



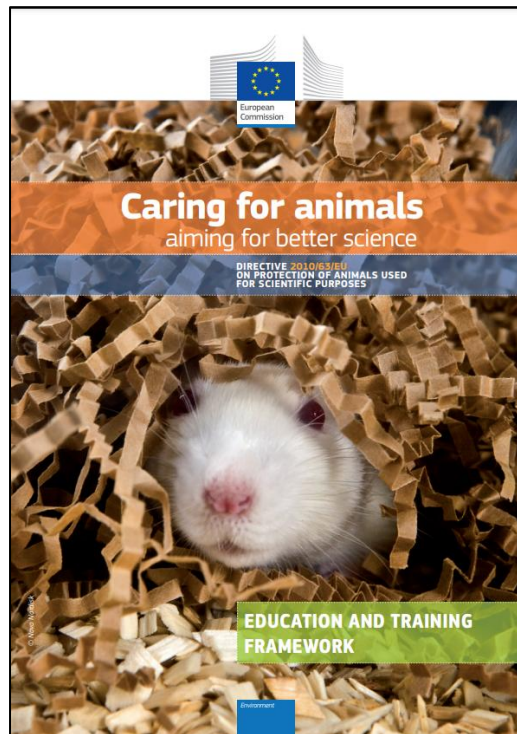
Education and Training Platform for Laboratory Animal Science

The role of ETPLAS, course modules, DOPs and SOPs
NORECOPA 18th anniversary - October 14th 2025

The Education & Training Platform for Laboratory Animal Science



*A European platform at which **information** on education and training can be exchanged is proposed.*



About ETLAS



- *Established in 2014*

The EU one-stop-shop for E&T in lab animal science, information sharing and communication; registered in Spain (Spring 2021)

Pools together key stakeholders

Member State Authorities
Course Providers
Course Accreditors

To provide:

- Information and tools for the delivery and assessment of high quality laboratory animal science training in Europe
- A forum for exchanging information on LAS education and training

To facilitate

- Mutual recognition of education & training in Laboratory Animal Science (LAS)
- The free movement of personnel

About ETPLAS



- Should **not add bureaucracy or control** approval/accrediting processes
- ETPLAS goal is to **facilitate and inform** (European Commission, 2014) – e.g. by publishing list of available courses formally recognized by Competent Authorities, or Accrediting Bodies
- Establishing and **harmonizing standards for E&T in LAS** (e.g. defining learning outcomes, publishing DOPS forms, etc.)
- Not originally defined by the European Commission (but EC endorsed):
 - e-learning courses
 - ETPLAS exam platform
 - Resource library (for 3rd party content)

ETPLAS has moved to Brussels, Belgium



Headquarters back to a European Union Member State

ETPLAS Website



- Website – www.etplas.eu
the LAS E&T central platform
- E-learning Modular training
Free, +12.000 registered users
- Directly Observed Practical Skills Forms
- European LAS course directory
- Exam platform
- Outputs from EU-funded projects
- Guidance and Recommendation documents for LAS Education & Training



EDUCATION & TRAINING PLATFORM FOR LABORATORY ANIMAL SCIENCE

ETPLAS is a non-profit European organization dedicated to raising and harmonizing education & training standards in Laboratory Animal Science.

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EDUCATION & TRAINING PLATFORM FOR LABORATORY ANIMAL SCIENCE

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[Videos from the ETPLAS 2025 Conference](#)

EU module 20. Anaesthesia for minor procedures

Objective: To assess the trainee's ability to perform practical anaesthesia-related skills correctly, ensuring animal welfare.

Instructions for trainees: You will be observed performing various anaesthesia-related tasks. A competence assessor will evaluate your performance according to the criteria below.

Details:

Trainee:	Assessor:
Species:	Date:
Method(s)/technique(s): (e.g., set-up of anaesthetic equipment, sedation, pre-anaesthetic evaluation)	

Assessment details: Each criterion is rated from (-) to (+++), and a global rate is given at the end.

Criteria	Descriptors	Rating scale (encircle the correct option)			
Selection and justification of techniques	Selects simple anaesthetic methods appropriate for the species, procedure, and duration. Justifies choice with emphasis on animal welfare, and scientific needs.	-	+	++	+++
Pre-anaesthetic evaluation	Performs basic health checks to identify contraindications, focusing on species and physiological parameters relevant for short-term anaesthesia.	-	+	++	+++
Set-up and maintenance of anaesthetic equipment	Sets up and correctly operates simple anaesthetic equipment (e.g., injection volumes, chambers, masks).	-	+	++	+++
Anaesthesia induction	Administers anaesthetic via basic methods (e.g., IP injection, chamber induction) effectively, ensuring smooth and minimal distress.	-	+	++	+++
Monitoring techniques	Observes reflexes, respiration, and basic physiological parameters to assess anaesthetic depth. Adjusts as needed for stability.	-	+	++	+++
Management of adverse events	Recognises and addresses minor complications (e.g., shallow anaesthesia or mild distress) promptly and appropriately.	-	+	++	+++
Post-anaesthetic recovery	Ensures smooth post-anaesthetic recovery using simple interventions (e.g., warmth, hydration). Monitors for any immediate complications.	-	+	++	+++
Record keeping	Maintains clear, concise records of anaesthetic protocols, reflex monitoring, and recovery notes for each procedure.	-	+	++	+++
Safe handling and disposal of anaesthetic agents	Adheres to safety protocols for handling small quantities of anaesthetic agents, ensuring proper disposal.	-	+	++	+++

Example situation:

[+]: Completes pre-anaesthetic evaluation but shows hesitation in setting up equipment, needing minor guidance.

[++]: Appropriately monitors anaesthesia depth during a procedure with occasional hesitancy in assessing reflexes.

[+++]: Confidently selects and administers anaesthesia, maintains optimal depth with proactive adjustments, and smoothly oversees post-anaesthetic recovery.

Global rate (EU module 20): This section provides an overall rating of your expertise and supervision level based on performance in the criteria above.

PRACTICAL COMPETENCE & LEVEL OF SUPERVISION		
☐ Novice (-): Performs with caution but requires further training. Requires hands-on supervision.	☐ Intermediate (+, ++): Performs most tasks with minimal guidance. Requires hands-off supervision.	☐ Competent (+++): Independently manages anaesthesia for minor procedures with confidence and skills. Can work independently without supervision.

Observations/feedback: The assessor may provide feedback on strengths and areas for improvement. This section helps track progress and identify training needs.

Signed:

TRAINEE

ASSESSOR

#13 -Module 27 - Competence Assessor

0% COMPLETE

▼ INTRODUCTION

≡ Introduction ○

▼ CHAPTER 1: IDENTIFY THE GOALS OF AN ASSESSMENT

≡ Lesson 1: Why Establish Competence ○

≡ Lesson 2: What is competence? ○

≡ Lesson 3: What to train and why assess? ○

≡ Lesson 4: Being a competence assessor ○

▼ CHAPTER 2: SELECT AND CONSTRUCT ASSESSMENT TOOLS

≡ Lesson 5: Assessment Tools and DOPS ○

≡ Lesson 6: Design your own (DOPS) assessment tool ○

▼ CHAPTER 3: CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT

Lesson 5 - Lesson 4: Being a competence assessor

Lesson 6 of 17

Lesson 5: Assessment Tools and DOPS

Learning outcomes of this lesson

- 7 Describe the application of Direct Observation of Procedural Skills (DOPS) sheets, how they relate to other assessment strategies, how to use them, and how they contribute to the overall assessment quality.
- 8 Explain how different approaches to assessment influence their quality criteria and what possible assessment strategies are available.
- 9 Name essential elements of competent performance within an entrusted professional activity.

Different methodologies and the relation to DOPS to assess competence

Several methodologies evaluate different components of competence. However, knowledge, skills, and attitude should all be integral to practical assessment. Other tools focus on several aspects of competency and can be used in training, assessment, and

E-learning EU Modules

Replacement

EU-52: Searching for (existing) non-animal alternatives
EU-60: Developing non-animal alternatives for regulatory use

EU Module 52

Searching for (existing)
non-animal alternatives



EU Module 60

Developing in vitro methods
and approaches for scientific
and regulatory use



E-learning EU Modules

Reduction

EU-10: Design of procedures and projects – level 1

EU-11: Design of procedures and projects – level 2

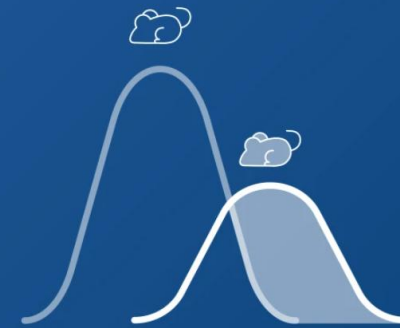
EU Module 10

Design of procedures
and projects
(level 1)



EU Module 11

Design of procedures
and projects
(level 2)



E-learning EU Modules

Refinement (from a regulatory perspective)

EU-12: The Severity Assessment Framework

EU-25: Project evaluation

EU-26: Inspector

EU-27: Competence Assessor

EU Module 12

The severity assessment framework



EU Module 25

Project evaluation



EU Module 26

Inspector



EU Module 27

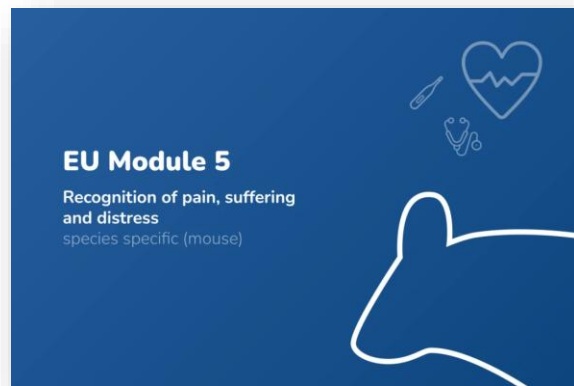
Competence Assessor



E-learning EU Modules

Refinement (from an animal welfare perspective)

EU-5: Recognition of pain, suffering, and distress (species-specific)



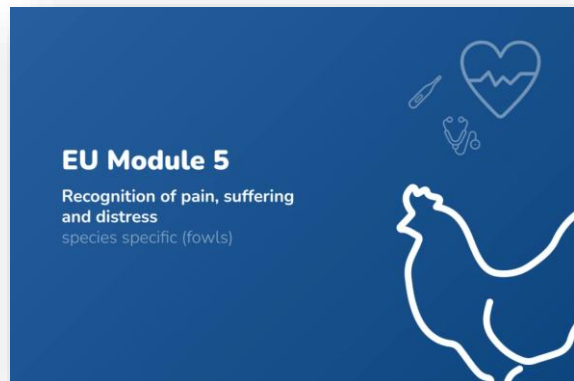
Mouse



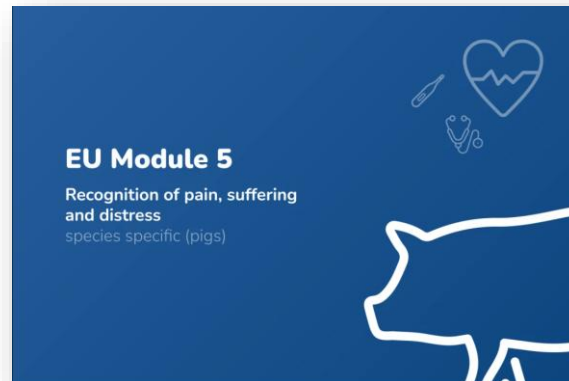
Rat



Zebrafish



Domestic Fowl



Pig



Ruminants

E-learning EU Modules

Other topics

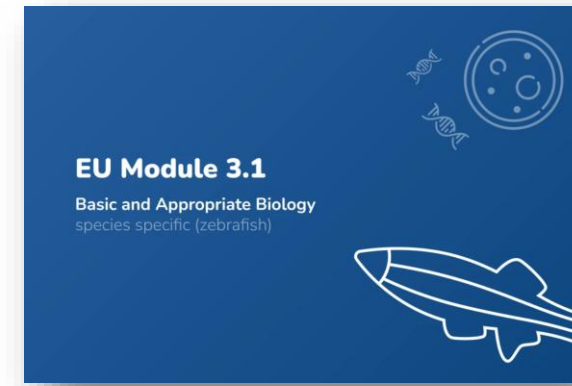
EU-3.1: Basic and appropriate biology (species specific)



Mouse



Rat



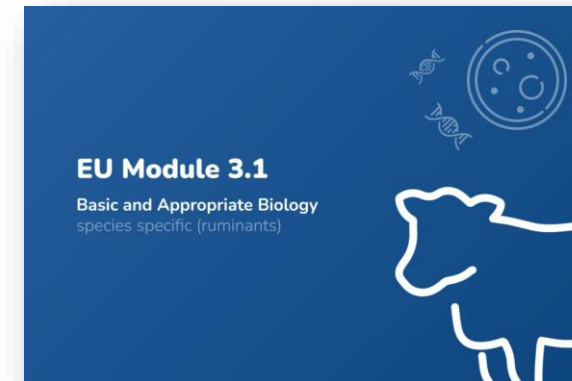
Zebrafish



Domestic Fowl



Pig



Ruminants

E-learning EU Modules

Other topics

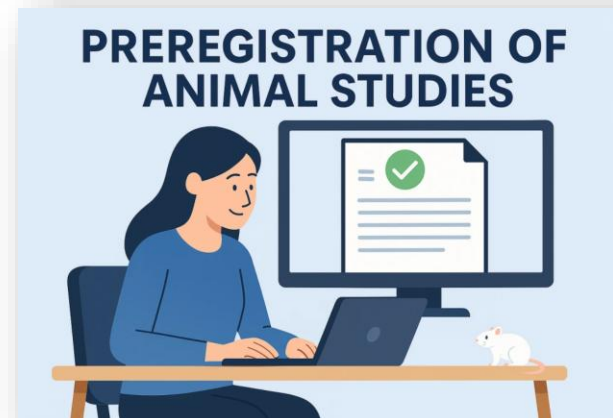
EU-2: Ethics, Animal Welfare and the Three Rs – Level 1

EU-9: Ethics, Animal Welfare and the Three Rs – Level 2

EU-24: Designated Veterinarian

Systematic Review of Animal Studies

Preregistration of Animal Studies



EU Module 9

Ethics, Animal Welfare
and the Three Rs
(level 2)



EU Module 2

Ethics, Animal Welfare
and the Three Rs
(level 1)



EU Module 24

Designated Veterinarian



Advantages

- Easy access
- Flexible attendance (great for professionals with limited time)
- Wide range of topics and species
- Follows learning outcomes for EU-function modules
- High quality
- Reduced cost (free, for now)
- **Soon to be translated to multiple languages**

- Cannot replace face-to-face teaching (or at least it should not, IMHO)
- No way of asking questions to asynchronous e-learning platforms
- The system can be “rigged” by rushing through pages without actually reading
- Educational contents delivered in a system with ample opportunities for distraction (social media, Youtube, email...)
- Accessibility issues

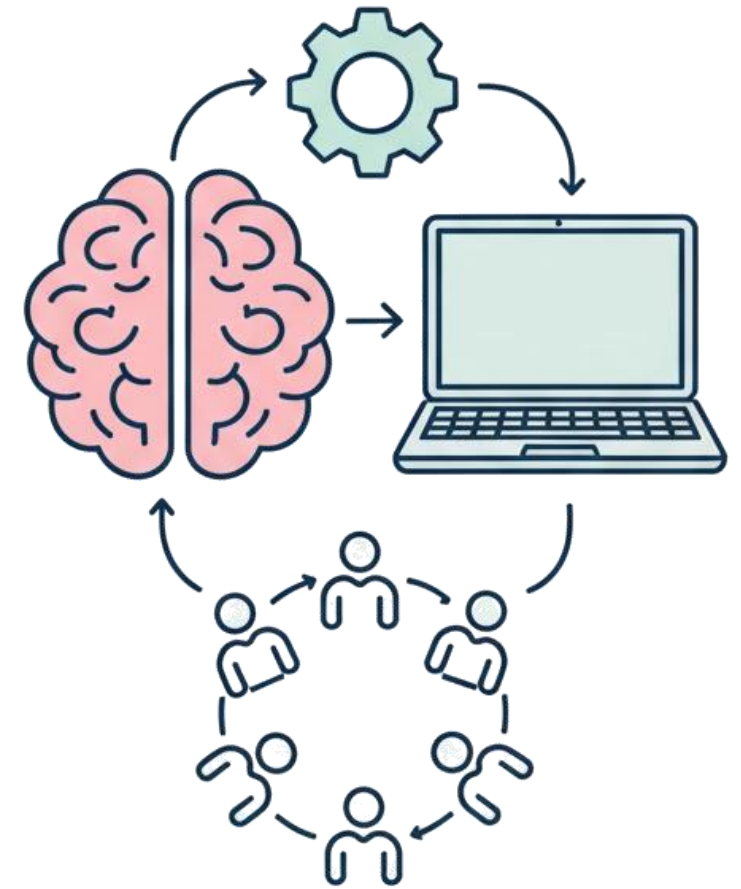
Recommended teaching/learning approach

Blended Learning

Combines the flexibility of e-learning with the engagement of interactive, live sessions

Ensures that learners receive the necessary information while accommodating those who require greater flexibility.

Modules split into short, manageable lessons, allowing participants to integrate learning activities into their daily schedules seamlessly.



Examples - 1

EU-52: Searching for (existing) non-animal alternatives

By Etplas Editor / July 9, 2021

EU-52: Searching for (existing) non-animal alternatives > EU-52: Searching for (existing) non-animal alternatives

IN PROGRESS

EU52: Searching for (existing) non-animal alternatives

100% COMPLETE

Formulating proper research questions

How to approach research questions differently as part of...

Identifying non-animal approaches – an interdisciplinary ...

PART 3: SEARCHING FOR RELEVANT INFORMATION

Earlier in this module, we discussed the different types of Replacement:

- one-on-one Replacement;
- reformulating the research question;
- combining data sets/evidence streams.

In regulatory or fundamental research, one-on-one Replacement is often not available. A more suitable approach can be the assessment of experimental results in the context of the complete programme.

In this process, it is important to specify the main objective, and 'dissect' the question into (sub-)questions in such a way that they

- Ask learners to take the module “Searching for (existing) no animal alternatives, at home
- Face-to-face, organize them in groups and ask each to find available Replacements to animal tests., e.g. :
 - Pyrogenicity
 - Draize
 - Phototoxicity

Examples - 2

EU-60: Developing in vitro methods and approaches for scientific and regulatory use

By Etplas Editor / July 9, 2021

EU-60: Developing in vitro methods and approaches for scientific and regulatory use > EU-60: Developing in vitro methods and approaches for scientific and regulatory ... **IN PROGRESS**

EU60: Developing in vitro methods and approaches for scientific and regulatory use

94% COMPLETE

What is a scientifically valid test method or approach? ✓

Information requirements to demonstrate the reliability a... ✓

Principles and study designs to assess the scientific val... ✓

Understanding the principles of OECD test guidelines and ... ✓

What is a scientifically valid test method or approach?

When is a test method or approach considered to be scientifically valid?

A test method or approach is considered to be scientifically valid when it is reliable and relevant for a particular purpose. The scientific validity of a test method is established through a validation process. Validation is the process by which

- Your MSc student is validating a new application for an existing NAM
- Ask them to take the module “Developing in vitro methods and approaches for scientific and regulatory use”
- Using it as a starting point, discuss what was learned, what can and cannot be applied in their work, and what limitations exist.

Examples - 3

EU-25-2: Project Evaluation

By Etplas Editor / January 22, 2021

EU-25: Project evaluation > EU-25-2: Project Evaluation

IN PROGRESS

EU25-2 Project Evaluation

42% COMPLETE

Harm: Benefit - why and how ✓

Harm: Benefit and the 3Rs ✓

Aids to harm: benefit analysis - cubes and grids ✓

Structuring the harm: benefit process ✓

What projects need specific justification? ○

What is re-use? ○

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT EVALUATION

Step 3

Developments - flattening the cube

			Harms		
Benefits	Scientific	Societal	Mild	Moderate	Severe
	Low	Low			
		Moderate			
		High			
	Moderate	Low			
		Moderate			
		High			
	High	Low			
		Moderate			
		High			

Various tabular versions of the harm: benefit matrix have been developed. The example above (redrawn from [Bout et al, 2014](#)) integrates harms

- For the training of newly recruited Animal Welfare Body members, you organize them in groups, and give each a simple project application to appraise.
- You ask them to do EU-25 module, and afterwards to appraise the same project, minding all relevant aspects.
- In the next session, hold a debate to discuss any changes.

Examples - 4

EU Module 3.1 – Basic and appropriate biology – Species specific: Farm animals (Pigs)

By Etplas Editor / June 17, 2025

EU Module 3.1 – Basic and appropriate biology – Species specific: Farm animals (Pigs) > EU Module 3.1 – Basic and appropriate biology – Species specific: Farm animals (...)

IN PROGRESS

Full-Screen

#6 - EU Module 3.1 - Basic and appropriate biology - Pigs

0% COMPLETE

▼ PIGS - BASIC AND APPROPRIATE BIOLOGY

≡ Introduction

≡ Anatomy and Physiology

≡ Husbandry, welfare and procedures

≡ Housing

Environmental enrichment

Domestic pigs are social, ground-oriented animals that explore with their snout. Rooting in earth or bedding and chewing on bulky objects keep them occupied and reduce abnormal behaviour.

In the absence of a stimulating environment, abnormal behaviours are expected, including tail-biting, bar-biting, and withdrawal from the group.



- A group of postdocs with licenses for procedures in rodents, are being trained to work with pigs.
- Ask them to take module 3.1 – Basic and Applied Biology, and to ask groups to deliver talks on its contents to their colleagues:
 - Anatomy and physiology
 - Husbandry, Welfare, and procedures
 - Housing and environmental enrichment
 - Dietary requirements
 - Breeds

Acknowledgements



European Union:

- ETPLAS Pilot Project Grant
- ETPLAS Preparatory Action grant
- *LAS-Learning* Project



Happy to take your questions

