

RESEARCH INVOLVING ANIMALS

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This Ethics Guidance Note is part of a series of documents issued by the University Research Ethics Committee to support the University's Research Ethics Policy. For the full set of Guidance Notes, please visit the Research and Innovation Services portal page for [Research Ethics](#).

The Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 regulates any experimental or other scientific procedure applied to a "protected animal" that may have the effect of causing that animal pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm. A procedure so defined by the Act is referred to as a "regulated procedure". The Act defines a "protected animal" as any living vertebrate, other than man. The invertebrate species *Octopus vulgaris* was added by means of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (Amendment) Order 1993. The use of animals in regulated procedures requires an establishment license, a project license and a personal license. The Home Office issues licenses to individuals under the Act. It is therefore, the individual (not the organisation) who is responsible and accountable to the Home Office for ensuring compliance with the terms and conditions of the license.

Some animal research is not regulated by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. This includes: i) any research involving non-vertebrate species (except *Octopus vulgaris*); and ii) the identification of any non-human animal by ringing, tagging or marking or any other humane procedure that causes only momentary pain or distress and no lasting harm. In general, this research will also be informed by the principles of replacement, reduction, and refinement (the Three Rs). For certain purely observational protocols (e.g. bird watching), however, these principles may be less applicable.

Animal research at UEA includes studies of laboratory animals (primarily mice) conducted mainly within the Disease Modelling Unit (DMU) and studies of wild animals in the field. We do not conduct studies on cats, dogs and non-human primates. Before UEA staff or students undertake **any** animal research, including observational studies (and including studies of non-vertebrate species, and observational fieldwork), an assessment of the proposed research needs to be undertaken by the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB). Applicants should complete an [Animal Ethics Information Form](#). An electronic copy of the form should be sent to the [BIO School Manager](#), and a hard copy form should be handed into the BIO General Office in room 01.36.

The AWERB will conduct an assessment to ensure that the research is ethical, justified, well designed (i.e. statistically and scientifically robust) and complies with all legislative requirements, and whether the applicant has considered the basic principles of replacement, reduction and refinement.

Links to further information:

[DMU website](#)

[UK Home Office website](#)