



VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY

ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE Policy ACC-006 - Animal User Training

PURPOSE

1. Consistent with its commitment to the highest possible standards in animal care and use in research, teaching and testing, Vancouver Island University (VIU) has established and maintains an institutional animal user training program that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) and is consistent with CCAC guidelines and standards. This policy defines:
 - a) the responsibilities of different members of the animal care and use program with respect to animal user training;
 - b) the components of the animal user training program;
 - c) the training required for animal users; and,
 - d) how animal user training records will be validated and maintained.

SCOPE

2. This Policy applies to all VIU Persons, which means those participating in scholarly activity, including full-time and part-time faculty, staff and students (including, without limitation, clinical faculty, visiting professors, and any persons enrolled in any degree, non-degree, diploma, certificate, or residency program at VIU) or any person who teaches, conducts research, or works at, or under the auspices of VIU.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3. All VIU Persons must possess:
 - a) an appreciation of the ethical issues surrounding the use of animals for scientific or pedagogical purposes in Canada;
 - b) adequate knowledge of the principles of experimental animal science relevant to their area of work (laboratory or field); and,
 - c) adequate knowledge and technical skills to humanely carry out approved procedures and to promote quality science based on the appropriate use of animals by skilled individuals.

4. Principal Investigators (PIs) are responsible for ensuring that all personnel working with animals under their supervision are named on an approved animal use protocol (AUP) and are adequately trained prior to appropriately and humanely carrying out procedures on the animals in their care.
5. The Animal Care and Committee (ACC) is responsible for oversight of the institutional animal user training program, and for verifying that VIU Persons have the training necessary to carry out animal care and use procedures.
6. Academic Heads (e.g. Deans) and Directors of the animal services units are responsible for ensuring delivery of up-to-date species-, technique- and facility-specific training consistent with CCAC standards, institutional training requirements, approved standard operating procedures, and for ensuring that personnel and trainees are trained for the animal care and use they conduct.
7. PIs are responsible for maintaining secure and consolidated records of animal user training.
8. The Post-Approval Monitoring Program will include assessments of animal users' competence and may include recommendations for additional training. The ACC may withhold approval of any AUP where lack of adequate training is a concern.
9. All members of the animal care and use program, including the staff of the animal services units, are responsible for ensuring that personnel and students working with animals are humanely carrying out the approved procedures assigned to them.
10. All animal users are encouraged to take any training or workshop that may benefit their studies regarding animal care and welfare, in addition to those which are required.
11. The University should provide access and resources for animal use personnel to pursue professional development related to their animal use and care.

ANIMAL USER TRAINING PROGRAM

12. The Institutional Animal User Program includes components that emphasize theoretical and practical training.

Part 1 - Ethics of Animal Use Training (Core Modules)

13. All VIU Persons involved in the use of animals for research, teaching and testing must have completed Ethics of Animal Use training, commonly known as the "Core Modules."

14. The Core Modules include the following core topics: Ethics in Animal Experimentation; the Three Rs of Humane Animal Experimentation (Reduction, Refinement and Replacement); Guidelines, Legislation and Regulations; and, Occupational Health and Safety. The Core Modules are based on material developed by CCAC and other CCAC accredited institutions, including VIU.
15. The Core Modules training is delivered online as a self-directed course. The ACC manages access to the online course and maintains secure online records of all users who have successfully completed the Core Modules for reference by members of the animal care and use program. The ACC will review the Core Module training at a minimum every three years.
16. All animal users are required to update their Core Modules training every 5 years. Evidence that an equivalent course has been taken elsewhere within the last 5 years may exempt an animal user from this requirement.

Part 2 - Species, Technique and Facility Training

17. All VIU Persons who handle or care for animals used in research, teaching or testing must be knowledgeable about the animals in their care, trained in the appropriate technical skills for the work or activities they will perform, and be knowledgeable about the facilities and life support systems which are relevant to their animal use.
18. Training for Part 2 may consist of, but may not be limited to: self-directed online learning, lectures or workshops, laboratory or field exercises, or direct small group or one-on-one demonstration and practice.
19. The animal user training must be of adequate frequency and oversight by proficient trainers to ensure all animal users receive necessary knowledge, skills and competency prior to performing ACC-approved animal procedures independently.
 - a) Until personnel or students have obtained competence to perform animal procedures, a competent individual must closely supervise their work with animals.
 - b) When practical skills must be acquired, training should be timed in proximity to the timeframe when the skills are required.
20. Documentation of practical training should consist of a description of the procedures, preferably in the form of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), for each procedure as practiced in the laboratory or field, with a statement dated and signed by the PI and/or trainer, acknowledging that the trainee was instructed in, and is competent to carry out the procedure, and signed by the trainee acknowledging the details of the training received.