



## Contents

Purpose / Scope.....	1.....
Rationale.....	1.....
Policy.....	2.....
Projects with Independent, Expert Scientific Merit Review from Funding Agencies.....	2
Projects without Independent, Expert Scientific Merit Review from Funding Agencies.....	3
References.....	3.....
Revision History.....	3.....

## Purpose / Scope

The purpose of this policy is to apply Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) requirements for ensuring scientific merit review of animal use for research purposes, as per CCAC's policy statement on scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research. This policy pertains to basic and applied research associated with Animal Use Protocols (AUPs) and affiliates.

This policy does not apply to projects focused upon regulatory, teaching or training, except where individuals are being taught or trained as research partners, animal health surveillance, or the production of animals or biologics for scientific purposes, except where that production is part of a research project.

## Rationale

In its preamble to the policy statement on scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research, CCAC states that animal use in research must only be undertaken if expert, independent opinion has attested to the probable scientific value of the research within its field. Each institution is responsible to develop and utilize a mechanism to ensure that all research involving animals has received independent review of its scientific value by expert peers.

[Return to TOC](#)

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Council on Animal Care. Frequently Asked Questions on the CCAC policy statement on: scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research. (2019). Retrieved from [https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/FAQ\\_Scientific\\_merit\\_and\\_ethical\\_review\\_of\\_animal-based\\_research.pdf](https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/FAQ_Scientific_merit_and_ethical_review_of_animal-based_research.pdf) 7 May 2024

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Council on Animal Care. CCAC policy statement on: scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research. (2013). Retrieved from [https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Scientific\\_merit\\_and\\_ethical\\_review\\_of\\_animal-based\\_research.pdf](https://www.ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Scientific_merit_and_ethical_review_of_animal-based_research.pdf) 7 May 2024



## Policy

Before an AUP is approved by Western's ACC, the project must first undergo scientific merit review.

Scientific merit reviewers must  
possess the expertise to adequately review the science, and  
be independent from the research under review as defined by the Agency.

Scientific merit reviews must be completed for all new AUPs and every subsequent Full Renewal.

Pilot studies used to explore a new research direction not covered within an existing peer reviewed AUP must undergo scientific merit review.

Pilot studies that develop or evaluate a new methodology within the context of an existing merit reviewed AUP do not require scientific merit review.

The ACC reserves the right to request a scientific merit review at any time when there are significant changes to an AUP being requested, e.g., the research goal.

Where uncertainty exists regarding whether a new study should be considered part of a research program, the Department/ Research Institute (p) 23 (r) (t) 5 -4.3 (tetU)-3.3 (P)-8.7 ( b)-0.6 (s)-40 g T5B



## Projects without Independent, Expert Scientific Merit Review from Funding Agencies

For projects funded by external agencies or by internal funding sources that do not undertake scientific merit review by independent experts, scientific merit reviews must be undertaken by a minimum of two independent, expert peers who are selected by the Department/ Research Institute.

Department/ Research Institutes associated with the AUP must:

determine appropriate scientific merit reviewers

maintain this membership list and provide it to the Office of Research Ethics and Compliance and

coordinate communications about the merit reviews with the IRBs.

Procedures for Undertaking Scientific Merit Reviews must be followed (PROC 13).

Once the scientific merit review has been completed and consensus is reached by the reviewers, the Department/ Research Institute must notify the ACC of the decision.

[Return to TOC](#)

---

## References

Western University

MAPP 7.12 Animal Ethics and Care Program

Animal Use Protocols Policy (POL 02-A) and Guidelines for AUP Reviews for Principal Investigators (GUID002)

Canadian Council on Animal Care.

CCAC policy statement on: scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research

Frequently Asked Questions on the CCAC policy statement on: scientific merit and ethical review of animal-based research

[Return to TOC](#)

---

## Revision History



Animal Care Committee  
Scientific Merit Review

Version	Date <i>dd/mm/yyyy</i>	Description of Changes	Author