

Statement on the use of animals in research – September 2015

A very small percentage of research at the Robert Gordon University involves the use of animals. This research specifically aims to better understand the pathology of cardiovascular and metabolic diseases at the cellular level, and develop new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches that will be translated into clinical practice. In undertaking this research the Robert Gordon University provides the highest standards of care to any animal. Animals may only be used in research programmes where their use is shown to be essential.

The research undertaken by the Robert Gordon University involving the use of animals is controlled by the United Kingdom Government's Home Office, and is conducted in accordance with the ***Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (ASPA) 1986***, as amended by the ***Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (ASPA) 1986 Amendment Regulations 2012*** [<https://www.gov.uk/research-and-testing-using-animals>]. This legislation has enacted ***Directive 2010/63/EU*** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes [<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:EN:PDF>]. The Home Office's *Policy: Ensuring research and testing using animals is safe and reasonable* may be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/ensuring-research-and-testing-using-animals-is-safe-and-reasonable>.

The Robert Gordon University is committed to the principles of ***Replacement, Reduction and Refinement*** (the ***3Rs***) [www.nc3rs.org.uk/the-3rs]. The ***3Rs*** are a framework for humane animal research and for conducting high quality science, and are embedded in national and international legislation regulating the use of animals in scientific procedures. The ***3Rs*** are defined* as follows:

Replacement: Methods that avoid or replace the use of animals defined as 'protected' under the *Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, amended 2012 (ASPA)* in an experiment where they would have otherwise been used. Protected animals are all living vertebrates (except humans), including some immature forms, and cephalopods (e.g. octopus, squid, cuttlefish).

Reduction: Methods that minimise the number of animals used per experiment or study, either by enabling researchers to obtain comparable levels of information from fewer animals, or to obtain more information from the same number of animals, thereby avoiding further animal use.

Refinement: Methods that minimise the pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm that may be experienced by the animals. Refinement applies to all aspects of animal use, from the housing and husbandry used to the scientific procedures performed on them.

The Robert Gordon University is committed to fulfilling the ***Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments (ARRIVE) Guidelines*** [www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines] developed by the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research [www.nc3rs.org.uk].

The Robert Gordon University is also committed to being a signatory to the ***Concordat on Openness on Animal Research*** [www.understandinganimalresearch.org.uk/policy/concordat-openness-animal-research/].

* Extracted from www.nc3rs.org.uk/the-3rs