

Using animals for research - Home Office Compliance Notice

Summary

At the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) we take our responsibility in relation to the use of animals in research seriously. Therefore, we are a signatory of the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK which is promoted by the organisation Understanding Animal Research. This update clarifies the reason the University used no animals for research purposes in 2021, as reported in our annual returns.

Following the issuance of a compliance notice by the Home Office the decision was taken to cease activities in the animal holding unit from 1 August 2020, until such a time that the Home Office Compliance team are happy with the actions we have put in place.

Actions Taken at UCLan

We have assessed the information in the Compliance notice carefully and implemented an action plan to make the necessary changes ensuring we have colleagues with the sufficient understanding, knowledge, or experience of the requirements of Animals Scientific Procedures Act (ASPA) and how the required controls to comply with the Act should be implemented. UCLan has addressed these concerns in numerous ways including, but not limited to those summarised below:

1. The Named Training and Competency Officer (NTCO), Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS), named Information Officer (NIO) and Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer (NACWO) have undergone assessment by an experienced named person from another establishment to their satisfaction.
2. Two additional technicians are in place in the Animal Unit in addition to the recruitment of a new NACWO. These technicians (and the NACWO) have been signed off as competent to perform husbandry tasks and daily checking by the NACWO of another unit.
3. A full set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Animal Unit have been provided to the Non-Compliance Team for their review.
4. An updated Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Terms of Reference and Operating Process has been provided to the Non-Compliance Team for their review.

Following the issuance of a compliance notice by the Home Office all activities in the animal holding unit ceased from 1 August 2020. This will remain the case until such a time that the Home Office Compliance team are happy with the actions we have put in place.