

Animal Wellbeing and Ethics Policy



1 Purpose

To establish the ethical standards, processes and responsibilities of Research Workers involved in the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes conducted at the University.

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all Research Workers and Employees involved directly and indirectly with the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes at the University.

3 Policy Statement

The University is committed to the highest ethical standards for the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.

4 Principles

- The University is committed to promoting and ensuring the ethical use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.
- Animals will only be used for Scientific Purposes when there will be scientific or educational merit and the potential effects on the Animals involved is justified by the potential benefits to humans, Animals and/or the environment.
- The University is committed to applying the '3 R's' at all stages of Animal care and use through:
 - 'Replacing' Animals with alternative methods that permit the purpose of an activity or project to be achieved without the use of Animals;
 - 'Reducing' the number of Animals used through deploying methods for obtaining comparable levels of information from the use of fewer Animals in scientific Procedures, or for obtaining more information from the same number of Animals; and
 - 'Refinement' of techniques and methods that alleviate or minimise potential pain and distress, and enhance Animal Wellbeing.
- The Vice-Chancellor has appointed the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and

Innovation) as the responsible officer for the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the Regulator.

- The responsible officer will register the University with the Regulator and ensure that the University complies with all relevant legislation, regulation and standards in regard to the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.
- The University will have an Animal Ethics Committee responsible for consideration, approval, monitoring and review of ethical approvals for the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.
- The USQ Animal Ethics Committee (USQ AEC) will be constituted and operate in accordance with its terms of reference (approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and the Regulator) in accordance with the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013.
- All activities involving the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes:
 - are subject to ethical review, approval and monitoring by the USQ Animal Ethics Committee
 - may only commence after approval has been granted by the USQ AEC in accordance with the Animal Ethics Committee Procedure
 - must be conducted in accordance with ethical approval
 - must be performed by a competent and USQ AEC approved individual, and supervised appropriately
 - must cease if ethical approval is suspended, withdrawn or expired.
- All activities involving the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes must be conducted in accordance with ethical approval, the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013, the USQ Animal Facility Procedures, work health and safety Procedures, risk management Procedures, and any other relevant legislation, directives and/or Policies and Procedures.
- Research Workers and Employees are responsible for complying with this Policy, its pursuant Procedures and implementing the requirements of the University's Research Code of Conduct Policy and its pursuant Policies and Procedures, the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013 and accepting all responsibilities as set out in these documents.
- The University may appoint an Animal Welfare Officer to oversee the wellbeing and care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.
- The University will appoint an Animal Facility Manager to be responsible for the welfare

of all Animals before the commencement of the use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.

- The Principal Investigator is responsible for the welfare of all Animals used in a project or activity for which they are responsible for the duration of that project or activity.
- The Principal Investigator is responsible for the appropriate management of all records relating to the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes during the project.
- Upon completion or cessation of a project, the Principal Investigator is also responsible for the management and storage of all primary records associated with the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes in accordance with the University's policies on records management.
- The University will ensure that access to adequate veterinary services is provided.
- Failure to uphold ethical conduct in regard to the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes may constitute Research Misconduct and will be investigated in accordance with the Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches Procedure.
- Persons who become aware that Animals are not being treated in accordance with an ethical approval have an obligation and must report this conduct in accordance with the Animal Ethics Committee Procedure and the Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches Procedure.
- If, during the course of caring or using an Animal for Scientific Purposes, an Unexpected Adverse Event (Animal) occurs, this must be managed and reported in accordance with the Animal Unexpected Adverse Event Procedure.
- All care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes must be reported and monitored in accordance with the Animal Ethics Committee Procedure.
- Monitoring and compliance of activities involving the care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes is the responsibility of the USQ AEC and will be undertaken in accordance with the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013.

5 References

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013) *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition*. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2007) *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council

6 Schedules

This Policy must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Policy Information

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| Subordinate Schedules | |
| Accountable Officer | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) |
| Responsible Officer | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) |
| Policy Type | Executive Policy |
| Approved Date | 23/10/2015 |
| Effective Date | 23/10/2015 |
| Review Date | 20/8/2018 |
| Relevant Legislation | Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2012 Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013 Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research Department of Agriculture and Fisheries - Animal welfare and ethics |
| Related Policies | Code of Conduct Policy Conflict of Interest Policy (under development) Records and Information Management Policy Research Code of Conduct Policy Research Data Management Policy Work Health and Safety Policy |
| Related Procedures | Animal Ethics Committee Procedure Disciplinary Action for Misconduct or Serious Misconduct Procedure Unexpected Adverse Event (Animal) Procedure Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches |

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| | Procedure |
| Related forms, publications and websites | Research Integrity and Ethics |
| Definitions | <p>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</p> <p>Adverse Event (Animal)</p> <p>An event that has a negative impact on the wellbeing of an Animal.</p> <p>Animal</p> <p>Any live non-human vertebrate (that is, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, encompassing domestic Animals, purpose-bred Animals, livestock, wildlife) and cephalopods.</p> <p>Animal Wellbeing</p> <p>An Animal is in a positive mental state and is able to achieve successful biological function, to have positive experiences, to express innate behaviours and to respond and cope with potentially adverse conditions. Animal Wellbeing may be assessed by physiological and behavioural measures of an Animal's physical and psychological health and by the Animal's capacity to cope with stressors and species-specific behaviours in response to social and environmental conditions.</p> <p>Employee</p> <p>A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the USQ Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University.</p> <p>Policy</p> <p>A high level strategic directive that establishes a principle based approach on a subject. Policy is operationalised through Procedures that give instructions and set out processes to implement a Policy.</p> <p>Procedure</p> <p>An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a Policy.</p> |

[Research Misconduct](#)

Breaches of the University Research Code of Conduct and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research occur on a spectrum, from minor (less serious) to major (more serious). Some major/serious breaches may be regarded as 'research misconduct'. The University uses the definition recommended in the National Health and Medical Research Council Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and defines Research Misconduct as a serious breach of the Code which is also intentional or reckless or negligent. The use of the term Research Misconduct for serious breaches will be considered in the context of other institutional processes, Regardless of whether a Code investigation and an investigation done under an employment or student disciplinary agreement are separate or integrated, the University will take all reasonable steps to ensure that these do not conflict, or hinder the timely implementation of all corrective actions. Research misconduct does not include honest differences in judgement. Unintentional errors do not usually constitute research misconduct unless they result from behaviour that is reckless or negligent. Repeated or persistent breaches will likely constitute a serious breach, which will trigger consideration of Research Misconduct.

[Research Worker](#)

Any person/s involved in Research Activities at, or on behalf of the University. This includes, but is not limited to Employees, Students, visiting scholars, research partners, research affiliates, holders of Honorary or Adjunct positions and research ethics committee members.

[Scientific Purposes](#)

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 breeding of a new Animal line where the impact on Animal wellbeing is unknown or uncertain), diagnosis, product testing and the production of biological products.

[Student](#)

A person who: has been Admitted or Enrolled in an Academic Program at the University, but has not yet graduated from the program; or has been Enrolled in a Course at the University but has not yet completed the Course.

[Unexpected Adverse Event \(Animal\)](#)

An event that may have a negative impact on the wellbeing of Animals and was not foreshadowed in the approved project or activity. An unexpected adverse event may result from different causes, including but not limited to: death of an Animal, or group of Animals, that was not expected (e.g. during surgery or anaesthesia, or after a procedure or treatment); adverse effects following a procedure or treatment that were not expected; adverse effects in larger numbers of Animals than predicted during the planning of the project or activity, based on the number of Animals actually used, not the number approved for the study; a greater level of pain or distress than was predicted during the planning of the project or activity; power failures, inclement weather, emergency situations or other factors external to the project or activity that have a negative impact on the welfare of the Animals.

[USQ Animal Facility Manager](#)

The person at the University responsible for the overall management of a USQ Animal Facility used for the breeding and holding of Animals.

Definitions that relate to this policy only

Principal Investigator

The person appointed to the role of Principal Investigator as per the approved ethics application. This person may also be known as the chief or lead researcher or investigator. The Principal Investigator is the person who is responsible for the overall management and conduct of an individual project and for ensuring that clear lines of responsibility, communication and accountability regarding the care and use of Animals are identified and upheld.

Source: Adapted from the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013.

Regulator

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Queensland).

Keywords

Record No

14/1868PL