



### Purpose / Scope

The purpose of this policy is to apply the Canadian Council on Animal Care's (CCAC) requirements for ensuring pedagogical merit review of animal use for research purposes, as per *CCAC's policy statement on pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training*.

This policy pertains to animal-based teaching and training associated with Animal Use Protocols (AUP) within Western and affiliates including teaching in academic institutions, training activities/programs for research or clinical proficiency, and testing team members (e.g. graduate students, principal investigators, technicians), as well as non-degree / diploma / certificate credit courses (e.g. professional development or continuing education workshops) provided by faculty or other institutional personnel.<sup>1</sup>

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### Rationale

In its preamble to the policy statement about pedagogical merit, CCAC states, "*CCAC-certified institutions that conduct animal-based teaching or training must have a formal pedagogical merit review process in place.*"<sup>2</sup> As such, each institution is responsible to develop and utilize a mechanism to ensure that all teaching and training involving live animals has received independent review of its value by expert peers.

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### Policy

Before an AUP is approved by Western's ACC, the project must first receive pedagogical merit approval from the Pedagogical Merit Reviewer (PMR) Committee.

Pedagogical merit reviews must be completed for all new AUPs and every subsequent Full Renewal involving animal-based teaching and/or training, as defined in the Purpose/Scope.

The ACC may request an additional PMR be undertaken at any time when significant changes to the AUP are being requested, e.g., the teaching goal.

The Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Committee must:

- determine appropriate pedagogical merit reviewers,
- maintain this membership list and provide it to the Office of Research Ethics, and
- coordinate communications about the merit reviews directly with the animal-based scientists.

Animal-based scientists and pedagogical merit reviewers must complete the applicable form elements (see Non-Expedited and Expedited Reviews).

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Council on Animal Care. Frequently Asked Questions – pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training. P.2. Retrieved 02MAY2024 from [https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/FAQ-Pedagogical\\_merit\\_of\\_live\\_animal-based\\_teaching.pdf](https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/FAQ-Pedagogical_merit_of_live_animal-based_teaching.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Council on Animal Care. CCAC policy statement on: pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training. Retrieved 02MAY2024 from [https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Pedagogical\\_merit\\_of\\_live\\_animal-based\\_teaching.pdf](https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Pedagogical_merit_of_live_animal-based_teaching.pdf)



- Animal-based scientists must articulate the **essential nature** of animal-based teaching / training with respect to the learning objectives and outcomes in a manner that demonstrates these cannot be achieved with teaching / training alternatives.
- PMR reviewers must determine whether animal-based teaching / training is essential to meet the learning objectives and outcomes.

Once the pedagogical merit review has been completed and consensus is reached by the reviewers, the PMR Committee must notify the ACC of the decision and provide the associated PMR Review and Reviewer documentation via the Office of the ACC.

To determine its acceptability both ethically and in practice, the ACC must make the final decision based upon reviewing both the AUP, the PMR review submission and PMR reviewer comments.

## PMR Form Types

AUP holders must submit one of two types of Pedagogical Merit Review forms to the PMR Committee well in advance of AUP submission depending on whether the intended learning outcomes are prescribed or mandated by a third party.

## Non-Expedited Reviews

Competency-based teaching or training activities where the intended learning outcomes are **not** prescribed or mandated by a third party (e.g., undergraduate departmental lab course) must follow the non-expedited review process using the *Pedagogical Merit Review Request Form* (See PROC-014-APP1) and the *Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Form-Non-Expedited* (See PROC-014-APP2).

The non-expedited pedagogical merit reviews must be undertaken by a **minimum of two experts** who together:

- possess the knowledge of pedagogy and alternatives to animal-based teaching to adequately review the proposal,
- are independent from the teaching / training project or program under review, as defined by Tri-Agency<sup>3</sup>, and
- are external to the ACC.

## Expedited Reviews

Competency-based teaching or training activities where the intended learning outcomes **are** prescribed or mandated by a third party<sup>4</sup>, must follow the expedited review process using the *Expedited Pedagogical Merit Review Request Form* (See PROC-014-APP3) and the *Expedited Pedagogical Merit Reviewer Form* (See PROC-014-APP4).

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<sup>3</sup> Government of Canada. Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality. 4.0. Definitions. Retrieved 03MAY2024 from [http://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h\\_90108244.html](http://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_90108244.html)

<sup>4</sup> e.g., CCAC-mandated institutional animal user training, ministry of education, an institutional researcher / personnel training program or an accreditation or certification body



Expedited pedagogical merit reviews must be undertaken by **one reviewer** with knowledge of replacement alternatives.

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## References

### Western University

- MAPP 7.12 – The Animal Ethics and Care Program
- POL-002 – Animal Use Protocols Policy and GUID-002

### Canadian Council on Animal Care

- CCAC policy statement on: pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training (May, 2016)
  - Frequently Asked Questions – Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training (January, 2020)
  - Expedited Pedagogical Merit Review for Animal-based Teaching and Training Activities (January, 2020)
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## Revision History

Version	Date <i>dd-mm-yyyy</i>	Description of Changes	Author
00	30-05-2018	New Policy	LT
01	09-09-2019	Reallocate responsibilities for administering merit reviews to the Pedagogical Merit Review Committee, remove Roles & Responsibilities section; add APP1-PMR Committee Composition; update terms and titles	LT/LC/EB/ TR
02	14-05-2020	Update to include CCAC's changes: Expedited review; Update formatting	LT
03	11-07-2024	Triennial review. Minor updates to clarify meaning.	LT / LC

**Pedagogical Merit Review Committee Composition**

- The Committee must have at least two independent referees who together possess knowledge of pedagogy and replacement alternatives to animal-based teaching or training who are:
  - University faculty members;
  - not involved in the teaching/training course; and
  - not currently members of the ACC.
- All members of the Committee will be appointed by the Vice-President (Research) or designate.
- The Committee will determine their Chair.