

THE BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE

The UWO Biosafety Officer is responsible for administering the Biosafety program on a day-to-day basis, for providing technical advice on safety procedures and equipment and relevant regulations.

Mandate

The University of Western Ontario Biosafety Committee (UBSC) is a Sub-committee of the University Health and Safety Committee (UHSC) and makes recommendations to the UHSC on all matters pertaining to biosafety at Western. The UBSC is also mandated to fulfil the responsibilities of a Research Institution Biological Safety Committee as described in the most current version of the Health Canada Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines. These responsibilities include verifying that all work with biohazardous agents which is carried out at the University of Western Ontario is in accordance with the safety practices as stated in the Guidelines. The UBSC also makes recommendations concerning biohazardous agents that, while not dangerous to human health, pose a threat to the natural environment or agriculture, i.e. agents under the control of Environment Canada or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The UBSC provides advice with respect to biosafety to the University's affiliated research institutions, the Lawson Health Research Institute [Lawson], London Regional Cancer Program [LRCP], Child and Parent Research Institute [CPRI], and the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Station [ACRC]), which are each represented on the Committee.

Terms of Reference

1. To make recommendations to the University Health and Safety Committee on actions and/or policies related to biosafety at the University of Western Ontario.
2. To monitor and promote compliance with the established policies and procedures as set out in the most current version of the Health Canada Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines, and other government and University guidelines related to biosafety
3. To develop and recommend policies and procedures to meet or exceed the requirements for each containment level as stated in most current version of the Health Canada Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines, or the most current version of Canadian Food Inspection Agency document: Containment Standards for Veterinary Facilities, or other applicable standards for teaching and research.
4. To approve protocols involving the use of potentially biohazardous agents including genetically modified organisms and animals potentially carrying infectious zoonotic agents and to confirm the appropriate containment level for the work; to verify that the appropriate facilities and procedures are in use and to ensure that appropriate procedures for the use, storage and disposal of the named agents are followed.
5. To approve applications for greenhouse or field trials of genetically modified organisms.

6. To review the procurement and use of all biohazards, including animals, human source tissues, blood and body fluids for research and undergraduate teaching, and to recommend and monitor the appropriate safety precautions.
7. In collaboration with the University Biosafety Officer, to review, recommend and act as an expert resource for biosafety education and training programs at Western.
8. To recommend to the University that appropriate institutional occupational health programs be put in place as necessary to achieve the outcomes stated above.
9. To establish Sub-committees to carry out specific tasks as mandated by the UBSC.
10. If the Biosafety committee or subcommittees make a recommendation that has cost implications to capital or operational budgets, this recommendation will be forwarded to the University Health and Safety Committee for further consideration. All such recommendations will clearly outline the purpose and rationale of the recommendation and all potential costs associated with it.

BIOSECURITY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mandate

Biosecurity measures are implemented to prevent the theft or intentional release of pathogens and toxins that would pose a threat to human health, agriculture, or the natural environment. The Biosecurity Sub-committee is a Sub-committee of the University Biosafety Committee (UBSC) and makes recommendations to the UBSC on all matters related to biosecurity. The committee examines the biosecurity risk of agents used and recommends any necessary biosecurity measures to be taken, including the prohibition of agents. The committee will also ensure that The University of Western Ontario complies with all relevant government legislation and university guidelines; including Section 2.6 of the most current Health Canada Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines and guidelines issued by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency or Environment Canada.

Terms of Reference

1. Perform risk assessment for The University of Western Ontario as required by relevant legislation and guidelines, including the current Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines. The committee will advise on biosecurity measures required as a result of the risk assessment.
2. To examine the biohazards used at The University of Western Ontario, determine the risk, and prescribe any biosecurity measures to be taken – including physical security, personnel accountability and agent accountability.
3. To prohibit any biosecurity risk agents deemed too high of a risk to the institution and prescribe measures to eliminate the storage, exportation, importation or use of these agents as determined by the Biohazards Sub-committee.
4. To consult government agencies and other experts as required.
5. To report biosecurity issues to the Biosafety Committee.