



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

Policy:

Ethics Approval for the Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes

Effective: 1 January 2019

Audience: Staff and Students

Policy Category: Academic

Policy Sub-category: Research

Key words: animals, ethics, research, teaching

Policy Owner: PVC, Research

Responsible Officer: Research Ethics Officer

Review Date: January 2022

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1 OBJECTS OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University's Objects are defined in Section 5 of its Act of Parliament:

The Objects of the University are:

- (a) the provision of university education, within a context of Catholic faith and values; and
- (b) the provision of an excellent standard of -
 - i. teaching, scholarship and research;
 - ii. training for the professions; and
 - iii. pastoral care for its students.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1** This policy, *Ethics Approval for the Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* ("Policy") has been formulated to ensure that appropriate ethics approval is obtained for any research or teaching activity using animals in which The University of Notre Dame Australia ("University") is involved.
- 2.2** The requirements for applying for ethics approval outlined in this Policy are intended to ensure that any research or teaching activity involving the use of animals complies with the requirements of the following National and State-based legislation:
 - 2.2.1 *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 2013* (Animal Code),
 - 2.2.2 *Animal Welfare Act, 2002* (WA),
 - 2.2.3 *Animal Research Act, 1985* (NSW),
 - 2.2.4 Part 3 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1986* (VIC),
 - 2.2.5 Part 4 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations, 2008* (VIC).
- 2.3** The Animal Code sets out the governing principles, as well as the responsibilities of institutions, Animal Ethics Committees, researchers, animal carers, and all people involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.
- 2.4** The Animal Code encompasses the '3Rs' to be applied at all stages of animal care and use:
 - 2.4.1 Replacement: Methods that replace or partially replace the use of animals.
 - 2.4.2 Reduction: Methods for obtaining comparable levels of information from the use of fewer animals in scientific procedures and/or for obtaining more information from the same number of animals.
 - 2.4.3 Refinement: Methods that alleviate or minimise potential pain and distress, and enhance animal wellbeing.

3 SCOPE

This Policy binds all staff, students and University Researchers.

4 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Any use of animals for scientific purposes must be in accordance with the principles set out in this Policy and must be approved in accordance with the *Procedure: Applying for Animal Ethics Approval* (“Procedure”).
- 4.2 The use of animals for scientific purposes must have scientific or educational merit.
- 4.3 The *Animal Code* is the foundation document informing research and teaching involving animals at the University and must be adhered to.
- 4.4 The University is committed to fulfilling its moral and legal responsibilities under the *Animal Code*, *Animal Welfare Act (WA)* and the *Animal Research Act (NSW)*, part 3 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (VIC)* and part 4 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations (VIC)*.
- 4.5 The University actively encourages its research and teaching community to pursue alternatives to the use of animals for research. Where such alternatives do not exist or are inadequate, the use of animals must be conducted with care and respect and to the highest ethical standards.
- 4.6 Research involving animals must meet established ethical, professional and cultural norms.
- 4.7 Research must demonstrate an appropriate balance between the cost of animal interventions and the value to be achieved in carrying out the research.
- 4.8 Research involving animals must not be in conflict with the Objects of the University.
- 4.9 Research that does not directly involve animals but can impact upon them also requires ethics approval.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Responsibilities of the University

- 5.1.1 The Pro Vice Chancellor Research is responsible for the University’s overall governance with respect to the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.
- 5.1.2 The University must ensure and promote that the care and use of animals for scientific purposes comply with the following National and state based legislation:
 - 5.1.2.1 *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018)
 - 5.1.2.2 *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* (2013)
 - 5.1.2.3 *Animal Welfare Act* (2002) (specific to WA)
 - 5.1.2.4 *Animal Research Act* (1985) (specific to NSW)
 - 5.1.2.5 *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (1986) – Part 3 (specific to VIC)
 - 5.1.2.6 *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations* (2008) – Part 4 (specific to VIC)
 - 5.1.2.7 Other codes, policies and legislation, where relevant.
- 5.1.3 The University must ensure that these documents are available and promoted to all staff and University Researchers.
- 5.1.4 The Research Office is responsible for ensuring that the university has a valid Licence to use animals for scientific purposes, as issued by WA Department of Agriculture and Food.
- 5.1.5 The Research Office is responsible for ensuring that the university has a current agreement in place for use of an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC).

5.2 Responsibility of University Researchers and Course Coordinators

- 5.2.1 University Researchers and Course Coordinators seeking to use animals for scientific purposes are responsible for ensuring that appropriate AEC approvals are attained.

- 5.2.2 Any costs associated with obtaining animal ethics approval from an AEC must be borne by the Researcher (for Research) or School (for Courses) unless otherwise agreed.
- 5.2.3 Each University Researcher or Course Coordinator has personal responsibility for the ethical conduct of the activity throughout the duration of the approved use of animals.
- 5.2.4 University researchers, Course Coordinators and animal carers involved in the activity must undertake relevant education, training and competency assessments as required.
- 5.2.5 University researchers and Course Coordinators must obtain written approval from the AEC, University HREC and any other relevant bodies prior to the commencement of any activity involving the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.
- 5.2.6 University Researchers and Course Coordinators must comply with all of the conditions of approval outlined by the approving AEC.
- 5.2.7 The activity must not extend beyond the scope of what is approved by the AEC.
- 5.2.8 The activity must be conducted in accordance with the Australian Code, the Animal Code and any relevant State legislation.
- 5.2.9 Any adverse events which might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the research project must be reported immediately to the AEC.
- 5.2.10 The AEC must be notified of, and approve, any changes to the original protocol or membership of the research/course team.
- 5.2.11 University researchers and Course Coordinators must ensure that animal wellbeing is appropriately monitored at all stages of the activity.
- 5.2.12 University researchers and Course Coordinators must maintain a detailed records of care and use of animals which must be made available to the AEC and the University's Research Ethics Officer upon request.
- 5.2.13 University researchers and Course Coordinators must cease the activity if approval from the AEC is suspended or withdrawn.
- 5.2.14 Researchers and students may conscientiously object, without disadvantage, to an activity that compromises their values.

6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 6.1** Policy: Responsible Conduct for Research
- 6.2** Procedure: Applying for Animal Ethics Approval
- 6.3** Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)
- 6.4** Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (2013)
- 6.5** Animal Welfare Act (2002) (specific to WA)
- 6.6** Animal Research Act (1985) (specific to NSW)
- 6.7** Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1986) – Part 3 (specific to VIC)
- 6.8** Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations (2008) – Part 4 (specific to VIC)
- 6.9** Guidelines to promote the wellbeing of animals used for scientific purposes - The assessment and alleviation of pain and distress in research (2008)
- 6.10** Guidelines on the Use of Animals for Training Interventional Medical Practitioners and Demonstrating New Interventional Medical Equipment and Techniques (2009)
- 6.11** NHMRC Guidelines on the Care of Cats Used for Scientific Purposes (2009)
- 6.12** NHMRC Guidelines on the Care of Dogs Used for Scientific Purposes (2009)

7 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Activity means any action undertaken that involves the care and use of animals, including acquisition, transport, breeding, housing and husbandry of those animals.

Adverse event means any event that has a negative impact on the wellbeing of an animal.

Animal means any live non-human vertebrates (fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals and encompasses domestic animals, purpose-bred animals, livestock and wildlife) and cephalopods.

Animal Carer means any person involved in the care of animals that are used for scientific purposes, including their acquisition, transport, breeding, housing and husbandry.

Animal Code means the *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 2013*.

Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) means a committee constituted in accordance with the terms of reference and membership outlined in the Animal Code.

Code means the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018*.

HREC means the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University.

Research Ethics Officer means the person who holds the position of Research Ethics Officer at the University.

Scientific purposes means all activities conducted with the aim of acquiring, developing or demonstrating knowledge or techniques in all areas of science, including teaching, field trials, environmental studies, research (including the creation and breeding of a new animals line where the impact on animal wellbeing is unknown or uncertain), diagnosis, product testing and production of biological products.

University Researcher means any University staff member or student who conducts research on behalf of or under the auspices of the University.

Course Coordinator means the person in charge of coordinating a University course in relation to which the Animal Ethics approval is sought.

| Version | Date of approval | Approved by | Amendment |
|---------|------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1 | July 2011 | Vice Chancellor | New Policy |
| 2 | September 2017 | Vice Chancellor | Updated nomenclature and introduction of new procedure. |
| 3 | 8 November 2018 | Vice Chancellor | Updated nomenclature and National guidelines. |