

Brandon University Animal Care Committee (BUACC) Policy on the Training of Personnel Working with Animals

Policy

All personnel working with animals in science must be knowledgeable about the principles of humane experimental science and ethical issues associated with the use of those animals, including the Three Rs tenet (replacement, reduction, and refinement).

All animal users must have the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to be competent to perform their required tasks. When practical skills need to be acquired, the training shall be timed in relation to when performance of the skills is required. Until animal users have had their competency assessed and been found to be competent to perform the relevant tasks or procedures, any work with animals should be carefully supervised. The supervision should aim to reinforce understanding and ensure tasks and procedures are conducted according to the appropriate standard. The duration of supervision required for competence to be attained will vary with the frequency of the task, the technical complexity of the task, and the ability of the individual.

All personnel involved in the care and use of animals for research, teaching, and testing must possess:

- An understanding of the ethical issues of using animals for scientific purposes in Canada and an understanding of the Three Rs tenet (replacement, reduction, and refinement);
- Knowledge of the principles of experimental animal science relevant to their area of work (laboratory, field studies, etc.); and
- Knowledge, skills and competency required for any procedure they need to carry out, including handling of the animals.

The Three Rs tenet is embedded in the conduct of animal-based science in Canada and encourages individuals to:

- Replace – avoid or replace the use of animals wherever possible;
- Reduce – employ strategies that will result in fewer animals being used and which are consistent with sound experimental design; and
- Refine – modify husbandry or experimental procedures to minimize pain and distress.

It is the intention of Brandon University to endeavour and sustain an institutional culture of respect for animal life.

Terms of Reference

- “Personnel working with animals in science” includes animal users, as well as those involved in the care and husbandry of animals used in science.
- “Animal User” includes personnel intending to use animals as part of a research, teaching, regulatory testing or production (of animals or biologics for scientific purposes) project, or who are involved in breeding as part of a project. This includes investigators, post-doctoral fellows, research staff, graduate students, Faculty and Instructional Associates, as well as undergraduate students, Consulting Veterinarians, the Animal Facility Manager & Animal Health Technologist, and the Animal Facility staff.

- “Competency” refers to the ability to effectively perform a particular task in relation to the care, maintenance or use of the animals, while ensuring their welfare is protected as far as possible within the constraints of any approved studies that the animals are involved in. Focusing on competency rather than training acknowledges that there may be a variety of ways to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills, and places emphasis on learning outcomes.

Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of the Brandon University Animal Care Committee (BUACC) to validate and/or provide training to animal users to ensure protection and safety considerations when handling animals.
- It is the responsibility of Principal Investigators, the Animal Facility Manager & Animal Health Technologist, and the University Veterinarian to ensure personnel in the Animal Facility adhere to the requirements of this policy and any procedures.
- It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigators, the Animal Facility Manager & Animal Health Technologist, and/or the University Consulting Veterinarian to ensure personnel are adequately trained to carry out their duties in a safe and respectful manner.
- It is the responsibility of the animal users to adhere to the requirements of this procedure.
- It is the responsibility of the institution, by way of the Chair of the Senate Research Committee, to provide evidence that all personnel working with animals have the appropriate knowledge, skills and competency to perform their required tasks.

Minimum Qualifications and Training

- Principal Investigators must demonstrate completion of the Animal User Training Course through the University of Manitoba, or an equivalent training from another institution. Fees for such course are the responsibility of the Principal Investigator.
- Animal users must complete all required training with respect to animal handling and ethics as determined by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) guidelines in accordance with the recommendations by BUACC prior to the start of the Animal Care Protocol. Please refer to Table 1 – Brandon University Animal Care Committee Animal Care and Use Training Requirements. Access to training materials and testing is available through Moodle at: <https://moodle.brandonu.ca/> **(00 Communication Websites; BU Animal Care Committee Training)**
- Animal users must complete all required training with respect to health and safety, including facility orientation (as applicable), WHMIS, and biosafety (if required), as determined by the Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation and in accordance with Brandon University’s Safety Program prior to the start of the Animal Care Protocol.
- Continuing education requirements for consulting veterinarians and animal care staff are outlined in the CCAC policy statement for: senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs.
- Animal Facility Relief Staff must complete the Health & Safety training; Core, Lab Animals and Fish Modules, Facility Orientation, and Animal Handling training. There must also be intensive supervision until such time that they can demonstrate appropriate levels of knowledge, skills, and competency.

Animal Care and Use Training Requirements

Table 1

	Health and Safety		CCAC Modules							Facility Orientation	Animal Handling
	New Personnel	Animal Use	Core	Lab Animals	Farm Animals	Fish	Zebrafish	Transgenic Animals	Wildlife		
Amphibians	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓
Fish	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓*	✓	✓	✓
Reptiles	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓
Rodents	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓*		✓	✓
Horses	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓	✓
Zebrafish	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓*		✓	✓

* (if applicable)

Curriculum

Core Stream:

Module 1 – Ethics of Animal Use in Science

Module 2 – Three Rs of Humane Animal Experimentation

Module 4 – Occupational Health and Safety

Knowledge Streams:

- Animals House in Vivaria (i.e. rodents, birds, non-human primates, amphibians, reptiles, and rabbits)
- Farm Animals (i.e. beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, horses and farmed wildlife)
- Fish (wild or captive fish)
- Zebrafish
- Transgenic Animals
- Wildlife (wild amphibians, reptiles, bats, birds, small mammals, large carnivores, ungulates and marine mammals)

Facility Orientation

Conducted by the Animal Health Technologist. Includes a tour of the facility, review of Facility Standard Operating Procedures, etc.

Animal Handling Orientation

The Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring adequate training on animal handling. PIs have the authority, and will assume all costs, to outsource training opportunities for animal handling. As part of the Animal Facility Orientation, the Animal Facility Manager & Animal Health Technologist will demonstrate basic animal handling techniques. As part of the Quality Assurance observation, assessment of animal handling techniques of the Principal Investigator, and research team if applicable, will also be observed and noted, and as such, the Quality Assurance observation should be done early in the protocol.

Testing and Documenting Competency

- Health and Safety training is conducted and documented by the Brandon University Safety and Health Officer.

- CCAC modules are located on Moodle at: <https://moodle.brandonu.ca/> (00 Communication Websites; BU Animal Care Committee Training). Completion of module training and successfully passing the quizzes created for each module with a 70% minimum passing grade will be documented with a certificate provided to the animal user by the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Graduate Studies).
- Facility orientation is conducted and documented by the Animal Facility Manager & Animal Health Technologist.
- Animal Handling training is documented by the Principal Investigator and communicated to the Animal Facility Manager & Animal Health Technologist.

This Policy was drafted in accordance with the CCAC guidelines on: training of personnel working with animals in science.

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