
Animal Ethics Policy

1. Purpose

The University has a Code of Ethical Conduct (the Code) for the use of live animals for research, testing and teaching that has been approved by the Ministry for Primary Industries.

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the University complies with the Code when using live animals for teaching and research.

2. Application of Policy

This Policy applies to Members of the University Community.

Policy Content

3. The Code of Ethical Conduct for the use of animals for research, testing and teaching

- 3.1 The Code deals with all vertebrate animals plus octopus, squid, crab, crayfish and lobster, and unborn mammals and pre-hatched birds and reptiles in the last half of gestation/development, in addition to 'any animal of a species declared by the Ministry for Primary Industries, by notice in the Gazette, to be a species of animal for the purposes of the [Animal Welfare Act 1999](#) and its amendments (see Appendix A for a copy of the Code).
- 3.2 The use of animals includes research and teaching activities involving animals, captive breeding programs undertaken by the Animal Care Facilities, and any animals killed (but otherwise not manipulated) for the purpose of collecting tissues for research and teaching.
- 3.3 As part of this code the University has an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) with a membership approved by the Ministry for Primary Industries. The chief functions of the AEC are to consider all applications for the use of live animals for teaching and research, to monitor the use of animals in approved projects, to inspect any animals held for the purposes of teaching and research, and to monitor the operation of animal facilities where animals are held.

4. Teaching and research

- 4.1 All teaching or research involving the use of animals must be approved in advance by an AEC.
- 4.2 Applications and amendments are made through the University's [online ethics management system](#). Since applications will be considered by the AEC at its scheduled meetings, applications must be submitted well in advance of any planned starting date. Approval may be granted for periods of up to three years.
- 4.3 Any research or teaching approved by another institution's Animal Ethics Committee and to be carried out by University staff or on University premises must be communicated to our Animal Ethics Committee.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Vice-Chancellor is the Code Holder who retains the institutional responsibility to ensure the University is compliant with the Code. The Vice Chancellor's delegated representative is

the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research.

- 5.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research is delegated with the task of ensuring the maintenance of proper ethical standards in research and will liaise with the Animal Ethics Committee for that purpose.
- 5.3 The Head of School has a responsibility to ensure that any member of their department contemplating teaching or research involving the use of live animals is aware of the Code, and of the procedures for obtaining AEC approval.
- 5.4 Supervisors must ensure that students are aware of and comply with the Code and the operational requirements of the AEC.
- 5.5 Refer to Appendices B and C for the responsibilities of principal investigators and undergraduate course organisers.

6. Animal Care Facility

- 6.1 The AEC inspects the Animal Care Facility regularly and reports to the Code Holder's representative on this and other matters relating to the use of animals within the University. All facilities overseen by the AEC must have a quality management plan outlining the management of the facility and its general operation such that its operation is in accordance with good practice.

7. Misconduct

- 7.1 Where it is alleged that a Member of the University Community has not acted in accordance with this Policy, the matter must be referred to the AEC and the Head of School, where relevant. The matter may be dealt with in accordance with the University's Staff Conduct Policy or the Student Conduct Statute, as appropriate.
- 7.2 Serious breaches of the Animal Welfare Act, such that may result in prosecution, shall be communicated to the Code Holder and the Ministry of Primary Industries for advice on further actions to be taken by the University and AEC, such as education and evidence collection. Serious breaches must be communicated as soon as practicable.

8. Definitions

In this Policy, unless the context otherwise requires:

Members of the University Community means staff members, students, independent contractors, adjunct and visiting staff, visiting scholars and interns, professors emeriti and any other persons providing services to the University.

Related Documents and Information

9. Related Documents

[Animal Welfare Act 1999](#)
[Education and Training Act 2020](#)
[Victoria University of Wellington Act 1961](#)

[Responsible Research Policy](#)
[Staff Conduct Policy](#)
[Student Conduct Statute](#)

[Appendix A: Code of Ethical Conduct for the use of Animals in Research, Testing and Teaching](#)

[Appendix B: Use of Animals in Research – Responsibilities of Principal Investigators](#)
[Appendix C: Use of Animals in Teaching – Responsibilities of Undergraduate Course Organisers](#)

10. Document Management and Control

Essential Record

Approver	Tumu Whakarae – Vice-Chancellor
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Policy Sponsor	Maruārangi – Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
Policy Owner	Animal Ethics Chair

Modification History

Date	Approval Agency	Details
18 November 2025	Tumu Whakarae – Vice-Chancellor	Major Amendment