

CHARTER TEMPLATE

NAME OF INSTITUTION/UNIVERSITY

ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (OFFICE, DEPARTMENT)

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Article 1. General Provisions

- 1.1. This charter defines the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (herein the Committee) competence, its organizational structure and working.
- 1.2. The main goal of the Committee is to ensure the compliance of scientific research, including the educational programs (herein the research), with internationally recognized ethical standards and "3R" principle.
- 1.3. The Committee conducts its activities in accordance with the UNESCO Declaration of Animal Rights and its additional protocols, European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and other Scientific Purposes, other animal rights-related international agreements and in accordance with Georgian legislation and on the basis of the present Charter
- 1.4. The Committee work is coordinated with the Institution's Vice-Rector for Research, Quality Assurance Department and Training Center for Scientific Skills.
- 1.5. The Committee is subordinated to the Academic Council of the institution/university .
- 1.6. The Committee is independent in its decision-making: any kind of external interference or pressure on the Committee is prohibited.

Article 2. Powers of the Committee

The Committee is entitled to:

- 2.1. Develop, review and approve the research applications, supporting documentation and other additional forms.
- 2.2. Evaluate the compliance of the research plan and methodology with ethical norms and prepare a the report in accordance with established criteria (p. 6.5);
- 2.3. Provide proper registration of the research evaluated by the Committee;
- 2.4. Monitor approved research and in case of violations take the relevant measures (warning, temporary suspension or full cancellation of research) to correct;
- 2.5. Support the implementation of state-of-the-art ethical and legal standards for animal-involved research at the University and promote committee activities.

Article 3. Structure and Staff

- 3.1. The Committee consists of 3-5 members (including academic or scientific staff of the research unit, vivarium employee, employee of the institution, which is not involved in the animal-related research) e.g.:
 - a) The academic / scientific staff selected by the appropriate department (research unit) Board 1-3 members.
 - b) from legal service - 1 member;
 - c) from veterinary service - 1 member;
- 3.2. Committee members should be nominated by institution's Vice-Rector (Deputy Director) and approved by the institution's Academic Council.
- 3.3. Committee chairperson should be elected at the first session of the Committee by secret ballot. Committee chairperson nominates the Secretary of the Committee.
- 3.4. The Committee discussed and approved by the Committee members and experts / prepared by experts and the conclusions of the Committee's annual report.

Article 4. Committee Meeting Regulations

- 4.1. Committee meeting should be held at least once a month. In urgent case (correction, suspension or termination of the research program) an extraordinary meeting should be convened.
- 4.2. Committee meetings are guided in accordance with a pre-determined agenda. The meeting is headed by Chairperson of the Committee (in his absence – by entitled member).
- 4.3. The Committee is empowered to hold a meeting and make a decision, if at least 1/2 of its members attend the meeting.
- 4.4. The decision is made, if voted for by the majority of the attending members. In case of equal votes, the casting vote belongs to the Chairperson.
- 4.5. The agenda of the forthcoming Committee meeting is drafted by a Secretary of the Committee in view of all issues and circumstances rose since the last meeting.
- 4.6. The agenda should be sent to the Committee members for at least 3-5 days prior to the meeting.
- 4.7. The Secretary of the Committee keeps the minutes of the meeting;
- 4.8. The minutes should be signed by the Chairperson and Secretary;

- 4.9. Chairperson of the Committee has the right to invite persons who are not members of the Committee to participate in the meeting. Personal information of the invited members should be provided to Committee members together with the agenda.
- 4.10. Committee's charter, application forms and other documents should be placed on regularly updated webpage of the Institution's website.

Article 5. Application Procedure

- 5.1. Hardcopies and digital versions of the application and scientific research documentation (p.5.2) should be provided to the Secretary of the Committee for further assessment and expertise.
- 5.2. The Committee should be provided with the following documents:
 - A) the request for conducting expert evaluation of the research to be done on animals ;
 - B) the application form, containing the following information:
 - main purpose of the research, justification for choice of species and number of animals, scientific evidence;
 - personal data of principal investigator and all researchers with reference to the experience and qualifications;
 - research methods, scope and duration of the experiment, methods of anesthesia and euthanasia, statistical, analytical methods, etc.;
 - Information on further possible use/application of the research results, data or biological materials including those for the commercial purposes;
- 5.3. If necessary, the Committee has the right to request any additional information, necessary for the ethical evaluation of the research project and making a decision.
- 5.4. The application should be registered in the journal under corresponding number, indicating the title of the proposal, the application date, personal data of principal investigator and title of the research unit (s), which conducts the study.

Article 6. Review and Decision-Making Procedure

- 6.1. Secretary of the Committee conducts a technical expertise of documentation:
 - A) In the case of the doctoral program (approved by the Quality Assurance Service of the University/Institute) the program itself, filled application forms (hardcopies and digital versions) should be delivered to the Committee from the Scientific Research, Master's and Doctorate's Coordination Service;

B) in case of a grant or any other experimental research project, hardcopies and digital versions of a research project itself and filled application forms must be submitted together with the request of the Head of the corresponding research unit (or the Project Manager) to the Committee Chairperson.

- 6.2. Complete set of the documents should be delivered to the expert (a committee member or an invited specialist that is not involved in the study).
- 6.3. Experts are chosen by the Committee Meeting.
- 6.4. The expert should review the proposal and provide a conclusion within 1 month from the application date
- 6.5. The expert reviews the research plan based on the context of the documentation and in accordance with the following criteria:
 - significance of a program for human or animal health, promoting of knowledge and the community welfare;
 - analysis of possible alternative research (in vitro systems, computer modeling and / or mathematical models) to reduce the use of animals or change;
 - the nature, quality and number of animals used;
 - discomfort, distress and pain could have been avoided or minimized;
 - use of appropriate sedation, analgesia and anesthesia;
 - method of euthanasia;
 - provision of adequate veterinary care;
 - proper animal transportation (if applicable) and housing, under the guidance of qualified personnel;
 - experience and qualification of all personnel involved in the research
- 6.6. The Committee could make the following decision:
 - A) approve without any changes (consent - the expert's positive assessment), which allows the researcher to conduct research on the set plan, it is without any changes.
 - B) approve conditionally (consent - the expert's positive assessment with minor remarks), that allows to start a project only after the recommended specific changes are made and/or requested additional information is submitted to the Committee. In this case, the final decision to approve/decline the project is made by the Committee Chairperson based on results of voting of Committee members.
 - C) decline (consent - the expert's negative assessment) which means that the research project requires major revisions. In this case, the corrected project can be resubmitted for consideration at one of subsequent Committee meetings.
- 6.7. The applicant should be informed about the decision not later than one month from the submission date.

- 6.8. In special cases, the Committee has a power to decrease/increase the assessment period.
- 6.9. Committee's final decision on approval/rejection should be drawn in minutes and recorded in a special register.
- 6.10. Excerpt from the minutes on the review and decision should be given to the Principal Investigator or his authorized representative upon request.

Article 7. Final Provisions

- 7.1. Charter of the Committee should be approved by the Academic Council of _____.
- 7.2. If necessary, the committee prepares the project of amendments to the Charter and submits for approval to the Academic Council.