
	Flinders University Safe Work Method Statement Rat – Sexing, Handling, Restraint, and Ear Notching 18/06/19			
				College of Medicine and Public Health Animal Facility
SWMS Number	RA Number		RA Score	
SWMS- 2.0	RA2.0		Medium	
Contact Person	SWMS prepared by	AWC Approval Date	Review Date	
Roxanne Collingwood	Roxanne Collingwood	18/06/2019	June 2021	

Contents

The SWMS **Rat – Sexing, Handling, Restraint, and Ear Notching** contains the following sections:

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Legislation

- *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 8th Ed.*
- *Animal Welfare Act 1985*
- *Animal Welfare Regulations 2012*
- [Gene Technology Act 2000](#) (the Act)
- [Gene Technology Regulations 2001](#)
- *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012*

University Policy

- Work Health and Safety Policy 2013
- Responsible Conduct of Research Policy 2016
- NHMRC Guidelines

Local Policy

Use of the College of Medicine and Public Health Animal Facilities by all staff and researchers of the College of Medicine and Public Health, Flinders University, is subject to awareness of, and adherence to the following:

Research Involving Animals:

- The University holds a licence for the use of animals for teaching and research purposes. To satisfy the requirements of the licence, anyone wishing to undertake teaching and research using animals must submit a proposal to the Animal Welfare Committee (via the Animal Ethics Review Sub-Committee. No work with animals may commence until written approval has been received from the Animal Welfare Committee. Standardised application forms for Research and Teaching can be found on the Flinders University website listed below. It is your responsibility to regularly check this site for updates to guidelines, forms etc

http://www.flinders.edu.au/research/researcher-support/ebi/animal-ethics/animal-ethics_home.cfm

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- **All staff and students involved in animal research must complete Animal Ethics Online Training (AEOT) and must also regularly attend Animal Researcher Information Sessions (ARIS).**

Safe Work Method Statement

Refer to Risk assessments, Safe Work method Statements for chemicals, processes and plant equipment where appropriate. All projects must have an accompanying Risk Assessment signed by the Animal Facility Manager

- RA 2.0 Rat Sexing, Handling and Restraint
- SWMS 7.0 Compliance - Emergency Contingency
- RA 7.0 Compliance - Emergency Contingency
- SWMS 7.1 Compliance -Transportation
- RA 7.1 Compliance -Transportation
- SWMS 7.2 - Rodent Importation
- RA 7.2- Rodent Importation

Personal Protective Equipment Required

- **Gloves – to be worn throughout entire procedure**
- **Gown**
- **Mask**
- **Hair Net**
- **Shoe Covers**

Hazards and Controls

- **Animal bites- training, demonstrate competency, adhere to SWMS.**
- **Animal Scratches- training, demonstrate competency, adhere to SWMS.**
- **Animal Allergies- wear PPE when handling or handling dirty cages to stop the potential development.**

Before Work Commences

Ensure that you are aware of the locations of the following:

- Spill Kit
- Fire Extinguisher
- Eye Wash
- Exits

Risk Assessment and SDS (Safety Data Sheet) - Ensure that you have read and understood for all the substances being used.

Equipment

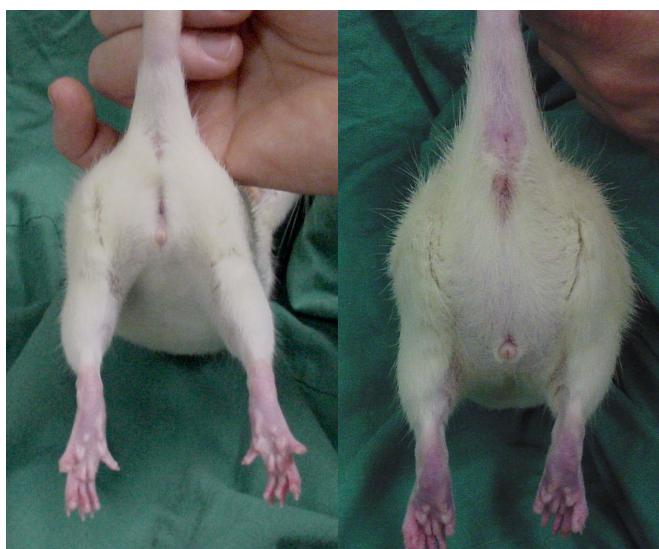
- Ensure that you have read and understood the Risk Assessment and Safe Work Method Statement
- Obtain training before using any equipment

General Information

- All procedures are to be performed by trained competent staff.
- Training is available from senior animal house staff or Animal Welfare Officer.
- Evidence of training is available in the “Training Needs Analysis”.

Sexing Rats

- To sex rat, lift up the base of the tail and hindquarters, and examine.
- The sex is determined by comparing the anogenital distance in adult males (the distance is longer than in females). The testes may also be visible in the scrotum, but can often be retracted.



FEMALE

MALE

Catching and Restraint

- Rats can be caught and held by the base of the tail for brief periods. If the rat is held by the tip of the tail it may cause the skin to strip from the tail.
- For a more secure restraint, hold the rat by the base of the tail and grasp the rat by placing one hand firmly over the animal's back and rib cage. Gently, but firmly, press the forelegs toward the head and restrain the head with thumb and index finger.
- Care must be taken not to restrict the rats respiration



Ear Notching

1. Restrain the rat in one hand using the above procedure
2. Immerse the ear punch in alcohol to disinfect it before use and between animals.
3. Place the punch on the outer edge of the ear in a location where you want to mark the animal for identification.
4. Press firmly to punch a circular hole through the ear.
5. Care must be taken as you remove the punch, not to rip the delicate membrane of the ear. Gently separate the ear from the device.
6. The punched tissue may be put into a sterile Eppendorf tube for PCR testing if genotyping is required.
7. **NOTE:** The holes or notches may grow closed over a period of time. It is important to check the markings regularly and re-notch the animal so that it can still be identified accurately.

Ear Notch Codes

- When notching the right and left ears are the “Rats” right and left ears.

No Notches

R	1 notch on the Right ear
L	1 notch on the Left ear
RL	1 notch on the Right ear + 1 notch on the Left ear
2R	2 notches on the Right ear
2L	2 notches on the Left ear
2R1L	2 notches on the Right ear + 1 notch on the Left ear
1R 2L	1 notch on the Right ear + 2 notches on the Left ear
2R2L	2 notches on the Right ear + 2 notches on the Left ear
3R	3 notches on the Right ear
3L	3 notches on the Left ear
3R1L	3 notches on the Right ear + 1 notch on the Left ear
3R2L	3 notch on the Right ear + 2 notches on the Left ear
1R3L	1 notch on the Right ear + 3 notches on the Left ear
2R3L	2 notch on the Right ear + 3 notches on the Left ear
3R3L	3 notch on the Right ear + 3 notches on the Left ear

SWMS Review

This SWMS currently applies to the animals housed in the College of Medicine and Public Health Animal Facility. This SWMS will be reviewed 3 yearly, but also updated more frequently as policies, techniques and animal care requirements change.

Position	Name	Contact Details
Manager Animal Facility	Roxanne Collingwood	8204 4380 roxanne.collingwood@flinders.edu.au
Animal Welfare Officer	Lewis Vaughan	0450 424 143 awo@flinders.edu.au

Useful References

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au>

<http://www.ogtr.gov.au/internet/ogtr/publishing.nsf/Content/home-1>

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ANZCCART/>

http://www.flinders.edu.au/research/researcher-support/ebi/animal-ethics/animal-ethics_home.cfm

Any questions regarding the above guidelines and any technical advice/ assistance required can be directed to Animal Facility Manager.