Purpose / Scope

The purpose of this policy is to apply CCAC's guidelines for the training of Animal Users and caregivers; and to outline the associated roles and responsibilities for the Animal User Training Program associated with Western's Research Community.

Rationale

Both our national (CCAC) and provincial (OMAFRA) regulators require that people working with live animals understand ethics in alignment with the Three Rs Tenet[1] and be knowledgeable and skilled in performing hands-on procedures.

Policy

Animal User Training Program elements must engender a culture of respect for animal life and must be designed to align with the Three Rs, as per CCAC's guideline on: training of personnel working with animals in science (2015).

All Animal Users and caregivers must demonstrate their understanding of ethics associated with the humane use of animals, including the Three R's tenet of replacement, reduction and refinement.

Any concerns associated with respect to Animal User and caregiver competency and/or the Animal User Training Program must be forwarded to the ACC Executive for consideration, as per the *Concerns Policy* (POL-004).

Training Program Administration

The Animal User Training Program must be administered centrally by the Department of Animal Care & Veterinary Services (ACVS), which is responsible to: determine Animal User training requirements; establish training competency benchmarks; develop and maintain training program content and training platforms; and maintain training records.

- Other Animal User trainers will be pre-approved by ACVS and will follow the centralized training program elements.
- The ACC via its Executive must be apprised of any significant changes to the Animal User Training Program.

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[1] CCAC. Three Rs Microsite. https://3rs.ccac.ca

Required Training

Animal Users and caregivers must complete the following CCAC-mandated animal training involving both theoretical and practical skills and prior to undertaking animal-based science or animal care work, as outlined within ACC-approved Animal Use Protocols (AUPs) and/or associated with institutional roles:

- Western's Animal Ethics and Regulations online ethics course, or an ACVS-approved alternative; and,

- as required by the Animal User's role, hands-on animal workshops / training sessions and their associated online course prerequisites.

Exemption from the training requirements may be requested and will be considered by the ACC Training Exemption Working Group based upon documented and/or demonstrated evidence that an equivalent course or experience has been obtained elsewhere (See *Procedures for Institutional Animal User Training*-PROC-017).

Competency Assurance

Animal User training must be offered with 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.

The responsibility for ensuring Animal Users and caregivers are competent will be shared among ACC-approved trainers and supervisors of Animal User trainees, e.g. AUP Holders, Facility supervisors.

Until personnel have obtained competence to perform animal procedures, a competent individual must closely supervise their work with animals.

When practical skills must be acquired, training should be timed in proximity to the timeframe when the skills are required.

References

Canadian Council on Animal Care

- CCAC guidelines on: training of personnel working with animals in science (2015)
- CCAC Frequently Asked Questions – Training of personnel working with animals in science (2017)
- Three Rs Microsite

Animals for Research Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. A.22, s.17(2)(c)

Revision History

Version	Date	Description of Changes	Author
00	10-11-2020	MAPP 7.10 replacement of operational elements	LT

Animal Users – Individuals who either use in animal-based science, or are employed to care for 'animals,' as defined by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC)

Western's Research Community – Institutions and their departments involving animal-based scientists having Animal Use Protocols under the jurisdiction of Western's Animal Care Committee (ACC)

Competency – as per Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), the ability to effectively perform a particular task in relation to the care, maintenance or use of animals, while ensuring their welfare is protected as far as possible within the constraints of any approved Animal Use Protocols (AUP).[2]

Three Rs Tenet – Principles developed by Russell and Burch (1959) that provide a framework for the ethical use of animals in scholarship: Replacement, Reduction and Refinement. Replace – avoid or replace the use of animals wherever possible; Reduce – utilize strategies that reduce the number of animals used while maintaining experimental design; Refine – modify procedures and/or practices to reduce animal stress or pain

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[2] Canadian Council on Animal Care. CCAC Guidelines on: training of personnel working with animals in science. P.5