



## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 23/08/2022

### 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 23/08/2022

Microsoft Teams

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1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.– Apologies – **separate attendance log**
2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 25/01/2022: approved**
3. **Presentation: the committee heard a presentation from NVS regarding recent Culture of Care Survey results.**

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4. **Named person and Director updates**  
**Directors update:**
  - **Staffing:** Deputy Director HOV confirmed and backfill of NVS post underway. [REDACTED] recruitment drive in recent months- [REDACTED]
  - **Estates:** Good progress with all ongoing [REDACTED] plans
  - **UAR Council:** [REDACTED] leaving council but another UoE member of AWERB joining.
5. **Deputy Director's update:**
  - **Recruitment:** 2021 MA joined meeting and 2022 MA's will start on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022..
  - **Culture of Care: Working on improving staff wellbeing, including developing Mental Health First Aid team** A few things to help wellbeing in Facilities have been carried out, more to come.  
BVS staff BBQ planned for 7 September 2022.**General:** An online incident reporting system for facilities has been created to allow easier access, auditing and better tracking of any trends
6. **NVS update**
  - Several condition 18 reports have been submitted since the last meeting. Appropriate actions being taken where required.
  - 2 potential non-compliances reported to the Home Office- awaiting feedback
  - The NVS also reported that the new NVS had now joined the team and is becoming familiar with all of the work, noted that she is a great addition to the team.
7. **NACWO update (Aquatics):**
  - **Steam issue:** some issues with steam in rodent facilities, monitoring but not of concern.
  - **Ageing fish of fish – continuing to work with researchers to ensure aged fish are clearly identified and within required limits according to PPL authorities**
  - [REDACTED]: PPL holders have been reminded about the need for regular breeding and this is being monitored.  
  - **NTCO update:** All going well.  
**Training:** new BVS trainer appointed to assist with training in one of our key facilities, similar role elsewhere which has been really successful.



## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 23/08/2022

### 8. [REDACTED] **AWERB update:**

Noted that this committee is very busy with new PPL applications and amendments:  
The committee heard an excellent presentation in relation to a PPL renewal the focus of which is research on [REDACTED].

### 9. **HOLC update:** 31 PPL applications and 53 amendments already reviewed. Turnaround times with urgent amendments are good. [REDACTED]

### 10. (a) **Project licences under consideration:**

#### **PL27-22: PPL application**

The aim of the project is to develop models of [REDACTED] to better understand [REDACTED]. This application was approved subject to the following points being addressed.

- A number of typographical errors exist within the application.
- Within the application - Statistical issues/experimental design could be strengthened.
- Protocol 1: clarify that aging animals will be used.
- Animal experience section: unclear what the typical experimental experience is due to the number of optional steps

#### **PL28-22: PPL application**

This was a well written application from an experienced researcher, it was noted that whilst this is a renewal there is a slight change of focus in this application. This application was approved subject to the following points being addressed

- **NTS:** Noted the inclusion of overly technical language eg 'desirable for modelling therapeutic interventions' or 'important modality in the pharmaceutical industry'. Much of this should be simplified. Some identifiers noted which should be removed.
- **Adverse effects:** protocol 2 requires revision in relation to [REDACTED].
- **Scoring:** there are some inconsistencies within the application in relation to the use of the clinical scoring sheet.

#### **PL29-22: PPL application**

This application needs further work. It was agreed to conduct further sub-committee review of the revisions and present this for final approval at the meeting on 13/9/2022, the applicant will be invited to give a presentation to the committee

### (b) **Amendments – for consideration by full committee:**

*A53-22: approved*

**Applications submitted and considered by the amendment Sub-Committee**



## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 23/08/2022

Approved: A41-22, A42-22 (), A44-22 A45-22 A50-22

### 11. Revised GAA guidelines

The committee heard a very detailed discussion on the changes to breeding and maintenance protocols circulated by ASRU for GAA Zebrafish. There was a discussion on 3 points detailed below with some clarification on wording should this cause issue within PPL applications.

- A. Maintenance timescales
- B. Wording regarding analgesia
- C. Single housing time after fin clip is restricted to 72hrs

A. The age range in step 3 is still set to 18 month of age.

**Maintenance to the age of 18 months.** We indeed endorse this as best practice but have (under animal experience- see below) added the provision of maintaining fish up to 24 month if required and when assessed first by a competent member of staff. A tank label is attached the tank to reflect this and the monthly age report (through ticketlab) will allow staff to monitor the upper age ranges.

- B. Provision of analgesia wording has also changed from the older versions  
*Following fin clipping for genotyping in >5dpf fish peri-operative analgesia may/will be provided; agents will be administered as agreed in advance with the NVS. To*  
Named Veterinary Surgeon advice will be followed regarding the use of analgesia following fin clipping for genotyping in over 5dpf fish (in the animal experience section of the protocol – as above).

We discussed AWERBs endorsement of the use of analgesia in fish when reviewing individual PPLs and wish to include a general statement within an AWERB meeting minute. This should be extended to fish under procedure including when fin-clipped and in line with our refinements for rodents (the wording from our SOP below).

### As Agreed by AWERB

Every effort should always be made to consider administration of an appropriate analgesia at the correct dose, frequency and time-frame to minimise any pain or distress that fish experience during scientific procedures including genotyping. It is the responsibility of the PIL holder to ensure that analgesia is provided to all animals under their care. Should there be a clearly defined scientific reason as to why analgesia cannot be given, this must be justified within the Project Licence under which the work is being conducted.

- C. Following tissue sampling, fish may be singly housed for up to 72 hours pending the results of genotyping.

The feasibility of this time limit will be discussed at the zebrafish facility PI meeting



## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 23/08/2022

**12. Overseas Research proposal:** OS10-22: approved subject to the clarification of some minor points as detailed below

- Clarify behavioural tests used.
- Clarify who will perform surgical procedures.

**13. A.O.C.B: Overseas research:**

The committee heard a report relating to an imminent publication from an Edinburgh researcher which used a species and model from their previous research group overseas. This work is long term but has not been assessed by the university AWERB/processes. Conclude that the AWERB could only state at this stage that it was aware of the work and acknowledge the assurance that local ethical approval was in place.

Discuss a further drive to identify animal work abroad and get ethical assessment in place. New ethics programme for whole university may be useful for this, In house processes have been updated in website and new online form in place

**Date of next Meeting: 13/09/2022 10am MS teams**