Preface

These statements of principle have been adapted from documents endorsed by the ANZCCART Board in September 1997. ANZCCART recommended to the AVCC that the statements, which complement the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals in Scientific Purposes, be adopted by member institutions.

The Charles Sturt University Animal Care and Ethics Committee has incorporated the Statement of Principles Guiding the Use of Animals in Teaching and Research in Australian Universities into its Standard Operating Procedures.

The Charles Sturt University Animal Care and Ethics Committee encourages the inclusion of the Statement of Principles Guiding Students in Laboratory Classes Involving the Use of Animals or Animal Tissues in class laboratory manuals, and has disseminated copies of the Statement for display in laboratories and other appropriate areas.

1 Adapted from paper prepared by Professor David Mellor, New Zealand Vice-Chancellors’ Committee representative on the New Zealand Board of ANZCCART, and Board member of ANZCCART Australia.
2 Adapted from document prepared by Professor David Mellor of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, Massey University, New Zealand with significant input from members of major animal science physiology and zoology departments in universities and polytechnics.
STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE USE OF ANIMALS IN TEACHING AND RESEARCH AT CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

Australian Society:

• places a high regard on human health and provides substantial funding to support medical research, much of which is animal-based;
• is heavily dependent economically on animal products and therefore on the productivity, health and well-being of its wide range of food and fibre producing animals;
• derives benefit from a wide variety of companion animals; and
• is enriched by the diversity of other animals, many of which are unique to this country.

Charles Sturt University is therefore committed to:

• maintaining and improving the health of the human population of Australia;
• maintaining and improving the health, well-being and productivity of animals at all stages of their use for the production of food, fibre and other products;
• maintaining and improving the health and well-being of animals which provide companionship and are used in sporting, recreational and other shared activities;
• preserving, protecting and managing a fauna which is ecologically stable and adapted to the Australian environment, especially the conservation of animals native to Australia;
• maintaining and improving the health and well-being of humans by controlling diseases shared with animals, by exploring parallels between animal and human disease, by the study of normal function and by developing the therapeutic potential of animals as companions; and
• broadening the foundations of biological science, including knowledge and understanding of life processes in all animal species.

Charles Sturt University progresses to these goals by:

• animal-based medical research;
• training a wide range of practitioners of biological science, including agriculturalists, biologists, health professionals, and psychologists
• providing advice and guidance on a wide range of animal-welfare matters;
• educating the wider community, the users and other beneficiaries of biological science; and
• carrying out a wide range of biological research to provide the required knowledge and improve the methods used in animal-based research.

Charles Sturt University considers working with animals to be essential to the University’s objectives of teaching, research and involvement in community issues, and therefore supports the controlled use of animals in these activities.
Charles Sturt University is committed to the following principles concerning such use of animals:

- alternatives to using animals must be considered and animals must only be used when no practical alternatives can be found for the purpose proposed;
- the expected benefits must outweigh the harm to the animals and active steps must be taken both to minimise the harm and maximise the benefits;
- the proposals to use animals for teaching and research must first have been submitted to and have been approved by the Charles Sturt University Animal Care and Ethics Committee;
- the work must be carried out in accordance with the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (1997); and
- such animal usage must be strictly in accordance with the legal requirements set down in the relevant legislation.

Charles Sturt University supports restraint in the use of animals for teaching and research by:

- keeping the numbers of animals to the minimum needed to achieve the desired purpose; and
- replacing animals by other models or systems wherever possible and encouraging the further development of such alternative models or systems.

Charles Sturt University, by providing individuals and Departments with resources for working with animals, is committed to public support of its staff and students so engaged, provided that the work conforms to the requirements of the Code of Practice and to the rules and regulations laid down by the University to control such activity.

Charles Sturt University recognises and respects the reservations held by some members of society regarding the use of animals in teaching and research. The University will continue to take note of and respond to public attitudes on ethical questions as formulated by informed, constructive discussion and national consensus. Moreover, it will seek to encourage the analysis of current perspectives, and the development of new perspectives, on this matter.

Charles Sturt University’s accountability for its use of animals includes the presence on the University’s Animal Care and Ethics Committee of non-University persons as designated by the Code of Practice and State legislation.

Charles Sturt University’s responsible operation of these guiding principles ensures that it will maintain its national importance as a major source of well-trained biological scientists and will continue to be a major contributor to progress in biological sciences and in animal welfare into the foreseeable future.
Using animals or their tissues in laboratory classes is a privilege which brings with it responsibilities that go well beyond the need to avoid cruelty to the animals.

Outlined below is some advice which will help you meet these responsibilities, and which will help you to derive maximum benefit from using animals in laboratory classes. Following this advice will show that you are aware of and accept the responsibilities which accompany the use of animals or their tissues for learning.

**Think about the use of animals or their tissues**

Talk about this with other students and staff. Everybody should develop their own opinions about this topic and be prepared to air them, justify them, and modify them. Also, you should feel free to make suggestions which might improve future laboratory classes.

**Make sure that good use is made of the learning opportunity**

*Be well prepared.*

This involves reading background material from lecture notes and references before coming to class, reading the laboratory manual before the class, and being generally prepared to maximise the learning experience.

*Think actively during the class.*

You should know what underlying principles are being taught in the class and understand the details which illustrate those principles. This is best achieved by active involvement rather than by merely waiting to be taught.

*Participation in the class should be active.*

You should use every opportunity, within the approved scope of the class, to develop manual, observational and recording skills.

*Think beyond the immediate scope of the class.*

Seeking to link the new knowledge and understanding gained in each class with other parts of the course is a learning device which will help you consolidate your knowledge.

*Treat animals and their tissues with respect at all times and take particular care to treat live animals humanely.*

This also means that each person should feel free to seek advice on how to correct a situation when another person does not appear to be meeting this requirement.