

Assessing Welfare

Welfare assessments are important because animals are sentient beings. These assessments help to stop or/and prevent animals from suffering and to ensure that they are functioning well. They help to monitor pain, suffering and any distress that may occur and to help stop them therefore it is important that animals have routine health checks.

The owner is responsible for making sure the animal is taken to these health checks regular and to get veterinary help when needed. A vet is responsible for giving advice and caring for animal when they are in their care. An assessor is someone who gives feedback on places such as veterinary practises and zoos.

The five freedoms

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst- the animal should have access to water and a proper diet to maintain health
2. Freedom from discomfort- the animal should have appropriate shelter and resting area that is comfortable.
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease- the animal should be given the appropriate care to prevent, diagnose and treat any health problems. This includes the choice of putting the animal down if its in the best interest of the animal's health.
4. The ability to express normal behaviour- adequate space, facilities and company of the animal's own kind should be provided.
5. Freedom from fear and distress- the animal should be given the comfort, the right conditions and treatment to avoid mental suffering

How behaviour is measured

Behaviour can be difficult to measure because:

- The animal might be out of sight
- The time of day may affect the animal's behaviour or the ability to see
- The weather could be mean that the animal is hiding
- How confident and the expertise of the observer
- Replication of behaviour
- Time scale
- How the behaviour is perceived by the observer