



## Animal Use Subcommittee (AUS) Terms of Reference

### 1. AUS Responsibilities and Authority

As a working subcommittee of the University Council on Animal Care (UCAC) on behalf of Western University, the Animal Use Subcommittee (AUS) is responsible:

- 1.1. To assume all responsibilities mandated by the
  - 1.1.1. Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) - <http://www.ccac.ca> ;
  - 1.1.2. Animals for Research Act, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) (Ontario) - [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90a22\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90a22_e.htm) ;
  - 1.1.3. Tri-Council's "Memorandum of Understanding" [http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/MOURoles-ProtocolRoles/index\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/MOURoles-ProtocolRoles/index_eng.asp) ;
  - 1.1.4. Other Federal agencies whose policies apply to the use of animals and/or materials used in research involving animals, including but not limited to:
    - 1.1.4.1. Canadian Food Inspection Agency;
    - 1.1.4.2. Health Canada;
    - 1.1.4.3. Public Health Agency of Canada;
    - 1.1.4.4. Environment Canada;
    - 1.1.4.5. Transport Canada.
  - 1.1.5. Canadian Association of Laboratory Medicine's "Standards of Animal Care";
  - 1.1.6. University policies.
- 1.2. To ensure that the care and use of animals, as defined by the CCAC, hereafter referred to as "animals," throughout all stages of their life and in all experimental situations associated with all facilities operated by the University and its affiliated institutions, is in compliance with all Federal, Provincial, and University policy statutory requirements, regulations, and guidelines. Furthermore, to ensure that scientists working off-site, such as field studies or those collaborating at other sites or institutions, are in compliance with the same.
- 1.3. To use its CCAC-mandated authority to:
  - 1.3.1. Stop any procedure it considers objectionable on the basis that unnecessary distress or pain is being experienced by an animal;
  - 1.3.2. Stop immediately any use of animals which deviates from the approved use, any non-approved procedure, or any procedure causing unforeseen pain or distress to animals; and
  - 1.3.3. Have an animal euthanized humanely if pain or distress caused to the animal is not part of the approved protocol and cannot be alleviated.
  - 1.3.4. Delegate authority to treat or euthanize animals to an authorized veterinarian.
- 1.4. To review and determine the approval status, require the alteration of an *Animal Use Protocol* (AUP), and stop or limit the use of animals in research, testing and teaching in accordance with Federal, Provincial, and University policy statutory requirements, regulations and guidelines as per 1.1. with particular attention to the Canadian Council on Animal Care's (CCAC's) "Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees (2006)"; "Ethics of Animal Experimentation"; the principles of the 3-Rs (Reduce, Refine, Replace); and the "Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals," Vols. 1 & 2.
- 1.5. As necessary, the AUS may draft and review policies and procedures, and may establish subcommittees according to Senate bylaws (Senate By-law VI, 3).

- 1.6. To ensure that all animals used by the University and its affiliated institutions, with the exception of wildlife studies, are sourced only from AUS-approved commercial and non-commercial sources licensed in their jurisdiction that operate in an ethical manner in keeping with Federal and Provincial regulatory guidelines as per section 1.1.
  - 1.6.1. In the event that non-invasive behavioural studies are proposed on pets owned by the public, such public member(s) must acknowledge in writing that they have read the associated AUP and agree to the participation of their pet(s) in the study. Additionally, CCAC-mandated safety review and staff health assessment must be completed prior to authorization.
- 1.7. To undertake post-approval monitoring and non-compliance response according to the AUS *Post-Approval Monitoring Policy*, for all approved AUPs through:
  - 1.7.1. Regular site visits - minimum once per year - of all animal care facilities and experimental laboratories where animals associated with AUS-approved AUPs are used (animal areas), and to ensure appropriate follow up.
  - 1.7.2. Written AUS site reports, including recommendations, which must be distributed in a timely manner to those responsible for the visited animal areas. Timely written responses to AUS' recommendations must be submitted by those responsible for animal areas. Any outstanding issues raised during the AUS site visits are followed up on jointly by the AUS and ACVS Veterinarians. Where matters remain unresolved, they may be referred to the Vice-President (Research) who may choose to refer these matters to the ACGSC.
  - 1.7.3. Veterinary rounds in accordance with the *Post-Approval Monitoring Policy - Veterinary Rounds for Laboratories and Post-Approval Monitoring Policy - Veterinary Rounds for Field Studies*.
  - 1.7.4. Annual certification of all non-arms-length-managed animal holding areas in accordance with the *Post-Approval Monitoring Policy - Non-Arms-Length-Managed Animal Holding Areas Certification*.
  - 1.7.5. Veterinary visits, in accordance with the *Veterinary Visit Policy*.
  - 1.7.6. Timely follow-up on any concern or complaint communicated to AUS relating to the care and use of animals.
- 1.8. To ensure that relevant Federal, Provincial, and University policy statutory requirements, and guidelines are communicated to animal users.
- 1.9. To ensure that all individuals involved in the care and use of animals receive and maintain up-to-date CCAC mandated animal training as per MAPP 7.10. *Standardized Training in Animal Care and Use*.
- 1.10. To bring to the attention of the University Council on Animal Care (UCAC) and the Animal Care Governance Steering Committee (ACGSC) any matters requiring its special attention, and to make recommendations as appropriate:
  - 1.10.1. To report to the UCAC minimum annually, or as necessary;
  - 1.10.2. To provide to the ACGSC with materials and information as required for the consideration of appeals to AUS decisions and AUS policy development.
- 1.11. To approve Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed by relevant stakeholders to outline animal care and use best practices and to review SOPs at least every three years or as necessary.
- 1.12. To undertake specific duties as may be requested by the UCAC and ACGSC.

## 2. Animal Use Protocol Policies & Procedures

- 2.1. **Animal Use Protocols** - The review and approval of *Animal Use Protocol (AUP)* forms by the AUS is required prior to the commencement of all research, teaching and testing involving animals.
  - 2.1.1. AUP approval is indicated by notification from the AUS via the AUS Administrative Officer (AUS AO).
  - 2.1.2. Once approved, an AUP is valid for a maximum of four years to the last day of the month of the initial approval, and is subject to yearly renewals.
  - 2.1.3. The protocol number issued remains with the AUP during its four-year life.
  - 2.1.4. A maximum of three one-year renewals may be obtained after which time a new and complete AUP must be submitted.
  - 2.1.5. Where necessary, the AUS may require supportive information in addition to the AUP to ensure that all members of the AUS understand the AUP's animal impact.
  - 2.1.6. Animal based research, teaching and testing may only continue while the associated AUP maintains an 'approved' status.
  - 2.1.7. AUP annual animal use data is sent to the CCAC and OMAFRA using their Animal Use Data Forms.
- 2.2. **Pilot AUP** - In advance of a full AUP submission, the AUS may request or PI may elect that a "Pilot Study" be performed on a small group of animals to ensure a particular procedure, animal model, or study design achieves the desired outcomes in a manner that is compatible with Federal, Provincial, and University regulations, guidelines and policy statements.
  - 2.2.1. A peer review of scientific merit is required when a Principal Investigator intends to use a Pilot study to explore a new research direction that is not covered within the context of an existing peer-reviewed research program. A peer review of scientific merit is not required when the Pilot AUP involves the development or evaluation of a new method already within the context of a peer-reviewed research program.
  - 2.2.2. Submission of an AUP is required and standard approval processes are followed.
  - 2.2.3. Such studies are limited to the fewest number of animals necessary to evaluate the appropriateness, feasibility and suitability of a particular animal model, procedure, or study design to meet defined scientific objectives.
  - 2.2.4. ACVS Veterinarians are to be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of all Pilot studies.
  - 2.2.5. A subsequent complete AUP may not be submitted before the completion of the pilot study, the results of which must be included in the new AUP.
- 2.3. **Protocol Modification** - The PI or instructor must submit an amendment to the approved AUP using a *Protocol Modification (MOD)* to inform the AUS of all changes.
  - 2.3.1. All protocol modifications must be approved by AUS prior to research/teaching implementation.
  - 2.3.2. Where a *Protocol Modification (MOD)* involves a significant change(s) in animal utilization or the direction of the research, teaching, or testing, a full AUP submission will be required.
- 2.4. **Pre-Meeting Review Processes** - The submitted AUP will undergo pre-meeting review assessment according to established criteria, as detailed within the *AUS Protocol Review Process Policy*, which may involve a protocol facilitation service.
  - 2.4.1. A submitted AUP that is either missing substantial details, or requires significant revision will be returned to the PI during the pre-meeting review process, and will not be forwarded to the full AUS until updated or completed.

- 2.5. **Scientific Peer Review** – As outlined within the *AUS Protocol Review Process Policy*, where scientific peer review has not already been documented by the granting agency, the AUS will request confirmation from the Associate Dean of Research (AD-R) for the associated Faculty that scientific peer review has been undertaken at a faculty level in accordance with CCAC's policy.
  - 2.5.1. The AD-R will provide confirmation of scientific peer review by a minimum of two qualified, arms-length peer reviewers to the AUS office in a timely manner
  - 2.5.2. The AUP may only receive ethical approval once confirmation of scientific peer review has been received by the AUS office.
- 2.6. **Pedagogical Merit** - Peer review for pedagogical merit of proposed animal use in teaching shall consist of, at minimum, a review at a department level to be summarized in the pedagogical merit review questions contained within the AUP form, and confirmed by the Chair of the Department.
- 2.7. **Formal Protocol Review Processes** - Formal protocol review follows one of three processes: Office Review, Designated Review, or Full Review, which adhere to established timelines as detailed within the *AUS Protocol Review Process Policy*.
- 2.8. **AUS Meetings** - A face to face meeting is the principal forum used for AUS discussion and decision-making. Decisions will be made by consensus or by formal vote if consensus is not possible. The Chair only votes in the event of a tie.
  - 2.8.1. Minutes describing all discussions and decisions taken during AUS meetings are produced and made available to the AUS, Vice-President (Research), Animal Care Governance Steering Committee (ACGSC) and the University Council on Animal Care (UCAC).
- 2.9. **Non-Compliance Response Meetings** – As detailed within the *AUS Post Approval Monitoring Policy*, non-compliance issues may be addressed during both full and ad hoc AUS meetings..
- 2.10. **Institutional Safety Approval of Hazardous Agents, Materials, and Devices** – As outlined within the *AUS Protocol Review Process Policy*, all forms containing any hazardous and new agent, material, and imaging device – biological, chemical, radioactive, imaging & laser device - must receive institutional safety officer(s) approval in order to attain AUP approval.

### 3. AUS Member Terms of Office & Quorum

- 3.1. Terms of Office –
  - 3.1.1. The term of elected or appointed members of faculty, staff or the general community will be three years, once renewable.
  - 3.1.2. The term of appointed students will be one year, renewable a maximum of four times.
  - 3.1.3. The Chair will be elected by the subcommittee from among the members who have served at least one year on the AUS, and will assume this role for two years, once renewable.
  - 3.1.4. A Vice-Chair will be elected annually.
- 3.2. Quorum –
  - 3.2.1. Quorum requirements for AUS shall be those of Senate Subcommittees (Senate By-law VI, 11 b <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/senate/bylaws.pdf> :
  - 3.2.2. One-half of all voting members during September to May,
  - 3.2.3. One-third of all voting members during June to August.Quorum must include at least one of the members from outside the University community and at least one veterinarian.

**AUS Composition**

3.2.4. With the exception of the Director of Animal Care and Veterinary Services (ACVS) and the Chair of the AUS, no member of UCAC or ACGSC may at the same time be a member of the AUS.

3.2.5. Thirteen animal-user faculty members, as follows:

- 3.2.5.1. Five faculty members from the Basic Medical Science departments of the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, elected by the Faculty Council
- 3.2.5.2. Four faculty members from the Affiliated Hospitals appointed by LHRI's Scientific Director
- 3.2.5.3. Four faculty members outside of Schulich and appointed by their respective Chair/Dean

3.2.6. Three technicians associated with research or teaching involving animals, appointed by the Director, Animal Care and Veterinary Services (ACVS);

3.2.7. Six members appointed by the President, as follows:

- 3.2.7.1. Three Non-animal User faculty
- 3.2.7.2. Three Community Representatives sourced from outside the University Community

3.2.8. Two graduate students, appointed by the Vice-Provost (School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies).

3.2.9. Other faculty members or community representatives appointed by the President, as necessary.

3.2.10. A pool of alternates will be appointed for each of these groups.

**4. AUS Ex Officio Members**

Director, Animal Care and Veterinary Services (voting)  
ACVS Veterinarians (non-voting)  
AUS Administrative Officers (non-voting)  
ACVS Operations Manager (non-voting)  
Institutional Safety Officers (non-voting)  
Institutional Compliance Officer (non-voting)  
Animal Facility Managers (non-voting)

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**5. AUS Members' Roles and Responsibilities**

In addition to the aforementioned responsibilities and authority, AUS members' roles and responsibilities, including participation frequencies, are outlined within the *Roles & Responsibilities for AUS Members*.

Alternates share the roles and responsibilities of the primary members, as required. Alternates will perform duties as outlined within the *Roles & Responsibilities for AUS Members*.

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