



The Open University

ANIMAL ETHICS ADVISORY GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of the Animal Ethics Advisory Group held on
Monday 22 June 2009

Present:

In Attendance:

1 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

1.1 Apologies were received from

1.2 Physics & Astronomy, was welcomed as a new member of AEAG.
has been appointed under category 9: Member of the Science Faculty (outside of
Life Sciences) and will serve on the AEAG until 2012.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AEAG/08/5/M

The AEAG **approved** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 8 December 2008.

3 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Following the discussion on Filming Animal Procedures (AEAG/08/5/6), reference was
made to a recent request from the BBC asking Life Sciences for permission to film animals.
It was felt that there was a lack of understanding around the issues concerning research
using animals and the request was refused.

3.2 The gave an update on data security which included changes being brought
into force by the Home Office whereby all email correspondence with them will need to be
encrypted. The system that will be used is Criminal Justice Secure Mail (CJSM) and those
Open University staff who may need to use the system would be given access to it. The

University Secretary has been consulted and has agreed to the introduction of the new system and the OU Academic and Administrative Computing Services are co-ordinating its introduction and access. The stated that once in place it would be of benefit to all OU departments wishing to communicate with any government department.

4 LICENCE APPLICATION

AEAG/09/1/1

4.1 Home Office Project Licence application:

presented a comprehensive overview of research and answered questions. The research aims to advance the understanding of mammalian ageing and has been awarded collaborative funding by the Collaborators are and is also a named collaborator.

4.2 The procedures outlined and research are categorised as mild and low risk. Where surgery is required it would be carried out by who is qualified to do so, or once recruited. No advice has yet been sought by from the Home Office but would contact them as soon as possible. has been in contact with the Home Office regarding the licence so they will be expecting it. Overall, the AEAG were happy with the licence application but agreed that some areas of the licence required more information. agreed that this would be remedied and the licence would be re-submitted for final approval at the next AEAG meeting. Also the AEAG agreed that it would be very useful to have feedback from and who were unable to attend this meeting.

4.3 The AEAG agreed that research covers an important area of study and it would look forward to approving the revised licence in order to recommend it for approval by the Certificate Holder.

5 AEAG TERMS OF REFERENCE AND AEAG MEMBERSHIP

5.1 AEAG considered changes made by the AEAG Sub-group to the AEAG Terms of Reference document and AEAG membership. They **agreed** the edited document and made further suggestions. These would be approved at the next AEAG meeting and then presented for comment and approval by the Home Office, the University Secretary and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise).

5.2 Part of the Terms of Reference discussion included comments about procedures within the Department of Life Sciences and whether or not all research using animals is recorded. It was **agreed** that there should be a record and the Head of Department would contact all Life Sciences staff to supply information on their work. In addition, some of this data can be ascertained from the Research School Grants & Contracts RED (Research & Enterprise Development) form and database which are used to obtain OU approval for external funding and for storing said information. The G&C Team would be contacted to follow this up.

6 THE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE UNIT (BRU)

6.1 With reference to the previous minutes, the stated that there continue to be problems with the BRU humidity control valves. However, minor works were almost

completed and they would complete a new transgenic area. The change in the designation would then have to be approved by the Home Office.

- 6.2 Changes to the design of the water sterilisation system had been made which would benefit the animals kept in the BRU.
- 6.3 Health screening of the BRU animals had been successful.
- 6.4 The BRU vacancy has successfully been filled.
- 6.5 had not been able to begin research due to delays in processing the necessary documentation. An update on the matter would be given at the next AEAG meeting.

7 RESPONSES TO EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

7.1 A Bioscience Sector response to the House of Lords European Union Committee Inquiry (already submitted)

The gave an overview of the consultation and OU response.

7.2 Response to the Consultation Paper on the proposals for the revision of EC Directive 86/609 (deadline 3.07.09).

The recommended that the organisation: Understanding Animal Research suggested formal wording be adapted and used in the response. The AEAG discussed the impact of the proposed Directive and how it may affect Higher Education Institutions in terms of increased costs to research using animals (non-human). However, it was seen to be positive as it would produce a more level playing field with European colleagues

8 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

8.1 has attended or would be attending the following:

- A meeting with members of Understanding Animal Research and members of the British Neuroscience Association at their National Meeting held at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, 19-22.04.09.
- New opportunities for the 3Rs, 23.04.09
- A meeting of the European Coalition for Biomedical Research (ECBR) in Bruxelles on the 17.07.09, where there would be a discussion of the EU Directive (AEAG/09/1/7.2)

8.2 It was **noted** that the Open University has a strong presence within the Tissue Engineering Society.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 RESEARCH ETHICS REFERENCE GROUP Tabled Paper

Two Research Committee papers on the proposed Research Ethics Reference Group were tabled and AEAG members were invited to propose a nominee to join the new Group. It was agreed AEAG members would consider this and responses would be made at the next meeting.

9.2 The AEAG noted that [redacted] would be reaching the end of AEAG term on 31.07.09. [redacted] is unable to serve for another year as [redacted] will be on sabbatical at the [redacted] from September 2009. The AEAG Chair extended the Group's thanks to [redacted] for all of AEAG work and wished [redacted] well for the future. A replacement [redacted] would be sought.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be advised.

Secretary to AEAG

21 September 2009

<http://www.open.ac.uk/research-ethics/index.shtml>