

Agenda Items:

Meeting:	Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)		
Date:	21 January 2025	Time:	09:30 – 12:15
Location:	Meeting room		
Members present:	AWERB Chair / Named Information Officer (NIO) Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) (on-line) NACWO Chair of BRF User Forum NASPA Chair PIL representative Head of Assurance representative Independent, external lay member Communication's team representative Academic with relevant experience NEER Officer		
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 SAGE-AR – Self-Assessment for Governance and Ethics – Animal Research URIC – University Research and Innovation Committee UAR – Understanding Animal Research		

Item		Action #
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Apologies received from: Deputy AWERB Chair, Deputy NVS</p> <p>Chair welcomed all members.</p>	<p>Apologies for absence to be sent to Chair in advance of meetings. (ALL)</p>
2.	<p>Approval of minutes and update on action log</p> <p>Minutes of the previous AWERB meetings (held on 19 November 2024) were circulated for final approval via email prior to the meeting; Comments to be sent by email.</p> <p>8/24: Tissue sharing database – Update: BRF User Forum Chair presented at meeting and discussions are on-going as to how best implement system and who should be made aware of the resource.</p> <p>10/24: Webpage working group. Discussions about how website could also support new releases /case studies that are posted on UAR’s BARN Digest. New action for Communication team representative to get in touch with UAR about posting BARN Digest items.</p> <p>19/24: Communication planning on Animal ethics (University-wide campaign to raise awareness).</p> <p>20/24: Advert for new members for AWERB/NASPA soon to be released to all University members. Update at next meeting. Recruitment of laymembers discussed.</p> <p>21/24: Committee needs a new PIL representative. Email was circulated to User Forum community. Chair will check Terms of Reference to ensure one-year terms are permissible.</p>	<p>AWERB minutes (uploaded to BRF website)</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>1/25 Communication Team’s Representative</p> <p>Carried forward</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>21/24 On-going 2/25 Chair</p>
3.	<p>Named persons reports – key points only from:</p> <p>NVS: Incorporated into the NACWO report. No concerns.</p> <p>NACWO: Training on lymph node identification and dissection in mice provided to external researcher. Animals from 4 project licences currently housed in facility.</p> <p>NTCO and HOLC: Training exemption sought for PPL holder applicant. Home Office stipulated training must be within last 5 years. Annual returns are due.</p> <p>NIO: A researcher was successful in obtaining NC3Rs funding on developing a non-animal method to study heart disease. The NC3Rs Study Plan is now live. The OBSERVE guidelines for rodent cancer models will be reviewed at May meeting. Brief discussion on how AI might aid development of clinical score sheets to be followed up at next meeting.</p>	<p>3/25 NEER Officer: AI & clinical scoring</p>

	<p>NASPA Chair: List of new approved applications and amendments were shared. Two tissue audit actions completed; work is commencing on outstanding actions which focus on proportionate review of activities (risk management) and feasibility of compliance checks.</p> <p>NEER Officer: One application approved. Concerns that current system appears not to be capturing all external activity. Suggestion to link into grant submission (FRIO) form. Noted that deputy NASPA Chair oversees grant bid review process.</p> <p>User Forum Chair: Provided an update on impact of environmental environment on over-grooming in mice. Help has been sought with data analyses. User community concerned about lack of available statistical input.</p>	
4.	<p>End-of-year summary AWERB/NASPA Chairs shared the end-of-year summary statistics with the committee. Key achievements related to the revamp of university animal ethics portal (SAGE-AR), streamlining of NASPA documents, development of a training module for Schedule 1 users, drafting of the 3Rs strategy document and participation at various external events including a school visit. Committee reflected on the need for on-going work to improve communication and provide clarity on the need for, and review process of animal work performed elsewhere. Discussion also reflected that the source of animals (i.e. pets/livestock vs laboratory) needed to be considered.</p>	
	Break	
5.	<p>3Rs and Culture of care items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Lay Member provided a summary of the presentations/discussions from the RSPCA Laypersons Forum meeting (9/12/2024). Topics covered included induction and training, replacement, empathising with animals, and ‘what AWERB members’ need. Committee heard more about two of these items: i) the RSPCA led project on ‘Replacement’ including the creation of a ‘replacement checklist’ and ‘infographic’ to help AWERBs review activities. It was recognised that there has/is a movement away from using animals, but it is challenging due to lack of funding/resource. Additionally, committee reflected some research questions may not be possible to address using current non-animal approaches. ii) Induction and training – workshop members felt adequate training and induction material was not always available. Laymember shared resources. NIO committed to updating current university member induction pack. ii) ARRIVE Study Plans – these have now been made available on-line and the Chair requested that the NVS/NACWO and interested researchers looked at these in detail to see if any improvements/changes can be applied to university forms. iii) UAR webinar presentation – NIO summarised main points presented at recent UAR webinar on writing non-technical summaries (NTS). The Gunning-Fog Index was offered as one 	<p>4/25 NIO replacement checklist</p> <p>5/25 NIO member induction pack</p> <p>6/25 NVS/NACWO review of university animal forms</p>

	tool that can be applied to improve the quality of the text to ensure it is appropriate for a lay audience.	
6.	3Rs strategy updates There was a brief discussion about next steps. The 3Rs strategy document was shared prior to the meeting. The assessment of tasks to 3Rs champions may be influenced by the arrival of new members; this was carried forward until the outcome of the membership call is known. In the meantime, the 3Rs refinement champion (and laymember) will be invited to join the next User Forum meeting.	Carried forward 7/25 User Forum Chair
7.	Any other business FOI - 600 – HVVB7TLKVN (decapod use) Chair thanked everybody for their contributions and closed the meeting.	

Next AWERB Committee Meeting

14 March 2025 1.30 pm (Teams)	
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