

ANIMAL ETHICS AND CARE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

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The following is a selection of frequently asked questions (and their respective answers) concerning the CCAC animal ethics and care program components.

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1. When should an animal care committee require the submission of a protocol by a researcher / instructor / study director?

All proposed animal-based research, teaching, and testing activities must be clearly described in an animal protocol that must be approved by the institutional animal care committee before any animal-based work can begin. For CCAC's definition of "animal" and for exceptions to the above statement, please refer to the [*Requirement for submitting an animal protocol: Addendum to the CCAC policy statement on terms of reference for animal care committees*](#) (CCAC, 2018).

2. Who can and can not be a community representative on the animal care committee?

Community representatives come from all walks of life; they can, for example, be members of a humane society, retirees, lawyers, homemakers, business people, teachers, ethicists, or members of the clergy. Community representatives can have any background as long as they have never worked with animals for scientific purposes, are not affiliated¹ in any way with the institution that they will be working with, and do not have any conflict of interest that would compromise their role.

Specifically, the following should not be asked to serve as community representatives:

- current or former employees of the institution;
- someone with a real or perceived conflict of interest (e.g., family member of an animal care committee member, researcher, or senior administrator; someone involved with Board or Senate of an institution, etc.);
- someone who has exceeded eight continuous years of service on an animal care committee; or
- someone (currently or in the past) involved in animal-based research, teaching, or testing (e.g., graduate student working with animals).

Additional information can be found in the [*CCAC-CFHS Manual for Community Representatives*](#) (CCAC, 2006).

3. How should third-party facilities be overseen?

In the case of a CCAC-certified institution that does not own the animals or facilities where research, teaching, or testing animals are housed (e.g., animals on private farms involved in teaching or research) or where animal-based work is undertaken, the CCAC's expectations with regard to institutional responsibilities related to the CCAC Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice[®] are:

- that the institution be responsible for the activities and processes under its direct control (animal care committee functions including protocol approval, site visits and post-approval monitoring, training of their personnel, scientific and pedagogical merit review);

¹ Former undergraduate students are acceptable community representatives as long as they have not pursued further studies or work experience involving animals in research, teaching, or testing.

- that the institution set clear performance expectations for the elements not directly under its control (animal welfare, facilities, competency of on-site staff, veterinary services, occupational health and safety, and crisis management), with the understanding that third party facilities that do not meet these expectations will not, or no longer, be included in research or teaching projects. These expectations can be communicated through a memorandum of understanding or other documented method; and
- that third party facilities be visited by animal care committee members annually (not all members need to participate in the visit). At least two animal care committee members with no real or perceived conflict of interest can undertake a documented site visit and provide a report to the animal care committee. Facilities should strive to meet CCAC standards, and should at the very least meet industry standards (e.g., [National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice](#)) or an equivalent.

4. What CCAC resources are available to help animal care committees undertake effective and efficient site visits of animal facilities?

The CCAC has published [Guidance for Animal Care Committee Members Conducting Annual Site Visits](#) (CCAC, 2018) that includes a sample site visit form that animal care committees can adapt to their facilities.

In addition, the CCAC webinar [ACC Site Visits of Animal Facilities](#) is available on the CCAC website.

5. What are the CCAC requirements with regard to the pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training?

All animal-based teaching and training activities that require an animal protocol must undergo pedagogical merit review, as described in the [CCAC policy: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training](#) (CCAC, 2016).

Additional resources include the [CCAC frequently asked questions: Pedagogical merit of live animal-based teaching and training](#) (CCAC, 2018) and a [sample peer review form](#).

6. What are the CCAC requirements with regard to scientific peer review of animal-based research?

Animal-based research must only be undertaken if expert, independent opinion has attested to the probable scientific value of the research within its field. For a research program or project that has been examined through an independent and expert peer-review process (e.g. federal and provincial granting agencies and others), the institutional research administration can choose to accept the results of this review as evidence of scientific merit. In other cases, it is the institution's responsibility to develop and implement a mechanism to ensure that proposed research that will involve animals is independently reviewed for scientific merit by expert peers.

Additional information can be found in the [CCAC policy statement on: scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research](#) (CCAC, 2013) and its accompanying [frequently asked questions](#) document.

7. The CCAC recently published a list of definitions of animal-based activities and identified which activities require an animal use protocol (see the *Requirement for submitting an animal protocol: Addendum to the CCAC policy statement on terms of reference for animal care committees*). What should institutions do to meet CCAC expectations with regard to different animal-based activities?

The responsibility of the institution and the animal care committee will vary with the type of activity:

- **Animal-based community outreach** – non-invasive activities involving animals meant to informally educate the public and for which there is no assessment of understanding or retention of knowledge obtained from the involvement of animals.
 - **Institutional responsibility:** none (no pedagogical merit review)
 - **Animal care committee responsibility:** depends on the animals involved:
 - a) none, if no research or teaching animal involved; or
 - b) need to request the submission of an [*Oversight of Animal-Based Community Outreach Activities Form*](#) if research or teaching animals involved
- **Animal-based research** – any study aimed at the generation of new knowledge² where animals are involved
 - **Institutional responsibility:** scientific peer review
 - **Animal care committee responsibility:** review of animal use protocol
- **Animal-based teaching** – activities involving animals that formally educate participants enrolled in a course within a recognized academic curriculum, and for which there is a formal process to assess understanding and retention of knowledge obtained from animal involvement.
 - **Institutional responsibility:** pedagogical merit review
 - **Animal care committee responsibility:** review of animal use protocol
- **Animal-based testing** – experimental manipulation of animals with the measurement of defined experimental endpoints, generally for regulatory purposes. Safety testing involves procedures to determine, for example, whether, in what ways, and to what extent a compound is toxic. Efficacy testing involves procedures to determine whether a compound or device will be effective for a given condition. Environmental testing involves actively placing animals under environmental conditions that may impact them.
 - **Institutional responsibility:** regulatory requirements verification
 - **Animal care committee responsibility:** review of animal use protocol
- **Animal-based training** – activities involving animals that formally (e.g., directed studies) and informally (e.g., workshops) assist learners in acquiring competency, and for which there is a process to assess competency derived from animal involvement.
 - **Institutional responsibility:** expedited pedagogical merit review

² While research studies may include the examination of already existing data under a new hypothesis, the CCAC does not require the submission of protocols for the secondary use of data.

- **Animal care committee responsibility:** review of animal use protocol
- **Display** – keeping animals for personal or public display with no specific educational or research goal.
 - **Institutional responsibility:** none
 - **Animal care committee responsibility:** none
- **Monitoring** – monitoring is mostly for regulatory purposes and refers to the measurement of changes in a system over time, for example to detect the spread of disease agents in the wild or assessing parameters at the animal population level. It involves the routine collection of information obtained in a prescribed manner using standardized methods.
 - **Institutional responsibility:** none
 - **Animal care committee responsibility:** none
- **Practicum** – activities related to the supervised practical application of previously or concurrently studied theory, in which students often participate in performing tasks. These activities (e.g., time spent handling animals in an animal shelter, veterinary clinic, or farm beyond formal teaching or training) unlike structured laboratories are not undertaken in direct support of formal learning objectives described in a course outline as part of a formal curriculum. There is generally no formal process to assess the acquisition of skills obtained from animal involvement.
 - **Institutional responsibility:** none
 - **Animal care committee responsibility:** none

Certified institutions must ensure that research, teaching, and testing animals (within the CCAC mandate) are not adversely affected (e.g., cross-contamination) by animals outside the mandate.

To avoid any animal welfare issues, institutions are encouraged to have a policy, understanding, or agreement in place that sets conditions and expectations for keeping animals in an institution for purposes other than research, teaching, or testing.