



---

## University Court

### Minutes of Welfare and Ethical Use of Animals Committee

---

A meeting of the Committee was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025.

Present: The Convenor, the Director of Biological Services (DBS), the Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS), a Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer (NACWO), a Named Training and Competency Officer (NTCO), a Named Information Officer (NIO), an independent member, one scientist Personal Licence (PIL) holder, four Project Licence (PPL) holders (also PIL holders), one scientist and five lay members (two external, one joining online). The new establishment licence holder also attended briefly as an introduction.

Apologies: one member sent apologies.

#### 1 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The last meeting was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025, and an extraordinary meeting held online on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, the Minutes for each were approved.

#### 2 MATTERS ARISING

- a. **New Establishment Licence Holder (ELH).** The interim University Secretary will hold this responsibility for the duration of their contract. The ELH attended the meeting briefly as an introductory visit and to share with the committee the positive feedback from the Home Office inspector about the recent facilities audit conducted in August. The Inspector was very complimentary about the facility, the staff and their dedication to and advancement of 3Rs. The Convenor has arranged to meet with the interim University Secretary to discuss WEC-related issues.
- b. **Proposal to outsource genetically altered (GA) mouse breeding.** The University Executive Group (UEG) approved the proposal from the Schools of Life Sciences and Medicine to outsource GA breeding. A preferred supplier has been awarded the contract following a procurement tender. Further negotiation on welfare standards that better align with “Dundee” standards have been completed following a site visit by the NVS and NACWO at the request of this committee. Plans are in place to begin the transition to ensure all scientists provide the necessary documentation in a timely manner to aide progress. It is important to note that because of this proposal, 50% of the facility staff left the university during September through Voluntary Severance. The committee acknowledged and appreciated the efforts by the remaining staff to manage operational activity in the facilities during this time with no reduction in animal numbers.
- c. **Scientific Reports pre-publication on experimental design and reporting.** The committee discussed a recent high profile online publication in Scientific Reports entitled “A call to action to address critical flaws and bias in laboratory animal experiments and preclinical research “. The committee statistician provided a summary of the data, and the committee discussed the author interpretation and limitations of the study. However, the committee agreed that it highlights the need to avoid confounded data, the importance of appropriate controls as well as improved transparency in reporting. In Dundee, training on experimental design is mandatory as part of project licence holder training, and specifically for those who wish to be study directors submitting study plans. It is also university policy to follow and publish to ARRIVE guidelines.
- d. **New RSPCA Ethics training resource.** The committee agreed that this new resource was useful, and an action is to work through the examples and discuss relevance to the establishment at the next meeting.

### **3 REPORTS FROM THE NVS AND NACWO ON ANIMAL WELFARE**

[Standing agenda item]

The NACWO and NVS reported as follows since the last meeting:

- Further to Point 2b above, there is a risk of burn-out or potential for issues to be missed by staff who are managing the operations in two units with half the staff. This situation is unsustainable for more than a few weeks without risk. There are concerns that University procedures not being completed in a timely manner, mostly due to lack of understanding of the urgency as well as resource limitations are delaying progress.
- There have been welfare concerns in a commercially supplied GA mouse line. These are being monitored and attempts to improve the situation are ongoing. Committee members were concerned that some of these animals were not fit for transport and insist for intervention by the project licence holder to improve the system for ordering, selection parameters and planning of these animals for studies.

### **4 REPORT FROM THE UVS ON COMPLIANCE**

[Standing agenda item]

The UVS provided a comprehensive report for the committee.

- There were no cases of non-compliance since the last meeting.
- There were two near misses reported since the last meeting with remedial actions agreed for each.
- There were three Standard Condition 18 reports submitted to the Home Office since the last meeting. Internal reviews have been conducted with remedial actions agreed for all cases. The Home Office have indicated that they will not respond to SC18 reports unless they identify non-compliance, so no response is expected.

### **5 REPORT FROM THE TRAINING COORDINATOR**

[standing agenda item]

Training is proceeding as standard.

- Seven new starts since the last meeting
- Two new PIL A/B completed their theory and one who failed the exam on two occasions. This individual will not continue with training.
- Annual refresher training for licensees has been scheduled for October and November.
- The Home Office amended their minimum requirements for surgeons to align to LASA minimum requirements. As such the team has been working with all surgeons to standardise aseptic technique during surgery. A new DOPS for monitoring anaesthesia and aseptic technique are being introduced along with mandatory SOPs from surgeons being submitted with the surgical plan.
- Fifteen DOPS have been completed since the last meeting
- The NTCO recruited to the role in February 2025 has completed their NTCO course

- DBS attended the Universities Trainers Group Day and provided feedback on the different approaches taken by other establishments.

## 6 REPORT FROM THE NIO ON 3Rs

[standing agenda item]

A summary of the progress from the 3Rs Champions group, 3Rs activities, attendances and presentations at external events, web page updates, openness events and public engagement activities was presented to the committee.

The NIO specifically highlighted to the committee:

- **Refinement Prize.** that the 3Rs champion team have been successful in winning the European Partnership for Alternative Approaches (EPAA) to Animal Testing refinement prize. The EPAA is a public-private partnership across seven industry sectors and between the European Commission and industry stakeholders. Launched in 2005, it contains thirty-nine companies, 9 nine European trade federations, three EU Agencies and five Directorates-General of the European Commission. Therefore, winning this prize is prestigious against competition in industry across Europe.
- **Openness Events.**
  - Two technicians attended the University of Glasgow culture of care day, at their own expense. They presented a poster on recent refinements to voluntary dosing made in Dundee.
  - PhD Programme. The DBS and NIO presented to new students on the use of animals in research in Dundee and offered a tour of the facilities.
  - The NVS, NACWO and NIO joined the public engagement officer to explain the use of animals in research to secondary school children via an interactive workshop (The mouse exchange).
  - RSPCA Visit. Two members of the RSPCA visited the facilities and met with the staff. A positive outcome of this visit was the recruitment of one to Dundee AWERB as an external lay person.

## 7 REPORT FROM THE DBS ON LICENSING MATTERS

[standing agenda item]

A comprehensive review of progress of each application and amendment reviewed by the committee either in person or electronically and submitted to the Home Office since the last meeting was discussed. The DBS highlighted a new application with a sub-committee and the outstanding amendments yet to be commented on by the committee.

## 8 AOCB

- Welcome to a new committee external lay member.
- Meeting Minutes. It was the Convenor's understanding that all approved meeting Minutes sent to Court were published online. A recent FOI highlighted that this is not the case. Previously the committee approved the proposal to share the minutes on the external web page annually. An action is to upload the minutes from all meetings held in 2025 and annually thereafter.
- The Convenor sent a letter to UEG in relation to the proposal to outsource GA breeding in July, and again in August following site visit by NVS/NACWO and is yet to receive a formal reply.
- Call to committee members to suggest additional members, specifically scientists.

## 9 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026

23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2026

1<sup>st</sup> October 2026

## 10 ACTION LOG

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Update</b>
04/07/2024 Item 6 And 23/01/25 Item 6	Replacements. To compile a list of non-animal methods and replacements in the University with the aim to share case studies on the web page	NIO/DBS/ Scientists	Complete
02/10/25 Item 2c	Experimental design training requirements for Dundee scientists to be uploaded to the webpage for awareness and transparency	DBS	Webpage update in preparation
02/10/25 Item 2d	To add to the next meeting agenda time to cover ethics examples as a committee relevant for local cases	DBS/Convenor	Agenda will be generated in early January 2026
02/10/25 Item 3	Improve systems for animal orders via a third party	DBS/Convenor	Email sent to project licence holder with suggested revised system
02/10/25 Item 6	3Rs information to be uploaded to webpage	DBS/NIO	Webpage update in preparation