

## Guide for Animal Ethics Standard Operating Procedures

### Contents

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Introduction and Defining a Standard Operating Procedure .....	1
Compliance with ‘the Code’ .....	2
Ethics Committee Endorsement of SOPs .....	2
Change of Author Request.....	2
SOP Renewals.....	3
Sharing approved SOPs. ....	3

### Introduction and Defining a Standard Operating Procedure

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are documents that describe a preferred method for performing a task.

Generally individual SOPs are submitted to the University Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) for review and approval if they are being used repeatedly or used across multiple researchers. There may be circumstances where SOPs are incorporated into the AEC application methodology and not submitted separately for approval. **For example:** when new procedures are being tested or if they are just for a particular research project and not used repeatedly or shared.

Standard Operating Procedures may be created by:

- researchers and animal facility managers to describe in detail how a certain experimental procedure is performed, or to describe how a certain procedure relating to the husbandry, welfare or management of animals is performed; or created by a
- University Veterinarians to describe how a certain procedure relevant to the welfare of animal’s must be performed.

*Examples: An SOP describing how to euthanise a rodent using CO<sub>2</sub>; A SOP describing a surgical procedure on an animal*

## Compliance with 'the Code'

For researchers to be compliant with the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#) (the Code) - the following principles must be followed:

**2.2.33** *Institutions, in consultation with the AEC, may allow the AEC to consider and approve standard operating procedures (SOPs) relating to the care and use of animals. Reference to SOPs can help people prepare applications to the AEC, but may make it more difficult for the AEC to apply rigour when evaluating procedures described in applications. An SOP must only be referenced in an application under the following conditions:*

1. *the SOP must have current approval from the AEC*
2. *the SOP must include in its title the date of approval or last review by the AEC*
3. *investigators named in the application must be competent to implement the SOP*
4. *any variation to an SOP must be described in the application and should be considered as a prompt for review of the SOP.*

**2.2.34** *New SOPs must not be used until approved by the AEC*

**2.2.35** *If an approved SOP is not reviewed by the AEC within three years of its approval, approval for the SOP lapses, and the SOP cannot be used.*

## Ethics Committee Endorsement of SOPs

SOPs can only be submitted for ethics committee endorsement via the online ethics portal 'Ethics Review Manager (ERM)' using the AEC Standard Operating Procedure form.

The ethics committee will review submitted SOPs during their usual meetings and may request amendments to the document prior to endorsement.

Once endorsed, a notification will be sent from ERM. Approval expiry dates are 3 years for AEC approved SOPs as per the 'Code'.

The AEC will determine whether an endorsed SOP represents a key decision.

## Change of Author Request

A Change of Author can be requested on an approved AEC SOP. This request is used when a SOP Authorship is transferred to another Researcher.

When a Change of Author Request is approved by the AEC, the SOP then becomes the new Author's responsibility.

Please contact [animal.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:animal.ethics@utas.edu.au) to unlock the approved AEC SOP to submit the 'Change of Author' request.

## SOP Renewals

All AEC approved SOPs will be listed on the UTAS intranet - this will include the ethics reference number, title and author of the SOP, and the SOP expiry date. Researchers can request a copy of the approved SOP from the author or request that the author share their SOP form in ERM.

If the author of an approved SOP **does not** want the SOP made available to share with other staff and students, the “No” option must be ticked in the form.

Please contact [animal.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:animal.ethics@utas.edu.au) to unlock the approved AEC SOP to submit the ‘SOP Renewal’ for AEC review and approval.

## Sharing approved SOPs.

All AEC approved SOPs will be listed on the University’s Intranet and will include the ethics reference number, title, version, author of the SOP, and the SOP expiry date. University staff/students can contact the author for a copy of the approved SOP or request access to the SOP in ERM.

**University Veterinary AEC approved SOPs** are available as a download on the University Intranet.