

Freedom of Information Act request, Animal Research, IMPFOI-24-158, Imperial College response

Thank you for your Freedom of Information Act request. We have numbered the different queries in the request and responded to each in turn. Imperial College London takes the ethical treatment of animals very seriously and is committed to use the very best scientific evidence when designing animal studies and to following the principles of the 3Rs. Our policy requires that all animal models used should be rigorously scrutinised for their ethical, scientific and translational (i.e. relevance to translate to clinical benefits) value in the light of the best current evidence, and this is one aspect of the work carried out by the college's Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB). As well as a detailed examination of the science, there is a strong emphasis on the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) throughout all aspects of the ethical review process for any animal work associated with Imperial College.

Our AWERB's policy is to pay close attention to the scientific literature and to advances in the 3Rs and we routinely update our protocols and guidelines to reflect best practice. It has continued to monitor the evolving literature and any associated guidelines regarding the use of the FST, including recommendations set out in the recent Animals in Science Committee report. Any applications involving the use of the FST are reviewed by our central AWERB and undergo rigorous scrutiny.

- 1. Please outline any instances of non-compliance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 at your institution between 1 January 2019 and 19 March 2024. Please include the date, reason for non-compliance, a description of the incident, number of animals affected, and how the Animals in Science Regulation Unit remedied the non-compliance.**

Please see the table in the attached document for details of all instances of non-compliance, each of which was self-reported by Imperial College London to the Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU).

- 2. Please state the number of Animals in Science Regulation Unit laboratory inspections (both in person and online) conducted at your institution in the last five years and if applicable, the year they took place, and specify whether they were in person or online.**

2019 – 9 in person

2020 – 2 in person

2021 – 1 online

2022 – 2 in person

2023 – 1 in person

- 3. Please state whether your institution conducts experiments on primates, dogs, or cats.**

No.

4. Since August 2022, have personnel at your institution been granted a licence or are they awaiting approval of a licence that includes the forced swim test as an authorised procedure?

No.

5. If applicable, please provide copies of any active licences which the institution has held since August 2022 and any draft licence applications from August 2022.

No licences including the use of the forced swim have been granted or applied for since August 2022. However, one licence granted prior to August 2022 remains active. A copy of this licence has been released to PETA in response to a previous FOI request relating to the use of the forced swim test (on 19 February 2020).

6. If applicable, please confirm how many forced swim tests have been carried out at your institution between 1 July 2022 and the present day, specifying both the number of procedures conducted and the total number of animals used per species.

None.

7. If available, please provide five video clips of the forced swim test being conducted at your institution. The footage may be chosen at random, but please ensure it shows the duration of the test from the animal being placed into water until they are removed.

Not applicable.