



ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. The University of British Columbia (UBC) is committed to the humane and ethical care of animals used in research, breeding and teaching. Animal use at UBC must be justified and there must be a reasonable expectation that the use of animals will benefit the health and welfare of people or of animals, advance basic knowledge, or provide an educational outcome that cannot be achieved by other means. UBC follows the tenets of the 3Rs (replacement, reduction, refinement) and adheres to best practices that evolve over time.
2. UBC will maintain a functionally active Animal Care Committee (ACC) for so long as any research, breeding, or teaching involving animals is conducted by UBC Persons, or in all areas where animals are housed or used including alternate housing sites and laboratories.
3. The UBC ACC must work to ensure that all animal users and caregivers are informed of, and comply with, the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) policies, Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Medicine (CALAM) Standards of Veterinary Care, applicable legislation and UBC policies and procedures.
4. The ACC will operate in accordance with the following terms of reference.

Appointment Process

5. The Associate Vice President Research & Innovation (AVPRI) will determine the number of members on the ACC and will be responsible for appointing members to the ACC.

Composition

6. The ACC will include the following members:
 - a. UBC faculty members experienced in animal care and use from diverse UBC faculties, including at least one field researcher, who may or may not be actively using animals during their term on the ACC;

- b. veterinarians experienced in experimental animal care and use who are provided with continuing education/training opportunities in experimental animal care and use;
- c. an Institutional member whose normal activities, past or present, do not depend on or involve animal use for research, breeding, or teaching;
- d. at least one, but preferably two, person(s) representing community interests and concerns, who has no affiliation with UBC, and who is not involved in animal use for research, breeding, or teaching;
- e. an animal facility technician or manager;
- f. a student representative (graduate or undergraduate);
- g. any other person the AVPRI may deem appropriate; and
- h. the University Veterinarian, Clinical Veterinarian(s), Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) Veterinarian, and PAM Compliance Officer, ACC Manager, ACC Assistant Manager and Safety and Risk Services Representative are ex-officio members of the committee.

Term

- 7. Members (with the exception of ex-officio members) are normally appointed for a term of no less than two years and no more than four years, renewable at the AVPRI's discretion to a maximum of eight consecutive years.

Chair

- 8. The AVPRI will appoint a Chair of the ACC from among its members as defined above. To avoid potential conflicts of interest, the Chair must not:
 - a. have direct involvement in the management of a UBC animal care facility;
 - b. be a clinical veterinarian or animal health technician for UBC;
 - c. have involvement as an investigator in a significant number of the protocols presented to the ACC;
 - d. be a member of the Post-Approval Monitoring compliance team.

Meetings

9. The ACC will meet no fewer than 10 times each calendar year.

Quorum

10. A quorum consists of 50% plus one member, however three of these must include the community representative, one veterinarian and at least one researcher. In the event that a community representative, veterinarian, or a researcher is not able to attend, they are urged to submit written comments or comments on the UBC online Research Information System (RISe) concerning protocols and annual renewals to be reviewed at that meeting. If the ACC reaches a decision that is contrary to the comments of the community representative, veterinarian or researcher, the decision will be delayed until the next ACC meeting.

Subcommittees

11. The ACC may recommend the creation of a subcommittee to the AVPRI to conduct any part of its business, provided that the decisions and actions of a subcommittee are subject to ratification by the ACC at an ACC meeting. The quorum for a subcommittee will be as considered appropriate by the ACC in each case, but it should include the Chair (or delegate) and a veterinarian, and if the subcommittee involves reviewing protocols, at least one community member, one institutional member who does not use animals, one technical staff representative and the ACC coordinator must also be included. Currently, the following subcommittees are in place:
 - a. Policy, Guideline and SOP Subcommittee works to develop policy, policy guidelines, and SOPs related to the ACC and any matters for which the ACC is responsible. (see Policy, Guideline and SOP Subcommittee TOR for details);
 - b. Facility Managers' Subcommittee which works to improve consistency amongst units and also reports any animal welfare related concerns to the ACC (see Animal Care Facility Managers Subcommittee TOR for details).

Committee Manager

12. The ACC Manager and Assistant Manager provide support to the ACC.

Line of Accountability

13. The ACC reports to the AVPRI.

Agendas, Minutes and Reports

14. Information should be circulated to all members at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting. Formal minutes will be recorded for each meeting, reviewed by the Chair, and circulated to the Committee.

15. The ACC, via the online RISE portal, will keep written records of ACC decisions, will make these available to the AVPRI and will follow up with him/her on any concerns.

Responsibilities

16. The ACC will ensure that appropriate care, including adequate veterinary oversight, is given to all animals in all stages of life and in all experimental situations in compliance with CCAC policies and guidelines, CALAM Standards of Veterinary Care, applicable legislation and UBC policies and procedures.

17. The ACC will establish standards to ensure that:

- a. unnecessary pain or distress is avoided;
- b. anaesthesia and analgesia are properly and effectively used in all cases where necessary;
- c. appropriate post-procedural care is provided;
- d. appropriate means of euthanasia are used;
- e. all procedures are carried out in the most humane and scientifically justified manner;
- f. all due consideration is given to animal welfare, including environmental enrichment; and
- g. all personnel working with animals are appropriately trained.

18. The ACC will develop policies and guidelines as needed to enforce its responsibility¹.

19. The ACC will establish procedures for post-approval monitoring of animal use.

20. The ACC has the authority to:

- a. stop any procedure if it considers that unnecessary distress or pain is being experienced by an animal;
- b. stop any animal use which deviates from any approved use, which involves any non-approved procedure, or which causes unforeseen pain or distress to an animal; and
- c. humanely euthanize an animal, if it considers it necessary.

The Committee's authority with respect to the points above is also delegated to the University Veterinarian, and his/her delegates as approved by the ACC, who shall make full reports to the ACC within 24 hours in cases where this authority is exercised.

The Chair of the ACC and the UBC Veterinarians must have access at all times to all areas where animals are or may be held or used.

Protocols

21. The ACC is responsible for setting the procedures for review and approval of protocols, and the consensus necessary for any decision with respect to a protocol, as follows:

- a. The ACC is responsible for reviewing all protocols. As per UBC Board of Governors Policy LR2 - Research, the ACC will ensure that the use of animals in research, breeding and teaching is undertaken only when a written application (i.e. a protocol submitted on RISE) has received approval at a meeting of the full ACC;
- b. when reviewing protocols, the ACC will place particular emphasis on the CCAC policy statement on Ethics of Animal Investigation and the CCAC guidelines on the Care and Use of Experimental Animals and Animal Use Protocol Review, as well as all other relevant institutional policies and guidelines, applicable legislation and CALAM Standards of Veterinary Care;
- c. decisions will typically be made by consensus. Here we define consensus of opinion as general or widespread agreement. This does not mean unanimous agreement and allows the opportunity for individual committee members to

¹ <https://animalcare.ubc.ca/animal-care-committee/sops-policies-and-guidelines>.

register their opposition. If agreement is not widespread (consensus is not met), any ACC member can call for a vote. Approval of decision will require greater than 50% of those present at the meeting assuming quorum is met;

- d. the ACC will ensure that each research project has been reviewed for scientific merit. In the case where a research project has not undergone peer-review (start-up funding, contract research, pilot studies), the proposed protocol will be subjected to independent peer review. If there appears to be a discrepancy between the research proposed in the ACC application and the research that was funded through a peer review process, at the Committee's discretion, the project may also be sent for independent peer review. This process will take place through the Peer Review Committee which is a separate Committee reporting directly to the AVPRI. Mechanisms will be available to maintain the confidentiality of the proposed work and the reviewers' identities. All Teaching protocols will be subject to a pedagogical merit review. This process will take place through the Pedagogical Merit Review Committee, overseen by the AVPRI. Once pedagogical or scientific merit review is complete, the ACC will be informed via the online RISE portal whether the protocol is considered meritorious;
- e. protocols requiring review must be submitted to the ACC three weeks before a protocol review meeting. These protocols can undergo an optional pre-review process, where a veterinarian reads and provides feedback on the protocol to facilitate ACC review. While pre-review is optional, it is strongly encouraged. Pre-review may involve back and forth communications between the pre-review veterinarian (or their designate) and the Principal Investigator. One week before a scheduled ACC protocol review meeting, individual protocols are assigned, via RISE, to reviewers including, a minimum of two researchers, one clinical veterinarian, one community member, and a representative from Safety and Risk Services. Reviewers comments are uploaded to RISE before the ACC protocol review meeting;
- f. the Chair, who presides over the monthly protocol review meetings of the ACC, guides the Committee through the review of each successive application on the agenda. The Chair will ask the primary reviewers to give a brief summary of the protocol for Committee members who have not been assigned the application. All reviewers are then asked to put forward their concerns for discussion;
- g. the Chair moderates the discussion, and when a consensus is reached (or a vote taken, if necessary) summarizes the Committee's decisions for the ACC Manager;

- h. the Chair will establish, based on the Committee's consensus opinion, the outcome of the ACC review (e.g., approval, conditional approval, proviso, deferral or rejection). These are defined as follows:
- **Approved** – The Certificate of Approval is released and no further information is required from the applicant.
 - **Conditional Approval** – The Certificate of Conditional Approval is released with a covering memo advising the applicant of minor changes, comments or suggestions from the Committee, none of which involve concerns related to animal welfare. The PI may proceed with animal work while full approval is pending.
 - **Proviso** – The Certificate of Approval is withheld until the applicant has responded to the items listed in the proviso memo. All assigned ACC reviewers who had questions on the protocol will evaluate the response and approve, question, or refer the file for review by the full ACC. No animal work may proceed until the protocol is approved or conditionally approved.
 - **Deferral** – The Certificate of Approval is withheld because insufficient information was provided in the protocol to allow the ACC to perform an assessment. Details are provided to the applicant and they are invited to submit the application for full ACC review at a future date.
 - **Rejection** – The work is not acceptable to be done at UBC.
- i. the ACC's approval of a protocol is valid for a maximum of one year. If the work will be pursued beyond one year, the ACC will require the investigator to submit a renewal application through RISE. The ACC will not grant more than three consecutive protocol renewals. After three consecutive renewals of a protocol, an investigator must reapply for approval by way of a new protocol application;
- j. the ACC will require any modifications/amendments to an approved protocol be submitted through RISE. No changes to the work under an approved protocol can take place until the modification has been approved. If the modifications are, in the ACC's opinion, substantial, the ACC may require the researcher to submit a new protocol application.

Administrative amendments are defined as changes that are predominantly administrative and not animal related. Administrative amendments include, but are not limited to: personnel changes and updates to training, funding, contact information. Administrative amendments can be approved by the ACC manager.

Minor amendments are defined as changes that are minimally invasive with no significant impact on animal welfare. Minor amendments include, but are not limited to: less than 20% increase (up to 30% increase at the discretion of the committee) in animal usage or minor procedural details. Minor amendments

can be approved by a subgroup of standing committee members that will include at least the Chair or Associate Chair and a Veterinarian.

Major amendments are defined as changes that may be considered invasive and may have an impact on animal welfare. Major amendments include, but are not limited to: increase of category of invasiveness, use of more invasive or more frequent procedures, entirely new procedures, or greater than 20% - 30% increase in animal numbers, change of species, or at the discretion of the ACC. Major amendments must be approved by the full ACC;

- k. interim review of protocols may be undertaken for short-term pilot studies or to address unforeseen circumstances requiring an expedited review. Interim reviews will be conducted by the Chair/Associate Chair, a researcher, a veterinarian, a community member and a representative from Safety and Risk Services. All communication regarding interim approvals will be documented on RISE. All interim approvals are conditional pending discussion at a full meeting of the ACC;
- l. the ACC will work with the investigator to resolve any concerns of the Committee with respect to a protocol. This may involve a request to the investigator to appear before the Committee.

Appeal Process

- 22. If the ACC does not approve a protocol, the investigator has the right to appeal the ACC decision to the AVPRI. The AVPRI will resolve the appeal in a timely manner by ensuring a separate, fair, and impartial process, which may include expertise from appropriate institutions. The AVPRI's decision will be considered final.

Facilities and Animal Housing

- 23. The ACC will be responsible for inspecting and approving all areas where animals are housed or used, including alternate housing sites and laboratories, and for visiting each facility that is under UBC oversight at least once per year. Site visit reports will be produced and the ACC will follow up on any concerns.
- 24. The ACC will ensure that there is a person (the Facility Manager) designated to be in charge of each facility under UBC oversight for the housing, care and production of animals, and that the animal care users and caregivers are qualified and properly trained. The ACC will also ensure that safety, security and crisis management procedures are in place. See also the Animal Facility Management Policy.

General

25. Members of the ACC shall hold materials associated with the ACC, such as research protocols, and all discussions that take place at meetings of the ACC, in the strictest confidence.
26. The ACC will review these Terms of Reference every three years to ensure that they reflect changes in CCAC policies and guidelines as well as animal welfare, scientific or community concerns.
27. The ACC will liaise with the CCAC on behalf of UBC and provide such information to the CCAC that it may require from time to time, including annual animal use data.
28. The ACC will act as a general resource to UBC animal users and caregivers and will be available to render assistance in the event of any unanticipated problems, and to advise and educate through workshops and other information sessions with respect to CCAC guidelines or policies, ethics, any applicable legislation and UBC policies/guidelines with respect to animal use and animal care.