

Animal Ethics Policy			
Policy Sponsor	Provost and Vice President, Academic	Category	Academic
Policy Contact	Associate Vice President Research	Effective Date	May 22, 2019
Approved By	General Faculties Council	Review Date	May 22, 2024
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1. Purpose

Athabasca University is committed to promoting the highest ethical standards in all research involving the care and use of animals. This policy provides a framework for animal-based research conducted by Athabasca University researchers and a structure for addressing non-compliance. Animal users are responsible for acting in strict accordance with the standards set by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), federal, provincial or municipal statutes that may apply, as well as related policies and procedures.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Athabasca University (University) researchers who propose to use animals for research.

3. Definitions

Animal	Any living non-human vertebrate and any living invertebrate of the class Cephalopoda, including free-living and reproducing larval forms, used for research purposes by Athabasca University (University) researchers.
Athabasca University Animal Care Committee (AUACC)	The Committee responsible for the ethics review and post-approval monitoring of all animal use by Athabasca University researchers.
Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC)	The national organization responsible for setting and maintaining standards for the ethical use and care of animals used in science.

Peer Review for Scientific Merit	The review of the research proposal by two or more researchers, who have the technical expertise to assess the science of the protocol and are at arm's length from the research team and the AUACC.
Principal Investigator (PI)	A member of the academic staff who is responsible for the design, conduct, supervision and oversight of the care and use of animals in research as described in an approved animal use protocol.
Researcher	Anyone who conducts research activities. Includes, but is not limited to, faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and other personnel involved directly or indirectly in research, including research assistants/associates, technical and support staff, adjunct professors, visiting professors, and institutional administrators.

4. Guiding Principles

Animals used in research by University staff and research project personnel must be cared for and maintained in accordance with applicable laws, CCAC guidelines and policy statements, and the requirements of the *Tri-Council Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions*.

No animal use for teaching or testing shall be undertaken by Athabasca University staff or students.

Animal use for research shall only be conducted in facilities that meet the standards set by the Canadian Council on Animal Care, or in the field.

The [Russell-Burch Three Rs](#): Replacement, Reduction and Refinement principles will be upheld in the design and review of animal use protocols.

4.1 Ethics Review of Animal Use

All research that involves the use of animals must be approved by the Athabasca University Animal Care Committee (AUACC) prior to commencement and must comply with any and all conditions of approval and post-approval monitoring requirements as outlined in approved Procedures.

The AUACC shall operate in accordance with established Roles and Responsibilities Procedures.

Where the applicant confirms that an independent peer review for scientific merit has not been undertaken, arrangements for arm's length peer-review must be made and the review successfully completed before the protocol will be approved by the AUACC.

Funds to support animal-based research shall not be released by the University until such time that the animal use protocol has been approved by the AUACC. If the activities involving animals will only take place in a subsequent fiscal year, funds may be released, on a pro-rated basis, for activities up to the start of the work involving animals, at which time the review of the protocol must be completed before further funds can be released.

If a Principal Investigator (PI) is collaborating with researchers at other institutions to conduct animal research, the CCAC [*Policy Statement for Animal-Based Projects Involving Two or More Institutions*](#) will apply.

4.2 Procurement, Use, Housing and Maintenance of Animals

No animals shall be acquired, held or used for the purposes of research, teaching or testing at any Athabasca University facility.

Animals used for research must be obtained through the processes established at the institution where the animal use will be conducted, except animals used in the field and be subject to veterinarian oversight at that institution.

4.3 Animal User Training

All University staff and trainees engaged in the care and use of animals must understand the ethics and principles of animal care and use, and be competent to handle animals and undertake animal based procedures. Athabasca University researchers must provide evidence of adequate animal ethics training as outlined in the approved procedures, prior to engaging in any animal use for research.

4.4 Non-Compliance

Should a project in progress be found to contravene the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) standards, violate any relevant legislation, or fail to meet any AUACC condition of approval, funding shall be suspended until the contravention has been resolved to the satisfaction of the AUACC.

Any animal use that has not been approved, or is not conducted in the manner in which it was described in an animal use protocol and approved by the AUACC, will constitute non-compliance.

Animal use that contravenes this policy constitutes non-compliance.

Non-compliance may represent research misconduct.

Breaches of compliance shall be referred to the Athabasca University Associate Vice President Research (AVPR). The AVPR shall inform the AUACC about any breaches of compliance reported directly to him/her and any sanctions to be taken by senior university administrators in the event of a serious breach of compliance.

5. Applicable Legislation and Regulations

The care and use of animals in research is to be carried out in accordance with federal and provincial legislation and regulations, including the most recent versions of the following:

[Canadian Council on Animal Care \(CCAC\)](#)

The Russell-Burch [Three Rs: Replacement, Reduction and Refinement principles](#)
[Tri-Agency Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards](#) (2012, December and as amended from time to time).

[Animal-Based Projects Involving Two or More Institutions \(CCAC\)](#)

[Animal Protection Act](#) (Government of Alberta)

[Animal Protection Regulation](#) (Government of Alberta)

Agreement on Animal Research Ethics Review between the Governors of the University of Alberta and the Governors of Athabasca University (2019, and as amended from time to time).

6. Related Procedures/Documents

[Animal Care Committee Roles and Responsibilities Procedure](#)

[Animal Care and Use Appeal of an AUACC Decision Procedure](#)

[Animal Care and Use Post-Approval Monitoring Procedure](#)

[Animal Care and Use Standard Operating Procedure](#)

[Animal Care and Use Non-Compliance Procedure](#)

[Animal User Training Procedure](#)

[Research Integrity Policy](#)

[Breach of Research Integrity Procedure](#)

History

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