



Module Definition Form (MDF)

Module code: MOD010089	Version: 1 Date Amended: 09/Aug/2024
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1. Module Title
Animal Ethics and Welfare

2a. Module Leader
Nhenna Ugwu

2b. School
Writtle School of Agriculture, Animal and Environmental Sciences

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Science and Engineering

3a. Level
7

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
15

4b. Study Hours
150

5. Restrictions			
Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:			

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

This interesting and interactive module has been developed to provide students with the knowledge of animal welfare science that will support them in making real-life ethical decisions on the use of animals in different applications. Particular emphasis will be placed on how animal welfare is assessed as well as the internal and external factors that contribute to different welfare levels. The relationship between welfare and ethics will be discussed in different scenarios with both national and international perspectives. Finally, the module will also cover the ethical and welfare implications of animal-human relationships and their impact in specific areas, such as: conservation (wild & exotics), animals as pets, farm and livestock (animal production) and animals used for research purposes.

Students taking this module will enhance their skills relating to searching, interpreting and critically reviewing literature. Oral discussion and presentation skills will be developed through group discussion and debates.

6b. Outline Content

ANIMAL NEEDS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR WELFARE. The physiological and behavioural needs of animals and how failure to meet these needs can lead to a reduction in welfare. This will include frameworks for animal welfare concepts including the Five Freedoms, the Five Domains model and Fraser's three concepts of animal welfare.

PHYSIOLOGICAL MEASURES OF WELFARE. The use and limitations of heart rate and its variability; cortisol and other hormone levels; reproductive success and longevity as physiological measures of welfare.

COPING STRATEGIES. Adaptations made by animals in response to the changing environment and what happens when these strategies fail.

LEGISLATION AND ANIMAL WELFARE. Review of the main UK and international legislation affecting the use of animals.

MORALITY AND PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWPOINTS ON ANIMAL ETHICS. Utilitarianism, animal rights, species integrity, contractarian, relational and other moral viewpoints.

SENTIENCE AND CONSCIOUSNESS. Definitions and evidence for sentience and consciousness in animals.

KEY AREAS. Discussion will be focused on key areas including: Use of animals in research, ethical implications of keeping companion animals, use of animals in food production, cost of conserving animal species

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

None

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	Type	On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:
1	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Evaluate the different concepts used and methods of assessing animal welfare, including physiological and behavioural indicators.
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Appraise the role of legislation, codes of practice and welfare organisations in managing animal welfare.
3	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Critically evaluate the ethical issues regarding the use of animals in the UK and abroad.
4	Knowledge and Understanding	Assess the importance of historical, social, economic and political influences on interaction between animals and humans.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2026/7	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	Hours	Learning Outcomes	Details of Duration, frequency and other comments
Lectures	36	1-4	Lectures, seminars, group discussions
Other teacher managed learning	0	None	None
Student managed learning	114	1-4	Directed reading to supplement lectures.
TOTAL:	150		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence

The assessment for some modules includes a presentation (see below for details on how this particular module is assessed). We recognise that presenting, especially to a large group, can cause significant anxiety or distress for some students. If this may affect you, please contact your Module Leader or the Disability and Neurodiversity Service as early as possible. We will work with you to consider appropriate reasonable adjustments. Depending on your individual needs, these might include, for example, presenting to a smaller group or presenting only to a member of academic staff.

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1-2	50 (%)	Fine Grade	40 (%)

Report (1500) - POSTnote on an animal welfare issue based on the format used by the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST).

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
011	Practical	3-4	50 (%)	Fine Grade	40 (%)

Debate (20 Minutes) - Summative debate on aspects relating to the ethical use of animals similar to that described below (20min per student, total time per debate: 1 hour approximately).

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:

- (a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above
- (b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]