



Developing induction materials for AWERB members

1st Edition – April 2017

AWERB induction: An RSPCA/LASA project to support induction for new AWERB members

The RSPCA Research Animals Department and LASA (Education, Training and Ethics Sub-committee) are working together to develop induction for new AWERB members. The rationale and aims of the project are set out below.

1. The need for induction

Appropriate induction is key to supporting the participants in an establishment's AWERB. This is highlighted in the *RSPCA and LASA Guiding Principles on Good Practice for AWERBs* (3rd edition 2015, p.46) and its importance has been reinforced by AWERB-UK¹.

The Home Office *Guidance on the Operation of ASPA (1986)* also recommends that establishments provide a “local [training] module” to “allow people fulfilling key roles to understand their own role within the local structure and how they personally contribute and work with others”. Similarly, the European Commission’s *Working Document on Animal Welfare Bodies and National Committees* (2014) states that members of Animal Welfare Bodies “should receive appropriate individual induction training and CPD”.

However, whilst these publications list a variety of topics that might be covered during induction, they provide little information and few ideas for how best to design and deliver support for new (and existing) AWERB members.

2. Aims

The aim of this ongoing project is to assist the development of induction for AWERB members through:

- (i) identification of the key knowledge and skills that will help enable effective participation in the AWERB;
- (ii) consideration of the most appropriate methods for initial orientation of AWERB members and delivery of the knowledge and skills;
- (iii) recommendation of existing, and/or development of new, resources to support induction including the development of an induction 'pack'.

The work was started in May 2016 and is an ongoing and iterative project managed by an RSPCA/LASA project team, in collaboration with other interested organisations and individuals who have AWERB and training experience. The intention is for information, advice, and resources relating to induction, to be presented on a dedicated web page on the LASA website as these become available.

¹ AWERB-UK is an initiative to ensure communication and co-ordination between bodies that undertake AWERB related activities. It is co-ordinated by the RSPCA, with LASA, LAVA, IAT and ELHF

Part 1 Introduction

3. Induction resources/website content

1. Project aims (as above)
2. Introduction for establishments - suggestions for induction activities
3. Self-assessment training tool for new AWERB members with links to useful information, advice and resources
4. References and resources list

Authors

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PDF document available for download from <http://www.lasa.co.uk/publications/>



AWERB induction: Suggested activities and resources

Ideally, the process of induction to the AWERB should be tailored not only to an individual establishment but also to the needs of particular categories of participant. At a basic level, provision of specific information relating to the local AWERB, and the establishment's culture and processes is helpful, along with generic information on the AWERB and ASPA for those who have not undertaken Home Office modular training. This sort of factual information should be fairly easy to provide, although it can take some time for participants to acquire sufficient understanding and all the necessary skills to operate effectively in the AWERB environment.

Many establishments already provide new AWERB members with some form of introduction to their AWERB (see below), but there is general agreement amongst stakeholders and AWERB members that much more is needed, and that the learning process needs to be continuous and not just focused on a one off induction event.

Some form of induction to the AWERB would also be useful for those whose work comes under its auspices, since if they have a better understanding of its purpose and processes they are more likely to become engaged and supportive. Materials developed for new AWERB members are therefore likely to have wider application within establishments

Current induction activities described by a range of establishments

- **Provision of, and encouragement to read, the RSPCA/LASA Guiding Principles for Good Practice for AWERBs document - this should be a prerequisite for every prospective and existing AWERB member**
- Provision of an establishment AWERB handbook, terms of reference and any relevant policy/process documents
- Attendance on licensee training modules L and E1 (if not already a licensee)
- Personal introduction and/or one-to-ones with other AWERB members and key staff such as the NVS, NACWO, NIO and HOLC
- Pairing new members with existing members in a 'buddy' system
- Taking members on a tour of the animal facility/facilities with opportunities to talk to staff
- Providing opportunities to sit in on and observe AWERB meetings
- Attendance at the RSPCA Lay Members' Forum
- Attendance at AWERB-UK meetings convened by the RSPCA with LASA, LAVA and the IAT
- Provision of the RSPCA Lay Members' Resource Book
- Provision of link to the RSPCA ethical review site:
science.rspca.org.uk/sciencegroup/researchanimals/ethicalreview

A self assessment table as an induction resource

Part 3 provides a generic self-assessment table for all prospective (and current) AWERB members which can also be used as a template for their induction. The table sets out a series of self-directed questions about AWERB-related knowledge and skills, with associated information and web links. (Additional reference materials are listed in Part 4). Although some of the information is generic (e.g. about the ASPA, the roles of the AWERB, the Home Office and the Animals in Science Committee), some, particularly in part 2 of the table, will be specific to the establishment and the information and links need to be filled in locally. This includes:

- in house links to the local AWERB terms of reference and any existing minutes or other relevant information;
- information on the scientific work of the establishment;
- information on how the AWERB fits within the organisation of the establishment and what the lines of communication, reporting and accountability are between different internal bodies, and external bodies where relevant;
- an overview of the establishment's values, perspectives and resources and how it is developing its 'culture of care';
- introductions to Named Persons and other AWERB members.

Part 3 of the self-assessment table provides a list of more personal issues for members to think through.

AWERB induction: Self-assessment checklist with links to useful information and resources

The tables in this document are intended as an AWERB 'induction resource' to help provide new AWERB members with the knowledge and skills to become active and effective participants. The tables are set out as a series of questions with information and links to resources designed to help fill or develop any knowledge gaps.

Table 1 covers easily accessible *general information* about the functions and membership of the AWERB. Table 2 relates to the functioning of the AWERB *within individual establishments* and most of the information referred to should be made available in-house. Table 3 addresses more *personal questions* for members to consider.

Part 1: Understanding the functions of the AWERB in general	
Self assessment questions	Where to get the relevant information
Do I know the purpose of the AWERB and its tasks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief list of the Home Office requirements can be found in the section on AWERBs in the Home Office Guidance on the Operation of the Animals Scientific Procedures Act 1986, pp. 88-89. • Use the RSPCA/LASA Guiding Principles on Good Practice for AWERBs document to find more detail about each of the specific AWERB tasks, along with advice on how they should be implemented. (This document also addresses the AWERB's aims, tasks and membership in general in the section on Home Office requirement, pp. 5-7). • Ask for your AWERB's Terms of Reference document (see below) to find out more about its specific tasks and procedures, and discuss with other members how these work in practice. • Check out the AWERB Resources section of this website where other helpful information will be added as it becomes available.
Do I have sufficient understanding of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (ASPA) and how it is implemented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of UK law on the use of animal in experiments and how the law is administered is in Appendix 1 of the RSPCA Lay Members' Resource Book pp. 50-54. This includes information on AWERBs. • The law is complicated so, depending on your role, it may take considerable time to become familiar with its details. Use the Home Office Guidance on the Operation of the Animals Scientific Procedures Act 1986 to look up specific points as they arise. Consider attending legislation and ethics training modules (modules L and E1) to gain some insight into the requirements of the legislation, particularly if training is available at your institution. Contact the NTCO (Named Training and Competence Officer) for suggestions about training opportunities.

Part 3 Self assessment training tool

Self assessment questions	Where to get the relevant information
Do I understand how the roles of the AWERB and the Home Office Inspectorate relate to each other, particularly with respect to the review of project licences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With respect to project licence review the AWERB's role is to "advise the establishment licence holder whether to support project proposals, primarily considering such proposals from a local perspective and bringing local knowledge and expertise to bear." The AWERB should not "duplicate or try to 'second guess' the Home Office inspector's views", which are formed "within the national legal policy framework and takes account of issues beyond the scope of the local establishment" (RSPCA/LASA Guiding Principles p.10, point 3). The roles of the Home Office Inspectorate are explained in the Home Office Guidance on the Operation of the Animals Scientific Procedures, Act 1986 pp. 90-93. Further information on how the Inspectorate consider the harm/benefit assessment is explained in the Home Office advice note on harm/benefit analysis.
Do I understand the role of the national Animals in Science Committee particularly with respect to AWERBs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The roles of the Animals in Science Committee (ASC) are outlined on the ASC web-site, and the Committee's relationship with the AWERB is explained in the RSPCA/LASA Guiding Principles, p. 7. Ask about the AWERB Hub Network and find out which region your AWERB belongs to.
Do I have clear expectations of what should be achieved by the AWERB?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSPCA/LASA Guiding Principles list and discuss "Ten top tips for a successful AWERB" (pages 9-14), which set out achievable general expectations and advice for all AWERBs. However, it should be remembered that the way in which AWERBs address their tasks will vary between different establishments, depending on the contexts in which they are operating.

Part 2: Knowledge of your own establishment's AWERB

Self assessment questions	Where to get the relevant information
Do I know who else is on the AWERB, what their roles are and how to contact them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask your establishment's Home Office Liaison Contact (HOLC), AWERB administrator or Chair to put you in touch with other AWERB participants. Try to meet with as many as possible face to face, to hear about their roles. Ask for a list of 'Named People' and others who have specific duties required by and defined in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act.
Have I received Terms of Reference for the AWERB, and a timetable of meetings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All AWERBs should have Terms of Reference (ToR) so ask the HOLC or AWERB administrator for a copy. The ToR should be useful to find out more about how your AWERB is organised, its goals and procedures. Also check whether the HOLC can provide any further information about how the tasks in the ToR are addressed and discharged. The HOLC or AWERB administrator or Chair should be able to provide you with a list of dates, times and venues for forthcoming AWERB meetings.

Self assessment questions	Where to get the relevant information
<p>Do I know about the establishment's own animal use, for example species, numbers, purposes, severity of procedures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be an establishment website that sets out the nature of animal use in the establishment, particularly if it has signed up to the Concordat on Openness. • However, the best people to talk to in order to gather this information are the Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) and the Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer (NACWO) - in a large organisation there may be several people in these roles. The Named Information Officer (NIO) and NTCO are also useful contacts as is the HOLC. • Talking to some of the project or personal licensees will provide practical examples of the nature of animal use in the establishment. • Try to arrange a visit to the animal facility to meet key colleagues and see some animal work in progress.
<p>Do I know how the AWERB carries out all of its tasks?</p>	<p>You cannot expect to know everything about how the AWERB's tasks are addressed straight away, but there are several things you can do to help develop your knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to existing members particularly the HOLC, NIO, NVS, NACWO and the AWERB Chair; • Ask whether you can sit in on a few AWERB meetings before actually becoming a member; this may or may not be possible depending on your establishment's approach to openness/confidentiality. • read through any AWERB documents, minutes of meetings etc.
<p>Do I know how much additional work will be required e.g. for reading and commenting on project licences or other internal documents?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HOLC or AWERB administrator should be able to give you an idea of this, but it is a good idea to talk to other long-standing members as well to hear about their experiences.
<p>Do I know what the lines of communication are between the AWERB and other internal groups or individuals within the organisation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check whether your AWERB's Terms of Reference (ToR) include a list of the groups or individuals with which it communicates, a diagram or description of the lines of communication and the broader management/organisational structure within which the AWERB sits. • If the relevant information is missing from the ToR, ask the HOLC, AWERB administrator or Chair to explain the links (and suggest that it is included in the ToR or other AWERB information). • More generally, read the table on page 15 of the RSPCA Lay Members' Resource Book, which lists examples of other activities that might influence work of the AWERB - and consider any possible impacts.

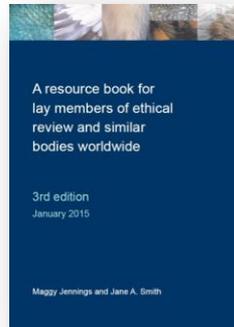
Part 3 Self assessment training tool

Self assessment questions	Where to get the relevant information
<p>Am I familiar with the concept of a Culture of Care and how the AWERB and the establishment more widely develop and maintain it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 56-58 in RSPCA/LASA Guiding Principles, which provide a definition of 'culture of care' and a list of features that help to foster that culture. • Consider the examples of activities that can help in developing a culture of care (p.58) and find out whether your AWERB/establishment does, or could, implement them along with any other ideas you might have.
<p>Do I understand the establishment's 'local' values, perspectives and resources?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This question is linked to the one above, as all three features (<i>values, perspectives, and resources</i>) can contribute to a culture of care. • <i>Local values</i> should both create and fully embrace the culture of care – and in some establishments, these values might lead to a decision not to carry out certain types of work, (over and above those that are already prohibited in law), nor to exceed certain levels of severity . • Bringing a range of <i>perspectives</i> and relevant expertise to bear on all topics considered by the AWERB will inevitably lead to more informed, balanced decision-making. • Critical evaluation of <i>local resources</i> should also play a vital role in decision-making, as the standards of local facilities and expertise can impact greatly on both animal welfare and science.

Part 3: Personal factors	
<p>Questions to consider when invited to join an AWERB and to reflect on throughout your membership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What particular strength or skill do I bring to the AWERB?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I have a clear idea of what I want to achieve and what I can achieve through my membership?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does participation in the AWERB compromise my personal principles or values or create any conflict of interests?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I prepared to accept that the AWERB as a whole may arrive at decisions that I do not agree with? • Can I deal with this satisfactorily?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I have sufficient time and energy to play an active role in the AWERB?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I prepared to speak up in meetings and be questioning yet constructive?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I prepared to visit the animal facilities and see procedures being carried out?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does my management (where relevant) believe the AWERB is sufficiently important that they support my membership e.g. by adding it into my objectives/performance review?

AWERB Induction: References and Resources

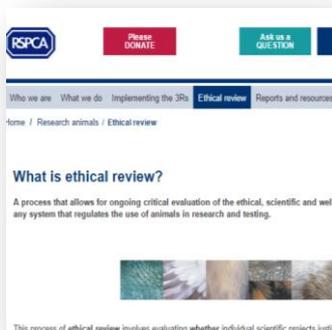
The AWERB and ethical review



The RSPCA/LASA **Guiding Principles on Good Practice for Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Bodies, 3rd edition** provides a brief, clear overview of all the tasks of the AWERB and good practice for meeting these tinyurl.com/RSPCA-LASA-AWERB

What you need to know about your AWERB and how to participate effectively, including making ethical judgements: **RSPCA Lay Members' Resource Book, 3rd edition** (NB although the title refers to lay members, the content is relevant to all member categories) tinyurl.com/RSPCALMH

The AWERB as a 'forum for discussion' view.pagetiger.com/AWERB/AWERB focuses on this task, setting out current practice, suggestions for progressing this and action points



A wider discussion of ethical review as a process: RSPCA ethical review webpages science.rspca.org.uk/sciencegroup/researchanimals/ethicalreview

The **European Commission working document on Animal Welfare Bodies and National Committees** to fulfil the requirements under the Directive is also helpful: ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/pdf/endorsed_awb-nc.pdf

See also the **European Commission working document on Project Evaluation and Retrospective Assessment**: ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/pdf/Endorsed_P E-RA.pdf

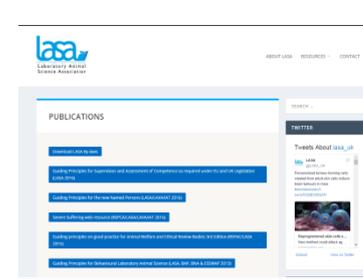
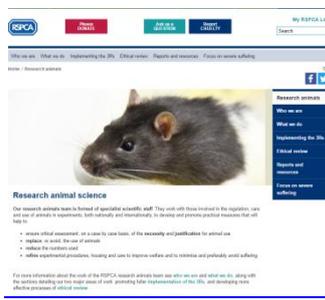
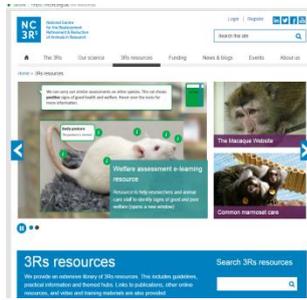
Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (ASPA)

- The legislation and its Codes Of Practice and Advisory Notes: **The Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) page**: www.gov.uk/guidance/research-and-testing-using-animals

Part 4 References and resources

- What the **Animals in Science Committee** does, and its reports: gov.uk/government/organisations/animals-in-science-committee

The Three Rs – Replacement, Reduction and Refinement



Helpful and interactive resources on all Three Rs, from the **NC3Rs**: nc3rs.org.uk/our-resources

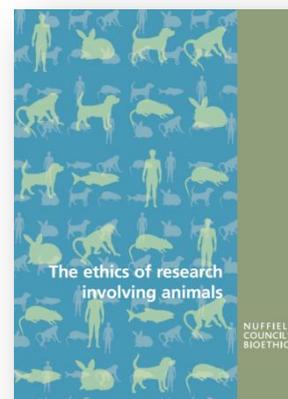
Information sheets on good practice for animal housing, husbandry and care, for insights into the behaviour and welfare needs of commonly used species and guidance when visiting the animal house, from the **RSPCA**: science.rspca.org.uk/sciencegroup/researchanimals/ethicalreview/functions/tasks/housingandcare

Accessible publications on a range of Three Rs topics from **LASA**: www.lasa.co.uk/publications/

Concordat on Openness

- **The Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK**: understandinganimalresearch.org.uk/files/6614/1207/5133/concordat-on-openness-on-animal-research-in-the-uk.pdf – you can see whether your AWERB's establishment has signed up [here](#) and, if it has, you should be able to find out more about its animal use on its website

Further reading



Review of cost [harm]-benefit assessment in the use of animals in research, a **2003 report from the Home Office's advisory Animal Procedures Committee**: tinyurl.com/hoe9vco

The Ethics of Research Involving Animals, a broad and inclusive review by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics: nuffieldbioethics.org/project/animal-research/ (scroll down the page for the report)



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Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty
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