



AAALAC International Accreditation in Europe

AAALAC International is a nongovernmental, non-profit organisation that promotes the humane treatment of animals in science through a voluntary accreditation programme and other educational programmes.

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What is AAALAC International accreditation?

AAALAC International is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organisation that promotes the humane treatment of animals in science through a voluntary accreditation programme, a programme status evaluation service, and educational programmes. More than 1,100 institutional animal care and use programmes in 50 countries around the world have earned AAALAC International Accreditation. This includes more than 120 institutions in 22 European countries (including Israel). There are accredited programmes in: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Turkey, and the United Kingdom (England and Scotland).

Is the accreditation process the same from country to country?

Yes, the process is the same. However, because each country has its own set of laws and regulations, AAALAC International takes into account applicable laws and regulations of the host country, and the overall performance of the programme as it relates to desired animal welfare objectives. AAALAC also evaluates the extent to which the

programme conforms with AAALAC's Three Primary Standards which are: the European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals Used for Experimental and Other Scientific Purposes, Council of Europe (ETS 123); the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (Guide), NRC 2011; and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching* (Ag Guide, 2020). Council also uses a number of international guidelines and a list of additional resources during the assessment process as appropriate to the location of the programme. (These resources are available online at: www.aalac.org/resources/reference-resources/) In Europe, the *Guide* is specially taken in consideration for those programme areas (e.g., veterinary care) not well defined in the main European documents (ETS 123 and applicable legislation).

How does the process work?

Institutions seeking accreditation complete an initial application which includes an extensive description (that also serves as selfevaluation) of the applicant's entire animal care and use programme through completion of the "Programme Description" (Programme Description forms available at: www.aalac.org/program-description/). There are European versions of the Programme Description

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forms. After the application and Programme Description are completed and submitted to the AAALAC International office, a site visit team led by a member of the Council on Accreditation is assigned and a site visit is scheduled. The site visit team completes a detailed on-site evaluation and submits a full report to the Council on Accreditation. The Council then determines the final accreditation status.

How is accreditation status determined?

AAALAC International's Council on Accreditation makes all final decisions regarding accreditation. The Council meets three times a year (January, May and September). Applications and site visit reports are considered during the first Council meeting that follows the site visit. Based on the Council's discussion, a letter is drafted that explains accreditation status. Official notification of accreditation status (and any necessary actions needed before accreditation can be granted) is sent within four to eight weeks after the Council meeting.

What is the European Council on Accreditation?

AAALAC's Council on Accreditation is comprised of highly accomplished laboratory animal medicine specialists, research scientists and other professionals from around the world. They conduct the evaluations that determine which institutions are awarded AAALAC accreditation. European programmes are evaluated by the 11-member "European Section" of the Council, which is exclusively composed of European professionals.

What if we have more questions?

If you have additional questions about the accreditation process or specific questions related to your programme, please contact AAALAC International's Director for Europe and Latin America:

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