

Policy on the Use of Animals for Scientific or Educational Purposes

Introduction

Dublin City University (DCU) places a high value on maintaining the highest standards of animal welfare, while still recognising the benefit, to man, animals and the environment, that can be derived from the use of animals for scientific or educational purposes. Therefore, the University has a Policy that provides guidance on how best to balance these potentially conflicting ideals.

Purpose

This document sets out DCU's Policy on the use of animals for scientific or educational purposes. It should be read in conjunction with the Standard Operating Procedures for the Bio Resource Unit (BRU) and the relevant Codes of Practice (i.e. BRU, University, etc.), which provide detailed binding instructions to staff and students of the University who are considering, planning, or engaging in, the use of animals for scientific or educational purposes.

Scope

This Policy applies to all units of the University, both academic and support, including the campus companies and research centres. The Policy applies to all staff (including employees, contractors working for or on behalf of the University, visiting staff, and emeritus and adjunct staff) and students (undergraduate and post-graduate), when they are working within DCU and when they are working for or on behalf of the University at other Establishments or at other locations.

Definitions

Throughout this Policy the definition of an "animal" and a "procedure" shall be those used in the European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 543 of 2012), as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the Regulations").

In this Policy, all references to a specific Regulation are to a Regulation within the above Regulations.

"Compliance Officer" is the person designated by the University under Regulation 44, and should not be confused with the University's Risk and Compliance Officer.

"Animal Welfare Body", as constituted and approved by the University Executive, is the group of persons set up by the University pursuant to Regulation 50.

Policy Statement

Dublin City University considers that it is desirable to replace the use of live animals in procedures by other methods not entailing the use of live animals but recognises that, given

the present state of scientific knowledge, the use of live animals continues to be necessary to protect human and animal health and the environment.

The University favours the full replacement of procedures on live animals for scientific and educational purposes as soon as it is scientifically possible to do so, and to that end it seeks to facilitate and promote the advancement of alternative approaches. In the meantime the University seeks to ensure a high level of protection for animals that still need to be used in procedures.

To ensure that the way in which animals are bred, cared for and used in procedures within the University is in line with international and national standards, the principles of replacement, reduction and refinement, commonly known as the 3Rs, should be considered systematically when implementing this Policy. When choosing methods, the principles of replacement, reduction and refinement must be implemented through a strict hierarchy of the requirement to use alternative methods. Where no alternative method is available, the numbers of animals used should be reduced by resorting to other methods and by implementing testing strategies, such as the use of *in vitro* and other methods that would reduce and/or refine the use of animals.

Every person to whom this Policy applies must receive prior ethical approval from the University's Research Ethics Committee before he or she engages in any activity that involves the use of animals for scientific or educational purposes.

In the case of activities taking place in Ireland, individuals must comply with the provisions of the European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 543 of 2012), as amended. In the case of activities taking place outside Ireland but within the European Union, individuals must comply with Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (hereinafter referred to as "the Directive") and with local legislation. In the case of activities taking place outside the European Union, individuals should comply with the spirit of the Regulations and the Directive, and must comply with local legislation.

Compliance with this Policy is mandatory.

Roles and Responsibilities

All DCU staff and students must ensure that they comply with this Policy and with the Regulations. In addition, certain individuals appointed under the Regulations have specific responsibilities.

- Ultimate responsibility for compliance with this Policy and with the provisions of the Regulations shall lie with the Compliance Officer designated by the University under Regulation 44.
- The Animal Care and Welfare Officer(s) designated under Regulation 45 shall be responsible for overseeing the welfare and care of the animals in the University and shall ensure that the staff and students dealing with animals have access to information specific to the species housed in the establishment.

- The Training Officer designated under Regulation 46 shall be responsible for ensuring that the staff and students dealing with animals are adequately educated, competent and continuously trained and that they are supervised until they have demonstrated the requisite competence.
- The Designated Veterinarian appointed under Regulation 48 shall be charged with advisory duties in relation to the well-being and treatment of the animals. He or she shall also assist the Animal Welfare Body with its tasks.
- Each Project Manager designated under Regulation 47 shall be responsible for the overall implementation of the project and its compliance with the project authorisation and shall ensure that:
 - any unnecessary pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm that is being inflicted on an animal in the course of a procedure is stopped;
 - the project is carried out in accordance with the relevant project authorisation; and
 - in the event of non-compliance, the appropriate measures to rectify it are taken and recorded.

Sanctions

Any breach of this policy may be subject to sanctions, as determined by the Animal Welfare Body and the University.

Related Documentation

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:-

- Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes.
- European Union (Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 543 of 2012), as amended.
- Any Code of Practice or Standard Operating Procedure that applies to a specific activity being performed under this policy.


Contacts

Further information concerning this Policy may be obtained from the Compliance Officer, Bio Resource Unit, Dublin City University, Glasnevin, Dublin 9. Staff or students using animals, or considering using animals, may also contact the Animal Care and Welfare Officer at the same address.

Policy Review

The University Executive shall review this policy every three years.

Version Control

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End.