

1. SCOPE

This policy is designed to ensure that the Irish Deer Commission complies with its obligations under relevant legislation, including; The Animal Welfare Act 2006, Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, Welfare of Animal Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and Republic of Ireland Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

All Employees, Instructors, Assessors and Associates are responsible for promoting awareness of this policy and for monitoring its effectiveness. Everyone including Learners must understand their responsibilities and will familiarise themselves with relevant Codes of practice to help compliance with the provisions of Section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act.

Example codes of practice

Code of practice for the welfare of dogs:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/697953/pb13333-cop-dogs-091204.pdf

Code of practice for the welfare of Cats:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/697941/pb13332-cop-cats-091204.pdf

Code of practice for the welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and their Hybrids:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/700200/horses-welfare-codes-of-practice-april2018.pdf

3. OBJECTIVES

The Irish Deer Commission objectives are to ensure that the welfare needs of their animals are met. These include the need:

- For a suitable environment (place to live)
- For a suitable diet
- To exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- To be housed with, or apart from, other animals (if applicable)
- To be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease

4. COMMITMENT

The Irish Deer Commission is committed to ensuring that when any training or assessment is taking place, or subsequent or post this activity, the health and welfare of animals has been considered at all times. All animals must be handled humanely and appropriately to suit the requirements of the individual to minimise fear, stress, pain and distress.

Animal training (if applicable) must be based on the principles of positive reinforcement (i.e. reward desired behaviour and ignore unwanted behaviour). Animals must not be physically forced to perform or punished if they do not perform.

We will ensure we consider whether training and / or an assessment activity may involve, or is likely to involve learners coming into contact with live animals, or sites where any animals have been present, or can often be found in the location where the activity may take place (example fencing or forestry). We will ensure that all precautions have been taken to reduce any negligence that may impact animal welfare or the environment at any time.

The use of chemicals, machinery and tools must be considered, as well as ensuring that the spread or likelihood of exposure to infectious and / or zoonotic disease is considered to be of minimal risk.

5. REPORTING

The Irish Deer Commission will review the effectiveness of this policy by ensuring a risk assessment is carried out pre and post any training or assessment activity to ensure learners, staff or associates formally report any instances that may impact animal health and welfare or the environment.

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated annually or as and when required.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006: www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-welfare

(Wales) The Animal Welfare Act 2006: <https://gov.wales/animal-welfare>

Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006: www.gov.scot/policies/animal-health-welfare/animal-welfare/

Republic of Ireland Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2013/act/15/section/36/enacted/en/html>

Note: Links or references to policies or legislation should be validated by anyone looking to adopt this example policy