

Guidelines to the Use of Facilities 2005
Dept of Experimental Surgery
Singapore General Hospital

Preamble

The Department of Experimental Surgery (DES) is funded through competitive, public grants to serve as a national translational research facility with expertise in laboratory animal science. The department has more than two decades of experience in this field. The highly skilled staff and comprehensive facilities the department has built over the years allow the department to carry out research projects to the highest international standards.

DES serves the needs of the entire local research community and this includes both academia and the biomedical industry. Approximately 30 - 40 research projects are carried out in the department every year by research groups and investigators from more than 15 departments, institutions and companies. These projects cover a broad range of in- vitro and in- vivo animal, as well as cadveric-based research projects. The department hosts another 20 -30 training projects based on animal models or cadaveric parts yearly

There is thus high demand for the use of the department's facilities and expertise. It is therefore important that rules pertaining to the use of these facilities be observed strictly to maximize resources and minimize potential glitches that may impact negatively on research results.

All users of the facilities in DES are expected to comply with the Guidelines below:

General Guidelines

1. No project involving the use of animals may proceed without approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) of Singhealth. A copy of the approval letter must be lodged with Department before the project commences. The IACUC approval number must be quoted in all communications and documents.
2. Prior to the commencement of any research or training project (including cadaver-based projects) the principal investigator or director of a training program must draw up a Statement of Works with the Director of DES which will set out the aims of the project, the resources required, the amount and terms of payment, the schedule of works and the deliverables expected from all parties. The Statement of Works will be signed by the Director for DES and the relevant Head of Department.

Where the user belongs to an institution outside of Singhealth, a Research Agreement or Contract must also be signed between CEO of SGH and the CEO or equivalent person of that institution.

3. Requests for animal resources must be made not later than 3 weeks ahead of time, and for cadaveric parts not later than 6 months ahead of time. Bookings for the use of facilities and for technical assistance must be made not later than 2 weeks ahead of time.
4. Bookings for animal facilities (both large and small animals) including operating theatres, microsurgical suites, angiography suites, gamma camera suites etc are in blocks of 2 hours each. Booking of clinical skills laboratory and similar facilities are in blocks of 4 hours each. Cancellation of bookings must be made at least 48 hours ahead of time or a late penalty of 50% of the charges will be levied.

Animal Use and Care

1. All principal investigators and directors of training programs must have attended the Responsible Care and Use of Animals course prescribed by the National Advisory Committee on Laboratory Animal Care (NACLAR). From 1st July 2005, all users of animals must have attended the prescribed course.
2. All animals kept in the facilities of DES shall be cared for by veterinary staff of DES under the supervision of the Institutional Veterinarian. Access to the animal must be arranged through veterinary staff.
3. Animal procedures may only be carried out by named individuals with experience and training in the procedures. The Institutional Veterinarian is the final arbiter of such competence. Where the investigators lack such experience, the procedures should either be carried out by professional technical or veterinary staff of DES or the investigators should receive the appropriate training in such procedures from the staff or other experienced individuals. Such training must be logged and signed.
4. Animals must only be ordered through DES. Order forms are available in the DES office. Animals from other Institutions are not allowed on the SGH campus without approval from the IACUC and DES.