1. Policy

1.1. APCF takes its responsibilities for the humane care and use of animals very seriously and APCF will investigate all welfare concerns whether identified by directly by APCF staff and/or users or received anonymously. APCF adheres strictly to the protection of whistle-blowers who make good faith allegations of welfare misconduct – hence all complaints or concerns will accepted by APCF from a complainant whether anonymously or not. All complaints will be handled in the strictest confidence. The policy also ensures there is no discrimination against the complainant, and the complainant is protected from reprisals.

2. Mechanisms for reporting concerns

2.1. All concerns on welfare of animals should be reported to the Director of APCF (Dr. Anthony James; ext: x2702; email: aejames@ust.hk) the first instance or to the Chairman of AEC (Prof. Kenny Chung; ext: x8019; email: bckchung@ust.hk).

2.2. Complaints can also be placed in the securely locked box in the change rooms of 7J & 7H or in common area outside LIFS general office.

3. Investigation, reporting and corrective actions

3.1. The Director of APCF is committed to responding to such reports in a timely manner and findings will be communicated to the concerned complainant(s), unless such concerns are reported anonymously including corrective actions if deemed necessary.

3.2. A report will be made to the VPRGO of the issue, findings, and actions taken will also be made.
3.3. Reported concerns and any corrective actions are to be documented and filed with both the APCF and the AEC.

4. **Random visits to users’ satellite facilities and laboratories**

4.1. Random visits of satellite facilities by members of the Animal Ethic Committee and/or the Director of APCF or his representative may occur without prior notification of the faculty member(s) concerned. Inspections will proceed with relevant university authority.

4.2. The purpose of such visits is to satisfy the Chairman of the AEC and the Director of APCF that the research models at HKUST are receiving humane care and undergoing ethical use according to the *The Code of Practice for Care and Use of Animals for Experimental Purposes* (Hong Kong), the corresponding AEC approved protocols and License 2 conditions (refer to SOP O-028 Post-Approval Monitoring).