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## **Animal Ethics Committee**

### **OPERATING PROCEDURES 2010**

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#### **SECTION A: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

##### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Pursuant to legal obligations of the University, the Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) has responsibility for the consideration of ethical and welfare aspects as well as the scientific or education value of the use of animals for scientific purposes. The AEC will ensure that all animal care and use within the University is conducted in compliance with the “*Animal Research Regulation (2005)*”, the NHMRC “*Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*” (2004) and subsequent editions that may come into effect, and incorporates the principles of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement as outlined therein.

The Committee will:

1. Examine written proposals concerning the use of animals for scientific purposes including research and teaching and shall:
  - i) approve;
  - ii) approve subject to receipt of clarification and/or modification; or
  - iii) reject

such proposals, provided that approval shall only be given to research or teaching for which the use of animals is essential and justified and which complies with the requirements of the NSW Animal Research Act (1985) and the Animal Research Regulation (2005) and the NHMRC “*Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*” (2004) and subsequent editions that may come into effect. The Committee will take into consideration factors including ethics, the impact on the animal or animals and the anticipated scientific or educational value. In such considerations the AEC may raise issues of the statistical validity of the design of a research proposal.

2. Withdraw approval for any project which no longer complies with the Regulations or AEC approval;
3. Maintain a register of all proposals and projects;
4. Approve guidelines for the care of animals that are bred, held and used for scientific purposes on behalf of the institution;
5. Monitor the acquisition, transport, production, housing, care and use of animals used for scientific purposes;
6. Monitor the use and fate of animals used for scientific purposes;
7. Where necessary authorise the treatment or compassionate euthanasia of any animals;
8. Examine and comment on all University plans and policies which may affect the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes including research and teaching;
9. Recommend to the institution any measures needed to ensure that the standards of the legislation are maintained;
10. Ensure that all persons involved in animal care and use are informed of the University's policy and procedures in relation to animal ethics;
11. Facilitate the education of University staff and students in animal ethics issues, including advising the Library on appropriate materials which are pertinent to improving animal research practices and ethical use of animals; and
12. Perform all other duties imposed on the AEC by the "*Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*" (2004), legislation and other regulations.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The AEC shall include members of both sexes (where possible) appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVC(R)) or delegate and shall comprise:

1. The Chair, who should be a person holding a senior position in the University and not involved in animal research.
2. The Deputy Chair, who may also be a member of any of the other categories listed below in items 3-6.
3. The AEC will have a membership which will allow it to fulfil its terms of reference. It must comprise at least four persons, including a separate person appointed to each of the following categories:

**Category A:** persons with qualifications in veterinary science, with experience

relevant to the activities of the institution;

**Category B:** persons with substantial recent experience in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities;

**Category C:** persons with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who are not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution, and who are not involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes; and where possible are selected on the basis of membership of, and nomination by, an animal welfare organisation;

**Category D:** persons who are both independent of the institution and who have never been involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, either in their employment or beyond their under-graduate education. They 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.

4. The **Manager of Animal Research Facilities** involved in the daily care of animals shall be a member of the Committee.
5. Members of the staff of the University with teaching or research interests in the field of ethics, nominated after consultation with the Head of the Philosophy Program, such persons not being involved in the use of animals for laboratory purposes;
6. The Committee may include such additional members as it deems necessary to ensure its adequate functioning provided that Categories C plus D represent at least one third of the total members.
7. A member of the staff of the University with teaching or research interests in the field of statistics, nominated after consultation with the Head of the Department of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, such persons not being involved in the use of animals for research purposes.

## **TERMS OF OFFICE**

Members of the AEC shall be appointed, re-appointed, or retired according to the following procedures:

1. The Executive Officer will monitor the membership needs of the AEC in consultation with the AEC Chair.
2. After consultation between the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVC(R)) or delegate, the Chair, and the Executive Officer, the DVC(R) or delegate will send a letter of invitation to the nominated new Committee member. The letter will specify length of tenure, assurance that indemnity will be provided in respect of liabilities that may arise in the course of bona fide conduct of their duties as a member of the AEC, the circumstances whereby membership may be terminated and conditions of their appointment. The invited person must declare any conflict of interests prior to accepting the invitation.

3. Appointment of a new member of the AEC takes effect on receipt by the DVC(R) or delegate of written confirmation from the person of the invitation, of acceptance of the AEC's Operating Procedures and the requirements for confidentiality imposed by the University.
4. The term of office of the members of the Committee including the Chair shall be for a three-year term which may be renewed by letter of invitation from the DVC(R) or delegate, and which is accepted by the member.
5. All members may be reappointed to serve for consecutive terms. In general, members would not be expected to serve more than six years continuously, but it is recognised that in some circumstances, the availability of suitably qualified potential members will require some members to serve for longer periods.
6. A member may resign from the AEC at any time by advising the Chair in writing and if possible giving at least two months notice. The Chair will advise the Executive Officer and a new member will be sought.
7. Membership will lapse if a member fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the AEC without reasonable excuse/apology, unless exceptional circumstances exist. The Chair will notify the member of such lapse of membership in writing.
8. The DVC(R) or delegate, in consultation with the Chair may terminate the appointment of any member of the AEC by letter of termination if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the AEC. In the event that the Chair is under review, the DVC(R) or delegate in consultation with the Chair of the University Ethics Policy Committee may terminate the Chair's appointment by letter of termination if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the AEC.
9. All AEC members are required to declare any conflict of interest as soon as practicable after they become aware of anything that may be reasonably considered to be a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest in a matter may include:
  - A direct financial interest;
  - An indirect interest, for example a financial benefit accruing to a close relative or partner of the member;
  - A non-financial interest, for example a person may have an interest in a matter as a result of an affiliation or membership of a group or organisation;
  - An interest that could be perceived to represent a possible conflict of interest;
  - Combinations of the above interests.

AEC members must declare any such conflict of interest whether direct or indirect, pecuniary or otherwise, and perceived or real, before or at the beginning of the meeting of the AEC.

10. If based on the information disclosed by the member the AEC determines that a conflict of interest does exist, this must be recorded in the minutes for that AEC meeting and the member will be required to leave the meeting at the appropriate time including during the decision making process.
11. The Executive Officer will maintain a record of all appointments to the AEC and associated documents.

## **SUB-COMMITTEES**

1. The AEC may establish and maintain such sub-committees as it deems necessary for the effective transaction of the business of the Committee.
2. Each sub-committee established by the Committee shall be chaired by a member of the Committee.
3. A sub-committee shall exercise such functions as the Committee delegates to it and shall report as required to the Committee.

## **THE EXECUTIVE**

1. The Executive will be composed of the Chair of the Committee, a representative from either Category C or D, the Executive Officer, and/or the Deputy Chair.
2. The Executive will have authority to approve minor amendments as set out below under Section B 'Administrative Procedures, Part (b) Submissions for executive review'
3. When the AEC has reviewed a proposal and approved an application subject to minor clarification or modification then the Executive has the authority to approve applications deemed to require minor clarification or modification by the full Committee and report this outcome at the next scheduled AEC meeting for ratification.

## **MODE OF OPERATION**

1. The AEC shall meet as frequently as necessary but at least eight times a year including a policy meeting.
2. Representatives from the AEC will conduct site inspections of the Animal Holding Facilities in use at least twice per year in accordance with the NHMRC *Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (2004)* and subsequent editions. The AEC may identify non-compliance issues and will inform the relevant researcher/s of the action required within a specified time frame.
3. The Committee may invite other persons to attend for particular items of business at its meetings, or for such complete meetings, as the Committee may believe appropriate to facilitate its work.
4. Any member of the AEC who is listed as a Principal Investigator or co-investigator on an application before the Committee shall not be present during final discussion and shall not participate in voting on the application.

5. The Committee will review and approve Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and make them available on its web-site. External advice may be sought when reviewing SOPs. SOPs in use must be reviewed every three years.

## **QUORUM**

1. The quorum for meetings of the Committee shall be the nearest whole number above one half of the membership for the time being and must include at least one member from each category (Categories A, B, C and D). Category C and D members should represent not less than one-third of the members participating in a meeting.
2. In the event a quorum is not present, the remaining members of the AEC may consider the items on the agenda and make recommendations to the next quorate meeting of the Committee.

## **DECISIONS OF THE AEC**

**In reviewing proposals for the use of animals for scientific purposes including research and teaching the AEC will seek to make decisions by consensus.**

1. A decision of the AEC is made by consensus. When a clear consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote by a show of hands shall be taken. A dissenting member may request that his/her view be formally recorded in the Minutes.
2. A decision of the AEC is based upon all the requirements of the legislation, but especially principles that:
  - i) Animal research may be performed only when it is essential to obtain and establish significant information relevant to the understanding of human or animal health and welfare, to the improvement of animal management or production, or to the achievement of scientific and/or educational objectives; and
  - ii) Each AEC must approve only that research for which animals are essential and which conforms to the requirements of the NHMRC "*Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*" (2004) taking into consideration ethical and welfare aspects as well as scientific or education value.
  - iii) In relation to proposals involving the use of animals in teaching "Studies using animals may be performed only after a decision has been made that they are justified, weighing the scientific or educational value of the study against the potential effects on the welfare of the animals".
3. A decision of the AEC may be:
  - i) approved:
    - a. without specified conditions;
    - b. subject to receipt of clarification and/or modification;

- c. interim (with/without specified condition);
- ii) not approved:
  - a. pending receipt of additional information;
  - b. rejected
- iii) that an approval is:
  - a. suspended;
  - b. withdrawn

## **RECORDING OF DECISIONS OF AEC**

1. All deliberations by, and decisions of, the AEC are minuted by the Executive Officer to the Committee.
2. The draft Minutes are proofed by the Chair and then circulated with the agenda for the following meeting, for endorsement by the members of the AEC.
3. Copies of the approved minutes are kept in the AEC Minutes and Agenda File in the Research Services Office.
4. With regard to initial responses to applications, the Executive Officer will record the questions to be asked of the Principal Investigator prior to the meeting and all replies received.
5. A record will be maintained of the deliberations and decisions of the Executive Committee.

## **REPORTING TO INSTITUTION**

1. The AEC will comply with the reporting requirements of the institution including to regulatory bodies, funding agencies and the Code by:
  - a. Submitting an annual report to the University through the University Ethics Policy Committee and through an interview between the Chair and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVC(R)) or delegate at least once per year. The report will include information and comments on:
    - \* numbers and types of projects assessed and approved or rejected;
    - \* physical facilities for the care and use of animals within the University;
    - \* activities that have supported the educational needs of AEC members, and of personnel involved in the care and use of animals;
    - \* administrative or other difficulties being experienced; and
    - \* any matters that may affect the University's ability to maintain compliance with the Code and if necessary the provision of suitable recommendations.
  - b. Promptly reporting to the DVC(R) or delegate any event or issue that may need to be referred to NSW Department of Primary Industries Animal Welfare Unit, or other regulatory body.

- c. Submitting any reports relating to use of animals for scientific purposes by the University of Wollongong as required by law including the Annual Animal Use Statistics Report to the NSW Department of Primary Industries, the NHMRC Statement of Compliance and any other reports required by regulatory bodies and funding agencies.

## **SERVICING OF COMMITTEE**

The University shall appoint an Executive Officer to the AEC.

## **SECTION B: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

### ***a) Submissions to scheduled meetings***

1. Applications are submitted to the Ethics Officer 3 weeks ahead of the due date of the AEC meeting. The dates for meeting times and agenda deadlines are regularly circulated by email to the animal research community by the Executive Officer.
2. Upon receipt of an animal ethics application, it is date stamped and registered on the database.
3. The database generates an Ethics number and an acknowledgment letter is sent to the Principal Investigator.
4. All members are required to review AEC applications and to provide comments in writing to the Executive Officer prior to the meeting.
5. Usually, within 1 week of agenda deadline, the Executive Officer compiles a draft agenda and sends out the applications to all Committee members. Usually, no later than 1 week before the date of the meeting (ie members have had the papers for 1 week) all members notify the Executive Officer of major concerns or queries they have with the applications, including noting whether they have no comments on the applications. These notifications must be returned by email or fax, not by phone, because the Committee is required to keep substantial written records. Comments need only be very brief notes or a series of points about major issues that need attention or clarification.
6. The Executive Officer has one week to advise applicants of the questions to be addressed and to receive their responses, preferably by email. These responses are distributed at the meeting.
7. This procedure should mean that discussion at the meeting can focus on the amended applications because major concerns will have already been raised with and addressed by the researcher. If the AEC wishes the researcher to attend the meeting they will be advised in writing.
8. Following assessment of applications by the AEC, the Executive Officer notifies the Principal Investigator and the Head of relevant Department in writing of the

conditions of approval/non approval of application. Where animal holding facilities are involved the Manager of the relevant facility should also be notified as appropriate. Research cannot proceed until all conditions have been met to the satisfaction of the AEC.

9. If further issues arise in discussion at the meeting of the Committee, the Principal Investigator will be notified by letter and then the replies will be referred to the Executive of the Committee which may approve them if it is satisfied that the reply addresses the concerns of the full AEC.

***b) Submissions for Executive review***

10. Requests for amendments to approved protocols are date stamped upon receipt and sent to the Executive of the AEC for approval or for wider circulation to the AEC.
11. The Executive has the authority to approve minor amendments that have (a) no or minimal impacts on animal welfare or (b) address emergencies. All decisions must be presented for ratification at the next meeting of the full Committee.
12. Amendments deemed to have no or minimal impact on animal welfare include the following: (a) justifiable extensions of time for protocols that do not involve any changes in procedures or animal numbers, (b) addition of experienced researchers, or new researchers in situations where the executive is satisfied that adequate training will take place (certificates of competency will be required), (c) transfer of unused or control animals from one approved protocol to another where there is no change in procedure. The animal facilities manager should be consulted and informed if the amendment involves animals in holding facilities. If any member of the executive thinks the amendment should be more widely circulated, then it will be circulated to all members, with approval required from one member of each category plus the animal facilities manager or delegate.
13. When proposed amendments may impact on animal welfare – either by an increase in the number of animals used or where there is a possibility of increased pain or stress for animals – the Executive must obtain approval from one member of each category of the Committee. When animal holding facilities are involved approval should also be sought from the Manager of the relevant facility or his/her delegate. All decisions made in this way will be presented for ratification at the next meeting of the full committee.
14. In the event that the AEC only has one member of a category, and that member is not available for consultation, the Executive may deem amendments to have been approved, provided that all other categories have approved the amendment, and the Executive is satisfied that sufficient information regarding impacts on animal welfare has been sought or made available. All decisions made in this way will be presented for ratification at the next meeting of the full committee
15. The Executive Officer notifies the Principal Investigator in writing of final approval. The letter of final approval of the amendments shall constitute the “Animal Research Authority”.

16. The Executive Officer registers the outcome of the decision and details of each application on the database and maintains files of application forms and any associated paperwork.
- c) Research reports*
17. Researchers will be required to maintain records and report unexpected deaths in line with AEC requirements. Researchers should consult the Animal Research Facilities Operating Procedures and the Fieldwork Monitoring Policy for detailed guidelines. Researchers conducting fieldwork must include a template of their monitoring records with their applications to the AEC and produce their field records on request. Records will also be checked during site inspections.
  18. The Executive Officer monitors animal research every 12 months by sending out Annual Review Reports to be completed by researchers and noted by the AEC. Where the principal investigator or co-investigators have other ongoing or completed protocols and the annual report/s or other paperwork is overdue the AEC reserves the right to withhold approval for research applications or amendment requests. This includes action arising from holding facility inspections.
  19. The AEC will prepare an Annual Report for the DVC(R) or delegate including information on the number of applications approved, breakdown of the number of animals used in research and their fate, physical facilities for the care and use of animals, administrative and other difficulties experienced, and training of staff that may be required. A copy of that report, together with the DVC(R) or delegate's response will be forwarded to the University Ethics Policy Committee for noting.
  20. The AFMC will provide minutes of its meetings to the AEC and the AEC will provide a copy of its inspection reports outlining compliance issues to be tabled at the AFMC. A member of the AFMC will report at AEC meetings and the AEC will report annually to the AFMC to ensure adequate coordination and sharing of information between the two bodies. Similarly, the AEC will receive an annual written report from the AFMC to the AEC identifying issues relating to the Animal Holding Facilities. These reports should be tabled by one of the people who are already on both committees.

## **SECTION C: DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONAL QUERIES, ONGOING PROBLEMS, AND FOLLOW-UP ON URGENT SITUATIONS**

Research activities in the Animal Research Facilities should comply with Animal Research Facility Operating Procedures.

1. Any person with a concern regarding the treatment of animals in a facility for which the University is responsible should, in the first instance, raise that concern with the Responsible Officer for that facility and the Manager of Animal Research Facilities.
2. If, for some reason, the person with the concern cannot or does not wish to follow the procedure above, or is not satisfied with the response of the Responsible Officer, notification of the problem should be made in writing to the Manager of Animal Research Facilities, with a copy to the AFMC. If it is felt that there are direct effects

on the quality of life of any animals involved, a copy should also be sent to the Executive Officer of the AEC.

3. Notification should also be made immediately to the researcher(s) involved with the animals.
4. In addition to a description of the problem, the following details should be supplied: when the problem was first noticed, the staff/students involved (if known), whether the issue had been raised previously, and if the problem is occasional or continuing.
5. If, after a situation has been investigated by the AEC, a grievance is still felt or the situation has not been resolved to all party's satisfaction, then, upon notification of this, the AEC will involve the University Executive.

## **SECTION D: IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS (PAIN, DISTRESS OR DEATH)**

If a captive animal is showing symptoms of pain or distress, or found dead, the following sequence of responses should follow:

- a. If the distress can be remedied by direct intervention (e.g. two animals fighting violently), then immediate corrective action must be taken. The researcher responsible for these animals should be notified immediately and the situation must be reported to the Manager of Animal Research Facilities or Technical Officer. If none of these people are contactable, then the person discovering the distressed animals(s) should rectify the situation or contact a researcher who can.
- b. If the cause of distress is unknown, the researcher responsible for the affected animal and the Manager of the Animal Research Facility should be notified immediately. If they are not contactable, then the Technical Officer should be notified. If these people cannot be reached, then contact the AEC Veterinarian, Dr Colin Pinney at Warrawong Veterinary Hospital on 4274 6155 for advice.
- c. **ANY unexpected animal death must be reported immediately to the Manager of Animal Research Facilities and noted on the monitoring record.** An email should also be sent to the AEC Executive Officer advising of the unexpected death within 48 hours. The researcher must provide a formal report to the AEC within 10 working days. If the cause of death was preventable, then corrective procedures must be devised and brought to the attention of the AEC. If the cause of death is unknown, then the researcher responsible for the animal must seek expert opinion to diagnose likely causes. If there is an unexpected occurrence of deaths in any group of animals the research on those animals may be halted until the cause is discovered and rectified.
- d. If a person discovers dead animals in the care of others, they must notify that person and the Manager of Animal Research Facilities immediately on discovery of the animal. If these people are not contactable, then the Technical Officer must be notified.

**Action should be initiated as follows:**

1. Immediate action should be taken to alleviate pain or distress suffered by an animal. Medication, euthanasia or appropriate action involving the animal should be attended to by the Manager of Animal Research Facilities, or a researcher qualified in the procedures. The researcher responsible for the animal must also be notified immediately.
2. In the case of distress, consultation should be made with the researcher responsible for the animal, to make a decision on treatment. (If the researcher is unavailable, then a decision must be made in their absence, for example, by the Manager of Animal Research Facilities or a qualified veterinarian.)
3. If an animal is found dead, an assessment of the cause of death must be made, following Animal House procedures. In the case of unexpected death an autopsy is normally required. If a researcher believes an autopsy is not required he or she must explain why an autopsy is unnecessary.

## **SECTION E: GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS**

1. The Animal Research legislation specifies: “Institutions that use animals for scientific purposes must establish mechanisms to respond to enquiries or complaints concerning the use of animals within the institution”, and “The process by which decisions are made must be fair to investigators and acceptable to all AEC members”. Following the UoW’s “Client Service and Complaints Handling Policy”, the AEC has developed a mechanism for responding to complaints about treatment and handling of research animals. The ultimate goal in the consideration of concerns is to ensure the welfare of animals.
2. If any individual, staff or student, is concerned about the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes, they may lodge a written complaint to the Executive Officer of the AEC, who will act as the Complaints Officer. These concerns may range from observed pain or distress in an animal, or suspected mistreatment or neglect, to concerns regarding daily running of the Animal Research Facility or equipment failure. These complaints may address:
  - research being conducted in a way which the complainant believes to be unethical or contrary to existing policy or legislation
  - research (involving animals) being conducted without formal AEC approval
  - research being conducted in a manner contrary to the conditions placed on the research in the letter of approval from the AEC
  - research being conducted in a manner contrary to an AEC application which has been approved
  - any other similar matter.
3. The AEC Complaints Policy only covers complaints where the complainant identifies themselves. Anonymous complaints received by the Complaints Officer will be filed, but will not be investigated. Other matters relating to the welfare of animals being held for research may be taken up in accordance with Section C, above. Where a complainant brings matters relating to animal welfare to the attention of the Committee the AEC will investigate the veracity of the complaint.

4. On receiving a complaint the Complaints Officer or the Chair of the AEC may, in light of the information contained in the complaint:

- inform the researcher and/or the researcher's supervisor of the complaint and seek information in response to the complaint
- seek an explanation of the events which have given rise to the complaint.
- where there is suspicion of research misconduct the Chair may refer the matter to the DVC(R) or standing nominee of the Vice Chancellor in accordance with the Code of Practice – Research provisions on research misconduct.

At that point, the AEC Chair may take any of the following steps:

- suspend AEC approval while the matter is investigated
  - recommend to the AEC or AEC Executive the request for evidence that the researcher is conducting the research in keeping with the terms of the AEC approval
  - place further conditions on the continued conduct of the research
  - approach the DVC(R) or delegate, to inform him/her of the complaint
  - recommend further investigation of the complaint by the DVC(R) or delegate.
  - after full investigation, revoke or reinstate approval for the research.
5. Complainants and researchers (and supervisors where the research is student research) will receive a written response to the complaint from the AEC. Where the nature of the complaint requires further investigation, researchers will receive written information about the process being undertaken.
  6. Researchers who believe that a complaint is unwarranted or that the handling of the complaint is unfair are entitled to lodge an appeal to the DVC(R).

## **DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN AEC MEMBERS**

If consensus regarding a protocol or animal welfare issue cannot be achieved, external advice will be sought. Initial advice will be sought in confidence from researchers within the institution who are not on the protocol being discussed but who are experienced in the techniques or animal welfare issues that are the subject of the disagreement. These researchers may also be asked to identify experts outside the University who may be able to adjudicate disputes. If consensus cannot be achieved, a majority vote will be taken. In the event that votes are evenly split, the Chair will exercise a casting vote. Dissenting views will be recorded in the minutes.

## **PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES REGARDING DECISIONS OF THE ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEE**

1. A request for reconsideration of a decision of the AEC may be made by the Principal Investigator within 10 working days of the date of the notification of the decision.
2. The request shall be directed, in writing, to the Executive Officer of the AEC and

should outline the reasons for the request and the evidence upon which the request is based.

3. Following consideration by the AEC of the information presented by the Principal Investigator, the Committee may decide to:
  - i) uphold its decision. This decision shall be final.
  - ii) vary its decision
4. The AEC shall notify the Principal Investigator, in writing, of its decision and detailed reasons for that decision as soon as is practical after the close of the meeting.

### **APPEALS BY INVESTIGATORS AGAINST COMMITTEE DECISIONS**

1. Applicants who wish to appeal further against a decision of the Committee may make a formal request in writing to the DVC(R) or delegate to review the basis for the Committee's decision. The DVC(R) or delegate will consider the appeal in consultation with the Chair of the AEC. It should be noted that formal approval for research involving animals must ultimately come from a duly constituted AEC.
2. The DVC(R) or delegate, may review only the procedures followed by the AEC in reaching its decision, rather than the actual decision of the Committee and may require the AEC to provide documentation or any other evidence of the procedures followed by the Committee in reaching its decision.
3. The DVC(R) or delegate may:
  - i) uphold the procedures followed by the AEC in reaching its decision; or
  - ii) request the AEC review its procedures in reaching its decision
4. If, following the decision of the DVC(R) or delegate, any party is dissatisfied with the decision of the DVC(R) or delegate, or the dispute is unable to be resolved, the DVC(R) or delegate may refer the matter to a mediator and/or seek further advice from the Animal Research Review Panel, NSW Department of Industry and Investment.

### **DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE AEC AND THE INSTITUTION'S MANAGEMENT**

Disputes between the AEC and UoW management will be handled through the University's 'Procedures for Investigating Grievances' <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/ssLINK/3426/UOW058640> and the University's 'Grievance Policy' <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058683.html>.

If the dispute cannot be resolved in this way, the DVC(R) or delegate, and/or the AEC, may refer the matter to a mediator and/or seek further advice from the Animal Research Review Panel, NSW Department of Industry and Investment.

