

## **Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. AWERB Purpose**

- 1.1 The Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB) oversees the use of animals for research at Heriot Watt University. An AWERB is a legal requirement under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA). The AWERB ensures that all use of animals in the establishment is carefully considered and justified; that proper account is taken of all possibilities for reduction, refinement and replacement of animals in scientific research (the 3Rs principles); and that high standards of accommodation and care are achieved.

#### **2 AWERB Remit**

- 2.1 To provide a forum for discussion and development of ethical advice to the establishment licence holder on all matters relating to animal welfare, care and use at the establishment
- 2.2 To promote awareness and advise on the application of the 3Rs (replacement, refinement and reduction of animals in research)
- 2.3 To provide support and advice to staff and researchers working with animals on ethical issues and the welfare of animals used in scientific research (e.g. relating to their acquisition, care and use)\_
- 2.4 To promote a Culture of Care within the establishment
- 2.5 To ensure compliance with guidance on animal experimentation issued by the Home Office such as ensuring that relevant authorisation and licences are obtained from the Home Office before animal experiments are undertaken
- 2.6 To review project licence applications prior to submission, and advise whether the Establishment Licence holder should support project licence applications
- 2.7 To ensure that persons holding specific responsibilities under ASPA are aware of their responsibilities and have received any necessary training to enable them to undertake their duties

- 2.8 To perform a scientific and ethical review of research proposals that involve animals under ASPA
- 2.9 To ensure that statutory records are kept and updated as necessary
- 2.10 To establish and review management and operational processes for monitoring, reporting and follow up in relation to animal welfare
- 2.11 To follow the development and outcome (retrospective review) of projects and assist with the retrospective assessment of relevant projects required by law
- 2.12 To advise on rehoming of laboratory animals
- 2.13 To provide new members of the AWERB with an appropriate induction and ensure they attend relevant training
- 2.14 To provide advice, support and liaison with the University Genetic Manipulation and Biological Safety Working Group and University Research Ethics Committee
- 2.15 To ensure visibility of the AWERB within the establishment

### **3 Composition and Membership**

- 3.1 The Committee shall include:

Establishment Licence Holder  
Chair of AWERB  
Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS)  
Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer(s) (NACWO)  
Named Training and Competency Officer(s)  
Director of Governance and Legal Services  
Project Licence Holders  
Home Office Liaison Contact (HOLC)  
Clerk

A Lay Member (from the community), personal licence holders and a Home Office Inspector may also attend.

- 3.2 The Committee may co-opt members who they consider have particular skills and experience which would assist the work of the Committee

- 3.4 The current membership of the AWERB is as follows:

i) Professor Steve McLaughlin, Establishment Licence Holder

- ii) Prof Helinor Johnston, Chair of AWERB
- iii) Dr Gidona Goodman, Named Veterinary Surgeon
- iv) Dr Sue Collier, Director of Governance and Legal Services
- v) Dr Alastair Lyndon, Project Licence Holder and Named Training and Competency Officer
- vi) Prof Ted Henry, Project Licence Holder (*licence elapsed in Oct 2021*)
- vii) Professor Stephen Votier, Project Licence Holder
- viii) Mr John Fox, Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer
- ix) Ms Emma Samson, Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer
- x) Mr Miguel Sanchez-Lopez, Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer
- xi) Mrs Jolanda Currie, Home Office Liaison Contact and Clerk
- xii) Douglas Prentice, Lay member

#### **4 Equality and Diversity**

- 4.1 The Committee will aim to promote diversity of representation within its membership. The Committee will also act to promote equality of opportunity for all colleagues who are involved in carrying out the business of the Committee.

#### **5 Committee Chair**

- 5.1 In the absence of the Chair of a Committee, members shall elect from among the members of the Committee who are present at the meeting a person to act as Chair for the meeting or until such time as the Chair of the Committee arrives.

#### **6 Frequency of meetings**

- 6.1 The Committee will meet twice a year.
- 6.2 Additional meetings may be held in order to meet business requirements at the request of the Chair or one of the Committee members.
- 6.1 The Committee will maintain a record of attendance at each of its meetings.

#### **7 Reporting procedures**

- 7.1 The Chair of AWERB will submit regular reports to the University Research Ethics Committee based on the Committee minutes. The Chair will approve the content of reports before release including the redaction of any information deemed necessary for reasons of confidentiality.
- 7.2 The Chair of AWERB will report to the University Research Ethics Committee on any matters which the Committee considers ought to be brought to the attention of the University Research Ethics Committee and on any matters requiring the approval of the University Research Ethics Committee.

- 7.3 Matters requiring approval of the University Research Ethics Committee will be highlighted within the AWERB's report.
- 7.4 The Committees records (agenda, papers, minutes) are included in the University's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. Information will be readily accessible on request to members of the public under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOI(S)A) with the exception of information which is deemed to be covered by a specific exemption under the Act.
- 7.5 Minutes and reports of the Committees will denote those areas of reported business which are deemed to fall within the designation of information which is 'exempt' under the FOI(S)A.

## **8 Forward planning**

- 8.1 The Committee will review its Terms of Reference annually.