

IB animal experimentation policy

This policy applies to all experimentation in IB World Schools, whether assessed or non-assessed, for extended essays or for the group 4 project, in classrooms or school laboratories, or in other locations where IB students may conduct experiments.

The IB policy may be more stringent than some local or national standards for experimentation in schools. Bearing in mind its mission statement, the IB should be in the vanguard of ethical behaviour. The policy is based upon the established 3Rs principle (replacement, refinement and reduction), in which any experimentation involving animals should initially consider: *replacement* of the animals by using cells, plants or computer simulations; *refinement* to the experiment to alleviate any harm or distress to the animal; and *reduction* in the numbers of animals involved.

Our standards for work in schools should also be more stringent than those of university and R&D research 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 research.

- Any planned and actual experimentation involving animals must be subject to approval following a discussion between teacher and student(s) based on the IB animal experimentation policy.
- Experiments involving animals must be based on observing and measuring aspects of natural animal behaviour. Any experimentation should not result in any pain or undue stress on any animal (vertebrate or invertebrate) or compromise its health in any way. Therefore experiments that administer drugs or medicines or manipulate the environment or diet beyond that easily tolerated by the animal are unacceptable. Experiments resulting in the death of any animal are unacceptable.
- Any experimentation involving humans must be with their written permission and must follow the above guidelines. Experiments involving body fluids must not be performed due to the risk of the transmission of blood-borne pathogens.

Internal assessment moderators or extended essay examiners who see evidence of breaches of the above policy 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.

The internal assessment section of the group 4 subject reports for May and November examination sessions will contain examples of experiments deemed to be unacceptable.

Animal dissection

There is no requirement in the group 4 experimental 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 the 4/PSOW they must apply the following policy.

- 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.
- Dissect animals obtained from an ethical source only, for example, no wild animals or animals killed on the road.

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