

## Guidelines for the use of animals in IB World Schools

### Why have guidelines for use of animals in the classroom?

As respect for animals is a fundamental stepping stone in the development of respect for fellow human beings the IB animal guidelines seek to set out the parameters for the acceptable inclusion of animals in an IB World School.

### What do the guidelines apply to?

These guidelines apply to the treatment of all animals in IB World Schools, to all students at all levels including PYP, MYP, DP and IBCC whether assessed or non-assessed, for extended essays, the group 4 project and the MYP project. The Guidelines cover any work, be it in classrooms or school laboratories, or in the general environment, that is anywhere where IB students may be working. The Guidelines apply to:

1. Keeping animals in schools
2. Animal Experimentation
3. The use of human subjects in investigations

### The Guidelines

#### Keeping live animals in the classroom

Caring for classroom pets can provide a variety of authentic learning contexts for students at almost every level. It presents opportunities for students to develop compassion and empathy towards other living things and take action as a result of this learning. Ultimately the decision to care for a live animal lies with the classroom teacher and time should be taken to adequately research the animal and determine a suitable diet, housing, exercise and socialization for the animal as well as how its care fits into the curriculum. The following should be carefully considered before committing to the care of a classroom pet:

- Student sensitivity or allergies to particular species, their food or bedding materials
- Type of animal (domestic rather than wild, not venomous or vicious, diurnal rather than nocturnal etc)
- Arrangements for housing the animal safely, comfortably, cleanly and in a manner that is not disruptive to the classroom environment
- Arrangements for appropriate care of the animals over weekends and holidays
- Long term care of the animal in cases where a future student is allergic or the animal can no longer live in the classroom

Additionally, essential agreements should be established regarding when and how the animal is to interact with students. These should ensure the health and safety for both students and the animal (e.g. students wash their hands before and after handling).

#### The nature of the guidelines

IB animal experimentation guidelines may be more stringent than some local or national standards for experimentation in schools. Our standards for work in schools should also be more stringent than those of university and research and development committees as we are not carrying out essential, groundbreaking research. Practical work in schools has other purposes such as reinforcing concepts and teaching practical skills and techniques. Even in a practically based extended essay the work will not be fundamental, ground-breaking research.

#### Live animals in experimentation

Any planned and actual experimentation involving live animals must be subject to approval by the teacher following a discussion between teacher and student(s) based on the IB guidelines. This discussion should look at the 3Rs principle and the decision justified. The principles are:

- Replacement
- Refinement

- Reduction

Any investigation involving animals should initially consider the replacement of animals with cells or tissues, plants or computer simulations. If the animal is essential to the investigation refinements to the investigation to alleviate any distress to the animal and a reduction in the numbers of animals involved should be made.

Experiments involving animals must be based on observing and measuring aspects of natural animal behaviour. Any experimentation should not result in any cruelty to any animal, vertebrate or invertebrate. Therefore experiments that administer drugs or medicines or manipulate the environment or diet beyond that which can be regarded as humane is unacceptable in IB schools.

#### Animal dissection

There is no requirement in the PYP, MYP or in the DP group 4 sciences for students to witness or carry out a dissection of any animal, vertebrate or invertebrate. If teachers believe that it is an important educational experience and wish to include dissections in their scheme of work they must apply the following guidelines. The IB does not support animal dissection or the use of animal body parts in the PYP.

- Discuss reasons for dissections of whole animals with the students.
- Allow any student who wishes to opt out of the dissection to do so.
- Seek to reduce the number of dissections.
- Seek to replace animal dissection with computer simulations and/or use animal tissue, for example, hearts and lungs obtained from butchers, abattoirs or laboratory suppliers.
- Dissect animals obtained from an ethical source only, for example, no wild animals, animals killed on the road or endangered animals.

#### Experiments involving human subjects

Any experimentation involving human subjects must be with their direct, legally obtained written permission and must follow the above guidelines. In addition, the investigation must not use human subjects under the age of 16 without the written consent of the parents or guardians.

- Subjects must provide written consent
- The results of the investigation must be anonymous
- Subjects must participate of their own free will
- Subjects have the right to withdraw from the investigation at any time.

Investigations involving any body fluids must not be performed due to the risk of the transmission of blood-borne pathogens. An exception would be an investigator using their own saliva or sweat.

#### The use of secondary data

Secondary data acquired as a result of research that would not be in line with the above policy may be used under certain circumstances:

- Data acquired by professional researchers. In this case the data would be from research which is written up in academic journals and qualifies as ground breaking. Such research would have been presented to research committees for approval and be licensed.
- Research which was considered ethical at the time the research was conducted. Our view of animals and their welfare has moved on considerably in recent years. Much research conducted in a different culture would not be granted permission today even though at the time, it was considered acceptable. Data from such sources is acceptable.

Some secondary data exists that was considered unethical even within the cultural and historical context of the day. Such data is not acceptable under any circumstances.

#### What happens if the guidelines are not followed?

Internal assessment moderators or extended essay examiners who see evidence that the guidelines are not being followed at the school, in the sample work sent for moderation or in extended essays are required to complete a problem report form (PRF) to be submitted to IB Cardiff.