



The University of Southern Queensland
Animal Ethics Application Guidelines and Procedures

Prior to submitting the ethics approval form, applicants should read the following guidelines carefully in order to minimise delays in the granting of permission to commence work:

1. Ethics clearance is required if the proposed research involves the use of representatives of any vertebrate animal species. No clearance is necessary for research in which invertebrates are the only animals to be used.
2. The [Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](#), produced jointly by the National Health and Medical Research Council, CSIRO, and the Australian Agricultural Council should be followed in all experiments.
3. Since the University of Southern Queensland does not wish to be associated with illegal or dangerous research projects, final ethics approval will not be granted without receipt of documentation verifying that all necessary licences or other approvals have been obtained. Depending on the nature of the intended research it may therefore be necessary to contact the:
 - a) [Environment and Resource Management](#) (protected fauna)
 - b) Lands Department (prohibited species)
 - c) [Toowoomba City Council](#) (waste disposal or other practices)
 - d) USQ Infection Control Committee (if microorganisms are to be used)
 - e) Biosafety Committee (genetic engineering) once established in this region
 - f) USQ Safety Officer (if chemical or radiation hazards are involved)
 - g) any others as specified from time to time.
4. Experiments involving animals will be permitted only if they are essential for educational purposes, investigation of matters associated with the maintenance and improvement of animal health, welfare, management and production, or with the advancement of medical science. Alternatives to the use of experimental animals are to be employed wherever they will allow the same objectives to be achieved.
5. Investigators are required to exercise responsibility in regard to the welfare of animals they use in their research. They have an obligation to treat the well-being of their animals as an essential factor in the planning and conduct of experiments.
6. Animal experimentation is to be performed only when it can be justified after the scientific and educational benefits of the research have been weighed against the potential harm to the experimental animals.
7. The animals to be used in all experiments must be appropriate for the proposed work in terms of species and strain, age, sex, genetic constitution, and health status.
8. Experimental animals collected from their natural habitats are to be used only if no suitable laboratory-bred individuals are available.
9. Experiments involving animals should be designed to be statistically valid but should employ no more animals than are necessary to achieve the stated objectives. Experiments must not be repeated unnecessarily and the use of death as the experimental end-point is to be avoided as far as possible.
10. The scientific methodology to be used must be the best that is achievable and experimental manipulations performed on the animals are to be carried out only by persons competent to perform them.
11. All experiments must be designed to avoid or minimise pain and distress to the animals. Since there is no certain way to ascertain the degree of pain being experienced by any animal, researchers should perform their experiments on the assumption that the experimental animals they are using suffer pain in a manner similar to humans.

12. In any experiment in which the procedure can reasonably be expected to cause severe pain, the animals should be anaesthetised by a method recognised as appropriate for that species and currently used in veterinary practice.
13. Any experimental animal that is clearly exhibiting pain or distress of a kind and degree not predicted in the research proposal must receive immediate relief treatments, even if this means that the experiment must be terminated. If severe discomfort cannot be relieved quickly, the animal must immediately be killed humanely. In those experiments where the inflicting of a certain amount of pain is unavoidable, this must be minimised and the experimental end-point must be as early as possible.
14. No experimental animal should be used for more than one painful or stressful procedure unless there are compelling reasons for carrying out follow-up work.
15. Analgesics, tranquillisers, and neuromuscular blocking agents are to be used in a manner equivalent to what is current in medical practice. However, they should be appropriate for the species involved. Neuromuscular blockers must not be used without simultaneous general anaesthesia unless other humane methods have been used to eliminate sensory awareness. The level of general anaesthesia must be monitored constantly when neuromuscular blockade has been induced.
16. Experimental animals are to be transported, housed, fed, watered, and handled in ways that will minimise distress.
17. Experiments must not commence until written approval has been obtained from the USQ Animal Ethics Committee.
18. Applicants must provide evidence of qualifications and animal handling experience.
19. Applicants must be prepared to attend an Animal Ethics Committee meeting to discuss their proposals if this proves to be necessary to deal with unresolved issues.
20. Subsequent to ethics approval by the Committee, an applicant must provide written advice to the Committee should there be any variation to the project. In particular, the Committee must be advised immediately of the revision of any techniques.
21. The Committee will request annual progress reports for all applications that receive ethics approval.
22. The Committee reserves the right to undertake spot checks at any time to ensure compliance with ethics approvals. Non-compliance may result in the withdrawal of approval.