Committee can reach a decision. Commercially sensitive information given in confidence may be released under the OIA after consultation with the applicant.

4.9. Use of Tele/Video Conferencing

It is intended that AEC meetings be held face-to-face. A member who is not able to attend a meeting may submit written comments to the Chair for consideration at the meeting and may, when the meeting decides, participate by teleconference or other electronic means during the meeting.

When there are insufficient members present at a face-to-face meeting to constitute a quorum, other members may attend by teleconference or videoconference in order to obtain a quorum. Full meetings may also be held by electronic means, such as "Zoom", at the discretion of the Chair in order to meet University health and safety obligations.

4.10. Consideration between Meetings

In urgent cases, and with the consent of the Chair, an application or amendment with an impact grading of A, B or C may be considered by the Committee between meetings for *pro tem* approval as follows:

- Urgent applications or major amendments with an impact grading of A or B, may be approved following consideration by the Chair and two statutory external members.
- Applications or major amendments with an impact grading of C or above, including those which have been deferred from a previous meeting, may be approved following consideration by a quorum of members.
- Amendments of a minor nature may be dealt with by the Chair. Minor amendments are restricted to:
 - i. An increase of up to 10% over the number of animals originally approved;
 - ii. Addition of a procedure where the additional welfare impacts will be minor;
 - iii. Change of wild type strain of animal to be used.

In these cases, where any member of the committee raises an objection, *pro tem* approval may not be given.

The Chair may on occasion be permitted by the AEC to complete approval processes for applications and major amendments that have had their content discussed by the AEC and for example need defined corrections or minor refinements.

All *pro tem* approvals will be ratified at the next committee meeting.

4.11. Public Presence at Meetings

Generally, AEC meetings will not be open to the public. The AEC may resolve that one or more specified persons may remain after the public has been excluded if, in the opinion of the AEC, they have knowledge that will assist the AEC. The minutes of the meeting must note this resolution and must also state the knowledge possessed by that person or persons which will be of assistance to the AEC in relation to the matter to be discussed and how it is relevant to that matter. If a member of the public requests a copy of the minutes for a meeting, their request should be referred to the University's General Counsel to be dealt with as a request under the OIA.

4.12. Applicant Presence at Meetings

The AEC may allow Principle Investigators (PIs) to be present during the discussion of their application only if that is considered necessary to provide explanations to questions raised by Committee members. Applicants will not be present during the decision-making and will be notified of the decision about their application through the normal notification process.

If one of the AEC members is listed as personnel on any application being considered at an AEC meeting, they must declare a conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting and are asked to leave the room while the protocol is discussed and the decision of outcome made.

4.13. Secretarial support

The University provides administrative support to the AEC. The Animal Ethics Administrator is responsible for receiving applications (new applications and amendment requests), preparing and circulating the agenda, writing draft meeting minutes and coordinating the final minutes, sending out correspondence, keeping all records, and other duties required to support the AEC.

4.14. Record keeping and Information Management

All records of the AEC are stored securely and held permanently. Access to these records is restricted to members of the Ethics and Integrity Team.

4.15. Reporting of Statistics to MPI

The Animal Ethics Administrator will consolidate the figures reported by researchers and facilities into a University-wide return for submission to MPI by 28 February of each year. The Animal Ethics Administrator will issue an approval letter to each Principal Investigator (PI) once all animal usage numbers have been confirmed.

A subcommittee of the AEC (comprising two members including the Chair or Deputy Chair) as well as the AWO and Ethics Administrator will review the numbers before final submission to MPI.

Consideration of Projects by the AEC

4.16. Criteria for Consideration

- The key principle underlying the AEC application and approval process is that the benefits that are likely to be derived from using animals in research, testing or teaching must be considered by the AEC to outweigh any foreseeable harm to the animals.
- The AEC shall ensure that the proposal meets the criteria set out in section 100 of the Act, including whether the design of the study is such that the objectives of the experiment will be met, that the number of animals to be used is the minimum necessary to ensure a meaningful interpretation of the findings, whether suitably qualified persons will be engaged in supervising and undertaking the research, testing or teaching, and whether the work has been conducted previously.
- The AEC will consider whether the applicant has adequately addressed the 3 Rs, and whether throughout the course of the approval, adequate measures will be taken to ensure the general health and welfare of the animals before, during and after any manipulation.

The following conditions must also be noted and addressed in applications:

Animal use justification:

There are no practical alternative approaches to the research, testing or teaching that would avoid the use of sentient animals.

Anaesthesia and analgesia:

Appropriate use of anaesthesia and analgesia must be provided at all times.

Source of Animals:

The animal must be lawfully acquired and appropriate for the proposed use. Where possible, animals should be used that have been specifically bred for research, testing and teaching, or obtained from an appropriate source.

Neuromuscular Blockade:

The AEC will not approve the use of a neuromuscular blocking agent without concurrent use of appropriate anaesthesia, mechanical pulmonary ventilation and monitoring.

Endangered Species:

The AEC will not approve the use of an endangered or threatened species unless the findings are expected to assist the management and conservation of that species. The appropriate permission by the relevant Government department must be obtained prior to submission of the AEC application.

Transportation of Animals:

Transportation of animals must be included as a procedure in applications to the AEC and given a grading score. Unless specific approval is obtained from the AEC, all animal transport must be carried out in accordance with the relevant SOPs held by each animal facility.

Housing of Animals:

Details of animal housing must be included in applications to the AEC. Unless specific approval is obtained from the AEC, all animal housing must be in accordance with the relevant SOPs held by each animal facility.

Fate of animals:

The fate of all animals at the end of the protocol must be stated. Consideration should be given to adopting out animals, as appropriate and in consultation with the AWO.

4.17. Appropriate Qualifications

Upon application for AEC approval, applicants are required to list their qualifications and experience in carrying out the procedures. Applicants without appropriate training must receive training and demonstrate to the AEC they have the appropriate qualifications. Training obtained as part of an application must be supervised by a qualified person. For applications involving surgical procedures (including anaesthesia), applicants are required to specify previous experience and training. The AWO must confirm to the AEC that an applicant has or will receive sufficient training in the surgical procedures before approval can be granted. The AEC may stipulate that the AWO and/or trained supervisor be present for surgical procedures.

4.18. Collaborations with other research institutions

If staff or students of the University of Auckland collaborate with staff from another research institute in New Zealand on a project that requires approval under the Animal Welfare Act, approval should be sought in accordance with the NAEAC policy statement 'Which Animal Ethics Committee should assume the approval role' (appendix 1). In accordance with that statement, the requirements of the University is as follows for staff or students:

- i. If the project has been approved by the Animal Ethics Committee of the primary host institution and all work is to be completed outside of the University of Auckland, no notification or other action is required.
- ii. If the project has been approved by the Animal Ethics Committee of the primary host institution and any work is to be done at the University of Auckland, the application form and approval notice shall be sent to the Animal Ethics Administrator and tabled before the University AEC for review and local approval.
- iii. The Chair of the AEC may also consider such work *pro tem*. The University staff member or student will be notified of the decision of the Chair and/or AEC on his/her involvement in the project of the host institute. The work can commence by the University staff member or student only following (*pro tem*) approval.

4.19. Outcomes for Consideration

There are four possible outcomes of consideration of an application:

Approved: the application is approved, but minor administrative changes may be required. If any minor changes are required, a request for these changes will be forwarded to the applicant. Once the changes made are satisfactory, or if no changes were required, the status of the application will be changed to "Approved", and the Animal Ethics Administrator will send a letter of approval to the applicant in which any conditions of the approval are stated.

Conditionally approved: the Committee has identified matters for clarification or amendment. The Animal Ethics Administrator will send a letter to the applicant, listing the required clarification(s) or amendment(s). Once an applicant has re-submitted their changed application, the Animal Ethics Administrator will send the revised application, including the required covering memo, to the original committee reviewer (or in their absence another member) via the Ethics RM software system. The reviewer either confirms that the questions and amendments have been addressed satisfactorily, in which case the application will be processed for approval, or further amendments can be requested. Once approvable, the status of the application in Ethics RM will be changed to "Approved", and the Animal Ethics Administrator will send a letter of approval to the applicant in which any conditions of the approval are stated.

If a revised application has not been re-submitted within three months after notification to the applicant, the AEC Administrator will send a reminder email, and if no response was received within a further 20 working days, the application will lapse and a new application will need to be submitted.

Not approved (in its current form): if major revisions of the proposed research study are required by the Committee, the applicant will be notified by letter and/or the Chair or nominee may choose to discuss the required amendments with the applicant. Once the application has been re-submitted, the revised application, together with the required covering memo, will be added to the Agenda of the next available meeting for re-review by the committee.

If a revised application has not been re-submitted within three months after notification to the applicant, the AEC Administrator will send a reminder email, and if no response was received within a further 20 working days, the application will lapse and a new application will need to be submitted.

Declined: if the application is declined, the Animal Ethics Administrator will send a letter to the applicant listing the reason(s) given by the Committee for declining the application. The Chair or nominee may choose to visit the applicant to clarify the AEC's decision. The Chair may decide to involve the applicant's Head of Department in any such discussion.

4.20. Additional Conditions on Approvals:

The Committee may require various conditions to be fulfilled on approved applications. These will be conveyed in the outcome letter.

This may include:

- i) A requirement to put in place additional training, consultation or other procedural matters.
- ii) Pilot studies and initial reports back to the Committee before allowing a larger study to be completed.
- iii) The Committee may require the applicant to have the Animal Welfare Officer attend a new procedure performed.
- iv) Some of these conditions may require a report back to the AEC on outcomes before progressing to a subsequent part of the study.

4.21. Student questionnaire approval requirement:

The AEC requires that a student questionnaire on their experience as participants of the use of animals in the teaching protocols of their particular course to be completed at least once during the approval period. The questionnaire is available on the AEC webpages. The applicant must report the results of the student questionnaire to the AEC when they apply for renewal of the approval or the course permanently ends. Course coordinators must use the information from these questionnaires to refine the course content.

4.22. Institutional approval for work outside of New Zealand legal jurisdiction

The AEC is aware that some University researchers undertake animal-related research outside of the New Zealand territorial jurisdiction boundaries, in which case the granting of an approval is no longer covered by the New Zealand legal system.

In locations where there is no legal framework for approving animal ethics applications, applicants are still required to make a standard approval request to the University of Auckland AEC. It will be evaluated in terms of the University's expectations that researchers will use the standards of the New Zealand animal welfare legislation, but a formal legal approval will not be granted. Proof that the research is allowed be carried out at the desired location, must be submitted to the AEC in the application.

The AEC will grant a local approval letter to say the research has been reviewed by the AEC and found to adhere to the New Zealand Animal Welfare Act 1999 principles and that local University approval was granted to the employee. Any researchers working overseas will be responsible for meeting any additional approvals in the overseas jurisdiction(s).

Animal numbers used in these research projects outside of New Zealand legal jurisdiction will not be included in the MPI annual usage returns.

4.23. Maximum Approval Period

Approval is given for a period of three years, or any such lesser period as the AEC may determine.

The AEC may approve a brief extension (usually no longer than 3 months) if this enables a research project to be completed in that time period, or to provide time for an additional protocol to be submitted.

4.24. Power to Suspend, Revoke and Vary Approvals

The AEC has the power to suspend or revoke approvals, or set, vary or revoke conditions of project approval if the applicant is observed to be carrying out procedures not set out in the approved application and/or failing to adhere to specific operating procedures and/or failing to provide adequate care and veterinary support of animals (as applicable). This power is usually held by the Chair and Animal Welfare Officer but can be delegated by the Chair to any member of the Committee. In such circumstances, the applicant, Head of Department and Vice-Chancellor's Office will be informed by the AEC Chair of the suspension or revoking of project approval and the reasons.

4.25. New submission

New submissions should follow the processes outlined in the AEC web pages (e.g., the Research Hub).

4.26. Changes to Approved Applications

After approval, any subsequent amendments to protocols must be approved by the AEC prior to the changes coming into effect. This will require submitting an amendment request in Ethics RM, or for approved parented organisation with no access to Ethics RM, on the appropriate Word form. Amendment applications will be considered by the AEC as follows:

- Major amendments will be reviewed at the next available AEC meeting.
- Amendments of a minor nature will be reviewed by the Chair.

Minor amendments are restricted to:

- i. An increase of up to 10% over the total number of animals originally approved;
 - ii. Addition of a procedure where the additional welfare impacts will be minor;
 - iii. Change of wild type strain of animal to be used.
- Addition of personnel:
All personnel being added to a project will be required to have completed the required training modules. All new personnel will need to sign the amendment application form, either digitally in Ethics RM or on the paper Addition of Personnel form which can then be uploaded to Ethics RM (available from Ethics RM/Help/Templates).
 - Addition of personnel requests are reviewed and approved by the Animal Ethics Administrator, in consultation (if needed) with the AWO.

5. Responsibilities for PIs of AEC Approved Projects

5.1. Compliance

The PI is primarily responsible for all work undertaken under approval of the AEC. Prior to the submission of an application, the PI must have completed a course of training as specified by the AEC.

In addition, all other members of a research team must attend a course of training as specified by the AEC to ensure that they understand their legislative and institutional responsibilities.

5.2. Non-Compliance

Compliance issues will be dealt with in the first instance by the AWO, who will report on the issue at the next AEC meeting. If an incident is considered to involve a serious compromise of animal welfare or breach of conditions, the AWO will report the incident to the Chair as soon as possible. Response options may include one or more of the following: requiring an amendment to an approval, temporary restrictions imposed, additional education and/or retraining, a temporary cessation of specific activities, or permanent withdrawal of approval. This is done by the AWO, Chair or delegate of the Chair, as per Section 4.24.

5.3. End of Approval Reports

PIs shall submit an End of Approval Report (EOA) at the end of the 3-year approval, or at the end of any extension(s) granted. The EOA must be submitted within 3 months of the end of the project using a report in Ethics RM and will be reviewed and accepted at a subsequent AEC meeting.

Applicants will be issued with an approval letter if the report is satisfactory, or if required to make amendments to the report for re-review by the Chair.

- End of Approval Grading

After reviewing the grading of the manipulations as reported in the EOA and those proposed in the approved application, the Animal Ethics Administrator will report any discrepancy to the AEC for discussion at the next meeting.

- End of Approval Statistics

Submitted Animal Usage Reports are added to the AEC annual statistics report to MPI. The AEC will receive the animal use statistics for approval at the next AEC meeting as part of the end of approval report.

5.4. Animal Usage Return

An Animal Usage Return must be submitted at the following times:

- i. When the maximum approved number of animals has been used;
- ii. When the approval has been revoked by the AEC or terminated by the Principle Investigator.
- iii. At the end of the original 3-year approval period;

- iv. Again, for any subsequent calendar year into which the approval was extended; Reports need to be prepared in Ethics RM and submitted by the end of January of the following year.

5.5. Sick and Injured Animals

Applicants must treat animals in their control with due care and consideration for their welfare and use animals in such a way as to cause them minimal stress and suffering. Sick or injured animals must be attended to immediately, including obtaining veterinary advice and/or care. The AEC can direct that sick or injured animals be properly cared for, and if appropriate, euthanised.

5.6. Standard Operating Procedures

The application process for approval of an SOP is the same as for research, testing and teaching applications. The approval process for a University Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is available on the AEC webpages of the University website.

SOPs must be reviewed at regular intervals by the owner of the SOP in consultation with the AWO to ensure that all policies and procedures are up to date. SOPs should be reviewed at least yearly and revised every three years, with an updated version submitted in Ethics RM for AEC review and inclusion in the SOP database.

Animal Facility SOPs

An internal audit against all animal facility SOPs must be completed and reported annually to the AEC as part of the submission of required facility reports. Minor adjustments to a facility SOP can be reported in this audit. However, any major modification to an SOP will require prior AEC approval following the same process as submitting an amendment to an application.

Non-facility SOPs

Project SOPs associated with research or teaching should be reviewed at minimum every 3 years at the time of reapplication.

Modification to an SOP will require prior AEC approval following the same process as submitting an amendment to an application.

5.7. Adverse Events

If any unexpected events occur before, during or after manipulations that affects animal welfare, it needs to be reported as soon as possible. Urgent welfare concerns must be acted upon immediately by contacting a team leader or unit manager. Expected Adverse Events are to be detailed in the animal ethics application.

Sick or Injured Animals

Sick or injured animals must be attended to immediately, including reporting to the facility manager and obtaining veterinary advice and/or care. The AEC can direct that sick or injured animals be properly cared for, and if appropriate, euthanised.

All deaths (animals found dead or euthanised) occurring prior to the planned end of an experiment, must be notified to the AWO (in order for a post-mortem examination to be conducted). Any welfare incident involving sick or injured animals or unexpected adverse event(s) will be reported to the next AEC meeting as part of the AWO monthly report.

5.8. Grading

The AEC determines whether the proposed impact grading listed in each application is correct based on the information published by MPI in the Animal Use Statistics report, and also based on the expertise and knowledge of the Committee and the details of the specific application.

5.9. Euthanasia for tissue collection/dissection

Euthanasia for the purposes of tissue collection or dissection requires an AEC application to be submitted to and approved by the AEC. Surplus tissues not being used by the particular research group may be made available to other research groups or used for teaching purposes.

6. Animal Facilities

6.1. Management of Animal Facilities

The SOPs to manage University animal facilities must be approved by the AEC. Facility SOPs must take into account relevant legislation and guidelines and must include procedures for managing emergency events.

In addition to addressing management of emergency events in SOPs, the AWO/University Veterinarian, facility managers and senior technicians are on call 24/7 in case of emergencies.

6.2. Development of SOPs

All SOPs of University animal facilities must be approved by the AEC. Procedures for the approval of SOPs are the same as for project applications and amendments and are outlined in section 5.6.

6.3. Monitoring Animal Facilities

The AWO will make regular visits to each animal facility at least once in every 24-month period and may be accompanied by other members of the AEC. When the Facility Visit is completed, a report will be circulated and included on the agenda of the next AEC meeting. A copy of the report and any Non-Compliance Reports will be sent to the animal facility manager.

7. Monitoring

7.1. Powers of the AEC

The AEC has the power to inspect animals, their accommodation, and related experimental records at any time to satisfy itself that approved procedures are being properly carried out and to deal with any breaches found, as appropriate to their particular circumstances as set out in section 4.24. This will include the power to monitor approved protocols, require animal users to report back to the

AEC, monitor adherence to specific operating procedures, and to monitor animal facilities, routine animal husbandry and animal welfare.

The AEC will monitor through site visits to animal breeding and holding facilities, visits to users of animals, and visits to locations where approved manipulations are being performed (on and off campus). Between meetings of the AEC, the Chair can unilaterally undertake site visits and inspections, and/or appoint another member of the AEC or the AWO to undertake this task. Other reviews may be undertaken as noted in section 7.2. Reports on site visits and reviews will be presented at the next meeting of the AEC.

7.2. Monitoring by the AEC

The AEC will undertake monitoring to ensure that all manipulation of live animals is carried out in accordance with the CEC. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Regular visits by the AWO and/or other members of the Committee to PIs and relevant animal facilities;
- Welfare reviews - reviews of specific aspects of a protocol (generally targeting new research groups, new models being used and/or new procedures being done);
- Ethical reviews - reviews of whole protocols including written protocols, SOPs and records held by PIs;
- Facility visits - reviews of animal facilities and their associated SOPs.

Where the appropriate experience is not available from within the AEC, experienced external reviewers may be engaged by the AEC to undertake these reviews.

7.3. Frequency of Monitoring

The AEC will undertake monitoring visits to facilities as stated in section 6.3 (at least once in every 24-month period, but more frequently if required to achieve visits to projects graded C, D and E as described in section 7.4). All site visits and monitoring will be tabled at an AEC meeting and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

7.4. Monitoring of Manipulations Grade C-E

At least 10% of projects graded C and all projects graded D or E will be visited once every 12 months for the duration of the approval by the AWO or other nominee of the AEC. Where the location of the procedures makes a site visit problematic, the AEC can request applicants provide a video record of procedures and/or use a live video link to facilitate monitoring of the approval.

7.5. Monitoring by Nominated Veterinarians

The AWO will take part in monitoring of projects as indicated in sections 6.3, 7.1, 7.3 and 7.4.

8. Arrangements for External Parties to Use the CEC and AEC

8.1. Parenting agreements

External organisations or individuals may apply in writing to use the CEC and the AEC processes for consideration of protocols for Research, Teaching and Testing, using their organisation's own facilities and animals. This parenting request shall be received and processed by the Animal Ethics Administrator for consideration, acceptance or rejection by the AWO and/or Chair of the AEC, who will make a recommendation to the DVCR. After DVCR approval, addition of the parenting agreement will be noted at the next AEC meeting. The agreement must also be notified to MPI, prior to consideration of any application to use animals from the external organisation or individual within the organisation.

Parenting agreements and AEC fees will be reviewed and renewed every five years at the time of re-approval of the CEC.

The AEC will charge fees for this service as outlined in the parenting agreements.

8.2. External organisations

External organisations that wish to use the University facilities and animals for Research, Teaching and Testing are required to enter into a Research Agreement (Animal Ethics) with Auckland UniServices Ltd.

The organisation will be required to appoint a PI who is a member of staff of the University.

9. Complaints Procedures

9.1. Reporting of Complaints

Complaints regarding animal welfare or AEC procedures must be reported to the AEC Chair, through the Animal Ethics Administrator. Complaints can be submitted to the Animal Ethics Administrator via email, as a letter, or as a phone call followed by an email or letter. All complaints will be logged in the Complaints Register and must be notified to the Chair as soon as practical for further action, except when the complaint concerns the Chair, in which case, the DVCR must be notified.

9.2. Procedural Complaints

Complaints made by applicants or AEC members about procedural matters must be directed to the Chair in writing through the Animal Ethics Administrator. An AEC member who makes such a report in good faith shall not be liable to any discipline or civil proceedings by reason of having made the report. Any AEC member who believes that the AEC or the code holder is failing to comply in a material respect with the Animal Welfare Act 1999 or with the CEC, may also report this to the Director-General of MPI.

9.3. Animal Welfare Complaints

- 9.3.1 Members of the public, AEC members or members of the University may submit written complaints to the University. The Chair, in conjunction with the Animal Welfare Officer and the DVCR will investigate the matter and will determine if any animal welfare breach occurred and any corrective action that might be required. Complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation in writing (unless the complaint was made anonymously). Any member of the public who believes that the AEC or the code holder is failing to comply in a material aspect of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 or with the CEC, may report this to the Director-General of MPI.
- 9.3.2 Complaints made by AEC members, the University staff members/students or the public that concern the Chair of the AEC can be directed to the DVCR in writing through the Animal Ethics Administrator. The DVCR, in conjunction with the Animal Welfare Officer, will investigate the matter and determine if any animal welfare breach by the Chair occurred and any corrective action that is recommended. The matter will then be reported to the DVCR to determine the corrective action. Complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation in writing (unless the complaint was made anonymously).

10. Process to Amend, Suspend or Revoke the CEC

The AEC may recommend amending the CEC to the code holder when required. An amended CEC must be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor via the office of the DVCR. Once approved, the amended CEC must be submitted to the Director-General of MPI for approval (as required in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 1999). In cases where the proposed amendments are minor in nature (i.e., amendments that would not materially affect the purposes of the CEC), the amendments can be made with approval from the code holder but without requiring prior approval from the Director-General. Any such amendments made during a calendar year must be reported in writing to the Director-General, prior to 31 March of the following year.

The code holder may apply in writing to the Director-General to suspend or revoke the CEC, stating the reason why the CEC should be suspended or revoked.