



Terms of Reference

University of Southern Queensland Institutional Biosafety Committee (USQ IBC)

Trim Location	12/G/28
Responsible Officer	Manager, Research Integrity and Ethics
Approval Date	17 June 2019
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

1 Role

The University is obligated to comply with the requirements of the *Gene Technology Act 2000* (the Act), the *Gene Technology (Queensland) Act 2016*, and the *Gene Technology Regulations 2001* (the Regulations) and/or instruments issued by the Regulator. In accordance with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations pursuant to it, the University has established the University of Southern Queensland Institutional Biosafety Committee (USQ IBC).

In addition to its statutory obligations, the committee will oversee use of any non-GMOs which may pose a potential biological risk.

2 Functions

The USQ IBC shall:

1. Review, assess, and approve Exempt and Notifiable Low Risk Dealing (NLRD) applications for activities undertaken with GMOs by Research Workers at or by the University.
2. Review and provide advice to the University on Dealings involving Intentional Release (DIR) (including GM plant field trials, GM plant commercial release, and non-plant dealings); Dealings Not involving Intentional Release (DNIR) and Confidential Commercial Information (CCI) applications prior to referral and formal application to The Regulator.
3. Maintain a register of approved exempt and NLRD dealings assessed by the USQ IBC with GMOs
4. Provide scientific and technical expertise representation for participation in inspection of GMO certified facilities prior to certification and annually thereafter (with the exception of PC1 facilities).

5. Monitor the conduct of USQ IBC approved NLRD activities to ensure compliance with relevant approvals and legislative and regulatory requirements including assessment and approval of project conduct milestone reports and adverse event reports involving a dealing or activity with deals with a GMO.
6. Suspend and/or revoke approval to conduct activities with GMOs by Research Workers in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements when required.
7. Provide advice to the University, via the responsible officer (as required) on:
 - certification of GMO facilities (laboratory, plant, and animal) to physical containment levels 1, 2, 3 or 4;
 - submission of application to certify and/or modify certification (such as variation suspension and lifting of suspension, surrender and transfer of certification);
 - the import and export of GMOs;
 - the transport, storage and disposal of GMOs;
 - development and review of policy relating to a dealing or an activity that deals with a GMO undertaken by a Research Worker at or by the University;
8. Provide notification to the OGTR on approved GMOs to contribute to the GMO Record in order to provide the Australian public with ready access to information about GMOs in Australia.
9. Monitor the availability and uptake of GMO training and education programs at the University.
10. Oversee the University's process of review and approval of non-GMOs through regular reporting from the Biosafety Officer on the Biological materials/hazards process and register of reviewed and approved activities.
11. Review and assess potentially high risk projects involving non-GMOs as referred to it by the University's Biosafety Officer, and in accordance with the University's Biological Materials/Hazards review process.
12. Refer matters to other University ethics, safety, and research conduct committees and processes as required.

3 Meetings, Reporting and Minutes

Frequency of Meetings: The Committee will meet at least annually. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair as required.

The meetings of USQ IBC shall be chaired by the Chair (IBC). In the absence of the Chair (IBC), the Deputy Chair (IBC) shall act as Chair.

Reporting: The Committee will report at least once a year to the Research Committee of Academic Board. The Committee will also report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) as required.

Minutes: Minutes shall be kept for all meetings.

4 Membership

4.1 Membership Structure

The USQ IBC is required to comprise a range of suitable experts and an independent person (OGTR, 2018).

Voting Members:

1. Chair (USQ IBC);
2. Deputy Chair/s (USQ IBC) (appointed from within the membership of the USQ IBC);
3. At least one Technical and Scientific Experts, one of whom must be independent to the University;
4. A Safety representative (Senior Safety and Wellbeing Advisor – ex-officio);
5. A teaching laboratory representative;
6. A research laboratory representative (Senior Research Operations Officer - ex-officio).

Non-Voting Members:

- Experts with experience or specialist knowledge required to address specific, short-term skills deficit in the USQ IBC.
- USQ IBC Executive Officer - Manager, Research Integrity & Ethics

4.4 Member Appointment

Appointment to the USQ IBC will be conducted in accordance with the USQ IBC Expression of Interest and Selection process. All members of the USQ IBC will be appropriately indemnified upon their appointment.

4.4.1 Chair, USQ IBC

Nominations for Chair shall be sought from suitably qualified University staff. Criteria will be provided stating requisite skills, capacity and experience. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) shall consider the nominations and progress an appointment against the stated criteria for up to three years.

4.4.2 Deputy Chair, USQ IBC

Nominations for Deputy Chair will be sought from suitably qualified USQ IBC members. Criteria will be provided stating requisite skills, capacity and experience. The USQ IBC Chair shall consider the nominations and progress an appointment against the stated criteria for up to 12 months.

4.4 Terms of Office

Appointed members shall serve for up to three years, with the option to apply to a further term via the Expression of Interest and Selection process. There is no restriction on the number of renewable terms. An appointed member who is absent from two or

more consecutive meetings without having been granted leave of absence from the Chair shall be deemed to have vacated the position, resulting in a vacancy.

Ex officio members remain members for their term of office. Ex-officio members of the USQ IBC may nominate an acting person to represent them in their absence. The member is to ensure the nominee is fully briefed and prepared to contribute to the meeting.

5 Executive Committee

The USQ IBC may establish an Executive Committee from the available members which must include the Chair (or Deputy Chair) and at least one other voting member. The USQ IBC is responsible for determining and endorsing the membership of the Executive Committee annually.

Membership of the executive should be shared and rotated between USQ IBC members.

The Executive Committee may only consider the following at its meetings:

- Approval of amendments to projects which have received conditional approval by the USQ IBC
- Approve activities which the USQ IBC have determined are Minor Amendments and/or Low risk and which do not require a full meeting of the USQ IBC as required by the OGTR
- Initiate urgent action in response to adverse event reports, incidents or hazards.

6 Authority

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

7 Ethical Practices, Confidentiality and Independence

Members of the Committee are to:

- exercise objectivity and integrity in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities;
- refrain from entering into any activity that may prejudice their ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities objectively and independently;
- act in a proper and prudent manner in the use of information acquired in the course of their duties and responsibilities, particularly in regard to the maintenance of confidentiality and privacy of information;
- exercise sound judgement guided by highest personal standards of honesty and integrity in all matters relating to membership of the Committee;
- ensure that they do not place themselves in situations which could lead to, or be perceived to give rise to a conflict of interest;
- disclose to the Committee any matter which could compromise, or be seen to compromise, the performance of their duties on the Committee or give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest; and
- have a sound understanding of the University's Code of Conduct.

8 Committee Services Officer

The USQ IBC Executive Officer provides the Committee Servicing for the University's Institutional Biosafety Committee.

9 Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Manager, Research Integrity and Ethics, annually or earlier if required by external regulatory bodies.

10 Modification History

Date	Source	Details
02/02/2017	Manager, Research Integrity and Ethics	Removed Names, corrected formatting, minor content edits
02/02/2017	Manager, Research Integrity and Ethics	Updated Quorum details to include Chair or Deputy Chair.
30/05/2019	USQ IBC (via the Manager, Research Integrity and Ethics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amended formatting and ordering of sections to be more consistent with Research Committee terms of reference.• Deleted information in role section which were functions of the USQ IBC.• Included new role and associated functions regarding the oversight of non-GMO activities involving biological materials/hazards and the referral of matters determined to be high-risk to the USQ IBC.• Included an Executive Committee with defined responsibilities