



## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 5/5/2020

### The University of Edinburgh

### Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986

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Minutes of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body held 05/05/2020

*Microsoft teams*

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1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending, particularly during current times.
  2. **Attendance and Apologies**– please see separate sheet
  3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 31/03/20: approved**
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#### 4. **Matters arising and action point summary**

- **ASPA provisions for visits to facilities:** Agreement from home office that routine NVS visits by NVS in person are not currently required; we have adapted to the COVID crisis by the use of video calls, virtual tours and regular updates from facility staff. Where needed an NVS will attend in person. A detailed description of our processes has been supplied to the Home Office: *Action complete*
- **Communication from AWERB chair:** a communication from the AWERB chair circulated to facility staff thanking them for their help and continued support during this time : *Action: complete*
- **AWERB video:** volunteers requested to put together an online video about the AWERB with clips of key roles within the AWERB and relevant contributions to this process. *Action:* ongoing email circulated to AWERB members.

#### Named person update

**Directors update:** this focused on the Covid-19 outbreak and the impact on facilities.

- **Experimental studies:** currently supporting in the region of 68-70 long term studies.
- **Returning to EXP work:** meeting with senior colleagues in the near future, studies will be assessed on a case by case basis.
- **Staffing:** morale is very good in facilities, staffing is constant and no issues have been reported a number of emails and other communications have been sent out to keep staff updated.

#### NVS update

- **Long term study review:** these have been reviewed in conjunction with senior staff.
- **merger:** currently undergoing health status screening (2 rounds) merger will be dependent on results obtained.
- **Tamoxifen:** working on an updated guidance document for tamoxifen use.
- **PPL application format:** working towards a document to better advise applicants with their applications.

#### Deputy Director update:

- **Merger of [REDACTED]:** this will go ahead dependent on health screens. Users to be kept informed of the facility plans; email will go out shortly.



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- **Merger of the [REDACTED]**: this will be completed once the current lockdown is over.
- **Staffing**: around 65-70% mark and team morale is very good. Some people in vulnerable category returning to work (pending discussions with OH).
- **Wild-type animals**: these will be available but on a breed to order basis, with more focus on ordering animals in. Users will be contacted in advance of returning to work to gauge potential demand

### NACWO update (1GSQ)

- **Facility staff**: staff have been fantastic and in very good spirits. Temporary travel allowance and food being provided for facility staff until the end of May.
- **Long term studies**: these are continuing without issue.

### NTCO update

- **Training**: looking at online options for running Scotpil courses online and other aspects of our work. Special dispensation to complete handling once lockdown is over.

## 5. Project licences under consideration:

### PL03-2020

This project licence is from a new applicant and was previously submitted to the AWERB earlier in the year but required revision and re-submission to the AWERB for final approval pending submission to the home office. **It was noted that** this version is much improved with some final revisions required (detailed below) prior to submission to the home office.

- **Invasive techniques**: still some clarification required in terms of understanding what the most invasive scenarios are in this application, this is currently unclear.
- **Grammar/proof reading**: suggested that it would be helpful if a colleague proof read his application pending submission to the home office.
- **Numbers**: these need to be clarified, it appears that the numbers have been underestimated (breeding and maintenance).

### PI11-2020

This project licence is from an experienced group leader and it was noted that this was a renewal application with well-established models looking at the role of neuropeptides in the brain in terms of how this influences behaviour and neuropsychiatric disorders. The application was approved pending revision of the points below:

- **Objectives**: well justified however, the plan of work does not really clarify how these objectives will be addressed within the application. These require expansion within the action plan.
- **Protocols**: many optional steps in protocol 2, however this seems to be the best approach
- **Maximum severity**: difficult to assess this due to the number of optional steps, this has to be clarified so that it's clear what animals will experience.



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- **Endpoints:** clearer humane endpoints and more standardised language is required with reference to BVS guidance.
- **Protocol steps:** the order that the steps are written do not convey the purpose of the protocol, this could be made clearer for example a preparation step/manipulation step.
- **NTS:** not clear why peptides are being researched, this needs to be explained.
- **NTS:** estimating numbers, this was also quite unclear how this was calculated. The NTS also is written in non-technical language and needs revision.

### **PL12 -2020:**

This is a renewal application from a very established researcher with some points for consideration as detailed below, it was noted that this was a very well written application. The application was approved subject to revision of the below points:

- **Sham injections:** what does this constitute, will animals receive an injection or are these simply control animals. This needs some clarification.
- **Post-operative analgesia:** could this be given as pre-operative analgesia to refine these techniques?
- **NTS:** very well written, but some terms are too complex for example “contra-lateral” and “termination of animal”.

### **Amendment applications submitted to the AWERB: none for full review**

Sub-committee review: All approved

6. **OS6-20:** application approved; comment on group sizes to be conveyed to researchers for information purposes only.
  1. Numbers were very small (n=3) clarify whether this is sufficiently powered.
7. **AOCB:**

Requesting volunteers to put together an online video about the AWERB with clips of key roles within the AWERB and relevant contributions to this process.

**Date of next Meeting: to be advised**