



Bergen, October 25, 2022

To ICLAS

Report from Porto workshop on Experimental design September 12-13, 2022.

Experimental design is an important topic in the evaluation of animal studies – both for the ethical considerations as well as evaluation quality, reliability, and relevance of animal studies. This topic should be given a significant attention in the training of animal researchers – especially for Function B.

My main learning points I took home from Porto

- Young researchers are responsive for ideas to improve experimental design. Their supervisors, however, prefer to use the methods they “always” used – so it seems difficult to achieve desired changes on how animal studies are designed. This should be taken into consideration in designing courses - as the audience is different – and training should be adapted to this.
- The session on how to build good questions for the students was useful to train them to identify strength and weaknesses in the study designs, to identify experimental units and optimizing the knowledge output from a study. More practical tasks are needed to help student in the learning process
- The session on logistics and practical organization of courses was also useful
- The Learning Objective 10.8. *Explain how to access expert help in the design of an experiment and the interpretation of experimental results*, of the common education and training framework to fulfil the requirements under the Directive is vague. Students must achieve enough statistical knowledge to structure and design studies that can be analyzed by statistical tools, defining relevant treatment effect(s), and taking relevant biological confounding factors into consideration. Then they should be able to start a fruitful collaboration with a statistician.

Regards Aurora Brønstad

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