

Meeting:	Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)		
Date:	07 September 2023	Time:	13:30 – 15.30
Location:	Teams		
Members present:	AWERB Chair / Named Information Officer (NIO) Deputy Chair Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) NACWO Chair of BRF User Forum NASPA Chair Research Integrity and Governance (RIGO) representative Statistician Deputy NVS NEER Officer Independent, external lay member Academic staff member with relevant research experience		
In attendance:	AWERB Secretary,		
Minutes:	AWERB Secretary		
Acronyms	AWERB – Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body BRF – Biomedical Research Facility ECR – Early Career Researcher FEO – Favourable Ethical Opinion HOLC – Home Office Liaison Contact NASPA - Non-Animal in Scientific Procedures Act NACWO – Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer NEER – Non-Establishment Ethics Review NIO – Named Information Officer NVS – Named Veterinary Surgeon PILh – Personal Licence (holder) PPLh – Project Licence (holder) PELh – Establishment Licence (holder) RIGC – Research Integrity and Governance Committee RIGO – Research Integrity and Governance Office SAGE-AR – Self-Assessment for Governance and Ethics – Animal Research URIC – University Research and Innovation Committee		

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Agenda Items:

Item		Action #
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Apologies received from: Academic staff member with relevant research experience x 2, Communication Team representative.</p> <p>Chair welcomed all members and informed that 2 AWERB committee members (NACWO 1 and NACWO 2) recently left the University; they were thanked them for their contributions to the committee over the years, with good wishes for the future. The Chair also informed the committee that the Deputy NVS will be stepping down. The Chair thanked the Deputy NVS for their input, and for remaining in post until the new person is appointed.</p>	<p>Apologies for absence to be sent to Chair in advance of meetings. (ALL)</p>
2.	<p>Approval of minutes and Update on actions from previous meeting</p> <p>Minutes of the previous AWERB meeting (held on 04/07/23) will be circulated for final approval via email. The action log to be removed from the official Minutes published on BRF website.</p> <p>23/23 A query raised around an update on purchasing animal use database.</p> <p>Action log.</p> <p>An update was provided on ongoing and completed actions (items references from previous minutes as per action log).</p> <p>4/22 SAGE-AR was reviewed further and updated; more refining is needed around human involvement questions, once completed AWERB Chair will confirm with NASPA chair and share with committee for testing.</p> <p>24/23 RIGO representative mentioned that JISCv3 has been released but a decision about storage of historic SAGE-AR records needs to be made.</p> <p>RIGO provided an update on progress with Infonetica software; progress is good but unfortunately slower than anticipated. Currently there is no confirmed transfer date for use by UEC.</p> <p>3/23 Few changes have been made on animal research activities websites. However, it has been noted further improvements are needed especially to incorporate information on animal suffering.</p> <p>5/23 Draft 3Rs strategy document to be shared with AWERB members at this meeting. Feedback to be sent to AWERB inbox.</p>	<p>23/23 NACWO to follow up</p> <p>4/22 AWERB Chair on-going</p> <p>24/23 AWERB Chair/NASPA Chair</p> <p>3/23 AWERB chair on-going</p> <p>5/23 ALL on-going</p>

	<p>8/23 Rehoming policy document to be shared with the committee for comments.</p> <p>15/23 UK legislation training module/site for Schedule 1 users, NVS and NTCO to meet and discuss further.</p> <p>17/23 A NEER application folder was set up in AWERB share point all members should have access to the file.</p> <p>19/23 Update on the Zebrafish SOP document to be provided at this meeting.</p> <p>22/23 NIO created a leaflet on Compassion Fatigue leaflet and shared it with the AWERB committee, user group and HR. Recommendation to share it in the Faculty Newsletter and newly designed webpages. It was recommended that line managers and the AWERB could be added as additional support resource at the end of the leaflet. It could also be mentioned at the faculty staff meeting. Separately it would be timely for an update to be given at the Faculty meeting from AWERB/NASPA committees.</p>	<p>8/23 pending</p> <p>15/23 NVS/NTCO</p> <p>17/23 Complete</p> <p>19/23 on-going</p> <p>22/23 AWERB chair on-going</p>
3.	<p>Key points from Named Person reports:</p> <p>NVS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NVS informed about upcoming training on the use of Vevo ultrasound equipment. <p>NACWO team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NACWO reported one mouse was culled after stitches had come out re-opening a wound. Origin of injury unknown but mezzanine step now removed for 2 weeks following surgery in case this contributed. NACWO provided an update on the zebrafish facility; it is still in planning phase. User requirements have been passed onto the construction company. Executive board will be approached for cost approval. No timeline given. <p>NTCO/HOLC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No major ethical notifications <p>NASPA Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NASPA Chair reported a slight delay with review of 2 applications, will be resolved this week. <p>NEER Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing to report. <p>User forum Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns were raised by Users over loss of 2 BRF staff members from the team. Facility management are currently recruiting new staff members. Communication about replacing new staff could have been better; lessons learnt could help create a better contingency plan. <p>NIO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIO encouraged committee members to take part in the Culture of care and 3Rs meeting at the Pirbright Institute on the 7th of November, and will reschedule AWERB committee meeting to another date to allow members to attend this event. 	

4.	<p>Agreement of guiding principles for Zebrafish larvae work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWERB Chair presented the legal context for work using Zebrafish larvae. Larvae younger than 5 days post fertilisation are not covered by ASPA legislation. However, there is a risk of noncompliance if larvae are used and not disposed of by this life stage. The use of larvae is consistent with 3Rs (partial replacement), and we should encourage their use where appropriate as an alternative to a protected animal. A new researcher at the University is an experienced user of adult and larvae zebrafish. His lab carries out research that uses 4 days old larvae for psychopharmacology and molecular neuroscience studies. While the on-site aquarium is being built, he would like to use larvae shipped from his former laboratory to support his program of research. • The committee are being asked to approve the 'guiding principles for work using zebrafish larvae' at the University. Key aspects: named researcher is fully responsible for all aspects of larvae work; an audit trail of arrival and euthanasia must be kept; training must be provided prior to working with larvae; training records must be kept. Transport of larvae to the University must be via specialized courier in temperature-insulated containers. At day 4 post fertilisation all larvae must be euthanized and disposed of. Larvae must be maintained in line with detailed SOP (which will be approved by NASPA sub-committee (November meeting)). Processes and procedures related to zebrafish larvae will be reviewed after first experiment, 3-6 months after commencement and/or at the point of re-housing to purpose-built aquarium. Use of larvae is currently restricted to the named researcher and his group. Committee approved the guiding principles. 	
5.	<p>Culture of care application of the 3 Rs</p> <p>3Rs strategy document was created and shared with the committee.</p> <p>ACTION: All members are asked to submit their feedback to AWERB email address by 22/09/2024</p>	25/23 All pending.
6.	<p>Discussion around showing animal videos.</p> <p>Researchers contacted the NACWO for advice on showing a video demonstrating the dissection of the stellate ganglia. They have generated 2 versions of the video; one that starts from the point of the mouse carcass and the other that starts at a later stage where only internal organs were visible. The videos were shared with the committee, who gave feedback. Points made included: i) good practice to be open about the activities and procedures, ii) careful consideration should be given to the tools used during dissection, iii) try to improve video quality (ie lighting, clarity). The members expressed mixed views as to the value of showing the carcass and concluded that this decision should be made by the researcher. Advice given to warn audience before showing clip and not to share (only show) the video.</p>	

7.	Any other business: AWERB committee member will be taking part in a discussion around designing new fish tank for the zebrafish facility and will provide feedback afterwards.	
	Chair thanked everybody for their contributions and closed the meeting.	

Next AWERB Committee Meeting

Date TBC in-person meeting	In-person
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