



Item	Appendix A – Terms of Reference
Parent Policy	Policy on the Care and Use of Animals in Research
Approval Authority	Board of Governors
Policy Owner	VP Research
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Supersedes	

UNIVERSITY ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The University of Ontario Institute of Technology (Ontario Tech) has a responsibility to ensure that effective control is exercised in the care and use of experimental animals. All animals (live, non-human vertebrates) are protected by the Animals for Research Act of Ontario and its associated regulations. In addition to this, provincial legislation, the Tri-Agency Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions requires the University to maintain a valid Certificate of Good Animal Practice from the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC).

1. Definitions

“**Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC)**” is a national peer review agency responsible setting and maintaining standards for ethical use and care of experiment animals used in research, teaching and testing in Canada.

“**University**” means the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (Ontario Tech).

2. Purpose

2.1. The Animal Care Committee (ACC) oversees all research, teaching and testing with animals. The ACC ensures that the 3R’s (replacement, reduction, and refinement) are considered for any activity involving the care and use of experimental animals and that these principles are upheld to minimize the number of animals used at the University.

2.2. The ACC is established by the University and responsible for the coordination, ethical review and approval for all proposed uses of animals in research (including field studies), testing and teaching at the University. The ACC shall establish internal policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legislation and the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) policies and guidelines. The operation of the ACC is governed by the following Terms of Reference.

3. Authority

3.1. The ACC reports directly to the Vice-President Research & Innovation (VPRI). The ACC, on behalf of the VPRI has the authority to:

- a) stop any objectionable procedure that causes unnecessary distress or pain to the animal;
- b) stop immediately any animal use that deviates from the approved protocol or non-approved procedure(s);
- c) determine corrective action on breaches of compliance with approved animal use protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The VPRI will be informed when breaches cannot be corrected by the ACC and will determine sanctions that will be taken;
- d) humanely euthanize an animal if pain or distress caused to the animal cannot be alleviated;

- e) conduct post approval monitoring of all research and teaching activities involving animals; and,
- f) have ongoing access to all areas where animals are held or used.

3.2. The ACC delegates to the consultant veterinarian(s) the authority to:

- a) treat, remove from a study or humanely euthanize an animal according to the veterinarian's professional judgment; and,
- b) proceed independently with any necessary emergency measures, whether or not the animal user and ACC Chair are available.

3.3. The consultant veterinarian(s), before exercising authority, must attempt to contact the ACC Chair and the animal user whose animal is in question before beginning any treatment that has not previously been agreed upon. The consultant veterinarian(s) will send a written report to the animal user and to the ACC following any such event.

4. Safeguards and Non-compliance

- 4.1.** Collegial working relationships must always be protected and promoted, but it is necessary to have in place safeguards to ensure any difficulties experienced with any aspect of animal care or use can be effectively identified and addressed. For serious non-compliance or threats to the health and safety of personnel or welfare of animals, the ACC Chair and ACC must promptly address these issues. Reports of non-compliance may come from the general community at large. Individuals raising such concerns must express their concerns in writing to the ACC Chair. Verbal concerns can be accepted when non-compliance situations require prompt attention; however, written documentation must follow post event. The ACC Chair will address the issues, through communications with the animal user(s), meetings and site visits in accordance with the University Policy on the Care and Use of Animals in Research and Teaching and associated procedures. The ACC, consultant veterinarian(s) and ACC Coordinator will work with the animal user(s) to ensure a resolution. All communications surrounding the event(s) will be documented in the ACC's Post Approval Monitoring reports.
- 4.2.** Non-compliance concerns that cannot be corrected or resolved with the ACC will be referred to the VPRI, who will inform all members of the animal care and use program about sanctions that will be taken by the administration. If the VPRI, has a real or perceived conflict of interest, the University President will determine sanctions.

5. Membership and Term

- 5.1.** The ACC is appointed by, and is responsible to the VPRI. ACC members will be appointed for terms of four (4) years and normally renewable only up to a maximum of eight (8) consecutive years of service. This maximum can be waived by the ACC if necessary in order to have appropriate animal user representation. This does not apply to ACC members who must be part of the ACC because of their role within the institution (e.g. ex officio members).
- 5.2.** The VPRI shall appoint a ACC Chair and ACC Vice-Chair from the complement of the ACC committee. The ACC Chair shall not be directly involved in the management of the animal care facilities, nor be the consultant veterinarian for the University, nor be involved in the preparation of a significant number of the protocols to be reviewed by the ACC in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest.
- 5.3.** The complement of the committee will include:
- a) a minimum of two (2) scientists and/or teachers experienced in animal care and use, who may or may not be actively using animals during their term on the ACC;

- b)** consultant veterinarian(s), experienced in care and use of animals used and housed at the University;
- c)** an institutional member whose normal activities, past or present, do not depend on or involve animal use for research, teaching or testing;
- d)** at least one (1) person representing community interests and concerns who has had no affiliation with the institution, and who has not been involved in animal use for research, teaching or testing; community representation must be ensured for all ACC activities throughout the year and included on all protocol review subcommittees;
- e)** technical staff representation preferably an animal research technician;
- f)** at least one student representative (graduate and/or undergraduate);
- g)** the ACC coordinator (University Research Ethics Officer) who is responsible for the coordination of all animal care related activities and providing support to the ACC;
- h)** a representative of the senior administration reporting to the VPRI (Director, Office of Research Services); and,
- i)** a representative for occupational health & safety and biosafety.

6. Responsibility

6.1. The ACC's responsibilities include but is not limited to:

- a)** ensure policies and guidelines are established in accordance to CCAC, provincial legislation and institutional standards to ensure appropriate care and use of animals at the University;
- b)** ensure that written ACC approval is obtained prior to animal use or acquiring animals for research, teaching or testing projects. ACC approval must also be obtained prior to breeding or holding of animals for research, teaching or testing projects;
- c)** ensure that ACC approval of a written animal use protocol is obtained prior to breeding, research, teaching, production or testing (including field studies) involving animals. For other animal based activities within the institution, the ACC will work with the individuals responsible for the activities to ensure appropriate procedures for animal care and use;
- d)** require the completion of an animal use protocol by the animal user and ensure that the protocol includes the nature of all procedures to be used on the animal, the number and type of animals to be used and the anticipated level of discomfort or distress that the animal will likely experience. In addition, other key sections identified in the CCAC guidelines on Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees must be included in the animal use protocol;
- e)** review all animal use projects to ensure compliance with the University policies, CCAC guidelines, and applicable regulatory requirements at a full committee meeting;
- f)** confirm that each research project has undergone an independent peer review and has been found to have scientific merit, prior to issuing ACC approval. For non-peer reviewed projects, the ACC Administrative Procedure 003 Peer Review Process must be followed;
- g)** review, propose modifications, reject or approve any amendments to an approved animal use protocol. ACC approval is required prior to implementation of any changes. Any major changes to an approved protocol will require submission of a new protocol to the ACC. A major change includes the following: considerable increase in the number of animals, change of species, addition of more invasive procedures and use of entirely new procedures compared to the original approved procedures. The ACC can deem changes as major at their discretion;

- h) review and approve annual renewals prior to study expiry. All renewals must be reviewed and approved by a scientist, consultant veterinarian(s) and community member and decisions will be reported back to the full ACC. A new submission will be required after a maximum of 3 consecutive renewals;
- i) document all ACC discussions and decisions in the committee minutes;
- j) participate in continuing education and training for the matters relating to animal use in research;
- k) ensure appropriate veterinary care is available commensurate with current veterinary standards, and consistent with the Standards of Veterinary Care as defined by the Canadian Association for Laboratory Animals Medicine (CALAM/ACMAL).
- l) promptly notify the CCAC Secretariat and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) of any program changes;
- m) submit and complete the CCAC and OMAFRA Animal Use Data Form before the yearly deadline;
- n) establish a crisis management plan for animal care and use facilities; and
- o) implement the Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) program and ensure established procedures are in place.

7. Research Involving Multiple Institutions

For off-site research, researchers are also responsible for obtaining the necessary ethics approval from any ACC or authorities that oversee research at the other institutions. An ethics review and approval or equivalent is required at each institution responsible for carrying out the research under its auspices regardless of where the research is conducted or led prior to study commencement

8. Meetings, Monitoring Visits and Inspections

- 8.1.** The ACC will meet at least twice per year or more frequently as is necessary to fulfil their Terms of Reference and be satisfied that all animal use within their jurisdiction complies with institutional, municipal, federal and provincial regulations, and CCAC policies and guidelines. Meeting minutes will detail all ACC discussions, decisions, modifications to protocols, site and inspection visits, that will be forwarded to the VPRI.
- 8.2.** All ACC members will complete a general site visit to all facilities where animals are used, in order to better understand the work being conducted within the institution. The general site visit, by all members of the ACC, will occur once a year and can be completed individually or as a group.
- 8.3.** The Post Approval Monitoring Committee will have scheduled visits, which will be held on average every 6 months on a date mutually agreeable to by all parties concerned including the consultant veterinarian and animal users.
- 8.4.** At the discretion of the ACC, monitoring visits and inspections to the animal facilities can increase in frequency.

9. Quorum and Decisions

- 9.1.** A quorum at ACC meetings shall be a simple majority of the committee members and shall include at least one community representative as well as the consultant veterinarian(s). Decisions are made by consensus.
- 9.2.** All delegated reviews must be approved by the ACC Chair/Vice-Chair, the consultant veterinarian(s) and community member. The final approval will be issued by the ACC.

10. Training and Education

- 10.1.** Training opportunities are required for new ACC committee members to provide an understanding of the institutional animal care and use program, animal user facilities, institutional policies and procedures, CCAC guidelines and OMAFRA regulatory requirements.
- 10.2.** All ACC members should complete the CCAC's Modules on the Core Topics of the Laboratory Animal/Teaching Stream of the CCAC Recommended Syllabus. The University will also provide ongoing training and education for ACC members.
- 10.3.** All persons who care for and use animals for research, teaching or testing purposes, and the consultant veterinarian(s) must receive training under the auspices of the University Animal Care Committee in the protocols appropriate to the animal species being used. They must demonstrate competence ensuring maximum benefit to the animals. This would include, continuing education in their field; (scientists/study directors, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students and research technicians)

11. Terms of Reference Review

- 11.1.** The ACC Terms of Reference, standard operating procedures and policies will be reviewed as necessary, and at least every three years (unless another timeframe is required for compliance purposes). The ACC and Office of Research Services are responsible to monitor and review these terms.

12. Policies with Specific Reference to ACC Terms of Reference

CCAC Policy Statement for: Senior Administrators Responsible for Animal Care & Use Programs, 2008

CCAC policy statement on: terms of reference for animal care committees, 2006

CCAC Assessment Report: University of Ontario Institute of Technology (Ontario Tech), April 4, 2012

13. Other Policies Procedures & Guidelines

CCAC policy statement on: scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research, 2013

CCAC training modules on: Institutional Animal User Training Program

CCAC guidelines on: choosing an appropriate endpoint in experiments using animals for research, teaching and testing, 1998

CCAC guidelines on: animal use protocol review, 1997

CCAC policy statement on: ethics of animal investigation, 1989

University Animal Care and Use of Animals in Research and Teaching, 2013

University 004 Administrative Procedure: University Post Approval Monitoring Program

University 002 Administrative Procedure: Process for Reconsideration or Appeal of Decisions of the ACC