# Background

Standard Condition 6 of the establishment licence states that the establishment must have an **Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body** (AWERB), and that the establishment licence holder must keep records of the advice provided by the AWERB and decisions taken in response to that advice (ASPA Schedule 2C, Part 1, paragraph 6, and Guidance on the Operation of ASPA). At the University of Glasgow the AWERB is known as the **Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body Committee** (AWERBC).

1.1 The minimum tasks of the AWERBC as stipulated in Article 27 of the Directive are to:

(a) Advise staff dealing with animals in the licensed establishment on matters related to the welfare of the animals, in relation to their acquisition, accommodation, care and use.

(b) Advise on the application of the 3Rs, and keep it informed of relevant technical and scientific developments.

(c) Establish and review management and operational processes for monitoring, reporting and follow-up in relation to the welfare of animals housed or used in the licensed establishment.

(d) Follow the development and outcome (retrospective review) of projects carried out in the establishment, taking into account the effect on the animals used; and to identify and advise on elements that could further contribute to the 3Rs.

(e) Advise on re-homing schemes, including the appropriate socialisation of the animals to be re-homed.

1.2 Additional tasks of the AWERBC as stipulated in Article 27 of the Directive are to:

(a) Advise the establishment licence holder whether to support project proposals, primarily considering such proposals from a local perspective and bringing local knowledge and local expertise to bear.

(b) Assist with the retrospective assessment of relevant projects carried out at their establishment.

(c) Respond to enquiries, and consider advice received, from the Animals in Science Committee.

(taken from ASPA Schedule 3, Part 2, paragraph 6(3) and Guidance on the Operation of ASPA)

# Aims of the AWERBC

2.1 The aims of the AWERBC are stated as being:

* To provide independent ethical advice to the Establishment Licence Holder, particularly with respect to project licence applications and standards of animal care and welfare;
* To provide support to named people and advice to licensees regarding animal welfare and ethical issues arising from their work;
* To promote the use of ethical analysis to increase awareness of animal welfare issues and develop initiatives leading to the widest possible application of the 3Rs (reduction, replacement and refinement).

To fulfil the legal requirements of the AWERBC, and to help promote a positive culture of care, the University of Glasgow AWERBC have made the following commitments:

* We will place the 3Rs, animal welfare and ethics at the heart of discussions.
* We will provide an inclusive environment and “safe space” to allow difficult questions to be raised and discussed without judgement.
* We will support the establishments “named people” and other staff dealing with animals on ethical issues.
* We will promote the 3Rs to the wider University community.
* We will be transparent and open to the wider University community on the activities of the AWERBC.
* We will create a culture of advising and enabling the University community.

To achieve these commitments, objectives will be set and reviewed annually by the AWERBC.  There will also be an annual AWERBC meeting with an open invitation to the wider University community.

# Staffing

3.1 In discharge of the requirement for AWERBC the Establishment Licence Holder is responsible to the Home Office for both the operation of the local AWERBC Process and the appointment of people to implement its procedures.

3.2 In order to meet the operational requirements of the AWERBC, the Establishment Licence Holder has appointed the personnel listed below to form a AWERBC pool. The pool comprises:

3.2.1 A Chairperson (a senior member of the academic staff with experience of animal work). There will be an arrangement for a deputy to be nominated from a Panel in the event of the Chairman’s absence;

3.2.2 The Named Veterinary Surgeons;

3.2.3 Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers;

3.2.4 Named Information Officer;

3.2.5 Named Training and Competency Officer;

3.2.6 A pool of Scientists, normally taken from the Project Licence holders;

3.2.7 A lay person whose role will be to bring an independent and different perspective to the Committee and reflect wider public concerns;

3.2.8 Clerk and administrator for the AWERBC.

# The AWERBC Membership

4.1 Membership shall consist of

The Chairperson or deputy; \*

Named Veterinary Surgeon; \*

NACWO; \*

A Project Licence/Scientist member; \*

The lay person;\*

Clerk for the AWERBC Process, or deputy; \*

NTCO;

NIO.

*\*denotes quorum for a meeting*

4.2 The AWERBC normally meets monthly to review the business of the committee. Sub Committees, Directors and Named staff will normally provide reports for each meeting as required.

4.3 The AWERBC can draft, develop, and implement policy and initiatives on ethical and other matters. This is distributed to and promoted within the animal research community in the University. This includes the dissemination of good practice relating to the 3Rs that is manifested in a particular project application but which in the opinion of the AWERBC may have a wider application across the institution.

4.4 The AWERBC reviews all new Project Licence applications for comment and approval, prior to submission to the Home Office. The AWERBC reviews Project Licence Amendments as required. The AWERBC receives updates on previous months’ applications’ progress and, annually, on numbers of applications. It produces an annual report.

4.5 If a vote is necessary, the motion will be passed if a majority of those present vote in favour of it, provided that the meeting is quorate. The person chairing the meeting shall have a deliberative and a casting vote.

4.6 If Secondary Availability on Project Licences is requested then the application must also submit the application to the relevant other institution(s).

4.7 In respect of Personal Licence applications, any areas of concern may be submitted to the AWERBC.

4.8 Mid-term PPL Review Panel:

At the mid-point of the PPL, the licence holder will be asked to complete a review of the work to date. This will then be passed on to the review panel. The Review Panel will comprise:

* The Chairperson or deputy
* Named Veterinary Surgeon

The outcome of the review is sent to the licence holder. The licence holder may be asked to apply for an amendment to the licence in the report. It is within the power of the Review Panel to advise the Establishment Licence Holder that the Project be terminated.

4.9 Where a Project Licence contains a condition that Retrospective Assessment is required, the licence holder will be contacted ahead of the assessment date. The Retrospective Assessment will be completed on ASPeL and then forwarded to the AWERBC for review prior to the submission to the Home Office.

# Subgroups of the Main AWERBC

**5.1 Project Licence Review Subgroup:**

The Project Licence Review subgroup will review all draft project licences to ensure that it is at the required standard prior to submission to the AWERBC for formal review. The group will aim to respond within 20 working days. The group will be made up as follows:

* NVS – Protocols
* NTCO – Training and experience
* NACWO Trained staff – Protocols
* Scientist – Scientific Background and experience
* HOLC – NTS/Lay summary

**5.2 PPL Amendment Subgroup:**

The Project Licence Amendment subgroup will review draft project licence amendments as required, to ensure that it is at the required standard prior to submission to the Home Office. The group will aim to respond within 10 working days. The group will be made up as follows:

* NVS
* NACWO
* Scientist

**5.3 Culture of Care Subgroup:**

Formation of a dedicated AWERBC Culture of Care Subgroup will ensure topics concerning animal and staff welfare, and best practice can be discussed at length in an open forum.

CofC subgroup will consist of: Chair, Clerk, Scientific Member, Human welfare member, Animal welfare member, event organiser and an animal technician from UofG and Beatson The Culture of Care Subgroup will report at the main AWERBC meetings. If the Culture of Care Subgroup committee is seeking PEL endorsement of a new policy or guideline, then the process is as outlined below:

* Policy should be discussed at AWERBC Culture of Care Subgroup meeting
* Draft policy submitted to main AWERBC for review
* Reviewed policy circulated to project and personal licence holders for final comment
* Statement released by main AWERBC on new policy or guideline and new policy or guideline added to the Biological Services intranet site.

An annual Culture of Care day will be held and there will be an open invitation to the whole Establishment and to external institutes.

# AWERB Resources

* [Animals in Science Regulation Unit](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/animals-in-science-regulation-unit#animals-(scientific-procedures)-act-1986)
* [RSPCA – The UK AWERB](https://science.rspca.org.uk/sciencegroup/researchanimals/ethicalreview/uk)
* [RSPCA – The AWERB Directory](https://science.rspca.org.uk/sciencegroup/researchanimals/ethicalreview/uk/resources)
* [Understanding Animal Research](file:///\\campus.gla.ac.uk\SSD_Dept_Data_D\CRT\CRTPublic\Licence\higginsa\awerb\Policy\nderstandinganimalresearch.org.uk\news\what-is-an-awerb-and-how-does-it-help-promote-high-standards-of-animal-welfare-in-research#:~:text=AWERB%20stands%20for%20Animal%20Welfare,(Scientific%20Procedures)%20Act%201986.)
* [LASA – Guiding principles on good practice for Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Bodies](https://www.lasa.co.uk/PDF/AWERB_Guiding_Principles_2015_final.pdf)