

Animal Ethics Committee

La Trobe University
Academic Board
Research and Graduate Studies Committee
ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEE

Responsibilities and operation of the AEC at La Trobe University

La Trobe University accepts the responsibilities and operation of the Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) as defined by the *Australian code of practice for the care and use of Animals for Scientific Procedures 2004* (The Code). The Terms of Reference are outlined below.

The AEC will ensure that all animal care and use within the Institution is conducted in compliance with the current Code and the principles of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement.

Composition

1. An AEC must have a membership that will allow it to fulfil its **Terms of Reference**. It must comprise at least four persons, including a separate person appointed to each of the following categories. *Membership must include a named alternate for each category to ensure that the committee shall at all time be quorate.*
 - i) *Membership on the AEC shall be on the recommendation of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) following a call for nominations from all user groups at La Trobe University through the Secretary, Animal Ethics.*
 - ii) *Terms of office shall ordinarily be for one year, renewable unless otherwise recommended by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).*
 - iii) *Membership of the AEC shall be approved by the RGSC].*

Category:

- A A person with qualifications in veterinary science, with experience relevant to the activities of the institution, or in special circumstances, a person with qualifications and experience to provide comparable expertise;
- B A person with substantial recent experience in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities. *The named alternate must be from a different Division, or at the very least different School;*
- C A person with demonstrable commitment to and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who is not employed by, or otherwise associated with the institution, and who is not involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. The person should where possible be selected on the basis of active membership of, and nomination by, an animal welfare organisation; and
- D An independent person who does not currently and has not previously conducted scientific or teaching activities using animals, and who is not an employee of the institution, except under defined circumstances.

Animal Technician: A person responsible for the daily care of animals within the institution should have membership of the AEC.

Animal Welfare Officer: A person responsible for ensuring the welfare of animals used in research by staff and students of the University. The Animal Welfare Officer is an *ex officio* member.

2. The AEC may include additional members to ensure that it can function effectively.
3. The Chairperson shall hold a senior position in the institution.
4. If the committee has more than four members, Categories C plus D should represent no less than one third of the members.
5. The composition of the AEC also must comply with any relevant legislation.
6. Before appointment, all members of the AEC should acknowledge in writing their acceptance of the terms of reference of the committee and any requirements for confidentiality required by the Institution. The committee should reach agreement on how advice may be sought without breaching confidentiality.
7. Membership of the AEC will be reviewed each year on the 31 December.

Membership

Chair	Assoc. Prof Michael Foley, Biochemistry (Chair) (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
A	Dr Jonathan Sullivan, external (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
A (alt)	Dr Daryl Hoffmann, external (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
B	Dr Johannes Schuijers, Human Biosciences (Deputy Chair) (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
B (shared)	Dr Catherine Meathrel, DEME (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
B (shared)	Dr Giuseppe Posterino, Zoology (shared) (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
C	Ms Riejet van de Vusse, external (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
C (alt)	Dr Barbara Wellington, external (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
D	Ms Delcia Fulloon (alternate) (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
D	Mr Peter Hogan (Community member) (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
Carer (shared)	Ms Eva Suric, Zoology (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
Carer (shared)	Mr Robert Evans, Agriculture (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)
Animal Welfare Officer	Dr S Ottomanski, Research & Graduate Studies Office (<i>ex-officio</i>) (1.1.09 – 31.12.09)

In Attendance (Optional):

Licensees:	* Head, Environmental Management & Ecology, Albury
	* Head, School of Molecular Science, Bundoora
	* Head, School of Human Biosciences, Bundoora
	* Head, School of Life Sciences, Bundoora
	* Head, School of Psychological Science, Bundoora
	* Director, Murray Darling Freshwater Research Centre
Administration	* Director, RGSO
Secretariat	* Secretary (Animal Ethics), RGSO

Terms of reference

The AEC will:

1. adhere to the recommendations of the *Code*, relevant Commonwealth and State legislation and regulations;
2. examine and approve, approve subject to modification, or reject written proposals relevant to the use of animals in scientific and teaching activities. Also to approve only those studies for which animals are essential and which conform to the requirements of the *Code*, taking into consideration ethical and welfare aspects as well as scientific or educational value;
3. formally withdraw approval for any project or authorise the treatment or humane killing of any animal;
4. monitor the acquisition, transport, production, housing, care, use and disposal of animals;
5. recommend to the institution any measures needed to ensure that the standards of the *Code* are maintained;
6. develop ongoing policies that reflect scientific, community and Institutional attitudes towards the use of animals;
7. promulgate, within the University, changes to policy, legislation and any matter that affects the welfare or use of animals;
8. examine and comment on all institutional plans and policies which may affect animal welfare;
9. maintain a register of approved projects; and
10. perform all other duties required by the *Code*.

Monitoring

The AEC must ensure that adequate records are kept on the acquisition, breeding, health, care, housing, use and disposal of animals.

Report to Institution

The AEC must provide copies of minutes to the RGSC through the Secretary, Animal Ethics, within two weeks after each meeting.

The AEC must report in writing annually (*based on a calendar year*) to the RGSC on its activities, on:

- * Numbers and types of projects approved
- * The physical facilities for the care and use of animals within the institution
- * Administrative or other difficulties being experienced
- * Any requirements for training staff
- * Review of composition and terms of reference
- * Compliance with quality assurance mechanisms approved by RGSC

Secretariat – Dr T Rohr, Research and Graduate Studies Office

Updated 24/03/09