

## **REPORT OF MY ATTENDANCE OF THE M2 COURSE FOR STUDY DIRECTORS AT THE INSTITUTE OF LABORATORY ANIMAL SCIENCE IN ZURICH ENABLED BY THE ICLAS GRAND OF THE TRAINING THE TRAINER SCHOLARSHIP**

After two years of waiting due to the temporary pandemic shut down, I visited the M2 course for course directors at the Institute of Laboratory Animal Science in Zurich in September 2022. Visit in quotation marks as the course was mainly held online via a ZOOM meeting. The course has currently no FELASA accreditation, but is structured and its content is similar to the EU education and training framework [1]. In the 40-h course you gain an extensive expertise on how to design an animal experiment according to the legal requirements and how to implement the 3Rs principle in your design properly. The content of the course, similar to modules 9, 10, 11 of the EU education and training framework [1], includes an in-depth study of ethical issues as well as the 3Rs principle and covers all relevant aspects for a study design e.g. literature research, biometrics and biostatistics, as well as project documentation for good scientific practice.

The course comprises a short online presentation about animal welfare regulations and a homework assignment for literature research beforehand. A major part of the course is a five day long lasting ZOOM meeting with presentations, questions rounds and working group tasks. (Mo - Th 8:30 - 17:30, Fr 08:30 - 16:45). Finally, there is a written exam, which had to be done at place. I did this on 19<sup>th</sup> September at Zurich. The exam is of multiple-choice format and mandatory for the completion and the certification of the course.

I really enjoyed the exchange of experience with the experts holding the presentations and the participants from various research fields ranging from small animal experiments, e.g., imaging, or surgical research projects, to projects with nutritional animals as well as projects at veterinary clinics. By heart, the zoom meeting days were long, and I sometime wished to be able to repeat parts of the presentation as I am a very detailed learner, but the questions rounds after the sessions and working group tasks helped me a lot to deepen my knowledge.

The course was very well organized. All information and handouts were sent in accurate timing before the course, and you got immediate support during the whole course. I highly improved my knowledge in study design, literature research, biostatistics, score sheet development and anaesthesia as well as in pain assessment and I got useful expertise how to management a virtual course. Apart from the content in general it was interesting to get to know a different legislative system since some point differ from the German system. It was very interesting to find parallels and differences, especially through the eyes of an animal welfare officer and veterinarian. For example, in both countries petitions have and had been raised aiming to partially or even completely forbid animal experiments so that communication about laboratory animal science is stressed. I am very glad to have been able to visit this very well-organized course by Philippe Bugnon at the Institute of Laboratory Animal Science in Zurich. I would like to thank him very much for this organisation and many thanks again to you for the ICLAS grand of the training the trainer scholarship.

Since I will start a new job as an animal welfare officer now, I will use the gained knowledge and experience for the establishment of workshops and e-learning modules. The workshops and modules should cover the learning outcomes for task B Article 23 (2) Directive 2010/63 in accordance to the EU education and training framework [1]. My first plans would be a workshop for score sheet development and literature research, then I will continue with other topics, e.g., severity assessment as well as ethics and the 3Rs. The workshops should begin with a presentation for theoretical background (45 - 75 min), followed by practical tasks in working groups (60 - 90 min) and finally been rounded up by a question round (15 - 30 min). For theory, the presentations of the course will be

supporting. For the practical-based tasks I will use examples, inspired by the examples mentioned in the course.

#### Possible example for a score sheet workshop

1 h Presentation: Topics: Legislative background, basics about score sheets, score sheet structure including main aspects, steps to develop a score sheet

0,5 h Discussion about score sheet via examples given, find mistakes, what can be improved

1,5 h Working group task: Develop a score sheet via a given experimental protocol

0,5 h Discussion working groups solutions

0,5 h Question round

## References

1. National Competent Authorities for the implementation of Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. *A working document on the development of a common education and training framework to fulfil the requirements under the Directive*, Brussels, 2014. Available online: [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab\\_animals/pdf/guidance/education\\_training/en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/pdf/guidance/education_training/en.pdf) (accessed on 30 March 2021).