

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE PREAMBLE

The Terms of Reference for the University Animal Ethics Committee are to:

- 1.1. Ensure that the AEC membership will enable the Committee to meet its responsibilities. Membership must comprise at least six people, being a Chair and one from each of five categories of membership (see Clause 2.3 Membership).
- 1.2. Describe how members are appointed, re-appointed or retired, according to procedures developed by the Institution in consultation with the AEC.
- 1.3. Ensure that the AEC has terms of reference that are publicly available.
- 1.4. Ensure that the operation of the AEC is compliant with the South Australian Animal Welfare Act 1985 (hereafter referred to as the Act) and the Australian Code¹ for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, 8th Edition 2013 (hereafter referred to as the Code).

2. OBJECTIVES AND POWERS OF THE AEC

The Terms of Reference and the operations of the AEC must comply with the terms of the Act and the Act will apply in the event of any inconsistency.

2.1. FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The AEC shall:

- 2.1.1. Examine and approve, approve subject to modification or reject written proposals relevant to the use of animals for research or teaching; and approving only that use for which animals are essential and which conform to the requirements of the Act and the Code, taking into consideration ethical and welfare aspects as well as scientific or educational value.
- 2.1.2. Monitor the acquisition, transport, breeding, housing, husbandry, and use of animals in each project, and the provisions for the animals at the completion of their use, including disposal of animals.
- 2.1.3. Approve Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for the care of animals that are bred, held and used for scientific purposes on behalf of the Institution.
- 2.1.4. Conduct an Annual Review of all UniSA animal facilities.
- 2.1.5. Maintain an ongoing dialogue with researchers to promote best practise and animal wellbeing.
- 2.1.6. Maintain a register of approved proposals.
- 2.1.7. Take action regarding unexpected adverse events or non-compliance to ensure animal wellbeing is not compromised. Action may include, where necessary, withdrawal of approval for any project or authorisation for treatment or humane killing of any animal.

¹ Where differences exist between the Act and the Code, the Act (as State Legislation) has precedence over the Code, but reasonable effort must be made to ensure compliance with both

- 2.1.8. Examine and comment on all University of South Australia plans and policies which may affect animal welfare.
 - 2.1.9. Support and promote the education and training of staff and students (particularly post-graduate students) in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.
 - 2.1.10. Approve Institutional guidelines for assessing and ensuring competency of people involved in the care and use of animals.
 - 2.1.11. Require that all members declare any conflict of interest.
 - 2.1.12. Require that all members maintain confidentiality in relation to any matters pertaining to the AEC in accordance with the terms of the Confidentiality Agreement.
 - 2.1.13. Deal with situations in which a conflict of interest arises.
 - 2.1.14. Report to the Research Integrity Committee (RIC) matters in relation to animal use and welfare as required by the Code 2.3.27 and 2.3.28.
 - 2.1.15. Recommend to the RIC any measures that are needed to ensure that the Act and the Code are complied with.
 - 2.1.16. Report to other institutional AECs as required in accordance with any established Deed for Reciprocal Access.
 - 2.1.17. Manage Freedom of Information applications pertaining to the business or activities of the AEC.
 - 2.1.18. Perform all other duties required by the terms of the licence to use animals for teaching, research or experimental purposes, including compliance with policies and guidelines, audit and inspection of animal houses & laboratories and submission of an annual report.
 - 2.1.19. Perform all other duties required of it by the Act and the Code.
- 2.2. ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH RESPONSIBILITIES EXTEND
- The University AEC accepts responsibility for the care and/or use of animals for scientific purposes for the following organisations:
- 2.2.1. The University (all sites).
 - 2.2.2. Other organisations approved to use the University Animal Research Facilities, such use being subject to signing of an appropriate Indemnity Agreement.
- 2.3. MEMBERSHIP
- 2.3.1. The AEC must have a membership which will allow it to fulfil its Terms of Reference.
 - 2.3.2. The membership of an AEC is stipulated in both the Act and the Code. Where differences exist between AEC membership as described in the Act compared to the Code, the Act has precedence but the University AEC must use reasonable measures to satisfy both requirements if possible.

- 2.3.3. The AEC must comprise at least six persons being a Chair and at least one person from each of the following categories²:
- 2.3.3.1. Category A - A person with qualifications in veterinary science that are recognised for registration as a veterinary surgeon in Australia, and with experience relevant to the institution's activities or the ability to acquire relevant knowledge
 - 2.3.3.2. Category B - A suitably qualified person with substantial and recent experience in the use of animals for scientific purposes relevant to the Institution and the business of the AEC. This must include possession of a higher degree in research or equivalent experience
 - 2.3.3.3. Category C - A person with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who is not employed by or otherwise associated with the Institution, and who is not currently involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. Veterinarians with specific animal welfare interest and experience may meet the requirements of this category. While not representing an animal welfare organisation, the person should, where possible, be selected on the basis of active membership of, and endorsement by, such an organisation
 - 2.3.3.4. Category D - A person not employed by or otherwise associated with the Institution and who has never been involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, either in their employment or beyond their undergraduate education. Category D members should be viewed by the wider community as bringing a completely independent view to the AEC, and must not fit the requirements of any other category
 - 2.3.3.5. Category E - A person who is responsible for the daily care of animals for use in teaching or research activities within the Institution
- 2.3.4. The AEC may include additional members to ensure that it can function effectively.
- 2.3.5. The AEC may, depending on workload, be split into two or more panels to streamline the application approval process. Each panel will be subject to the meeting quorum requirements (as per Clause 2.8) and each panel may appoint its own Executive (see Clause 10). AEC members may serve on more than one panel, or may switch between panels as required to ensure quorum requirements are met.

2.4. APPOINTMENT PROCESS

- 2.4.1. The Chair will seek expressions of interest for any vacant or new positions in the Committee as they arise. Nominations for Categories A, B and E (internal) are to be sought from Divisional Pro Vice Chancellors. *Ad hoc* expressions of interest from individuals will also be accepted by the Chair for consideration.
- 2.4.2. An expression of interest must be tendered using the UniSA AEC Expression of Interest form and must be accompanied by the candidate's C.V. to support his/her suitability for the position of interest.
- 2.4.3. The Chair and the Executive Officer (see Clause 2.6.1) or other deputised AEC members will conduct a personal interview with each potential new AEC member to ensure his/her

² The Category definitions are as defined by the Code but encompass the requirements of the Act.

suitability to serve on the AEC and to confirm that the person fits the criteria of the appropriate Category.

- 2.4.4. Once it has been determined that a candidate is suitable to fill a vacant position on the AEC, the Chair will submit the nomination for membership to the DVC:RI accompanied by the Expression of Interest form and C.V. of the potential new member, for approval and formal appointment.
 - 2.4.5. The DVC:RI has complete discretion as to whether to accept or reject a nomination or to appoint a person to the committee who has not been recommended by the Chair.
 - 2.4.6. Appointment to the Committee is dependent on prior signing of a Confidentiality Agreement (see Clause 7).
 - 2.4.7. All categories of members are equally valuable and valued. The knowledge, expertise and personal opinions of individual members will vary considerably, but certain overarching characteristics and abilities are necessary if the AEC is to function well as a group and be able to fulfil its purpose. These include:
 - 2.4.7.1. An acceptance that ethical experiments on animals can be carried out as long as they have been properly assessed and duly approved by the AEC;
 - 2.4.7.2. Courtesy and patience in dealing with other committee members and with investigators
 - 2.4.7.3. Willingness to listen as well as to speak; and
 - 2.4.7.4. Clarity and succinctness in oral and written communication.
 - 2.4.8. The term of office for an AEC member is a maximum of two years; on expiration of the term of office, a member is eligible for reappointment (see Clause 3). Shorter terms of office may be agreed to for individual members subject to prior agreement between the Chair and member.
 - 2.4.9. The Chair must notify the DVC:RI of any resignations, retirements or other departures from the membership of the AEC.
- 2.5. CHAIR
- 2.5.1. The DVC:RI will appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair of the AEC.
 - 2.5.2. The Chair and Deputy Chair should each hold a senior position in the Institution and are in addition to Category A to E members.
 - 2.5.3. The Chair is responsible for impartially guiding the operation of the AEC, ensuring all members are heard at meetings of the Committee, resolving conflicts of interest related to the business of the AEC, addressing concerns of members, and representing the AEC in any negotiations with the University's management³.
 - 2.5.4. The Chair may appoint a Committee member as additional Acting Second Deputy (*pro tem*) to support the appointed Chair or Deputy Chair in the event of either one's absence.
 - 2.5.5. The Chair/Deputy Chair, or Chair/Deputy Chair + another designated AEC member, may authorise final approval of revised applications that have already been approved by the AEC pending minor administrative changes, as long as the conditions imposed by that approval have been satisfied.

³ Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013, Section 2, Paragraph 2.2.13

- 2.5.6. The Chair/Deputy Chair may make decisions on minor amendment requests that are of an urgent or time-sensitive nature, but any such decision must be ratified by prompt submission by the Primary Applicant of a completed "Application for AEC Approval of a Minor Amendment to an Approved Protocol" to the Executive.
- 2.5.7. The Chair/Deputy Chair may, on advice from the AWO, facility staff or Executive Officer, suspend a project or activity immediately pending investigation of an unexpected adverse event, or of a breach of compliance with an approved protocol or with the requirements of the Act or the Code.
- 2.6. OTHER OFFICERS
- 2.6.1. An Executive Officer (EO) shall be appointed by the Director: Research & Innovation Services to help the Chair manage the regulatory and practical aspects of AEC operations. The EO (or delegate) will be in attendance at AEC meetings but will not be a voting member of the AEC. The duties of the EO will include:
- 2.6.1.1. Communicating with members outside meetings as required;
 - 2.6.1.2. Calling for agenda items prior to meetings, allowing sufficient time for responses;
 - 2.6.1.3. Preparing and writing the agenda with the Chair;
 - 2.6.1.4. Distributing the agenda and papers prior to meetings, allowing adequate reading time;
 - 2.6.1.5. Organising room bookings, catering and any equipment or other items required;
 - 2.6.1.6. Taking notes at the meeting;
 - 2.6.1.7. Finalising the Minutes in consultation with the Chair;
 - 2.6.1.8. Preparing the advisory letters to applicants after the meeting;
 - 2.6.1.9. Keeping a complete record of all meetings, correspondence and any other documentation; and
 - 2.6.1.10. Contacting members, if required, to attend to out-of-session matters.
- 2.6.2. The Committee may appoint an Executive to carry out certain tasks on behalf of the AEC out of session (see Clause 10). The Executive will consist of the Chair and at least one member from Category C or D. The Executive will be administered by the EO.
- 2.7. FREQUENCY OF AEC MEETINGS
- 2.7.1. Meetings should be scheduled by the EO in consultation with the Chair.
- 2.7.2. The timetable of meetings for a calendar year should be available before the final meeting of the previous year and any changes to the dates should be made in consultation with as many members as is possible.
- 2.7.3. The timetable of meetings must include a cut-off date for submission of applications for each meeting. The cut-off date must be set to allow adequate time for processing of applications, preparation of meeting documents and assessment of applications by reviewers prior to the meeting date.
- 2.8. QUORUM
- 2.8.1. A quorum of six members is required at meetings of the University AEC.

- 2.8.2. The quorum consists of a Chair plus at least one member representative of each Category A to E; a quorum must be maintained for the duration of each AEC meeting.
- 2.8.3. Category C plus D members must represent no less than one third of the Category A plus B plus C plus D members present.
- 2.8.4. If necessary, and preferably prior to the meeting, members from Category A or B can be asked to leave the meeting, so as to maintain the “Category C plus D ‘one third’ rule” whilst maintaining the “one member representative of each Category” rule.
- 2.8.5. In the situation where the proposer of an application is a committee member, and must remove himself/herself from the meeting during consideration of that application due to Conflict of Interest (see Clause 9) resulting in the discussion becoming inquorate, the use of teleconference processes with an alternate member can be used to deal with the matter at hand.

2.9. INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF AEC MEMBERS

- 2.9.1. Where possible, prospective new members will be offered an opportunity to attend an AEC meeting prior to being formally invited to become a member. A Non-member Confidentiality Agreement must be signed prior to any such visit (see Clause 7.3)
- 2.9.2. Newly-appointed AEC members will be provided with a Members Handbook and copies of the Code and the Act.
- 2.9.3. New members will be asked to attend an Induction which will include an explanation of the proper use of iPads for meeting preparation, an overview of the Act and the Code, an introduction to the application forms and how to review them, a synopsis of the Committee process and a discussion of the roles of the Category A to E members.
- 2.9.4. Ongoing members will be required to participate in at least biennial training sessions which will include opportunities for in-depth examination of specific issues, updates on legislation as appropriate and invited speakers.
- 2.9.5. All AEC members, as well as the Chair and EO, are encouraged to attend relevant workshops or conferences, such as the ANZCCART⁴ or ANZLAA⁵ annual conferences, NHMRC workshops as offered, or other appropriate meetings.
- 2.9.6. All members will be added to the ANZCCART mailing list.

2.10. GENERAL DUTIES

- 2.10.1. It is the duty of members to understand and accept their responsibilities under the Act and the Code.
- 2.10.2. Attendance at every meeting of the Committee is not compulsory; however, any anticipated non-attendance at any meeting should be notified in advance to the EO as an apology for that meeting.
- 2.10.3. Members are expected to prepare diligently for each meeting they attend, including reading the meeting documents in advance and coming to the meeting prepared to actively contribute to discussion of the AEC business.
- 2.10.4. Each member must decide in his or her mind whether or not an application or other matter under consideration by the AEC is ethically acceptable.

⁴ ANZCCART = Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching

⁵ ANZLAA = Australian and New Zealand Laboratory Animal Association

- 2.10.5. Each member is required to comply with any procedures established by the University for the effective function of the AEC, as well as any other internal Code or policy appertaining to animal research or which requires the exercise of due care and diligence and ethical behaviour.

3. TERM OF OFFICE

- 3.1. The term of office for an AEC member is a maximum period of two years, as per the requirements of the Act.
- 3.2. If a member wishes to serve another two-year term they should state so in writing to the Chair prior to the expiration of their current term. The Chair has the discretion to appraise the attendance record of a member, and/or their contribution to the effective operation of the AEC, and to seek other nominations if deemed necessary.
- 3.3. If the Chair wishes to serve another two-year term he/she should state so in writing to the DVC:RI prior to the expiration of his/her current term.
- 3.4. If a member wishes to resign their position they should state so in writing to the Chair who may seek other nominations to fill the role.

4. HONORARIA

- 7.1. The Chair and Deputy Chair shall be paid an annual Honorarium to be determined by the University. The Honorarium shall take into account the level of responsibility and time commitment associated with the position.
- 7.2. The Category C and D members shall be paid an Honorarium for each AEC meeting they attend. The Honorarium shall be determined by the University and shall take into account the time commitment and expenses associated with preparing for and attending meetings.

5. REVOCATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1. In certain circumstances, the Committee may resolve to recommend to the DVC:RI that a member be removed from the Committee. This may occur where the member:
- 5.1.1. Has a real or apparent conflict of interest with the interests of the Committee.
 - 5.1.2. Behaves in a way which brings the Committee into disrepute.
 - 5.1.3. Impedes the Committee from fulfilling its Terms of Reference.
 - 5.1.4. Engages in misconduct.
 - 5.1.5. Incurs a criminal record.
 - 5.1.6. Incurs termination of employment due to misconduct.
 - 5.1.7. Has a poor attendance record (i.e. misses three meetings in a row without leave of absence, without good cause or without notifying the EO).
 - 5.1.8. Fails to meet confidentiality requirements.
 - 5.1.9. Fails or refuses or is unable to comply with these terms of reference or the Act.
 - 5.1.10. Consistently fails to read the meeting documents prior to the meeting.
 - 5.1.11. Uses information for purposes other than those intended.
 - 5.1.12. Behaves in a manner which impairs the effectiveness of the Committee.
 - 5.1.13. Demonstrates mental or physical incompetence.
 - 5.1.14. In the reasonable belief of the Committee, is unable to perform their duties.

- 5.2. At least one calendar month prior to making a resolution to recommend removal, the Chair will meet with the member to outline the basis for the recommendation and will provide the member with reasonable opportunity, not exceeding two weeks, to be heard or to make a written submission in response. Following receipt of the member's response, the Committee may:
 - 5.2.1. Resolve to recommend that the member be removed from the Committee.
 - 5.2.2. Resolve to retain the member.
- 5.3. Where the Committee resolves that a member be removed, the licence holder will formally request that the DVC:RI removes the member from the Committee. The granting of such a request is at the discretion of the DVC:RI. The member's membership will cease immediately on receipt of notice from the DVC:RI that the request has been granted.
- 5.4. The licence holder may prohibit a member from being on property under his or her control (thus preventing that member from attending AEC meetings) whilst a resolution to recommend removal is considered in accordance with Clause 5.2, or in the case that criminal charges or allegations of misconduct are being investigated.
- 5.5. A member may submit a complaint or grievance, in accordance with Clauses 26.1 and 26.2⁶ of the Members' Handbook, about any step in this process.

6. VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

- 6.1. Whilst it is preferred that all decisions made by the AEC are on the basis of consensus⁷, occasions may arise when a vote is called for.
- 6.2. All members have the right to vote, except under circumstances where an AEC member has a conflict of interest (see Clause 9).
- 6.3. Each member present at a meeting of an AEC is entitled to one vote per decision at that meeting. Should there be an equal number of 'for' and 'against' votes, the Chair may cast a second, or casting, vote.
- 6.4. Where a non-member is co-opted to the Committee for the purposes of providing expertise on specific issues, they must take no formal part in the proceedings of the Committee other than offering expert advice when it is sought on the issues concerned.

⁶ PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCES *(from University of South Australia AEC Member Handbook)*

- 26.1 Notwithstanding the following grievance procedures adopted by the University, any Committee member who suspects on reasonable grounds that there has been a breach of legislation may exercise their right to report this directly to the appropriate state or territory government authority
- 26.2 AEC operations or rulings:
 - 26.2.1 Grievances by Committee members or applicants concerning AEC operation or rulings should in the first instance be discussed, in confidence, with the Chair or Deputy Chair.
 - 26.2.2 If the grievance cannot be resolved by such discussion, the Chair or Deputy Chair will decide whether the matter is best referred back to the AEC or referred to the DVC:RI.
 - 26.2.3 Irreconcilable differences between the AEC and a Committee member or applicant must be referred by the Chair to the DVC:RI.
 - 26.2.4 If any matter is referred to the DVC:RI, the AEC must be informed that this course of action has been initiated.
 - 26.2.5 Any ruling of the AEC may be appealed through the appropriate complaints process as instituted by the Government of South Australia

⁷ Consensus: the outcome of a decision-making process whereby the legitimate concerns of members of the animal ethics committee are addressed and, as a result, no more than one of the voting members present (excluding the Chair) do not accept the final decision, even though it may not be an individual's preferred option. In any consensus agreement, at least one Category C member and one Category D member of the sitting Committee, or either a Category C or a Category D member of the Executive, must be party to the agreement.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY & SECURITY

- 7.1. Maintaining confidentiality and security is essential to protecting the ethics approval process as well as privacy, innovation, the integrity of research and the reputation and safety of individuals and Institutions.
- 7.2. Members of the AEC must sign a Confidentiality Agreement which protects project-specific information, details about the AEC process, conversations, deliberations or decisions and details about other Committee members from being disclosed outside of the Committee itself. This agreement does not apply to any information that:
 - 7.2.1. constitutes alleged breaches of legislation which may be reported to the relevant state or territory government authorities
 - 7.2.2. is permitted to be disclosed by law (provided that only the minimum amount of confidential information is released or disclosed to comply with the applicable law)
 - 7.2.3. is lawfully already in the public domain, or becomes part of the public domain, other than due to the fault of, or any act or failure to act by a Committee member
 - 7.2.4. is or becomes available to a Committee member from a third party which is lawfully in possession of that information and has the lawful power to disclose or release that information to a Committee member on a non-confidential basis
- 7.3. Any visitors, guests or observers present at AEC meetings must also sign Confidentiality Agreements.
- 7.4. Information may be sought by AEC members from contacts outside the AEC with regards to specific issues, but applicants must not be identified nor information divulged which could identify projects or applicants or which could be regarded as socially, scientifically or commercially sensitive.
 - 7.4.1. Those contacts must also be informed of the sensitive nature of such an enquiry and the corresponding confidentiality restrictions and be asked to be mindful of such, to exercise absolute discretion and not to discuss the nature of any conversations or information gained with other persons except in conjunction with AEC business or purposes.
- 7.5. Should the Terms of Reference for the AEC be altered, an addendum to the Confidentiality Agreement must be signed by each member of the Committee accepting the changes.
- 7.6. It is up to members to seek advice from the Chair if they are unsure of how to balance their responsibilities with regards to confidentiality and security.
- 7.7. University of South Australia Information Technology (IT) policies, procedures and guidelines must be adhered to:
 - 7.7.1. When using IT facilities or equipment.
 - 7.7.2. When accessing University of South Australia webpages or shared sites.
- 7.8. Should any confidential information (or any storage device containing confidential information) pertaining to the AEC be lost or stolen, the EO must be notified immediately.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

- 8.1. Any communications received from members of the public regarding animal ethics or welfare matters must be referred, in the first instance, to the Chair of the AEC, who is University of South Australia's authorised spokesperson on such issues.
- 8.2. The Chair may allow senior staff to comment publicly on operational matters, but any application-specific issues must be referred to the Chair.

- 8.3. Any communication with the Media must be referred to the Chair or to University of South Australia's Director: Marketing and Development Unit.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 9.1. The Agenda for each meeting should state at the beginning of the document that "Members are required to declare a conflict of interest, must refrain from voting, and absent themselves from the discussion of an item of business in which they have a pecuniary, personal or other conflict of interest".
- 9.2. According to the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research⁸, "A conflict of interest exists where there is a divergence between the individual interests of a person and their professional responsibilities such that an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of that person are unduly influenced by their own interests". As such, 'conflict of interest' refers not just to an actual conflict, but also to situations that can be reasonably judged to present a perception of conflict.
- 9.3. A conflict of interest may include, but is not restricted to:
- 9.3.1. Receipt, or potential receipt, of financial gain from the product or outcome of a research project, by oneself or a by a person with whom a close personal or close professional or collaborative relationship exists
 - 9.3.2. Receipt, or potential receipt, of academic gain from the product or outcome of a research project, by oneself or a by a person with whom a close personal or close professional or collaborative relationship exists
 - 9.3.3. Receipt, or potential receipt, of material or personal gain from the product or outcome of a research project, by oneself or a by a person with whom a close personal or close professional or collaborative relationship exists
- 9.4. When a member of the committee is an applicant on a project, or has another declared conflict of interest, the member must leave the room during the discussion of the project and during the decision-making process (unless asked to give some background information prior to leaving the room). Whilst a member may be given the opportunity to talk about the project with which he or she is involved, this must not be a greater opportunity than is afforded to other applicants.
- 9.5. The Minutes of the meeting should clearly record all stated conflicts of interest and whether the member concerned has:
- 9.5.1. Absented himself / herself from the meeting during discussion of the application or business item; or
 - 9.5.2. Given an overview of the proposal or business item and answered questions before leaving the room; or
 - 9.5.3. Absented himself / herself from the room during the decision-making process and only responded to questions directed to him /her by the committee.

10. EXECUTIVE

- 10.1. The Executive of the AEC must be comprised of at least two members being:
- 10.1.1. Chair.
 - 10.1.2. One Category C or D member.

⁸ © Australian Government 2007

- 10.2. The Executive will be administered by the EO (or delegate). The EO will not be a voting member of the Executive.
- 10.3. The Executive may authorise final approval of revised applications that have already been approved by the AEC pending changes, as long as the conditions imposed by that approval have been satisfied.
 - 10.3.1. The Executive may request further clarification, justification or amendment of the specific points that have been addressed in response to the requirements of the AEC, but may not impose its own additional conditions with respect to the elements of the application that have been approved by the Committee.
- 10.4. The Executive may approve minor modifications to currently approved projects.
- 10.5. The Executive may ratify approval of projects where the animal use is to be carried out interstate but within Australia, as long as such use has been approved by the AEC established by the Institution which employs or engages the principal applicant on the AEC approval application as well as any AEC (or equivalent) established by the Institution that is responsible for the animals in that location, should such an Institution or Committee be in place.
- 10.6. The Executive may assess and note Scavenged Tissue Notifications.
- 10.7. When reviewing revised applications or minor modifications, the Executive may seek advice from the Animal Welfare Officer (AWO) regarding animal impact or welfare considerations.
- 10.8. Should the Executive fail to reach consensus regarding a revised or minor application, the application must be referred back to the full AEC at its next meeting.
- 10.9. The Executive may deal with emergencies, including but not limited to unexpected adverse events, natural disasters or breaches of approved project protocols.
- 10.10. Any decision made by the Executive must be reviewed and ratified by the AEC at its next meeting.

11. RETENTION OF RECORDS

- 11.1. Full documentation of AEC business will be maintained by University of South Australia Research and Innovation Services and managed by the EO.
- 11.2. All records pertaining to research projects or protocols must be retained in accordance with the Government of South Australia General Disposal Schedule 24, as follows:
 - 11.2.1. Research or teaching programme protocol applications for animal ethics approval and related correspondence may be destroyed 7 years after the last action is completed.
 - 11.2.2. Records relating to radiation and other high risk material, bio-ethics assessment and approval, including genetically modified organisms, may be destroyed 20 years after the last action is completed.
 - 11.2.3. Records relating to breaches of ethical practice and complaints in relation to research or teaching must be retained as per Clauses 11.2.1 or 11.2.2, whichever is relevant.
 - 11.2.4. Records relating to the monitoring of ethical practices, including individual project monitoring, annual review of activities, internal reports to governing bodies, summary reports, and compliance reports to external bodies, must be retained as per Clauses 11.2.1 or 11.2.2, whichever is relevant.
- 11.3. If a record is reactivated after a retention period has commenced, the time is recalculated from the date of the subsequent last action. The reactivation of a record is triggered by such events as:
 - 11.3.1. Record retrieved to meet a freedom of information (FOI) request.

- 11.3.2. Record retrieved to meet a subpoena.
- 11.3.3. Record accessed for research.
- 11.3.4. Record identified as being of significant risk management status.
- 11.3.5. Record identified as being required for possible legal proceedings.