

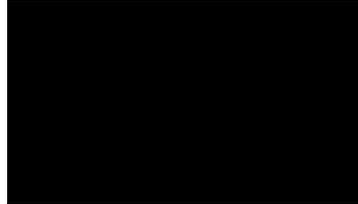


University of East Anglia

Information Services Directorate

The Library  
University of East Anglia  
Norwich Research Park  
Norwich NR4 7TJ  
United Kingdom

Email: [foi@uea.ac.uk](mailto:foi@uea.ac.uk)  
Tel: +44 (0) 1603 593 523  
Fax: +44 (0) 1603 591 010  
Web: <http://www.uea.ac.uk>



06 May 2016

Dear 

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI\_16-093)**

We have now considered your request of 09 April 2016 as clarified on 15 April for information on the numbers of animals used in UEA research, and documentation relating to the University's Animal Welfare & Ethical Review Board (AWERB).

Our response is on page 3 of this letter, together with a copy of your request. However it is not possible to provide all the requested information. The Act contains a number of exemptions that allow public authorities to withhold certain information from release. After consideration we have applied the following exemption to the requested minutes and correspondence of the AWERB.

Exemption	Reason
s.36(2)(b)(ii), Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs	Release of this information would, or would be likely to, inhibit the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation

With regard to the application of s.36(2)(b)(ii), we believe disclosure of this information would be likely to have an adverse effect on the University's ability to freely discuss, and therefore effectively support, research involving animals. This in turn would impact on one of the core objectives of the University, which is to produce internationally-renowned, innovative and diverse research.

We recognise research involving animals is often a contentious subject, on which the public may hold very different views. Where disclosure of information will facilitate informed debate on the subject, the University is aware of the benefits of transparency in terms of helping the public understand how and why it conducts its own research.

To that end, we have responded in full to previous requests for information on our research, where it was possible to do so. We will also look to increase the amount of information made proactively available.

With regard to the requested AWERB minutes and correspondence, we do not routinely publish this information and consider them to be an account of an internal discussion that was not intended to be made public. Public disclosure of the level of detail contained in the information may lead to a reluctance to fully discuss and deliberate such issues in this environment in future. While we recognise your request

allowed for the redaction of identifying data, we are also aware that even a description of the research itself may be sufficient to identify people, and the controversial nature of animal research in general may further inhibit those involved who may be concerned about negative repercussions on their own professional or private lives. We believe this 'chilling effect' may ultimately damage the quality of the Board's future deliberations.

Application of this exemption requires us to consider the public interest in withholding or disclosing this information. We acknowledge there is a public interest in how and why the University conducts such research, and that the minutes of the AWERB may provide a window into this area. By providing the minutes of the AWERB we may enable the public to see how issues relating to the University's animal research have been discussed and resolved.

However it is also clear that, in order to fulfil its primary purpose as an internal forum for facilitating responsible governance of this area of research, the AWERB will at times include discussion of sensitive issues, and it is important the attendees feel free to resolve these in a free and frank manner. We do not think publication of these minutes or correspondence would aid such debate, nor help draw attention to issues of concern: we are confident that the regulations surrounding animal research are such that our activities are already closely scrutinised and monitored, by Home Office inspectors and veterinary surgeons as well as through internal processes. As such, on this occasion we believe the public interest in disclosure is not outweighed by the interest in withholding this information.

You have the right of appeal against this response. If you wish to appeal, please set out in writing your reasons for appealing and send to the above address. You must appeal within 60 calendar days of the date of this letter. Any appeal received after that date will not be considered nor acknowledged. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Information Commissioner's Office.

You also have a subsequent right of appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office. Further information is available on their website: [https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact\\_us](https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us), or by telephone on 0303 123 1113.

Please note that any material over which UEA has copyright is released on the understanding that you will comply with all relevant copyright rules regarding reproduction and/or transmission of the information provided.

Please quote our reference given at the head of this letter in all correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Dave Palmer  
Information Policy and Compliance Manager  
University of East Anglia

## Response to Freedom of Information Act 2000 request (FOI\_16-093)

*I write in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("The Act") to request the disclosure of data held which concerns the use of animals in research by the University of East Anglia ("The Public Authority").*

*For the avoidance of doubt the term 'animal research' is defined as regulated procedures governed by the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 ("ASPA") and EU Directive 2010/63/EU ("The EU Directive").*

*The information I wish to request is as follows:*

*1. By species: How many animals were used in research by "The Public Authority" from January 1st 2015 to December 31st 2015?*

Mice	7089
Xenopus Laevis	264
Xenopus Tropicalis	134

*2. Minutes, reports and correspondence of any Animal Welfare & Ethical Review Board ("AWERB"), formerly known as the Ethical Review Committee ("ERC"), or sub-committee at University level, including but not limited to departmental committees, from 2015, where these relate to experimentation or other work involving captive live animals, in addition to any guidance issued by these committees at any time if currently in use. For the avoidance of doubt the term 'committee' is used in broad definition and is inclusive of boards, groups or similarly natured structural enterprises.*

*[Clarified on 15 April to include any attached project licence applications within the scope of the request]*

There is one such committee at UEA, which in 2015 met once. The minutes and correspondence relating to these meetings are withheld for the reasons explained in the letter above.

There is no additional guidance issued specifically by the AWERB regarding to experimentation or other work involving live animals, however the UEA Research Ethics Policy<sup>1</sup> does provide guidance for staff in this area.

---

<sup>1</sup><https://www.uea.ac.uk/documents/251484/3124686/UREC%2BPolicy%2BJan%2B2012.pdf/17206b85-ff33-4e13-adb9-a10ee6f32d0f>