



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

RUAREC Guidelines

Use of Invertebrate Animals for Scientific Purposes at Rhodes University

Drafted by: Dr Shelley Edwards (Chairperson of Rhodes University Animal Research Ethics Committee – RUAREC) and Associate Professor Roman Tandlich (Deputy Chairperson of RUAREC)

Inputs by: RUAREC, Siyanda Manqele (Ethics Coordinator, Research office of Rhodes University) and Jaine Roberts (Rhodes University Research Office)

Date when this SOP becomes operational: 1st August 2021 or the earliest possible date thereafter

Date of the review: 1st April 2024 or as deemed necessary by the RUAREC

Table of Contents

1. Purpose of this Guidelines document.....	2
2. Research and teaching activities involving invertebrates.....	2
3. Gatekeeper permission	2
4. Best practice and conduct of experiments.....	3
5. Ethical clearance for research and teaching involving invertebrates.....	3
6. Reporting	3

Glossary of terms

Invertebrates – animals without a spine that do not belong to the class Cephalopoda or order Decapoda.

RUAREC – Rhodes University Animal Research Ethics Committee

1. Purpose of this Guidelines document

This Guidelines document covers all research and teaching activities that are conducted by Rhodes University staff and students in the context of Rhodes University's academic project at the institution and that include the use of invertebrate animals. THESE ACTIVITIES DO NOT INCLUDE ACTIVITIES WHICH INVOLVE THE USE OF ANIMALS WITH A SPINE, I.E. VERTEBRATE ANIMALS, NOR ANY ACTIVITIES WHICH INVOLVE THE USE OF CEPHALOPODS OR DECAPODS.

2. Research and teaching activities involving invertebrates

For the purpose of these Guidelines and as defined in other policies where appropriate, research and teaching activities involving animals include, but are not limited to:

- Field observations and data collection where the invertebrates are captured/removed from their natural environment for short periods of time, i.e., less than 24 hours for the purposes of these Guidelines, examined for the purposes of observations, examined for the determination of species and class distribution or any other activity which does not result in the killing or euthanasia of the animal(s) in question or their removal from their natural habitat to be housed in a laboratory facility;
- Field observations and data collection where the invertebrates are captured/removed from their natural environment for periods of time ranging from 24 hours to 1 month for the purposes of this SOP, examined for the purposes of observations, examined for the determination of species and class distribution or any other activity which does not result in the killing or euthanasia of the animal(s) in question or their removal from their natural habitat to be housed in a laboratory facility;
- Laboratory experiments with commercially acquired/procured invertebrate tissue, eggs or other living matter, e.g. eggs, hatching and toxicity testing with eggs of *Daphnia pulex* or *Daphnia magna*;
- Laboratory experiments with existing and established invertebrate stock cultures and/or cell lines that are held at Rhodes University or at any of its affiliated institutes;
- Any other activities where invertebrates are used for research purposes and/or for teaching activities;
- Any activities as determined by the resolution of the RUAREC or as communicated by the Chair or the Deputy Chair of RUAREC.

3. Gatekeeper permission

Rhodes University staff and students who are involved in the research and teaching activities that require the use of invertebrate are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

a) Access to the sampling sites can be obtained after the necessary gatekeeper permission(s) has/have been granted. For the purposes of these Guidelines, gatekeeper permission includes the following where applicable:

- Permission from the owner of private land, e.g. the legal title deed holder;

- The national or provincial parks board;
- A trust board administering communal land;
- A traditional leader administering communal land;
- Local, metropolitan or district municipality operating a facility where the sampling sites are located, e.g. a wastewater treatment plant;
- As determined by any national and/or provincial legislation; and/or local government by-laws in the territory or parts of the territory of South Africa;
- As determined by a resolution of the RUAREC.

If any clarification is required about the gatekeeper permission, then this can be done by a resolution backed by a two-third majority of the RUAREC membership or after an agreement between the Chair and the Deputy Chair of RUAREC.

4. Best practice and conduct of experiments

All research and teaching activities must be performed as quickly as possible to minimise the impact on the invertebrates used as studied. All research and teaching activities that involve the use of invertebrate must be carefully planned and must be based on the best available practice(s) that are at the disposal of the academic and support staff/students, involved in the research and/or teaching activities that involve the use of invertebrates. Sources of best practice include the existing pool of practices from the respective Rhodes University's academic department or affiliated institute, professional literature, etc. Invertebrates must not be removed from their original habitat, unless this has been approved by the RUAREC. If collection of specimens is required, then appropriate collection permits are required from national conservation authorities.

5. Ethical clearance for research and teaching involving invertebrates

An abbreviated ethics application to the RUAREC is required for the use of invertebrates in research and teaching activities. In the case(s) of uncertainty, members of the academic staff and/or undergraduate or postgraduate students are requested to contact that Chairperson of RUAREC (currently Dr Shelley Edwards – s.edwards@ru.ac.za) or the Ethics Coordinator in the Research Office of Rhodes University (currently Mr Siyanda Manqele, s.mangele@ru.ac.za).

6. Reporting

Reporting of research/teaching activities involving invertebrate animal subjects will be done through an Annual Report, in line with the SOP on Monitoring and in accordance with the RU Animal Ethics Policy and the Terms of Reference for the RUAREC.