

ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) is committed to the humane and ethical care of animals used in teaching, research, and testing. All animal use at KPU must be justified by review of pedagogical or scientific merit, and there must be reasonable expectation that the use of animals will: be beneficial to the health and welfare of humans or of animals; advance basic scientific knowledge; or provide educational outcomes that cannot be achieved by other means. KPU follows the tenets of the 3Rs (replacement, reduction, refinement) and adheres to best practices that may evolve over time, as recommended by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC).
2. KPU will maintain a functionally active Animal Care Committee (ACC) for so long as any teaching, research, or testing involving animals is conducted by KPU personnel (employees, students, visitors, contractors, or volunteers), in any KPU site where animals are housed or used, including alternate housing, laboratories, and field locations.
3. The KPU ACC must work to ensure that all animal users and caregivers are informed of, and comply with, the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) policies, Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Medicine (CALAM) Standards of Veterinary Care, applicable legislation and KPU policies and procedures.
4. The ACC will operate in accordance with the following terms of reference.

Appointment Process

5. The Associate Vice President Research, Innovation, and Graduate Studies (AVPRIGS) will determine the number of members required for the KPU ACC and will be responsible for appointing new members to the ACC as needed. The ACC shall notify the Office of the AVPRIGS to request such appointments be made whenever it becomes aware of units at KPU newly undertaking animal use for teaching or research, or when the need for ACC activities necessitates additional membership, as per CCAC guidelines.

Composition

6. The ACC will include the following members:
 - a. scientists and/or teachers experienced in animal care and use, who may or may not be actively using animals during their term on the ACC; there should be a minimum of two such members. All animal-using units (faculties, institutes, etc.) should be represented;
 - b. one or more veterinarians experienced in experimental animal care and use who are provided with continuing education/training opportunities in experimental animal care and use;
 - c. one Institutional Member whose normal activities, past or present, do not depend on or involve animal use for teaching or research;
 - d. at least one, but preferably two, person(s) representing community interests and concerns, who has no affiliation with KPU, and who is not involved in animal use for teaching or research;

- e. an animal facility technician or manager;
- f. a student representative;
- g. the KPU Animal Care Co-ordinator appointed by the AVPRIGS to provide institutional support for the ACC; and
- h. any other person the AVPRIGS may deem appropriate. Additional temporary members may be required when other ACC members are involved in a submitted protocol and must be recused from the review process, or when specific regular members are not available.

Term

- 7. Members are normally appointed for a term of no less than two years and no more than four years, renewable at the AVPRIGS's discretion to a maximum of eight consecutive years.

Chair

- 8. The AVPRIGS will appoint a Chair and pro tempore Chair(s) of the ACC from among its members as defined above. To avoid potential conflicts of interest, the Chair must not:
 - a. have direct involvement in the management of a KPU animal care facility;
 - b. be a clinical veterinarian or animal health technician for KPU;
 - c. have involvement as an investigator in a significant number of the protocols presented to the ACC for review;

Meetings

- 9. The ACC will meet no fewer than 2 times each calendar year.

Quorum

- 10. A quorum consists of 50% plus one member, however three of these must include at least one community representative, one veterinarian, and one researcher (member currently performing teaching or research involving animal use). In the event that a community representative, veterinarian, or researcher are not able to attend, they may be replaced by appropriate delegates at the discretion of the AVPRIGS. In this case, the absent members are urged to submit written comments in advance concerning protocols and annual renewals to be reviewed at that meeting. If the ACC reaches a decision that is contrary to the comments of the absent members, the decision will be delayed until the next ACC meeting.

Subcommittees

- 11. The ACC may choose to strike a subcommittee to conduct any part of its business, provided that the decisions and actions of the subcommittee are subject to ratification by full quorum at a regular ACC meeting. The quorum for a subcommittee will be as considered appropriate by the ACC in each case, but it should include the Chair (or delegate) and a veterinarian, and if the

subcommittee involves reviewing interim protocols, at least one community member, and the ACC coordinator must also be included. Currently, there are no subcommittees in place.

Line of Accountability

12. The ACC reports directly to the AVPRIGS via the ACC Chair.

Agendas, Minutes and Reports

13. Information should be circulated to all members at least one week prior to scheduled meetings. Formal minutes will be recorded for each meeting by the ACC Coordinator, reviewed by the Chair, and circulated to the Committee.

14. The ACC will keep written records of ACC decisions, will make these available to the AVPRIGS, and will follow up with him/her on any concerns.

Responsibilities

15. Ethical review and approval of Animal Use Protocols (see below).

16. The ACC will ensure that appropriate care, including adequate veterinary oversight, is given to all animals in all stages of life and in all experimental situations in compliance with CCAC policies and guidelines, CALAM Standards of Veterinary Care, applicable legislation and appropriate KPU policies and procedures.

17. The ACC will establish standards to ensure that:

- a. unnecessary pain or distress is avoided;
- b. anaesthesia and analgesia are properly and effectively used in all cases where necessary;
- c. appropriate post-procedural care is provided;
- d. appropriate means of euthanasia are used;
- e. all procedures are carried out in the most humane and scientifically justified manner;
- f. all due consideration is given to animal welfare, including environmental enrichment; and
- g. all personnel working with animals are appropriately trained.

18. The ACC will establish procedures for post-approval monitoring of animal use.

19. The ACC has the authority to:

- a. stop any procedure if it considers that unnecessary distress or pain is being experienced by an animal;
- b. stop any animal use which deviates from any approved use, which involves any non-approved procedure, or which causes unforeseen pain or distress to an animal; and
- c. humanely euthanize an animal, if it considers it necessary.

20. The ACC Chair and Veterinarian member must have access at all times to the areas where animals are or may be held or used for the exercise of this authority.

Protocols

21. The ACC is responsible for setting the procedures for review and approval of protocols, and the consensus necessary for any decision with respect to a protocol, as follows:
 - a. The ACC is responsible for reviewing all Animal Use Protocols. As per KPU Policy and Procedure RS6, the ACC will ensure that all use of animals in teaching and research is undertaken only when a written application has received approval at a meeting of the full ACC;
 - b. when reviewing protocols, the ACC will place particular emphasis on the CCAC policy statement on Ethics of Animal Investigation and the CCAC guidelines on the Care and Use of Experimental Animals and Animal Use Protocol Review, as well as all other relevant institutional policies and guidelines, applicable legislation and CALAM Standards of Veterinary Care;
 - c. decisions will typically be made by consensus of opinion (general or widespread agreement, not necessarily unanimous). If agreement is not widespread (consensus is not met), any ACC member can call for a vote. Approval of decision will require greater than 50% of those present at the meeting assuming quorum is met;
 - d. the ACC will ensure that each research project has been reviewed for scientific merit, and each course or teaching program has been reviewed for pedagogical merit, prior to submission of the protocol. In the case where a research project has not undergone peer-review, the proposed protocol will be subjected to independent peer review via the Office of the AVPRIGS. If there appears to be a discrepancy between the research proposed in the ACC application and the research that was funded through a peer review process, at the Committee's discretion, the project may also be sent to the AVPRIGS for independent peer review. The merit review process will take place through an Ad-Hoc Merit Review Committee which is a separate Committee reporting directly to the AVPRIGS. Once pedagogical or scientific merit review is complete, the ACC will be informed whether the protocol is considered meritorious;
 - e. protocols requiring review must be submitted to the ACC at least three weeks before a protocol review meeting. These protocols can undergo an optional pre-review process, where a veterinarian reads and provides feedback on the protocol to facilitate ACC review. While pre-review is optional, it is strongly encouraged. Pre-review may involve back and forth communications between the pre-review veterinarian (or their designate) and the Principal Investigator/Course Instructor. Once submitted, each protocol will be assigned a lead reviewer; a member of the ACC who is not in any way involved with the teaching or research under review. The lead members and committee Veterinarian will submit comments on individual protocols at least one week prior to the scheduled ACC protocol review meeting for the committee to review;
 - f. the Chair, who presides over the regular protocol review meetings of the ACC, will guide the Committee through the review of each successive application on the agenda. The Chair will ask the lead reviewers (or a sub-committee if it has been assigned) to give a brief summary of the protocol for the rest of the Committee members, and all reviewers

are then asked to put forward their concerns for discussion. ACC members directly involved with any protocol will recuse themselves from the discussion and review process for that protocol;

- g. the Chair moderates the discussion, and when a consensus is reached (or a vote taken, as necessary) summarizes the Committee's decisions for the ACC Coordinator. If the Chair is directly involved in any way with a protocol under review, the pro tempore Chair will act in their stead;
- h. the Chair will establish, based on the Committee's consensus opinion, the outcome of the ACC review (e.g., approval, conditional approval, proviso, deferral or rejection). These are defined as follows:
 - Approved** – The Certificate of Approval is released and no further information is required from the applicant.
 - Conditional Approval** – The Certificate of Conditional Approval is released with a covering memo advising the applicant of minor changes, comments, or suggestions from the Committee, none of which involve concerns related to animal welfare. The animal work may proceed while full approval is pending.
 - Proviso** – The Certificate of Approval is withheld until the applicant has responded to the items listed in the proviso memo. All ACC reviewers who had questions on the protocol will evaluate the response and approve, question, or refer the file for review by the full ACC. No animal work may proceed until the protocol is approved or conditionally approved.
 - Deferral** – The Certificate of Approval is withheld because insufficient information was provided in the protocol to allow the ACC to perform an assessment. Details are provided to the applicant and they are invited to submit the application for full ACC review at a future date.
 - Rejection** – The work is not acceptable to be done at KPU.
 - i. the ACC's approval of a protocol is valid for a maximum of one year. If the work will be pursued beyond one year, the ACC will require the investigator to submit a renewal application. The ACC will not grant more than three consecutive protocol renewals. After three consecutive renewals of a protocol, an investigator must reapply for approval by way of a new full protocol application;
 - j. the ACC will require any modifications/amendments to an approved protocol be submitted to the ACC. No changes to the work under an approved protocol can take place until the modification has been approved. If the modifications are, in the ACC's opinion, substantial, the ACC may require the researcher to submit a new protocol application.

Minor amendments are defined as either purely administrative changes, or minimally invasive changes with no significant impact on animal welfare. Administrative amendments include, but are not limited to: personnel changes and updates to training, funding, or contact information. Administrative amendments can be approved by the ACC Coordinator alone. Other minor amendments include, but are not limited to: less than 20% increase (up to 30% increase at the discretion of the committee) in animal

usage, or minor procedural details. Minor amendments can be approved by a subgroup of standing committee members that will include at least the Chair or Associate Chair and a Veterinarian.

Major amendments are defined as changes that may be considered invasive and may have an impact on animal welfare. Major amendments include, but are not limited to: increase of category of invasiveness, use of more invasive or more frequent procedures, entirely new procedures, or greater than 20% - 30% increase in animal numbers, change of species, or at the discretion of the ACC. Major amendments must be approved by the full ACC;

- k. interim review of protocols may be undertaken for short-term pilot studies or to address unforeseen circumstances requiring an expediated review. Interim reviews will be conducted by at least the Chair/Associate Chair, one researcher, the veterinarian member, one community member, and the ACC Coordinator. All communication regarding interim approvals will be documented. All interim approvals are conditional pending discussion at a full meeting of the ACC;
- l. the ACC will work with the investigator to resolve any concerns of the Committee with respect to a protocol. This may involve a request to the investigator to appear before the Committee.

Appeal Process

- 22. Applicants have the right to appeal negative decisions of the ACC. An appeal can only be launched for procedural or substantive reasons, but ACC decisions made purely on ethical grounds should always stand.
- 23. Where the appeal concerns ongoing research, the ACC may direct that the research be suspended during the Consultative Dialogue and Formal Appeal period(s), as follows;
 - a. Consultative Dialogue (initial appeal) - Ongoing consultation and dialogue between the PI or Course Instructor and the ACC occurs throughout the protocol review process. The ACC will generally provide opportunities for response and alterations of a protocol before denial of approval, either via pre-review process, or through decisions of Proviso or Deferral. As such, an outright denial of approval should be very rare; instead, PIs or Course Instructors will be invited to re-submit with edits or alterations to the protocols as described above.
 - b. If the ACC does not approve a protocol, the applicant has the right to lodge a Formal Appeal of the ACC decision to the AVPRIGS. To do so, the applicant must contact the office of the AVPRIGS within 30 days of the ACC decision and provide the following documentation: the final application package including the AUP, related SOPs, and supplemental information as requested by the ACC during the protocol review process; a statement of the basis of the appeal (procedural, substantive, or both); and the rationale for the appeal.
 - c. KPU, through the office of the AVPRIGS, shall enter into an agreement with another institution whose Animal Care Committee shall function as an Appeal Board. Once a Formal Appeal has been lodged, the office of the AVPRIGS shall submit all the materials to the Appeal Board within ten working days of receipt of the materials described

above. Decisions of the Appeal Board shall be final and binding upon KPU and the applicant.

Facilities and Animal Housing

24. The ACC will be responsible for inspecting and approving all areas where animals are housed or used, including alternate housing sites and laboratories, and for visiting each facility that is under KPU oversight at least once per year. Site visit reports will be produced and the ACC will follow up on any concerns. This may include action items for animal use personnel to ensure compliance with protocols and SOPs.
25. The ACC will ensure that there is a person (the Facility Manager) designated to be in charge of each facility under KPU oversight for the housing, care and production of animals, and that the animal care users and caregivers are qualified and properly trained. The ACC will also ensure that safety, security and crisis management procedures are in place, in cooperation with the Office of Occupational Health and Safety, Office of Security Services, and Office of Emergency Planning.

General

26. Members of the ACC shall hold materials associated with the ACC, such as research protocols, and all discussions that take place at meetings of the ACC, in the strictest confidence.
27. The ACC will review these Terms of Reference at least once every three years to ensure that they reflect changes in CCAC policies and guidelines as well as animal welfare, scientific or community concerns.
28. The ACC will liaise with the CCAC on behalf of KPU and provide such information to the CCAC that it may require from time to time, including annual animal use data reports.
29. The ACC will act as a general resource to all KPU animal users and caregivers, and will be available for contact to render assistance in the event of any unanticipated problems, and to advise and educate through workshops and other information sessions with respect to CCAC guidelines or policies, ethics, any applicable legislation and/or KPU policies/guidelines with respect to animal use and animal care.
30. Post-approval monitoring will involve reports from annual site visits, and review of annual animal use reports; these reports must include signatures of all animal use personnel indicating that SOPs are current and have been followed in all procedures and related animal care.