Victorian Legislative and Regulatory Requirements:

In Victoria, the use of animals for research and teaching is regulated by Part 3 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA) and Part 4 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2008. Under this legislation the conduct of Scientific Procedures using animals in Victoria must be licensed by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR).

Institutions conducting research using animals must comply with the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013 (the Code) and nominate an Animal Ethics Committee to oversee the conduct of the institution’s care and use of animals for scientific purposes.

Scientific Procedures Premises Licence

The Victorian Government Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) is responsible for administering POCTA. This involves issuing licences to perform research using animals. Deakin University is licensed to use animals for research on the premises or out in the field. This type of licence is called a ‘Scientific Procedures Premises Licence’. It is subject to a number of conditions. These include:

1. An Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) must oversee activities, approve projects and staff competency
2. Projects must not commence without AEC Approval
3. Premises are inspected and approved
4. Procedures must be conducted in accordance with The Code
5. Annual animal usage is reported to DEPI
6. Fieldwork is reported to DEPI
7. Animals are obtained from an approved source
Deakin University Animal Ethics Committee

There are two institutional Animal Ethics Committee's at Deakin University that are authorised to review applications to use animals for research and teaching.

Animal Ethics Committee Wildlife (Burwood) - AECW(B)
Animal Ethics Committee Laboratory (Geelong) - AECL(G)

Each Committee functions independently, conducting business separately and in accordance with the responsibilities under Section 2 of the Code. The AEC's Term of Reference, composition, and operating procedures are determined by Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Code.

Who is on an Animal Ethics Committee?

In accordance with the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (8th Edition), an AEC must comprise at least four persons, one from each of the following categories:

Category A: Veterinary surgeon with experience relevant to the activities of the institution

Category B: Scientist or teacher with substantial recent experience in animal based research or teaching

Category C: a person with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who is not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution, and who is not involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes

Category D: Layperson who has never engaged in the use of animals for scientific purposes beyond their undergraduate education and who is independent of the institution

Role of the Animal Ethics Committee

The primary responsibility of the AECs is to ensure on behalf of Deakin University that all activities relating to the care and use of animals is conducted in compliance with the Code. The role of the AEC is to ensure that the use of animals is justified, the welfare of the animals are provided for, and the principles of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement (the 3R’s) have been incorporated.

Primary Responsibilities of the AEC

- Approve the use and supply of animals for research via animal ethics applications
- Ensure that all care and use of animals is ethically acceptable and conforms to the requirements of the Code
- Approve staff and student competency prior to conducting scientific procedures on animals
• Conduct ongoing review of approved projects and activities
• Assess any requests to change approved protocols
• Take appropriate actions regarding unexpected adverse events and non-compliance
• Review Annual and Final reports on approved projects
• Monitor animal housing and animal care
• Inspect animal facilities

Animal Ethics Committee Executive
The Code permits the AEC to appoint an AEC Executive that must consist of either a Category C or D member.

Role of the AEC Executive
• Respond to issues that may arise between AEC meetings
• Assess minor clarifications to a new application requested by the AEC
• Assess any requests to change approved protocols that may arise between AEC meetings

Any decisions made by the Executive must be reviewed/ratified by the AEC at the next meeting. The AEC Executive is NOT PERMITTED to approve new AEC Applications. All new AEC applications must be reviewed in session by the full AEC Committee.
(1) WHO NEEDS ANIMAL ETHICS APPROVAL?

Any STAFF or STUDENT at Deakin University, who intends on using animals for scientific procedures (research or teaching purposes), must obtain approval Animal Ethics Approval from the Animal Ethics Committee (AEC). Approval must be obtained prior to the commencement of the project.

**Scientific Procedures** include the use of animals for:

- acquiring, demonstrating or developing knowledge
- acquiring, demonstrating, developing or exercising techniques
- developing or testing the use, hazards, safety, or efficiency of vaccines, substances, drugs, materials or appliances intended for use in connection with human beings or animals.

Any person wishing to use animals for research, teaching, or testing must demonstrate to the AEC that the work proposed has scientific value and that the "3Rs" have been appropriately considered. The 3Rs are defined in the Code as:

- **Replacement** - techniques that replace the use of animals must be sought and used where possible
- **Reduction** - each project must use no more than the minimum number of animals necessary and
- **Refinement** - projects should be designed to avoid pain and distress in animals.

Further details on the 3 Rs may be found in the Code (section 1)

**Replacement: (refer to Section 1.18-1.20 Code)**

Methods that replace or partially replace the use of animals

Examples include:

- Epidemiological data
- Physical and chemical analysis
- Computer, mathematical and inanimate synthetic models
- Simulations
- In vitro systems, established animal cell lines
- Animal cells, tissues and organs collected from animals killed by a humane technique
- Abattoir-sourced material
Reduction: (refer to Section 1.21-1.27 Code)

The use of no more than the minimum number of animals necessary to achieve the scientific or educational aims and to satisfy good statistical design.

Examples include:

- Robust experimental design and statistical analysis
- Modern imaging techniques
- Sharing data and resources

Refinement: (refer to section 1.28-1.30 Code)

Methods that alleviate or minimise potential pain and distress, and enhance animal wellbeing.

Examples include:

- Improvements to scientific procedures and husbandry that prevent, alleviate or minimise known or potential causes of pain, distress or lasting harm to the animals
- Using non-invasive techniques
- Using appropriate anaesthetic and analgesic regimes for pain relief
- Training animals to co-operate with certain procedures (e.g. taking blood samples) so the animals are less stressed;
- Ensuring that accommodation meets the animals' needs (e.g. providing opportunities for nesting for rodents)
- Environmental enrichment to improve living conditions for research animals

Do I need ethics approval even if I am only observing animals?

You need ethics approval under a scientific procedures licence if your work may have negative impact on animals. Intrusion into wildlife habitats for the purpose of observation may affect animal breeding and other important social interactions. For this reason, AEC approval may be required. Simple observation alone is not a scientific procedure and does not require AEC approval. However, if the observation involves holding animals in cages or physical restraint or the fitting of tracking devices, microchips (PIT tags), and other telemetry or data logging devices that is a different matter altogether. To manage adverse risk, organisations often require all animal work to be screened by an AEC before any work can commence.

Always seek clarification from the AEC Secretary before attempting to work with animals in any capacity. Photography of animals may also require AEC approval.
WHAT ANIMALS REQUIRE AEC APPROVAL?

In accordance with the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986, all research or teaching projects that involve the use of animals for scientific purposes must be approved by an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC).

The following ANIMAL requires AEC approval:
- all fish and amphibians
- mammals, birds and reptiles above the mid-point in gestation
- adult decapod crustaceans
- adult cephalopods.

The stage of development that is required for approval is as follows:
- Mammals From half-gestation onwards (in utero);
- Birds From half-incubation onwards;
- Reptiles From half-incubation onwards;
- Amphibians Capable of independent feeding;
- Fish Capable of independent feeding;
- Cephalopod Adult
- Crustacean Adult

Studies involving vertebrate pest animals requires AEC approval. The principles of the Code must be applied equally to animals that are considered to be pests. **NB: section 3.3.44 Code requires that captive feral and pest species must be humanely killed unless the aims of a project require their release, or the study involves death as an endpoint.**
(3) HOW DO I GET AEC ANIMAL ETHICS APPROVAL?

You must complete and submit the required AEC Application by the submission deadlines. ALL application forms and submission deadlines can be found on the Deakin Animal Ethics Website. Please submit all applications via the AEC Application Lodgement system.

New Applications are to be submitted by the APPLICATION DEADLINE (via the application lodgement page)

Applications will be PRE-REVIEWED

Within 7 days

Review comments returned to the Principal Investigator

Principal Investigator is to SUBMIT:
(1) Cover letter responding to comments
(2) Amended AEC application

The Principal Investigator will be informed of the outcome of their application within one week of the AEC meeting date. If you have not heard from the office by that time, please contact the AEC Secretary to ensure that your contact details have been correctly recorded.

AEC Application and Forms:

AEC Application Lodgement Page:
http://www.deakin.edu.au/research/researcher-support/integrity-secure/animal-ethics/aec-submission
(4) DEAKIN UNIVERSITY ANIMAL SERVICES (Facility Housing)

Animal Services is responsible for managing the animal facilities on the Waurn Ponds campus. Their primary responsibility is in the provision of appropriate housing and husbandry conditions to assist researchers in ensuring the optimal health and welfare of animals at Deakin University.

If a proposed animal ethics project requires the use and housing of animals at a Deakin University Animal House Facility, the Principal Investigator must consult with the relevant Animal House Managers and complete the “animal enquiry and request forms” as necessary. This is essential in order to provide the appropriate space and facility requirements required for housing animals throughout the duration of the project.

**Contact Details: Animal House Managers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory Animal Supervisor</td>
<td>Adrian Cooper (ph: 522 72064) <a href="mailto:adrian.cooper@deakin.edu.au">adrian.cooper@deakin.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviary &amp; Wildlife Supervisor</td>
<td>Rod Collins (ph: 522 73063) <a href="mailto:rod.collins@deakin.edu.au">rod.collins@deakin.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burwood Animal Facility</td>
<td>Mr Luke Amor <a href="mailto:luke.amor@deakin.edu.au">luke.amor@deakin.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquaculture Sustainable Facility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- All animals must be maintained in animal facilities and/or laboratories approved by the AEC
- The physical housing and maintenance of animal facilities must be in accordance with the “Code of Practice for the housing and care of laboratory mice, rats, guinea pigs and rabbits (2004)”
- All Facilities are inspected at least once a year by the AEC (and random spot checks). Inspections will cover checking the proper identification and monitoring of animals in accordance to the approved AEC application, Code and Facility requirements.
(5) CONDUCTING ANIMAL RESEARCH OUTSIDE OF DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

(i) Research projects at another institution

Research performed at another institution other than Deakin University:

Any Deakin University staff or student who intends on initiating or collaborating in work at another institution, whereby the research and use of animals is to be conducted COMPLETELY at another institution and overseen by an External Animal Ethics Committee; the researcher must meet and complete the following requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBMIT the following to the AEC Secretary:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Request to work on an External Project form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) A copy of the approval notice from the External Animal Ethics Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Research projects in the field (Wildlife Studies)

Research involving wildlife may require approval and permits from other authorities, in addition to AEC approval. The use of wildlife in research and teaching is regulated by the Wildlife Act 1975, which may impose specific requirements on projects depending on the nature and location of the research. Further information on wildlife research is available from the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) [http://www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au)

(iii) Research projects in another state (other than Victoria)

Interstate Licensing Requirements

If you plan to conduct animal research in States and Territories other than Victoria, then you must also meet the specific State/Territory licensing requirements.

1. Contact the Animal Ethics Office, as there may be additional state licensing requirements that need to be met by Deakin University
2. You must meet all the requirements of Deakin University and the interstate or territory requirements before commencing any work outside of Victoria.

Important information: Animal ethics approval from Deakin University does not automatically allow research to be conducted in other Australian States. Some States may require approval from an interstate animal ethics committee. Please note that interstate licensing approval can be a lengthy process.

(iv) Research projects conducted in other countries

Under the Code, the AEC is required to consider the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes in other countries (Sections 2.6.9 – 2.6.14). Staff and students are required to notify and seek approval from Deakin AEC prior to commencing any use of animals for scientific purposes in countries other than Australia.
Does the international country have an animal ethics approval process?

- **YES - international AEC process**
  1. Before any work commences overseas, you must notify the Animal Ethics Office
  2. Obtain approval from the international AEC. Researchers are encouraged to seek assistance from the Animal Ethics Office prior to and during the completion of the international AEC application form
  3. Submit the 'notification to work on external project' form, along with the approved international AEC application and approval notice to the Animal Ethics Office for review by the Deakin University AEC.
  4. Deakin AEC will assess the application in compliance with the principles of the Code.

- **NO - there is no international AEC process**
  1. Before any work commences overseas, you must notify the Animal Ethics Office
  2. Principal investigator should complete either Deakin new AEC application form or Request for approval for minor change to protocol. The animal ethics office can advise which of these forms should be completed.
  3. Deakin AEC will assess the application in compliance with the principles of the Code.

The welfare of animals used for scientific purposes in countries not subject to the Code or Australian law, it will be considered by the AEC on a case-by-case basis.

- The AEC will take into account the requirements of the Code and seek evidence that the welfare of the animals be suitably monitored in the international country. Evidence will include compliance with codes, laws and practices equivalent to those in Australia.

- The AEC may take into consideration approval granted by a local AEC or equivalent body where the AEC is satisfied that the standards of the Code are met.

- In the case where an Australian institution operates facilities that use animals for scientific purposes in another country, projects at those facilities should be complaint with the Code
AEC TRAINING COURSES AND WORKSHOPS

http://www.deakin.edu.au/research/researcher-support/research-integrity/animal-ethics/aec-training-courses

(i) **Part 1 Training Course: Regulatory issues in the care and use of animals for research and teaching**

This is **COMPULSORY** for all investigators who intend to use animals for scientific purposes. This session introduces staff and students to their responsibilities under the legislation. The Animal Welfare Committee Part I Training Course is a pre-requisite for all staff, post-graduate and honours students who intend to use live animals in their research or teaching at Deakin University.

(ii) **Part 2 Training Course: The care and use of laboratory rodents in research and teaching**

Knowledge of animal husbandry and the acquisition of practical skills are essential for good animal welfare. This session aims to introduce staff and student to the principles of laboratory rodent care and use. This course is essential for researchers undertaking research involving rodents.

(iii) **Part 3 Register of Training and Assessment of Scientific Procedures provided by Principal Investigator or Delegate**

If an investigator intends on conducting scientific procedures not covered under ‘Part 2 training: the care and use of laboratory rodents in research and teaching’, the Principal Investigator is required to complete the “Record of Training and Assessment in Scientific Procedures Involving the Use of Animals” form for each investigator, in order to ensure a formal record of competency and skill level of researchers at Deakin. The Training and assessment must only be conducted by a person that the AEC has approved as competent for conducting the scientific procedure.

The completed record must be signed by the Principal Investigator and co-investigator who has been trained as competent in the scientific procedure, and submitted to the AEC Secretary. This information is recorded in a skills register held by the AEC Secretary for auditing by the Bureau of Animal Welfare.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS AND STUDENTS

All researchers and students should read and be familiar with Section 2.4 of the Code – Responsibilities of Investigators. The Code requires that investigators "must consider the governing principles in Section 1 when applying the Code to their specific circumstance."

Responsibilities of investigators include:

- obligation to RESPECT animals
- must seek AEC approval before commencing a project
- personal responsibility for welfare of animals in their care and allocated to their AEC Project
- work in accordance with Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 and Regulations 2008; and the Code
- conduct projects in accordance with AEC approval conditions
- undertake training and competency assessments
- maintain detailed records of the use of experimental animals
- only use facilities authorised by the AEC
- monitor the wellbeing of animals under their care
- prompt notification of any unexpected adverse events
- annual reporting of the project
- report when a project is completed or discontinued
- inform the AEC of other scientific and teaching institutions participating in the project (external projects)
Modifying an Approved Project

Any proposed minor changes to an approved project must be submitted to the AEC for consideration and approval. Modifications request will only be considered if the changes are deemed to be minor (having no significantly different impact on the welfare of the animals).

SUBMIT the following to the AEC Secretary (by application closing deadline)

1. Request for approval of minor change to protocol form, and
2. Include a cover letter explaining the request for modification

Request to modify an application may include:

- Extension of time
- Change to animal numbers
- Change to animal species/strain
- Change to protocol
- Change in personnel

A new application is required in cases where the objectives of the project or animal welfare impact are significantly different from the originally approved AEC project and do not meet the criteria for a minor modification.

Annual and Final Reports:

The continuation of all approved animal ethics projects is contingent upon the receipt and approval of an annual report by the AEC. The Primary Investigator is required to submit an annual report to the AEC Secretary by the end of January.

An AEC Annual Report Form must be completed and submitted to the AEC Secretary each year, regardless of whether or not any animals have been used.

In these reports the AEC will be advised on:

- what progress has been achieved, and whether the project is meeting its aims
- any problems that may have interfered with progress of the project
- how many animals have been used
- whether the wellbeing of the animals is consistent with that anticipated in the proposal
- whether any changes are envisaged
An AEC Final Report Form must be completed and submitted to the AEC Secretary when a project has been completed or discontinued.

Failure to submit the required reports by the stipulated deadline will lead to suspension of approval of the project. The Committee may also exercise its right to withhold approval for new applications while project reports on previously approved projects are outstanding.

**Recording Keeping**

It is a requirement under Section 2.4.30 Code that “Investigators must maintain records of the care and use of animals, and make such records available to the institution, the AEC and authorised external reviewers”.

It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that all matters relating to the welfare of the animals are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Code and the animal ethics application approved by Deakin University’s Animal Ethics Committee (Section 2.4.31 Code). These records should be available for audit by the institution and authorised external reviewers. Random checks are also conducted on investigators and premises from time to time by the AEC.

**Record keeping requirements:**

Records should be maintained by individual researchers on administrative procedures necessary for the project, including:

- AEC approval number, date and duration of approval
- Records relating to adherence to specific conditions with the AEC may have included in project approval
- Running tally of animal use against numbers approved
- Reports of any adverse incidents

Monitoring of individual animals’ passage through the protocol must be demonstrated, so each animal must be identified and have the following records attributable to it:

- Full ID (species, strain, sex, age, ID)
- Date of acquisition and source
- Place of housing
- Monitoring of health and welfare of the animal over the duration of the experiment and the personnel involved (eg. Records of daily monitoring, completed checklists)
- Place and date of procedures
- Identification of part of approved conducted on each date (eg. Weighing, administration of agents, surgery, killing)
- Details of procedures being conducted (eg, dose rates, volumes of agents administered, surgical technique) and personnel involved
- Details of drugs used: dose, administration, and monitoring and personnel involved.
Adverse Incidents

Under Sections 2.4.18(ix), 2.4.34, and 3.1.24 the Code, the principal investigator is required to promptly notify the Deakin University Animal Ethics Committee of any unexpected animal deaths or adverse or unforeseen circumstances that may impact on an animal’s wellbeing.

**What is an unexpected adverse incident?**

An event that may have a negative impact on the wellbeing of animals and was not foreshadowed in the approved project or activity, which meets the following criteria:

- **unexpected** = not as described in the AEC-approved proposal or subsequent documents to the AEC, i.e. unexpected by the AEC (or Principal Investigator) during its assessment of the application, an event not taken into consideration by the AEC when assessing the welfare impact, benefit and justification of the activity.

- **adverse** = opposing the animal's interests or desire as evidenced by abnormal physiological or behavioural response (i.e. not good from the animal’s point of view, including being painful and/or distressing).

When an adverse incident is noted, the following steps should be carried out:

1) Address animal welfare first - Contact the Animal Welfare Officer or Animal House Manager promptly
2) Prompt initial reporting - Advise the Animal Ethics Office
3) Investigate and submit the Adverse Incident Report
4) AEC review of Adverse Incident

**Reporting requirements:**

1) **Contact the Animal Welfare Officer/Animal House Manager promptly:**
   - AWO: Nick Branson (ph: 522 72726) nick.branson@deakin.edu.au
   - Animal House Managers:
     - Adrian Cooper (ph: 522 72064) adrian.cooper@deakin.edu.au
     - Rod Collins (ph: 522 73063) rod.collins@deakin.edu.au
   
1. Complete an [Adverse Incident report](#) and send it to the AEC Secretary.
FURTHER INFORMATION & ADVICE:

For any questions about the AEC processes, applications or general information about animal ethics at Deakin University, please contact us:

Animal Ethics Office
Email animal-ethics@deakin.edu.au
Phone: 522 72330

In addition, AEC Application Guidelines are available on the website to assist in completing the AEC Application and understanding AEC processes.