



Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 25/05/2021

The University of Edinburgh

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

Minutes of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body held 25/05/20201

Microsoft Teams

1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending
 2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 27th April 2021: approved**
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3. **Matters arising and action point summary**

- **None**
- 4. **Named person and Director updates**

Directors update:

- **New post:** Congratulations were given to [REDACTED] on the new post at [REDACTED], the committee noted the valuable contribution given to the AWERB and in [REDACTED].
- **Online training and research:** this will be launched at the 3Rs day at the end of June, this has been a great achievement for Edinburgh and represents a huge amount of work.
- **Non-compliance:** noted that the new structure within the ASRU compliance team is more centrally focused with less inspector input. Recognised that some recent letters were unexpected and may be the result of this more centralised approach; a response to these letters has been submitted by PEL holder.

Deputy Directors update:

- **Service PPL:** this will be taken over by [REDACTED], training is being completed.
- **Facilities:** another leak has occurred at the [REDACTED], repairs are ongoing.
- **[REDACTED] cage wash:** awaiting starting date for these works by [REDACTED].
- **Breeding lines:** good progress with rationalising breeding lines has been made. Noted that many users are now ordering commercially as required now without the use of in-house breeding.
- **[REDACTED] humidity:** work is ongoing to resolve this.

NVS update

- **Penile prolapse: a current PPL amendment** is in progress to address issues with penile prolapse to ensure that all staff working with these lines [REDACTED] are aware of the endpoints.
- **Surgical guidelines:** revising guidelines for aseptic practice, recognising that a different approach is allowable for non-recovery techniques where the time period of the surgery is less than 6 hours.
- **Idexx:** Some ongoing issues with transit of samples which must now be sent to the USA. Discussions are ongoing to determine if it will be possible to commence shipping to Europe via another site.



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NACWO update:

- **Breeding lines:** working with researchers to reduce numbers of in-house breeding lines.
- **Robots:** these have been very effectively used within the facilities for a number of tasks, for example cage wash.
- **NACWO meeting:** this was well attended and reports from NACWOs felt that this was a very useful and worthwhile meeting.

NTCO update:

PIL/Training record review: data presented to Roslin and Edinburgh AWERBs, noted that this has represented a huge amount of work.

5. Project licences under consideration:

PL09-2021: *for information:* **approved:** The AWERB recognised the huge amount of work that went into the revised licence. The committee were happy to approve the revised version and commented on the high quality of the revision.

PL11-21

This is a renewal application from a researcher with many years' experience in the biology of Th2 (T helper) cells. The aims of the application are to advance fundamental understanding of [REDACTED]. The application is scientifically justified and was approved subject to the revision of some minor comments detailed below:

- **Protocols:** suggest that more detail is given in places rather than referring to BVS guidelines.
- **Protocol 1:** remove reference to in-vitro blastocyst manipulation.
- **Funding:** noted that there is limited funding however this was not recognised as an issue and it is anticipated that more funding will become available.
- **Scientific content:** No issues were identified with the scientific content of the PPL, the value of the work was recognised.
- **NTS:** noted that this was a well written example.

PL12-21

This is a new application and part of a [REDACTED] fellowship which will replace some work covered by an existing project licence (not being renewed). The project aims to investigate [REDACTED]. The committee and review panel noted the clear scientific value of the work but suggested that the revised application is circulated to the committee for final approval.

The application was approved subject to addressing the following points:



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- **Endometriosis model:** some concerns that this could cause pain however initial behavioural tests may suggest that this is not the case. Perhaps further clarification on this could be given and detailed in the PPL.
- **Spiny mouse model:** the committee suggested that this model could be used as a model of menstruation, consider using this model in the licence if relevant.
- **Oestrogen pellets:** clarify any potential adverse effects relating to the use of this system as these were not described in any detail.
- **Humane endpoints:** protocols 3-7, clarify that animals will not be moved to other protocols if normal behaviour is not displayed.
- **NTS:** some more detail on the surgical techniques is required, not enough detail is given. In addition, could more explanation of the Von Frey technique be given in the NTS, this was not clear to our lay member.
- **Justification:** more justification is required for a number of the techniques within the PPL for example implants, microchipping, von-Frey testing.

6. a. Amendment applications submitted to the full AWERB:

A30-21: *approved subject to revision of below comments*

- Specify how we manage the penile prolapse issue specifically when we are very close to the end of the study.

PPL additional availability Lu: Approved

7. Culture of Care: excellent summary given by [REDACTED]

- Suggestions include the use of questionnaires/survey for researchers
- It is important that the culture of care can be 'demonstrated' within the establishment. However it is difficult to measure.
- Recognised that communication is very important within the culture of care.
- This area could be a suitable honours or MSc project for a student

Outcomes

Consider that we have a full AWERB devoted to discussing this and how we progress, survey results could be presented at this meeting. An appropriate external was suggested who could provide a presentation at this additional AWERB.

8. Pre-regulation stages:

How do we manage and consider as an establishment working with those stages that are pre-regulated (for example fish), do we need forms or processes?

Outcome: It was agreed that we could produce a statement on behalf of the AWERB showing that animals used at pre-regulation stages are subject to the same care and welfare, within the same facilities. Action [REDACTED]



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9. A.O.C.B:

1.Theses: these are available online and contain a great deal of information on animal methods raising potential security concerns; specifically because the thesis is in one person's name.

Outcome

Noted that whilst we are supportive of our students very good progress in our approach to transparency has been made with any changes potentially seen as a backwards step.

Suggestions included revising wording which does not "hide anything" but may "soften" the descriptions of some of the techniques?

2.New members: *All approved*

Date of next Meeting: 23rd June 2021 10am MS teams