

Hints, Tips and other information on Animal Care and Ethics

1. What is the Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC) and what does it do?	1
2. Who is on the ACEC?	1
3. How do I apply for permission to use animals?	2
4. When does the Committee meet?	2
5. Where and how can I lodge my application?	2
6. What if I have approval from another accredited Institution?	2
7. What if am undertaking a project overseas?	2
8. What are the key issues to address in my application, what will the ACEC allow?	3
9. What is an Animal Research Authority (ARA) and who needs one?	3
10. What happens after my proposal is reviewed by the ACEC?	3
11. When can I start my research?	3
12. How long is approval granted for?	3
13. What is the ACEC guideline on amendments to active projects?	3
14. What are the ACEC's reporting requirements?	4
15. Will there be monitoring or inspections of my animals or the facility in which they are held?	4
16. Where can I get assistance with my application?	4

1. What is the Animal Care and Ethics Committee (ACEC) and what does it do?

Under the *Animal Research Act* and the *Australian Code of Practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes*, any teaching or research activity at UWS that includes keeping or using vertebrate animals can only happen with prior approval from the ACEC.

The primary purpose of the ACEC is to protect the welfare of animals and ensure that their use is valid and justified.

2. Who is on the ACEC?

Under National regulations, the ACEC must comprise of:

Category A: A person with qualifications in veterinary science,

Category B: A person with substantial recent experience in the use of animals in scientific and teaching activities.

Category C: A person with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in furthering the welfare of animals. The person where possible should be selected on the basis of active membership of an animal welfare organisation.

Category D: An independent person who does not currently and has not previously conducted scientific or teaching activities using animals.

Membership includes both internal and external members. The Vice-Chancellor appoints the Committee members. Category C and D must comprise one-third of the total membership for the meeting to be quorate. Proposals can only be approved at quorate meetings of the Committee.

3. How do I apply for permission to use animals?

Complete the relevant form - Animal Research and Teaching Proposal Application form.

Lodge this proposal at least 1-2 months prior to the start of your project. All questions must be answered as fully as possible and all sections must be completed – mark N/A on those not applicable. Appendices (where attached) should show project title and question number. Incomplete forms or applications on previous versions of the application form will not be accepted. Researchers are encouraged to attend meetings of the ACEC in the initial presentation of protocols and Committee members value the input of researchers to enhance the effective functioning of the Committee.

Forms are available from the Research Services web page-

http://www.uws.edu.au/research/ors/ethics/animal/applicationreport_forms_for_animal_ethics

4. When does the Committee meet?

The Committee meets on the second Thursday of every month February to November, 1:00-3:00pm. Meetings schedules can be obtained at this web address:

<http://www.uws.edu.au/about/adminorg/devint/ors/ethics/animal/animalcttee>

5. Where and how can I lodge my application?

The original and 13 signed copies (14 in total) can be hand delivered, mailed internally or externally to the Ethics Officer.

Postal address:

UWS, Office of Research Services,
K1.118, Penrith Campus,
Locked Bay 1797, Penrith South DC NSW 1797.
Copies can be double sided and stapled.

6. What if I have approval from another accredited Institution?

Animal work carried out at another institution by UWS staff or students must have approval from that institution's animal ethics committee. In addition, a copy of the application and the approval letter must be submitted to the UWS ACEC for noting.

7. What if I am undertaking a project overseas?

Where proposals are undertaken in other countries in conjunction with UWS, an application to the ACEC must be made to conduct the work in those countries. The proposal shall provide evidence of compliance with the codes, laws and practices equivalent to those in Australia and provide evidence that the welfare of the animals will be suitably monitored. Where relevant, approvals granted by a local AEC or equivalent body are to be included in the submission to the ACEC. In all such instances, the ACEC shall take into account how the standards defined in the Code have been met.

8. What are the key issues to address in my application, what will the ACEC allow?

There isn't a single answer to this question. Each application is assessed on its merits; that means that each applicant must argue a case for their proposed use of animals. Some key issues include:

- Pain and distress / welfare of the animal;
- Numbers of animals used;
- Most appropriate species;
- Experimental techniques;
- Experimental design and scientific validity;
- Environmental enrichment;
- Appropriate methods of euthanasia;
- Alternatives sought.

9. What is an Animal Research Authority (ARA) and who needs one?

An ARA is a legal instrument issued by the ACEC on behalf of the accredited establishment to all personnel listed in the application involved in the use of animals associated with the proposal.

Note: It is an offence under the NSW Animal Research Act 1985 for a person to conduct animal research without an ARA.

An ARA remains in force for twelve months from the date of issue or for a shorter, specified period. An ARA may be cancelled at any time by the ACEC.

10. What happens after my proposal is reviewed by the ACEC?

Following the review, a decision is made and the outcome is communicated in writing both to you and your supervisor. This usually takes between 1-10 working days. The proposal may be approved outright or may be considered approvable subject to your complying with certain conditions to the satisfaction of the Chair before an approval letter will be issued. The approval letter will also include the Animal Research Authority (ARA).

11. When can I start my research?

Projects must not start before written ACEC approval is given & Animal Research Authorities issued. Researchers must not order animals or commence work until written advice has been received. This also applies to amendments to approved protocols.

12. How long is approval granted for?

Ongoing projects are normally approved for a maximum period of three years.

13. What is the ACEC guideline on amendments to active projects?

Requests for amendments to active approved proposals must be submitted in writing to the ACEC. It is helpful if you state how the amendment differs from

what was contained in your original protocol. Apply immediately to the ACEC if there is any variation/amendment to your approved proposal. [Amendments](#) must be approved before any variation is undertaken to previously approved proposals.

14. What are the ACEC's reporting requirements?

Monitoring of approved proposals is by submission of a [progress or final report](#) annually. However it can also involve an inspection by ACEC members of the animals or the facility in which they are held.

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to provide a progress report at the time of renewal of the Animal Research Authority (annually) or a final report on completion.

15. Will there be monitoring or inspections of my animals or the facility in which they are held?

The ACEC conducts site inspections of animal facilities after each meeting. The ACEC may appoint a member as an inspector to a project and their contact details are provided to the researcher in the approval letter. This however does not preclude any other member of the Committee inspecting the animals or the facility in which they are held. During inspections, monitoring records are checked and a [monitoring sheet](#) may be of assistance to you.

16. Where can I get assistance with my application?

An [information package](#) has been developed which the Committee hopes will be of assistance in enhancing researchers understanding of the issues associated with the use of animals in research and teaching. First time animal researchers are encouraged to refer of the [Training resources](#) to gain familiarity with animal ethical issues.

Need to know more?

Contact the Research Ethics Coordinator in Office of Research Services, Building K.1.48, Penrith Campus, by e-mail (animalethics@uws.edu.au).