International Association of Veterinary Editors

Consensus Author Guidelines on Animal Ethics and Welfare for Veterinary Journals

All material published in [journal name] must adhere to high ethical standards concerning animal welfare.

Animal ethics-based criteria for manuscript consideration

Manuscripts will be considered for publication only if the work detailed therein:
1) Follows international, national, and/or institutional guidelines for humane animal treatment and complies with relevant legislation;
2) Has been approved by the ethics review committee at the institution or practice at which the studies were conducted where such a committee exists;
3) For studies using client-owned animals, demonstrates a high standard (best practice) of veterinary care and involves informed client consent;
4) Meets all additional ethical standards set by [journal name], as follows: [describe any journal-specific animal ethics and welfare guidelines here].

Prior to acceptance of a manuscript, to verify compliance with the above policies, the authors must: [journals may opt for one or more of the following]
1) Sign a letter certifying that legal and ethical requirements have been met with regards to the humane treatment of animals described in the study;
2) Specify in Materials and Methods the ethical review committee approval process and the international, national, and/or institutional guidelines followed.

Animal ethics-based criteria for manuscript rejection

1) Manuscripts and authors that fail to meet the aforementioned requirements;
2) Studies that involve unnecessary pain, distress, suffering, or lasting harm to animals;
3) The Editor retains the right to reject manuscripts on the basis of ethical or welfare concerns.

Key Principles Used in Developing the Author Guidelines

1) All journals publishing studies in which experimental or client-owned animals are used should have a clear editorial policy on animal welfare ethics.
2) The policy should appear prominently in the instructions for authors and referees.
3) Guidelines should indicate that recommendations apply to all vertebrate (and specified invertebrate) animals and not just those reared for and used in the laboratory.
4) Policies should indicate any journal-specific requirements for animal welfare and demand adherence to relevant institutional, national, and international guidelines.
5) Policies should make clear that failure to meet ethical concerns regarding animal welfare will result in manuscript rejection.
6) Journals should require author declaration of compliance with animal welfare and ethical guidelines.

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