

CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL

THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW BODY (AWERB)

1st December 2022 (via Zoom)

MINUTES

Present:

22/12-01	<u>Apologies</u> Apologies had been received
22/12-02	<u>Minutes</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 13 th October 2022 were considered by the Committee and were approved.
22/12-03	<u>Matters Arising</u> All actions have been completed.
22/12-04	<u>Chairperson's Items</u> There were no Chairperson's Items
22/12-05	<u>Verbal Reports from the Director of BMSU and Named Persons</u> The Director of BMSU has become aware that the chief Executive Officer and the Science Manager of FRAME which is the Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Research visited an Animal research Unit at a UK University and then wrote a blog about the visit, which has now been posted. FRAME are strongly against the use of animals in research, however the blog provides a relatively balanced view, highlighting the caring attitude the people they met have to animals and the welfare they undertake. It also highlighted how they recognise that replacement is the hardest of the 3Rs to address. A link to the blog will be circulated to AWERB members. It was agreed that this was a very positive outcome given the remit of FRAME PPL holders have been contacted to request that all work requests are submitted in plenty of time prior to the Christmas period. All PPL holders have also been informed of the last ordering dates before Christmas. The Laboratory Animal Science Association (LASA) 2-day meeting was held on campus last week with good attendance from UoB. The meeting was well received with a presentation from a member of the university included in the 3Rs section. This talk was awarded the 3Rs prize. Senior members of the BMSU team are named as authors on a paper regarding refinement of arthritis models; this has now been accepted for publication. One of the Senior Technicians who is trained in performing regulated procedures will be leaving BMSU at the end of December but this will not impact on welfare or users as all other Senior Technicians are also fully trained and competent in performing these procedures. There are no concerns regarding animal welfare. A new cage washer is being installed in the service area during summer 2023 which will allow for the washing of racks and also has the capability of vaporised hydrogen peroxide (VHP) sterilisation for items which cannot go through the autoclave. This installation should not cause any disturbance to the animals. The Director reminded AWERB that Named Persons hold regular meetings (approximately every 4-6 weeks) during which reports regarding animal mortalities and ill health are reviewed to monitor for any patterns or arising issues. Currently, no issues have been identified, including during significant building work external to, but local to the BMSU. With the support of AWERB and the BMSU strategy group, the BMSU Director and Deputy Director have been providing talks to PIs across the different Institutes in the Medical School regarding changes in Home Office processes, and an update on how BMSU functions and why. The Home Office have continued to undertake Facilities Audits at other Establishments; reports suggest that these focus on application of the 3Rs and the processes in place to ensure compliance with standard conditions of the various licences. The Home Office are hoping to undertake some thematic audits in the future, but we are awaiting further details.

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	<p>The new training and competency module in our database is now fully tested and scheduled for release to the users on a step-by-step basis.</p> <p>BMSU have received a few FOIs, one relating to whether the University has undertaken a wildlife survey on campus: information of the Hedgehog Friendly campus has been provided as an example.</p>
22/12-06	<p><u>Report from the Fast Track Procedure</u></p> <p>Up to date with Fast Track and everything is going through as would be expected.</p>
22/12-07	<p><u>Review of AWERB activities 2022</u></p> <p>BMSU currently have 297 personal licence holders and 76 project licences. During 2022, AWERB has processed and had approval for 24 amendments to project licences and had 12 new project licences granted.</p> <p>The average iterations (number of times the Home Office returns an application prior to granting the licence) is 2.8 across the UK. Of the 12 applications submitted by the university, 11 have been granted with no comments which have had to be addressed (i.e. zero iterations). This is reflective of the high standard of applications which are finally submitted to ASRU via AWERB. In this context the Home Office has issued new guidelines for project licence applications; it has been confirmed that the advice provided in the document aligns with that already being provided to applicants by BMSU.</p> <p>For <i>in vivo/ex vivo</i> work undertaken in collaboration with UoB but outside of the university (PEL), AWERB has considered and made decisions on 2 UK-based applications (collaborations under a PPL held at another Establishment), 8 applications which fall outside of ASPA (use of protected species for non-regulated work), and on 3 applications where animals are being used overseas (where it would have been under ASPA had it been performed in the UK).</p> <p>BMSU have also provided CPD refresher training for all PPL holders.</p> <p>All of this data will be included in a report for the Research Governance Ethics Committee.</p>
22/12-08	<p><u>Matters relating to the 3Rs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NC3Rs Regional Programme Manager will now lead the 3Rs Focus Group. • UoB researchers are being encouraged to participate in an NC3Rs Experimental design survey. The results will be used to inform future experimental design training provided at the university by the NC3Rs Regional Programme Manager. • The NC3Rs Regional Programme Manager is running a workshop on the ARRIVE guidelines for new PIL holders on 26 January 2023 10:00-12:00. It will include advice on some key aspects of experimental design. • Responsible Research in Practice are running an online course on “Statistical Analysis for In Vivo and In Vitro Scientists”. Tuesday 6 December to Thursday 8 December • The NC3Rs have a virtual EDA demo on Wednesday 18 January 9:00-10:00. Register via our website
22/12-09	<p><u>Condition 18 Reports</u></p> <p>All Condition 18 reports have been independent incidents rather than indications of any bigger issues. During 2022 there were no instances of non-compliance.</p>
22/12-10	<p><u>Any Other Business.</u></p> <p>The 3Rs Focus Group Terms of Reference were agreed.</p> <p>UoB is concerned about power cuts and BMSU have a temporary generator to avoid concerns regarding heating, lighting and continuation of electrical support to equipment essential for animal welfare.</p> <p>AWERB do not have a student representative and members of AWERB were encouraged to identify a student who could attend.</p>
22/12-11	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The date of the next meeting – Thursday 12th January 2023 via Zoom</p>

GLOSSARY

3Rs	Replacement, Reduction and Refinement
ASPeL	Animals Scientific Procedures e-Licensing
ASPA	Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 2986

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ASRU	Animals in Science Regulation Unit
AWERB	Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body
BMSU	Biomedical Services Unit
EDA	Experimental Design Assistant
FRAME	Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Research
NC3Rs	National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research
NACWO	Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer
NTS	Non-Technical Summary
NVS	Named Veterinary Surgeon
PEL	Establishment licence
PI	Principal Investigator
PIL	Personal licence (Procedure Individual Licence)
PPLs	Project licence (Procedure Project Licence)
PREPARE	Planning Research and Experimental Procedures on Animals: Recommendations for Excellence
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
UoB	University of Birmingham
VHP	Vaporised Hydrogen Peroxide