

DRAFT

CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL

THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ETHICAL REVIEW BODY (AWERB)

24th June 2021 (via Zoom)

MINUTES

Present:

21/06-01	<u>Apologies</u> Apologies had been received
21/06-02	<u>Minutes</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 13 th May 2021 were considered by the Committee and were approved subject to some minor amendments.
21/06-03	<u>Matters Arising</u> The 3Rs Strategy was accepted by AWERB
21/06-04	<u>Chairperson's Items</u> There were no Chairpersons Items
21/06-05	<u>Verbal Reports from the Director of BMSU and Named Persons</u> There are to be significant changes in the way that the Animals in Science and Regulation Unit (ASRU) manage and operate the Act. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The system of having an assigned HOI will change to 4 Regulatory teams – Licencing, Compliance, Enquires, Audit. UoB will then be answerable to an Audit Team rather than a HOI.• The onus on governance will be with UoB. ASRU is hoping this will improve efficiency. The regulatory team will audit each Institution. There are concerns that local knowledge will be lost. Project applications will be submitted to a licencing group (via a queueing system) but there are no timescales in place, and there is no clear process regarding fast track for amendments to current licences.• ASRU is currently undergoing a “Bridging Ways of Working” Change Programme UoB No guidance is available regarding the audit process but UoB is working closely with the ASRU over this time• Progress of licences can be accessed via ASPeL, but it will not be clear where a licence is in the ‘queue’ <p>There had been a delay in freezing lines due to problem in obtaining reagents. There is a shortage of some hormones, and BMSU have a limited supply but this is beyond our control. Surgical procedures are beginning to take place again.</p> <p>Two condition 18s have been submitted where severity level of the protocols were exceeded. These will be reported to the Home Office for compliance.</p> <p>All B500 Animal Technicians are now NACWO qualified.</p>
21/06-06	<u>Report from the Fast Track Procedure</u> Amendment to a licence: Mapping mechanisms for energy homeostasis in rodents. It was agreed that this is a significant alteration to the licence, and not a fast track amendment. It was stated that the full application needs to be re-submitted to AWERB in. Action: Committee agreed that further discussions are needed between the NVS, BMSU, NACWO and PI, followed by resubmission of the full application to AWERB.
21/06-07-1	<u>Project Licence Applications</u>

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	<p>a) <i>Exploring the role of the cell surface molecule podoplanin in fibroblast-macrophage cross talk in arthritis</i></p> <p><u>Summary:</u></p> <p>The stated aims of this licence were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore the role of a new family of cellular targets expressed on fibroblasts and macrophages that enhance joint inflammation or promote its resolution during arthritis. It also aims to test the effect of new therapeutic strategies that target these molecules and help to switch off inflammation in arthritis • Biological therapies for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) have transient effects and relief is partial. There remains the need for effective treatments that cure as oppose to treat RA. • Current treatments reduce inflammation in the joints but are not as effective in reducing pain and restoring joint function. • Preliminary work has identified new molecules on the surface of cells that reside in the joint which regulate joint inflammation and help the resolution of arthritis, however more studies are needed to understand the cellular and molecular mechanisms involved in these processes. <p>The Committee raised the following points:</p> <p>The numbers of animals are very conservative for the duration of the licence, and that animal numbers should be increased. Animal numbers need to be recalculated utilising the experimental planning software available.</p> <p>It was noted that this is a 5-year licence application, but funding is only available for 3 years. The Committee advised that the application be amended to a 3-year licence, and then extended if / when further funding is obtained.</p> <p>The scoring system of assessment was discussed. Normally users conduct a joint score, and use callipers to measure the swelling of joints, as well as animal weight, scoring for one joint in mono-arthritis and multiple joints in poly-arthritis. The combined score takes into account mutiple factors, but Animal Technician observations are critical in the final evaluation. End points are very well defined.</p> <p>The use of analgesia was discussed in relation to weight-bearing. Not all animals will be given analgesia, and it was agreed that the exceptions need to be outlined in the NTS. The issue of parallel <i>in-vitro</i> studies was discussed. Cell types are concordant and are translatable.</p> <p>The mouse model will be used for other inflammatory projects e.g. IBD / Psoriasis</p> <p>It was queried whether the use of organoids is actually reducing the number of animals. It was confirmed that organoids are used as a screening mechanism, and the explanation needs to be expanded in the application.</p> <p>The NTS states 'curing arthritis' and AWERB felt this was a very ambitions claim, and should be replaced with remission of arthritis.</p> <p>Decision: Committee agreed that further discussions are needed between the NVS, BMSU, NACWO and PI prior to being sent to the Home Office.</p>
21/06-07-2	<p>b) <i>The Role of Nitrite in Coronary Artery Disease – resubmission</i></p> <p>This application was originally reviewed at the meeting on 13th May 2021 (agenda item 21/05-07-1). The Committee stated that the application needed to be resubmitted for reconsideration prior to approval.</p> <p>This application has undergone some significant re-writing, but there still needs to be some expansion of the refinement section.</p> <p>Decision: Committee agreed that final discussions are needed between the NVS, BMSU, NACWO and that this application will be sent to the Home Office.</p>
21/06-07-3	<p>c) <i>Developing and studying novel mouse models of glioma development and progression – resubmission</i></p>

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	<p>This application was originally reviewed at the meeting on 13th May 2021 (agenda item 21/05-07-2). The Committee stated that the application needed to be resubmitted for reconsideration prior to approval.</p> <p>Application has been re-written. Evidence of hyperactivity will be included as a humane end point for the development of brain tumor. There will be a moderate protocol re. hydrocephalus, and this will be a separate cohort. The application will be circulated electronically for approval, prior to submission to the home office.</p> <p>Decision: Committee agreed that final discussions are needed between the NVS, BMSU, NACWO and the PI prior to electronic approval and then forwarding to the Home Office.</p>
21/06-07-4	<p><i>d) Investigating muscle-organ crosstalk using Adeno-Associated Viruses (AAVs): a proof-of-concept study</i></p> <p>This application was originally reviewed at the meeting on 13th May 2021 (agenda item 21/05-07-3). The Committee stated that videos of the exercise regimes would be required prior to electronic approval.</p> <p>The videos of the exercise regimes have been received. AWERB agree that the videos clarified the protocols and there is, in fact, no exercise to exhaustion.</p> <p>Decision: Committee agreed that final discussions are needed between the NVS, BMSU, NACWO and the PI prior to electronic approval and then forwarding to the Home Office.</p>
21/06-08	<p>Matters relating to the 3Rs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 3Rs Strategy document has been finalised and approved by AWERB electronically. • The BMSU is currently trialling use of a playpen to provide enrichment for rats housed in the facility. • The mouse enrichment pilot study is ongoing, with the apprentices now analysing the data from the first objects trialled. • A member of the comms team is supporting BMSU in preparing some videos to be uploaded to the website once it has been updated. • Jan van der Valk from the 3Rs Centre in Utrecht has agreed to give a Replacement-focussed webinar in October on the switch to FCS-free media and how the FCS-Free Database can help support this.
21/06-09	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>There was no further business.</p>
21/06-10	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The date of the next meeting – 22nd July 2021</p>

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GLOSSARY

3Rs	Replacement, Reduction and Refinement
ASPeL	Animals in Science Procedures e-Licensing
ASRU	Animals in Science and Regulation Unit
AWERB	Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body
BMSU	Biomedical Services Unit
HOI	Home Office Inspector
IBD	Inflammatory bowel disease
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
PI	Principal Investigator
PIL	Personal licence (Procedure Individual Licence)
PEL	Procedure Establishment Licence
PPLs	Project licence (Procedure Project Licence)
RA	Rheumatoid Arthritis
UoB	University of Birmingham