

# Students for Ethical Science



## OUSA Conference April 2004

In 2004 we brought 3 motions to Conference namely, 68, 69 and 71, and we knew we had to defeat Motion 70 which was being brought by the Executive Committee. We also knew that they were going to oppose our 68 and 69. This document is an explanation of the Motions.

### Motion 68M(PO) – Carried!!

#### Societies Standing Committee

**This Association recognises fundamental differences, both in purpose and in law, between the use of animals in the University's educational curriculum and the use of animals in its research.**

**The Association therefore resolves to delete Motion 2003 32M(PO) on the grounds that it confuses research with undergraduate experiments.**

The aim is to separate the experiments taught to undergraduate students from the research done (some involving post-graduates) at the Open University. Last year two motions were carried to replace B26.1 but Motion 32M(PO) of 2003 did not make the distinction between the two areas of animal use, therefore it needs to be deleted. The rest of the policy enshrined in the motion will be upheld because Motion 33M(PO) of 2003 pretty much covers it and also refers, correctly, to the 'Animal Ethical Committee', not the 'Science Faculty Committee', which does not exist as such.

This is the one that was deleted (with the 'offending' text in red and our notes added in green) Below that is the policy motion that will stand.

"Delete B26.1 and B26.2 and replace with:

'This Association recognises that some students may morally or ethically object to the use of animals or specifically killed tissue in such experimentation. **However, this Association also recognises the importance of certain experiments involving animals when there are medical research benefits.**

It calls upon the University to ensure that:

- (a) formal alternatives are provided for students where such experiments take place and these alternatives are freely available; the ability for students to opt-out of such experiments is known by all students taking such courses; and if animal tissue is used during the normal study of such a course, this is published in course and course choice material;
- (b) steps are taken to reduce the number of animals needed, by replacement with viable alternatives;
- (c) **where alternatives cannot be used or found**, any tissue is sourced in a humane manner; **[This is covered by Motion 69M(PO) 2004 below]**
- (d) no student's academic assessment is adversely affected by **refusal** **[refusal to what?]** and such a statement is placed in both the undergraduate and postgraduate Student Handbook; and
- (e) the **Science Faculty Committee** **[actually the Animal Ethical Committee]** allows for adequate discussion on the use of animal tissue and potential alternatives."

This is the policy from last year's motion 34M(PO) that will stand and combined with Motion 69M(PO) 2004 it covers all the points raised in the one to be deleted, with the exception of its faults.

Delete B26.1 in the Register of Decisions and replace as follows:-

"This Association recognises that many students do not wish to take part in experiments involving the use of animals or specifically killed tissue. It calls upon the University to:

- a) provide sufficient details about such experiments in the Course Description brochure for students to be able to make an informed choice,
- b) provide formal alternatives for students where such experiments take place and ensure these alternatives are freely available and published in course material,
- c) take steps to reduce the number of animals needed by replacement with viable alternatives e.g. computer simulations.
- d) explore ways in which these alternatives may be implemented and expanded,
- e) ensure that no student's academic assessment is affected by refusal to participate and such a statement is placed in the Student Handbook,
- f) ensure that the remit of the Animal Ethical Committee allows for adequate discussion.
- g) implement these changes as soon as possible."

## **Motion 69M(PO) - Ran out of time**

### **Societies Standing Committee**

**Delete Motion 34M(PO) 2003 and replace with: 'This Association recognises that the University may wish to continue to provide experiments at undergraduate residential and day schools using animal tissue. It calls upon the University to ensure that any such tissue is ethically sourced, e.g. neither from purpose-bred nor purpose-killed animals.'**

Motion 34M(PO) 2003 was passed last year. The new motion 69M(PO), which will replace it, enhances it and clearly shows that the experiments are referred to are those done by students, not researchers, and therefore are outside the scope of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPAs).

Motion 34M(PO) reads as follows:

"This Association recognises that the University may wish to continue to provide experiments using animal tissue.

It calls upon the University to ensure that any such tissue is ethically sourced, e.g. not from purpose-bred or purpose killed animals."

Sadly, Motion 69 was not debated, but the original Motion 34 still stands and all we have to do now is to ensure that OUSA acts to carry out the wishes of its members when they carried the motion in 2003.

## Motion 70M(PO) - Ran out of time Executive Committee

Delete Resolution 34M(PO) 2003 and replace with:

“This Association recognises that the University may wish to continue to provide experiments using animal tissue.

It calls upon the University to ensure, where practical and within the bounds of the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 and current health and safety regulations, that any such tissue is ethically sourced e.g. not from purpose-bred or purpose killed animals.”

We would have asked you to **defeat this motion** because it is unnecessary, and it offers a get-out clause to the OU. **Educational experiments** at the OU do not fall within the scope of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, whereas **research** using animals does. Neither does the motion specify that the experiments for which ethical sourcing is possible are in undergraduate education, unlike Motion 69M(PO), which does. However, as was the case with Motion 69, there was not time to debate it.

## Motion 71M(PO) - Ran out of time Societies Standing Committee

**This Association calls for the complete cessation of research using animals as models for human conditions at the OU and for its replacement with more effective methods such as epidemiological and clinical studies, scanning technology, *in vitro* studies and computer modelling.**

It is time for all researchers to stop monkeying around with animals and to move away from that kind of harmful, cruel, and unproductive research into human ailments. They should embrace alternative humane and relevant methods and the benefits that new technology can bring.

It's absurd that in the 21st Century we should waste research years and money trying to inflict human diseases and ailments on animals; and then even more years and more money to try to cure them; and then trying to extrapolate the results into what will happen in humans. And it's obscene that we should be inflicting fear, pain and distress on sentient beings because we haven't been taught any better.

This University must move with the times and get out of its deeply entrenched harmful animal use – harmful to the animals, and harmful to humans.

Last year (2003) the Steering Committee insisted on linking this with Motions 32 and 34 so that it would fall if they were carried, which they did. This year (2004) we ran out of time (around 15% of the motions were not debated). We will bring this motion back to Conference in 2005, and eventually we will be heard.

Produced by

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