All investigations carried out by University personnel, which involve vertebrate animals or cephalopods, which are alive, or are to be killed specifically for the investigation, require the approval of the Animal Ethics Committee. Approval must be obtained for both research and teaching activities.

The Animal Ethics Committee is accountable to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) of the University, to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and to the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee established under the Tasmanian Animal Welfare Act 1993 or subsequent acts and amendments.

The Animal Welfare Act requires that all animal research must be approved by an Ethics Committee and must be conducted in accordance with an approved Code of Practice. The Code that has been approved is the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2004 or subsequent editions. It is the responsibility of investigators to ensure that all facets of animal care and use meet the requirements of the Code. This includes a responsibility to protect and promote the welfare of animals used.

The Code of Practice embodies the principles of:

- Replacement;
- Reduction and
- Refinement of animal use in scientific and teaching activities.

The Responsible Investigator or Nominee must be a UTAS employee and must ensure that:

(a) all aspects of the work conform to the requirements of the current edition of the Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes

(b) a full record must be maintained of all animals used in the project. If at any stage it is anticipated that additional animals will be needed, this must be communicated to the committee before use. Using additional animals without AEC approval is a breach of an ethics permit.

(c) any animals under an experimental regime are clearly identified. The AEC requests that you use an identification card on the cage or enclosure. This identification is only necessary for those animals under the experimental regime, not for animals being held as stock.

(d) the University Veterinarian is kept informed about where experiments will be conducted.

(e) the AEC is to be promptly notified of any unexpected events which occur during the period of the approved project and impact on the welfare of the animals (2.2.28 Australian Code of Practice).

(f) an autopsy should be performed by a qualified veterinarian when animals die unexpectedly. Any foreseeable departure from this requirement must been outlined and approved in the initial application.

(g) detailed experimental records must be kept and must be available to the Committee on request.

(h) if the investigation necessitates a Parks & Wildlife permit you are required to send a copy of this permit to the AEC Secretary before commencing work.

(i) if you intend to obtain laboratory animals directly from a source other than the Cambridge Farm Facility, the Animal Services Manager and the University Veterinarian must be notified when the order is placed and when the animals are received.
External or Joint Partners in Research

Instructions for a UTAS staff member/student who engages in research or teaching (with an animal component) with external/joint partners

1. Contact animal.ethics@utas.edu.au to determine if a full UTAS AEC application is required

If the responsible body is external, a Notification of Involvement in Research involving External Facilities or Joint Research Partners form is required and copies of all reports and correspondence to/from external body, must be submitted to the UTAS AEC.

2. Advise UTAS AEC which external AEC/Research Partner will be delegated the reporting of animal numbers to an appropriate state/national body. UTAS AEC must confirm an official agreement between the external body for permission to monitor/inspect the project as required and establish responsibilities of each party in terms of welfare, oversight and duty of care. All stakeholders must be kept informed.

3. If UTAS is the responsible body, an initial application must be submitted and the usual protocols followed. The Responsible Investigator is responsible for keeping other AECs informed of all communication.

UTAS Projects conducted in countries other than Australia

The welfare of animals used for scientific purposes in foreign countries which are not subject to the Code will be considered by the AEC on a case-by-case basis. The AEC requires evidence of compliance with Australian standards and evidence of the welfare of animals will be suitably monitored. The AEC must be satisfied that the standards as defined by the Code are met.

Investigators should be familiar with:


Investigations must not commence until approval has been granted. This also applies to pilot studies and any preliminary trials associated with the main investigation.

Hints for completing the Initial Application form:


2. Applications can be submitted as either a Word or PDF document. An additional, scanned document may be submitted for the provision of signatures.

3. A response is required for each question. Write "Not applicable", if necessary. Insert your answers using Arial 12 point font in the boxes provided below each question. Use the tab key to move through the form.

4. Endnotes are provided to assist you in the completion of this application form. They are a guide to help you provide important information to AEC. Please use the information provided to avoid unnecessary delays in the assessment of your application. To view notes, move the cursor across or click your mouse twice on the endnote number.

5. Applications must be written in plain English. Applications must be written primarily for an interested, intelligent person without a scientific background, not for a specialist. The use of specialist language is not helpful to the committee and may delay processing of an application while explanations are sought. It is not appropriate to include sections from grant applications containing excessive detail of procedures unrelated to the use of animals.

6. Your application should give the AEC sufficient information to satisfy members that the proposed use of animals is justified and complies with the principles of Replacement, Redution and Refinement.
7. In assessing applications it is often difficult for the AEC to obtain a clear picture of what happens to individual animals from the beginning to the end of the project. The AEC must assess the impact on animals of all procedures and of the project as a whole. The application should therefore focus on **what is happening to animals** and **what is being done to ensure their well-being**. It is important that this information is presented in a way that shows clearly what is happening to individual animals from the beginning to the completion of a project.

8. The impact of procedures needs to be clearly detailed. The investigator should provide a step by step examination of all treatments (substances, dose rates, routes, volumes, anaesthetics, surgical procedures etc) and the expected effects. Flow charts or sequence of events tables are most helpful for the committee. In addition, factors that will impact on animals such as housing (type, duration, opportunity for social interaction) should be included.

9. The application should also explain clearly why the use of animals is justified, why the species and number of animals have been chosen and that the qualifications of personnel are suitable for the procedures to be performed. It is important to note that using additional animals without AEC approval is a breach of the ethics permit.

10. It is highly recommended that you ask a colleague and a person with a non-scientific background to read the application before it is submitted.

11. The application form seeks information from applicants in order to meet the requirements of the Code of Practice (refer pages 13 -17 regarding written proposals). Applicants should be familiar with the contents of the Code before completing the application form. The Code is available on line at:

12. If you have any problems or queries, or would like to comment on the form, contact the Ethics Officer of the AEC animal.ethics@utas.edu.au, telephone: (03) 6226 7283.

**Application Procedure:**

1. The form must be submitted by email to animal.ethics@utas.edu.au
2. The Responsible Investigator (RI) will receive an email from the AEC Ethics Officer to confirm receipt of the application and to advise of the AEC number allocated to the project.
3. The application will then be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.
4. AEC meetings are monthly. Dates for meetings and submission of applications can be obtained from the Ethics Officer or at http://www.utas.edu.au/research/integrity-and-ethics/animal-ethics/application-process/aec-submission-and-meeting-dates
5. Within three working days of the meeting, the Responsible Investigator will receive an email from the Ethics Officer to advise of the outcome.