

## Terms of Reference



SWINBURNE  
UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY

Name: Swinburne Animal Ethics Committee (SAEC)

Approved by: Council

Last reviewed: 12 October 2009

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## SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE

The Swinburne Animal Ethics Committee (SAEC) was established as the Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee to comply with legislation regarding the prevention of cruelty to animals and with regard to requirements set by Victorian and national regulatory authorities and research funding bodies. Its main function is to examine written proposals relevant to the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, taking into consideration ethical and welfare aspects as well as scientific or educational value.

### DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Animal Ethics Committee (AEC)	Animal Ethics Committee as constituted in line with the current edition of <i>Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes</i>

### GOVERNING BODY

This Committee reports to Swinburne Council via the Vice-Chancellor.

## SECTION 2 - PROCEDURE

### 1. RESPONSIBILITY

- 1.1 To provide an advisory service to the University as appropriate with respect to the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, having due regard to national, international and professional standards of conduct.
- 1.2 To assist the University in meeting its legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations regarding the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, including with respect to:
  - a) Current Victorian prevention of cruelty to animals legislation/regulations<sup>1</sup> and any related licensing requirements<sup>2</sup> or codes of practice<sup>3</sup>; and
  - b) Current statements and guidelines promulgated by the National Health & Medical Research Council<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.3 In performing its role, due regard shall be paid to:
  - a) Approving guidelines for the care of animals that are bred, held and used for scientific purposes on behalf of the institution;
  - b) Monitoring the acquisition, transportation, production, housing, care, use and fate of animals;
  - c) Recommending to the institution any measures needed to ensure that regulatory and other relevant standards are maintained;
  - d) Examining and approving, or approving subject to modification, or rejecting written proposals relevant to the use of animals for scientific purposes;
  - e) Approving only those studies for which animals are essential and justified and which conform to the regulatory and other relevant standards. This should take into consideration factors including ethical principles, the impact on animals and their environment, and anticipated scientific, environmental or educational value;
  - f) Monitoring progress of projects given approval;
  - g) Withdrawing approval for any project as appropriate;
  - h) Authorising the emergency treatment of any animal with reference to relevant regulatory and other requirements;
  - i) Examining and commenting on institutional plans and policies that may affect the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes;
  - j) Maintaining a record of proposals and projects including the outcomes of Committee deliberation; and

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<sup>1</sup> See Victorian *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act/Regulations*

<sup>2</sup> Eg, Scientific Premises Procedures Licence (SPPL) issued by Bureau of Animal Welfare (BAW), Victorian Department of Primary Industries (DPI) (as at 2009)

<sup>3</sup> See DPI-issued *Code of Practice for the Housing and Care of Laboratory Mice, Rats, Guinea Pigs and Rabbits* (2004), etc.

<sup>4</sup> See *Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed 2004)

- k) Performing all other duties as required by regulatory and other authorities, including with respect to Swinburne and external reporting requirements.

1.4 The Committee shall be serviced by Swinburne Research

## 2. COMPOSITION

### 2.1 Membership

The Swinburne University of Technology Animals Ethics Committee (SAEC) shall comprise at least four members, including at least one separate person appointed to each of the following AEC categories:

#### 2.1.1 AEC Categories

2.1.1.1 **Category A** a person with qualifications in veterinary science and with experience relevant to the activities of the institution. Veterinarians who lack this experience must familiarise themselves with the biology and clinical characteristics of the species of animals used;

2.1.1.2 **Category B** a suitably qualified person with substantial recent experience in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities. This will usually entail possession of a higher degree in research;

2.1.1.3 **Category 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. Veterinarians with specific animal welfare interest and experience may meet the requirements of this Category. While not representing an animal welfare organisation, the person should, where possible, be selected on the basis of active membership of, and nomination by, such an organisation; and

2.1.1.4 **Category D** a person who is both independent of the institution and who has never been involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, either in their employment or beyond their undergraduate education. Category D members should be viewed by the wider community as bringing a completely independent view to the AEC, and must not fit the requirements of any other category.

#### 2.1.2 Additional Members

Additional members may be appointed where appropriate, including where practicable the person responsible for the routine care of animals from within the institution.

#### 2.1.3 Duties

No Committee or Sub-committee member shall adjudicate on any item of business in which they may personally be involved and other aspects of the University's policy on conflict of interest shall be maintained.

#### **2.1.4 Term of Office**

Membership shall in the first instance be for a period of up to one year and renewable for two-year periods thereafter.

#### **2.1.5 Method of Appointment**

Members (including alternate members) shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVC(R)) or delegate. In recommending appointments, the DVC(R) or delegate shall have consulted with the Chair of the Committee and other parties as appropriate to ensure minimum/maximum current membership and diversity accords with any legislative and other obligations.

### **2.2 Chair**

#### **2.2.1 Duties**

The Chair shall:

- (a) carry out responsibilities as specified under regulatory requirements, in particular with respect to the current *Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes*.
- (b) where necessary appoint a Deputy Chair from amongst members.

#### **2.2.2 Term of Office**

Membership shall in the first instance be for a period of up to one year and renewable for two-year periods thereafter.

#### **2.2.3 Method of Appointment**

The Chair shall be appointed by the Council on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor. Where there is an emergent vacancy, an Acting Chair may be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor subject to ratification by the Council.

### **3. OPERATING PROCEDURES**

#### **3.1 Quorum**

The quorum for meetings shall be at least one member from every AEC membership category (2.1.1 above). Where current membership extends beyond 4 members, Categories C plus D should represent no less than one third of members.

#### **3.2 Meetings**

The Committee shall meet in an ordinary deliberative capacity on at least two times a year or with regard to external regulatory requirements.

### 3.3 Manuals and Working Procedures

Working policies and procedures proposed, developed and revised under Section 1 above should be undertaken in consultation with the DVC(R) or delegate wherever there are resource implications. The content of operative policies and procedures should be appropriately publicised.

### 3.4 Reports

In addition to the Swinburne Council (or its delegate), the Committee reports to external authorities such as the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Victorian Bureau of Animal Welfare in conjunction with the Vice-Chancellor and/or DVC(R) as appropriate.

## 4. RELATED MATERIAL

Name	Location	Document Type
<p><b>Related Documents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes (7<sup>th</sup> Ed 2004)</i></li><li>▪ Scientific Premises Procedures Licence (SPPL)</li><li>▪ <i>Code of Practice for the Housing and Care of Laboratory Mice, Rats, Guinea Pigs and Rabbits (2004)</i></li><li>▪ Code of Conduct Policy</li><li>▪ Conflict of Interest Policy</li><li>▪ Policy on the Conduct of Research</li><li>▪ Research Higher Degrees Policy</li><li>▪ Current guidelines, procedures and work instructions pertaining to research ethics administration issued by Swinburne Research/SAEC.</li></ul>	<p><a href="http://www.research.swinburne.edu.au/researchers/ethics/">http://www.research.swinburne.edu.au/researchers/ethics/</a></p>	

## SECTION 3 - GOVERNANCE

### RESPONSIBILITY

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
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### VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
4	12 October 2009	Council	Complete review. Renamed Swinburne Animal Ethics Committee (SAEC). Previously known as Animal Experimentation Research Ethics Committee (AEEC).
3	5 June 2009	Director Governance and Policy Unit	Put into new template. Content not reviewed.
2	7 June 2001	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research	Reviewed without amendment.
1	3 October 1994	Council	

### POLICY & PROCEDURE DIRECTORY REQUIREMENTS

CATEGORY
University Organisation
KEYWORDS
Committee, Research, Terms of Reference, Ethics