

Use of Animals in Research Policy V2.0

Policies superseded by this version N/A – first issue of this policy in the University policy template.

Summary of changes to previous version Content transferred from the CSGUL Use of Animals in Research Policy (Version 2.0, approved by AWERB 09/10/2025 and by Senate 11/03/2026) into the standard University policy template.

Table of contents

Section:	Heading:	Page number:
1	Introduction	1
2	Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom	1
3	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	2
4	Definitions	2
5	Policy	2
6	Procedure	3
7	Advice and guidance	4
8	Failure to comply	4
9	Review	4
	Appendices	6

1 Introduction

City St George's, University of London, is dedicated to advancing knowledge and improving human health through high-quality scientific research. We acknowledge that there is a global scientific consensus that animal research remains essential for medical progress. This research is crucial to deepening our understanding of health and disease. Many of the antibiotics, vaccines, and surgical techniques we rely on today would not have been possible without the use of animals in research. However, we are equally committed to enhancing ethical standards and reduce animal use by prioritising non-animal alternatives whenever possible.

2 Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

2.1 City St George's, University of London, regards freedom of speech and academic freedom to be fundamental to delivering its mission as the University of business, practice and the professions. Its values in this respect are set

out in a code of practice on freedom of speech and academic freedom, which explains how the University will uphold, secure, and promote freedom of speech within the law:

<https://www.citystgeorges.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/code-of-practice-on-freedom-of-speech>.

- 2.2 Nothing in this policy should be interpreted in any way that would be inconsistent with the code of practice and – in the event of any inconsistency – the provisions of the code will prevail.
- 2.3 The Office for Students ("OfS") operates a free speech complaints scheme. Under that scheme, the OfS can review complaints about free speech from non-student members, staff, applicants for academic posts and (actual or invited) visiting speakers. The scheme is free to use. Information about the complaints that the OfS can review is available on its website at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/freedom-of-speech/free-speech-complaints. Student complaints about freedom of speech issues are handled by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education ("OIA"). Information about how the OIA handles such complaints can be found on its website (<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/resources-and-publications/latest-news-and-updates/oia-highlights-role-in-student-free-speech-complaints/>).

3 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- 3.1 City St George's, University of London works to advance equity, diversity and inclusion in its activities, processes, and culture, for the whole University community, including staff, students and visitors.
- 3.2 The University will meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in its policies and seek to eliminate discrimination on the basis of age, caring responsibilities, disability, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, neurodiversity, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.

4 Definitions

- 4.1 **3Rs** — Reduction, Replacement and Refinement: the guiding principles the University applies to minimise and improve the use of animals in research (see Section 5.3).
- 4.2 **ASPA** — the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, the UK legislation regulating scientific procedures on protected animals, overseen by the Home Office.
- 4.3 **AWERB** — the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body, responsible for overseeing, reviewing and approving research involving animals at the University.
- 4.4 **Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS)** — provides expert advice on the health and welfare of animals used in research.
- 4.5 **Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer (NACWO)** — responsible for ensuring animals are transported, housed and cared for by trained staff.
- 4.6 **Named Training and Competency Officer (NTCO)** — ensures all individuals working with animals receive proper training, supervision and competency assessment.
- 4.7 **Named Information Officer (NIO)** — disseminates information on the 3Rs to personnel at the establishment.
- 4.8 **Animal Welfare Act 2006** — UK legislation governing the welfare of animals not covered by ASPA.
- 4.9 **Concordat on Openness on Animal Research** — a commitment to transparent communication about the use of animals in research, to which the University is a signatory.
- 4.10 **ARRIVE guidelines** — Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments guidelines, endorsed by the University to improve the reporting, design and reproducibility of animal studies.
- 4.11 **CITES** — the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; a valid CITES permit is required as evidence of lawful import of animal-derived material sourced from endangered species outside the UK.

5 POLICY

Purpose

- 5.1 City St George's, University of London, is dedicated to advancing knowledge and improving human health through high-quality scientific research. This policy create the framework for ensuring excellent research within the limits set by legislation, ethics and integrity norms and broder best practice.

Scope

- 5.2 This policy applies to all research involving protected animals under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA), which is overseen by the Home Office.
- 5.3 It also applies to members of the University involved in work with live animals, or animals killed for the purpose of research, on University premises that is not subject to ASPA. Such non-ASPA projects are reviewed by the AWERB to ensure compliance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and other relevant legislation.
- 5.4 It further applies to researchers using animal-derived materials (such as tissues, organs or cells) obtained from animals not killed for the purpose of the research, including material sourced from external institutions such as universities, research centres, abattoirs or zoological collections.

Principles

- 5.5 The University is firmly guided by the principles of the “3Rs”:
- 5.5.1 Reduction – using the minimum number of animals necessary to achieve reliable results;
- 5.5.2 Replacement – prioritising non-animal methods, such as computer modelling, tissue culture and human clinical trials, whenever these can achieve the scientific aims;
- 5.5.3 Refinement – refining all procedures to minimise pain, suffering and distress, including improved husbandry practices, the use of anaesthesia and pain relief, and refined experimental techniques.
- 5.6 The University maintains high standards of animal welfare, including housing that allows animals to exhibit natural behaviours and supports their psychological wellbeing and physical health. Specialist facilities, including the Biological Research Facility, provide safe, clean and humane environments tailored to each species’ needs and operate under the guidance of skilled, licensed staff. Veterinary support is available at all times, daily welfare checks are conducted by trained personnel, and all staff working with animals receive comprehensive training and appropriate Home Office licensing.

Roles and responsibilities

- 5.7 The AWERB is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and approving research involving animals. It includes scientists, veterinarians, animal care staff, statisticians and lay members, ensuring a comprehensive ethical review process.
- 5.8 Under ASPA, the University is required to appoint several designated Named Persons: the Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS), who provides expert advice on the health and welfare of animals and is available at all times; the Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer (NACWO), a team ensuring animals are transported, housed and cared for by dedicated, professionally supervised and appropriately trained staff, including the provision of environmental enrichment; the Named Training and Competency Officer (NTCO), who ensures all individuals working with animals receive proper training, supervision and regular competency assessment; and the Named Information Officer (NIO), who disseminates information on the 3Rs to all personnel and fosters collaboration and the sharing of relevant expertise.
- 5.9 The Home Office carries out regular inspections of ASPA facilities to ensure compliance with licensing requirements and to verify that high standards of animal welfare are maintained. These external inspections are reinforced by the University’s own rigorous internal and independent audit programme.

6 PROCEDURE

- 6.1 All projects under the remit of ASPA must undergo a thorough ethical review by the AWERB, involving careful evaluation of the potential scientific and medical benefits in relation to the impact on animal welfare. Before approval, the following criteria are carefully considered: the necessity and justification for using animals, supported by evidence that non-animal alternatives are insufficient to achieve the research aims; the suitability

of the species selected and the use of the fewest animals required to achieve valid scientific outcomes; and efforts to minimise or avoid adverse effects on animal welfare through procedural refinement and care protocols.

- 6.2 Non-ASPA projects involving live animals on University premises are reviewed by the AWERB to ensure compliance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006, other relevant legislation and the University's ethical standards.
- 6.3 Where animal-derived material is obtained from an unlicensed or non-ASPA source, its use must be submitted to the AWERB for ethical consideration. Where such material is sourced from endangered species within the UK, documentation confirming ethical approval or consent from the supplying organisation must be provided to the AWERB. Where material is imported from outside the UK, a valid CITES permit must be provided as evidence of lawful import.
- 6.4 The Home Office carries out regular inspections of ASPA facilities, reinforced by the University's internal and independent audit programme, to ensure ongoing compliance with licensing requirements and animal welfare standards.

7 ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

- 7.1 As a signatory to the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research, the University is committed to transparent communication about when, how and why animals are used in research, and engages proactively with the public and media to foster understanding of the importance and ethical management of animal research. The University reports annually on its efforts to enhance openness and on the advancements made possible through research involving animals, and requires all partner institutions in collaborative animal research projects to uphold similar transparency standards.
- 7.2 The University endorses the ARRIVE (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) guidelines, developed to improve the reporting, design and reproducibility of animal studies, and continually assesses and updates its animal research practices to reflect advances in science and ethics.
- 7.3 For further information on this policy, or for advice on the use of animals in research, ethical review, or the Concordat on Openness, please contact the Biological Research Facility at brfinfo@sgul.ac.uk.

8 FAILURE TO COMPLY

- 8.1 Compliance with this policy, and with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and related Home Office licensing requirements, is mandatory for all staff and students undertaking or supporting research involving animals.
- 8.2 Compliance is monitored through AWERB ethical review and approval, regular Home Office inspections of ASPA facilities, and the University's own internal and independent audit programme.
- 8.3 Failure to comply with this policy, or with the licensing and legislative requirements it reflects, may result in the suspension or withdrawal of approval for a project, referral to the relevant Home Office licence holder, and may be considered under the University's staff or student disciplinary procedures, as appropriate.

9 REVIEW

- 9.1 This policy is reviewed on a triennial basis, or sooner if required by changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or University governance requirements.
- 9.2 This version (2.0) was approved by the AWERB on 9 October 2025 and by Senate on 11 March 2026. The next scheduled review date is 2 October 2028.

Policy information

Should you require further information regarding this policy, or access to the policy in an alternative format, please contact the Biological Research Facility at brfinfo@sgul.ac.uk.

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