

Animal Use and Care Policy

Intent

The University recognises the significant role played by animals in the progression of human knowledge. The University's research and teaching activities involving animals are critical to the mission of the James Cook University. In this respect the University uses animals only when their use is justified and when no alternatives are available. Activities involving animals must only be conducted in line with university policy, compliance with relevant legislation and after approval by the university's Animal Ethics Committee. Such approvals are only issued if the potential benefits of the work are likely to outweigh the effects on the animals concerned.

The University upholds the principles of reduction, refinement and replacement (the 3R's). Ethical use, appropriate care and respect for animals involved are central to the University's policy and procedure framework.

Scope

This policy applies to the care, use, breeding and holding of all animals at JCU and any external locations where animal use may occur. All JCU staff as well as staff of external organisations using the JCU Animal Ethics Committee are bound by this Animal Use and Care Policy and it serves as a basis for all JCU policies and procedures where animals are held and/or used, whether for scientific purposes or for display or exhibit.

Definitions

Adverse event	means an event or incident that has a negative impact on the wellbeing of an animal.
AEC	means the Animal Ethics Committee
AWO	means the Animal Welfare Officer
Code	Means the current version of the <i>Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes</i>
Investigator	means any person who uses animals for scientific purposes and is named on the AEC protocol as an investigator. Includes researchers, teachers, undergraduate and postgraduate students involved in research projects, and people involved in product testing, environmental testing, production of biological products and wildlife surveys.
Legislation	means the <i>Animal Care and Protection Act</i> and <i>Animal Care and Protection Regulation</i>
Wellbeing	means an animal is in a positive mental state and is able to achieve successful biological function, to have positive experiences, to express innate behaviours, and to respond to and cope with potentially adverse conditions. Animal wellbeing may be assessed by physiological and behavioural measures of an animal's physical and psychological health, of the animal's capacity to cope with stressors, and species-specific behaviours in response to social and environmental conditions.

Policy

1. The University will:

- 1.1. Promote a culture of respect and ethical conduct amongst its staff and students which will be evident in its policy framework and in the behaviour staff at all levels;
- 1.2. Ensure the health and wellbeing of all animals on university property or used by its staff for scientific or teaching purposes at field locations. It achieves this through the provision of the best possible accommodation, by providing a high level of care and husbandry practices, by ensuring those using and caring for animals are highly skilled and trained in their roles and by promoting the principles of the 3Rs;
- 1.3. Establish a well-resourced and independent AEC to oversee animal use and provide advice on matters regarding animals. All use of animals for scientific purposes must be approved by the AEC and all staff or students working with animals must also be approved to do so;
- 1.4. Employ adequate numbers of highly skilled and qualified investigators, technical staff, facility managers and animal care staff;
- 1.5. Employ an AWO to work with the AEC, facility managers, investigators and other staff and provide advice on matters of animal health and wellbeing and ensure compliance with the appropriate legislation, codes and policies;
- 1.6. Ensure all those working with animals are knowledgeable in the legal requirements and the Code as well as being competent in their roles or under the direct supervision of a competent person.

Related policy instruments

James Cook University Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference

Related documents and legislation

Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes

Animal Care and Protection Act

Animal Care and Protection Regulation

Administration

Approval Details

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Approval Authority	Animal Ethics Committee
Date for next review	Xx/xx/xxxx

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