



Institutional Biosafety Committee

Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION

The Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) is a formally constituted Sub-Committee of the Research Integrity Committee (RIC) responsible for assisting the University in meeting its' legislative obligations regarding the safety ([Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)) and regulatory aspects of research and teaching activities involving Genetically Modified Organisms ([Gene Technology Act 2000](#)), Biosecurity Material ([Biosecurity Act 2015](#)), Security Sensitive Biological Agents ([National Health Security Act, 2007](#)) and general biohazardous/biological materials (AS/NZ 2243.3).

The Committee reports to the University Research Committee (URC) through the RIC.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor - Research and Innovation (DVC R&I) is the officer of the University of Wollongong (UOW) accountable for ensuring compliance of the University with the requisite legislation and regulations and as such oversees the activities of the IBC and reports to the Vice-Chancellor regarding these responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The IBC will:

- Make recommendations to promote work, health and safety best practice at UOW work sites in relation to research or teaching activities involving biohazardous/biological materials, including Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), Biosecurity Material and Security Sensitive Biological Agents (SSBAs).
- Assist the University to meet its obligations under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#), [Gene Technology Act 2000](#), [Biosecurity Act 2015](#) and [National Health and Security Act 2007](#), [AS/NZ2243.3](#) and other applicable Regulations, Standards and Codes of Practice.
- Assess, approve, inspect and monitor all physical containment facilities where GMOs and other biohazardous materials (PC2 and above) are being used for compliance with regulatory requirements.
- Review findings of all local inspections of certified facilities.
- Participate in the planning, design and installation stages of proposed biological containment facilities, including advising on or determining whether a proposed facility complies with regulations and/or standards (OGTR-certified, Biosecurity Approved Arrangements and [AS/NZ2243.1](#) and [AS/NZ2243.3](#)).
- Undertake the assessment, approval and monitoring of University research and teaching activities involving the use of biohazardous materials, GMOs (PC2 and above) and pathogenic organisms (including assessing the qualifications and experience of those involved).
- Oversee a register of GMOs, (PC2 and above) biosecurity and other biological materials.
- Provide advice and assistance to the University community on potential biohazardous materials and their management and communicate changes in Australian standards and regulations and applicable guidelines to the University community.
- Review and comment on University plans and policies that may affect biological safety, including safe handling and storage of biohazardous materials and training and qualifications of personnel involved.
- Prepare and submit annual reports to the OGTR and other internal and external governing bodies as required.
- Provide regular reports (at least 1 per year) to the RIC.
- Perform all other duties as required by legislation relevant to GMOs, biohazardous materials and biological safety.



MEMBERSHIP

The IBC shall consist of:

- The Chair;
- The Deputy-Chair (appointed from within the membership categories below);
- A molecular biologist or geneticist with the requisite knowledge and expertise to assess, evaluate and oversee work involving the use of GMOs;
- A microbiologist with the requisite knowledge and expertise to assess, evaluate and oversee work involving the use of micro-organisms;
- A cell biologist with expertise in chemical, biochemical and physical interactions of cell culture media and reagent components and cell culture and cell line experience;
- At least one (if not two) University representatives or associates with expertise in Biocontainment and quarantine requirements;
- A representative of the University Workplace Health and Safety Division with expertise in biosafety practices and legislative and regulatory compliance;
- A representative of the Facilities Management Division;
- A representative working in the field of Operations Management;
- A representative of the Animal Ethics Committee;
- A representative of the Human Research Ethics Committee;
- An independent (lay) member with no personal, pecuniary or research association with the University; and
- An Executive Officer (non-voting member) appointed by the Research Services Office.

Executive Officer: Research Integrity Officer, Research Services Office.

The DVC (RI) shall appoint members to the Committee for a term of two years. Any short-term replacements will be a matter for the Chair to determine, in consultation with the Executive Officer.

The Chair may choose to invite experts to the meeting to provide advice to the Committee. These will be non-voting members

Both genders are to be represented on the Committee and if necessary, additional members will be co-opted to meet this requirement.

QUORUM

The Committee shall have a quorum which is equal to one half of the membership plus one.

All Committee members must attend 75% of scheduled meetings on an annual basis, subject to extenuating circumstances. On the occasions where Committee members cannot attend meetings, apologies must be submitted in writing to the Executive Officer.

MEETING FREQUENCY

The IBC will meet at least four (4) times per year.

Should urgent matters require review between these meetings a Sub-Committee of at least four voting members including the Chair (or their nominee). The minute and resolutions of the Sub-Committee shall be reported to the next full Committee Meeting.

