

Policy on Laboratory animal research

At the University of Twente (UT), in addition to experiments based on cell and tissue culture techniques, computer simulations and human volunteers, research is also conducted on laboratory animals. Testing on laboratory animals is necessary at this moment for scientific research. Laboratory tests on animals help us to a considerable degree to develop knowledge about how people (and animals) function, and they contribute significantly to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases. At UT, testing on laboratory animals is done primarily in experiments for the development of medicines and new techniques for the diagnosis and treatment of human diseases.

The University of Twente acknowledges that animals have an intrinsic value. For this reason, scientists at UT must also take the animals' interests into account, and not only those of man and science. In addition, with the performance of tests on animals, the principle of the '3 R's' is pursued - this stands for Replacement, Reduction and Refinement. Under these principles, one attempts to perform the research using alternative methods that replace the laboratory animals and, where this is not possible, to use as few laboratory animals as possible and in a manner that causes as little distress by the animals as possible. An ethically responsible consideration must be made in the face of the conflict of interests between man and animal. Before scientists begin their activities, all research in which laboratory animals are used must be presented to the Animal Experiments Committee (Dutch: DEC) for ethical assessment. Laboratory animal testing is not permitted without DEC approval. The animal testing experts at UT and inspectors from the Food Safety Authority then monitor the course of the research with laboratory animals and ensure that researchers comply with the Law on Animal Experiments.

The number of experiments involving animals at UT is limited: it concerns approximately 0.2% of the total number of experiments performed on animals at all the universities and university medical centres in the Netherlands. The UT itself has a small animal experimentation facility. Most of the experiments involving animals with a UT permit (approximately 80%) are performed in the animal experimentation facility at the University of Utrecht.

Code for Transparent Experimentation with Animals

The UT subscribes to the Code for Transparent Experimentation with Animals. With this, UT answers to the social requirements for more transparency about the use of laboratory animals in scientific research.

The UT signed the Code for Transparent Experimentation with Animals in 2008. In order to serve as broad a public as possible, information about the 'how, what and why' of laboratory animal testing at UT is published on this website. You can find this information in the UT's annual report on the use of laboratory animals.

The Code for Transparent Experimentation with Animals can be found on the [KNAW](#) website. The UT does not have its own DEC but uses the DEC in Utrecht or other DEC's in the Netherlands. For an accounting of DEC Utrecht's activities, please see the [annual report](#) drawn up each year by the DEC Utrecht.