

Terms of Reference

Name:	Swinburne Biosafety Committee (SBC)
Approved by:	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Development)
Contact:	Sheila Hamilton-Brown; Swinburne Research Office
Last reviewed:	12 March 2015

PURPOSE

The Swinburne Biosafety Committee (SBC) functions to ensure that Swinburne activities and facilities involving hazardous biological agents meet safety, ethical and professional standards as well as compliance with relevant Australian law and other regulatory regimes within the scope of this law.

The SBC also functions to regularly review and approve standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the Neuroimaging facilities in accordance with relevant Swinburne policies and external regulatory regimes.

Explanatory Note: SBC responsibility does not extend to general laboratory risks and procedures involving the use of chemicals which are otherwise covered by Swinburne Occupational Health and Safety Policies or Procedures.

DEFINITIONS

Biohazardous material (biohazards)	Infectious agents or other hazardous biological materials that pose an actual risk or likely risk to the health of humans, animals, plants or the environment.
Biosafety	Biosafety defines the conditions under which infectious agents can be safely used. The objective is to contain biohazards, and reduce the exposure of people and the environment to infectious agents.

GOVERNING BODY

The SBC functions as an advisory committee to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Development) (DVC(R&D)).

RESPONSIBILITY

The Committee responsibilities are:

- To assist the University in its commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment with respect to biohazardous material and associated facilities;
- To assist the University in meeting its legislative and contractual obligations concerning the safe production, handling, storage and containment of biohazardous material; specifically Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), potentially infectious microorganisms as described in the Australian Standard AS/NZ 2243.3 (Risk Group 2 or higher), Security Sensitive Biological Agents (SSBAs), and materials regulated by quarantine and biosecurity legislation;
- To assess, approve, inspect and monitor facilities where biohazardous materials are used, including advising on or determining whether a proposed facility complies with regulations and/or standards (OGTR-certified, Quarantine Approved Premises, Australian Standard AS/NZ 2243.1);
- To assess, approve and monitor research and teaching activities with biohazardous materials, including advising on which approvals are required;
- To regularly review and approve SOPs for the Neuroimaging facilities (Magnetoencephalography (MEG), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) in accordance with relevant Swinburne policies and external regulatory regimes;
- To provide an advisory service to the University as appropriate with respect to national, international and professional codes of conduct and community standards and expectations concerning biohazardous material or facilities;
- To provide an advisory service to the University and researchers in regards to development, revision or approval of policies, guidelines and procedures for the safe handling or storage of biohazardous material, including training and qualifications of personnel involved; and
- To report to the DVC(R&D) and regulatory authorities as required.

In fulfilling the above, the Committee carries out the functions:

- a) of an Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) in accordance with the *Gene Technology Act 2000*, the *Gene Technology Regulations 2001* and Victorian legislation:
 - which examine and comment on matters of policy relevant to genetic manipulation research in the University;
 - assist the University to correctly identify proposed dealings involving GMOs;
 - assess the actual and potential risks associated with any dealing involving genetic manipulation;
 - assess compliance with the requirements for certification of a physical containment facility for GMO dealings;
 - ensure all persons working with GMOs are adequately trained and that a record of trained personnel is maintained;
 - monitor dealings by requiring annual reports to the Committee and carry out the inspection of certified facilities; and
 - assist the University to comply with the conditions of the accreditation by completing annual reports to the OGTR.

- b) of a Biosafety Committee in accordance with Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 2243.3, Security Sensitive Biological Agent Standards (Part 3 of the *National Health Security Act 2007*) and the Quarantine Act 1908:
- provide advice on the safe handling of hazardous biological agents within the University;
 - examine and approve submitted applications for research and teaching protocols;
 - determine whether additional expertise should be consulted before a decision is made; and
 - maintain a register of approved projects and containment facilities (laboratories, animal houses), including personnel working in said facilities.

COMPOSITION

Membership

The Members of the Committee are appointed in accordance with the requirements of the Gene Technology Act 2000 - the membership has the collective technical and scientific expertise to review and assess all the matters that are likely be put to it by the organisation; the members of the IBC are appropriately indemnified; and at least one of the members of the IBC is independent. In addition other members have been appointed with specified expertise where applicable.

All members, with the exception of the Chair, shall be appointed by the DVC(R&D).

Name	Type of Appointment	Term of Office
Chair	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Deputy Chair	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Biosafety Officer	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Biochemist/Molecular Biologist	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Geneticist	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Independent - a person able to exercise unfettered and independent judgement in relation to IBC matters or deliberation	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Bioengineering expertise	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Laboratory Safety/Risk Management expertise x 2	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Bioelectromagnetic safety expert	Member	Initial appointment for 1 year, Renewable for 2 years periods
Executive Officer	Ex-officio (non-voting)	Nominated by Swinburne Research

Chair

Method of Appointment

The Chair shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the DVC(R&D).

Deputy Chair

Method of Appointment

The Deputy Chair shall be appointed by the Chair to chair a meeting in their absence or when applications or other matters involving the Chair are under consideration.

Executive Officer

Method of Appointment

The Executive Officer shall be provided by Swinburne Research, and will be responsible for facilitating meetings, record-keeping and reporting. There is no restriction on terms of office, but they may be reviewed annually as part of their performance appraisal.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

Quorum

The quorum for deliberative meetings shall consist of at least 3 members present, including the Chair or Deputy Chair. However, should decisions require specialist or independent (lay or other) input from members absent from a particular meeting these must be properly endorsed in a timely manner by those members 'by circulation'. In the case of notifiable GMO dealings where the resultant endorsement is not forthcoming or insufficient, the Committee must reconvene to review the particular decision in a deliberative manner, to ensure requisite collective technical and scientific expertise.

Meetings

The Committee shall meet as appropriate and at least twice annually in order to assist with compliance reporting. Agendas for deliberative meetings shall be forwarded to members in a timely manner.

Attendance at meetings

- a. The Vice-Chancellor and the DVC(R&D) (or their delegates) shall have right of attendance.
- b. The University's Occupational Health & Safety Consultant (or delegate) may attend or be requested to attend meetings as required.
- c. The Committee may invite other people with specific expertise to provide advice as required.
- d. Where appropriate, the Chairs (or delegates) of Swinburne's Animal Ethic Committee (SAEC) or Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) may be invited to attend meetings.

RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Development)
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VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
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2	12 March 2015	DVC(R&D)	Reporting lines end with the DVC(R&D) Clarification of Committee oversight
1	8 June 2010	Vice Chancellors Executive Group	