Use of Restricted Drugs

In coming Newsletters we intend to bring you updates on the use of restricted drugs and the conduct of restricted acts of veterinary science in animal research. All this information is available at the website below and we will be posting snippets from this over the coming months.


1. Use of schedule 2, 3 or 4 (S2, S3 or S4) drugs:
   A scientifically qualified person in charge of a laboratory or department, or a person acting under the direct personal supervision of such a person, is authorised to possess and use any Schedule 2, 3 or 4 substance that is required for the conduct of medical or scientific research or instruction or the conduct of quality control or analysis. (Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008 clause 129 and Appendix C clause 19). The use of these substances in animal research must also be approved by the establishment’s Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) in the course of approving an application to carry out a research project, and they must be used strictly in accord with the approved project.
   The authority to possess and use S2, S3 and S4 substances is given to the “scientifically qualified person in charge of the laboratory or department”, who is therefore responsible for the restricted substances and must directly and personally supervise any other researchers using these substances.

Acknowledgements
The contribution of Ms Leanne Gillespie and Dr Mike Fleming (Office of Environment and Heritage) and Ms Monique Reyes (Pharmaceutical Services Unit, NSW Ministry of Health) to the revision of this policy is gratefully acknowledged.

**BBC films inside Oxford Animal Lab**

Recently, Oxford university animal facilities were made available for the BBC to film. We all understand the differences in the research environment over in the UK but still, what a great step for transparency and openness for the general research field.


**Science’s Top Ethical Dilemmas**

We all work within an ethical framework. Below is a list of thought-provoking ethical dilemmas of. Go to the link below for more information – Do-it-yourself cyborgs may be of particular interest and presents the proverbial “can-of-worms” (or cockroaches!)

Predictive policing  
Do-it-yourself cyborgs  
Data chip implants  
Virtual currency  
Neuroenhancement  
Geoengineering  
Property rights in space  
Automated law enforcement  
Human-machine interfaces


**New Book!**

Simon Griffith has confirmed a request has been lodged with the MQ Library for the purchase of this new book. Very relevant to some of MQ’s research groups.

**Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Australian Birds**

Edited by:

- Stephen Garnett  
  Charles Darwin University
- Donald Franklin  
  Charles Darwin University
Tips and Hints for your applications

Forms: Request for Amendment - Change of Personnel

Please note the following change (*) on our Request for Amendment to Animal Research Authority – Change of Personnel form. This revision is necessary for the AEC to determine the capabilities and expertise of the remaining listed investigators is adequate to maintain animal welfare and perform the procedures described in the protocol.

This revised form has been uploaded on our Animal Ethics website: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/animal_ethics/forms.

SECTION 1: REMOVING PERSONNEL FROM A PROTOCOL

(Please complete this section if you are REMOVING an investigator from a project)

| Name (Title/first name/surname): | Date of Departure: |
| Protocols personnel to be removed from: |
| (*) Please list all the currently approved personnel remaining on the protocol: |

| Signature of Principal Investigator: |
| Date: |

Important AEC Information

Submission of New Applications for Animal Research

As of now, the deadline for submissions for the next AEC Meeting is 26th May FIRM. This means that submissions must be received by the RO, complete with signatures (Investigator, Facility Manager and HOD) by close of business on this day. This will apply to all future AEC Meetings from this point onwards and restore the necessary time for your AEC to diligently apply their consideration.

Regarding Facility Manager and HOD Sign-Offs, AEC consideration cannot occur prior to complete applications being endorsed with these signatures. Researchers should plan the submission of their applications to allow enough time for the relevant parties to sign-off PRIOR to the AEC submission deadline.

If you have any queries about the current or planned future process, please feel free to contact Dr Sam Gilchrist, +61 (0) 2 98507758 / +61 (0) 439 497 383 / animal.ethics@mq.edu.au.
Letter from the AEC Chair to all Researchers

16 May 2014

Dear Animal Researchers,

I am writing to you to let you about some changes to the requirements for ARAs holders at Macquarie, and to let you know that there will be other changes coming in the next few months, as well as to remind you of some of your responsibilities.

Firstly, I would like to remind everyone that there is now an 8th Edition of the [NHMRC Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](https://www.animal.ethics@mq.edu.au), you need to be familiar with this document, as it forms the basis for the ethical use of research animals in Australia. The care of animals under your ARAs is your responsibility, and you must ensure that you are diligent in attending to your animals, and that you record your attentions as requested by the AEC, and in accordance with the Code. There are several parts of the Code I would like to emphasize.

Section 2.4:

“Investigators must maintain records of the care and use of animals, and make such records available to the institution, the AEC, and authorized external reviewers”

it continues

“Investigators must ensure that the records include details of procedures, including dates, substances administered, anaesthesia and anaesthetic and any unexpected outcomes.” (my italics)

Section 3.1.22

“Records of monitoring and assessment of animal wellbeing must be (i) sufficient to enable the AEC to verify that the well being of animals has been monitored as agreed……(ii) accessible to all people involved in the care of the animal……(iii) available for audit by the institution, the AEC and authorized external reviewers”

Practically, this means that all monitoring sheets (including anaesthetic monitoring sheets), need to be kept with animals until the experiments with them are finished. The records can then be transferred to an office or lab, but they must be available for the AEC to examine at any time.

The AEC has decided that from now on all records must be kept for at least 2 years following the expiration of a protocol. This includes all monitoring sheets. This is line with record keeping in veterinary practice, and the 2 years probably represents a minimum time given that such records form part of the data set underlying published results, and these data often need to be archived for much longer than 2 years post publication.

The AEC is attempting to streamline the requirements for post-procedure monitoring by instituting some standard regimens that depend on what the procedure is. Preliminary outlines of what these might be for rodents will be circulated to researchers shortly for comment – please let us know what you think. It is also clear that the monitoring requirements for similar procedures on different protocols varies...
significantly, and the AEC is undertaking a review of all active protocols to ensure that standards are consistent across the board. This review may result in changes to the monitoring requirements on your protocols.

Veterinary Standards: All investigators should also remember that their surgical work must conform to veterinary standards – this includes use of aseptic technique, sterile needles and solutions, and the use of unexpired drugs.

Addition and Removal of Personnel: All people working with animals must be approved by the AEC, and we also need to know when people leave a protocol, so that we can ensure that there are enough people remaining on the protocol to adequately monitor the animals. When adding a new person, please provide details of their experience with animal research, if they have not recently done an Animal Ethics course in Australia, a c.v. will speed the process. They will, of course, be asked to do the Macquarie University Working With Research Animals Course.

Future Plans: The landscape of animal research ethics and regulation is constantly changing, and experimental best practice is also evolving as research is done into appropriate methods of analgesia, euthanasia and pain monitoring. Given this, the AEC is moving towards a position where everyone will be expected to keep their animal research credentials up to date – probably by attending refresher courses on key aspects of regulation and experimental practice. The final form of these has not been determined, but they are likely to take the form of short workshops akin to those run by the University for student supervision. It is also hoped to have online modules that researchers can access at any time.

Finally, you may notice an increased attention of the AEC to the experimental details in your applications, in addition to the basic welfare issues. It is an important part of the AEC function to ensure that any particular piece of animal research is justifiable, and that includes trying to make sure that any potential results will not have limited impact owing to sub-optimal experimental design. So, we may ask you to include extra control groups, or increase "n" values to levels sufficient for statistical validity (i.e. more than n=3). We may also ask you to provide ongoing validations of your model – if your rats are purportedly genetically hypertensive, we may ask you to confirm that with ongoing measurements – having that information available will increase the likelihood that any published data will have a greater impact, and that the animals will not be used for less than decent outcomes. It is clear that different researchers have different ideas about these matters (parallel controls anyone?), and we are always happy to discuss them, but it is a conversation we want to be having with you.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Professor Mark Connor
Chair
Animal Ethics Committee
Training opportunities this month

Please contact the AWO for any training requirements.

New Researcher training has been incorporated into the CAF Induction process. The format of this training will be refined over the next few months to ultimately deliver the best possible service to new researchers or any researcher looking to refresh their skills.

Animal Ethics Calendar

Next Application submission **deadline date 2014**
Monday 26 May 2014

Next Animal Ethics Committee Meeting date 2014
Thursday 19 June 2014

Animal Ethics Committee Meeting dates 2014

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Contributions

If you would like to contribute to the Animal Ethics monthly newsletter, kindly email that content for the next month’s newsletter.

Should you have any queries regarding your research, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Dr Sam Gilchrist - Animal Welfare Officer
sam.gilchrist@mq.edu.au
+61 (0) 2 9850 7758, +61 (0) 439 497 383

Alternatively, for more information about AEC policies, procedures, forms and ethical clearance requirements, please go to our webpage at
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/animal_ethics