

Selling Animals as Pets

Pre-inspection information

Notes:

- Sufficient numbers of people who are competent for the purpose must be available to provide a level of care that ensures that the welfare needs of all the animals are met.
- Animals must be kept at all times in an environment suitable to their species and condition (including health status and age) with respect to—
 - their behavioural needs,
 - its situation, space, air quality, cleanliness and temperature,
 - the water quality (where relevant),
 - noise levels,
 - light levels,
 - ventilation.
- Animals must be provided with suitable enrichment for species.
- Appropriate isolation facilities must be available for the care of sick, injured or potentially infectious animals.
- The licence holder must register with an appropriate veterinarian
- A designated key holder with access to all animal areas within a reasonable travel distance must be available to attend in an emergency.

Procedures/policies needed:

- A written staff training policy to include annual appraisal, planned continued professional development, recognition of knowledge gaps, use of online courses and literature, research or developments for specific species. Should no staff be employed the licence holder should demonstrate their own knowledge development.
- Written procedures must be in place and implemented covering-
 - Feeding regimes
 - Cleaning regimes
 - Transportation
 - The prevention of, and control of the spread of, disease
 - Monitoring and ensuring the health and welfare of all the animals,
 - The death or escape of an animal.
- Written procedure covering the care of the animals following the suspension or revocation of the licence or during and following an emergency (emergency plan)

Records:

- All required records must be kept for at least 3 years.
- A register must be maintained for all the animals or, in the case of fish, all the groups of fish, on the premises. The register where they are kept for sale must include:
 - The full name of the supplier of the animal,
 - The animal's sex (where known)
 - (except in the case of fish) the animal's age (where known)
 - The date of birth of the animal or, if the animal was acquired by the licence holder, the date of its acquisition.
 - The date of sale of the animal by the licence holder, and
 - The date of the animal's death (if applicable)

- **Any advertisement for the sale of an animal must-**
 - Include the number of the licence holder's licence
 - Specify the local authority that issued the licence
 - Include a recognisable photograph of the animal being advertised
 - (except in the case of fish) display the age of the animal being advertised
 - State the country of residence of the animal from which it is being sold, and
 - State the country of origin of the animal.

Pet Advice:

- The licence holder and all staff must ensure that any equipment and accessories being sold with an animal are suitable for the animal.
- The licence holder and all staff must ensure that the prospective owner is provided with information on the appropriate care of the animal including in relation to:
 - Feeding
 - Housing
 - Handling
 - Husbandry
 - The life expectancy of its species
 - The provision of suitable accessories, and
 - Veterinary care

Star ratings:

As part of the new regulations each premises will receive a star rating following their formal inspection. In order to achieve the best star rating possible each premises will need to have covered all of the standard conditions and have all consents, policies and procedures in place.

In order to meet the highest possible rating for both the high and low risk categories in the rating matrix certain extra conditions will need to be met. The higher standards are classified in to two types: **required** and **optional** and are outlined below. **Higher standards that appear in blue text are required**, whereas **those that appear in red text are optional**. To qualify as meeting the higher standards, the business needs to achieve all of the required higher standards as well as a minimum of 50% of the optional higher standards.

General

Required

- **Businesses selling animals exclusively to other businesses must meet the cage sizes and stocking densities as stipulated in the species-specific minimum standards.**
- **A documented health checklist should be completed daily and must cover physical, psychological and behavioural issues and any abnormality recorded.**

Optional

- **There must be a member of permanent, full-time staff with an OFQUAL regulated Level 3 qualification that is appropriate to the species kept.**

Dogs

Required

- There must be adequate staffing to undertake more regular/frequent checks than required by the minimum standard.
- The floor area must be at least 1.5 times larger than the minimum required.
- Dogs must be provided with a design and layout that provides them with choice. Separate areas for different activities should be provided. This can be achieved by, for example, inclusion of raised platforms.
- There must be a travel plan that sets out how animals are managed for long journeys over 4 hours.
- Adult dogs must have a feeding plan which sets out feeding twice a day.
- Each dog must, every day, be fed some of their food through scatter feeding or other feeding device. If this is not done, the reason must be documented e.g. due to veterinary advice.
- Each adult dog must have a documented daily exercise regime including lead exercise and free running.
- The last interaction session must take place within 1 hour before the end of the working day.

Optional

- Ventilation must be a managed, fixed or portable air system to ensure appropriate temperatures are maintained in all weather. This can be an air conditioning unit or use of removable fans.
- There must be a routine monthly visit to check health and welfare by the veterinary practice and the veterinary record held.
- A person that is competent in providing for the welfare of the animals must be on the premises at all times.

Cats

Required

- There must be adequate staffing to undertake more frequent checks than required by the minimum standard.
- The floor area must be at least 1.5 times larger than the minimum required.
- Cats must be provided with a design and layout that provides them with choice. Separate areas for different activities should be provided. This can be achieved by, for example, inclusion of a choice of raised platforms or hiding places.
- For cats a privacy area where they are not visible to people or cats in neighbouring pens must be provided for toileting.
- Cats must have a feeding plan which splits meals into small portions throughout the day.
- Where the individual cat will benefit, they must every day be given some food through scatter feeding or other appropriate feeding device. Cats must still get the majority of their daily food allowance in a feeding dish. If this is not done the reason must be documented e.g. due to veterinary advice.
- A written programme must be available setting out a variety of enrichment both inside and outside, including training, grooming, socialisation and play.
- The last interaction session must take place within 1.5 hours of the end of the working day.

Optional

- Ventilation must be a managed, fixed or portable air system to ensure appropriate temperatures are maintained in all weather. This can be an air conditioning unit or use of removable fans.
- A noise management plan must be in place e.g. physical barriers, cat unit design, location of noise producing equipment, with demonstration of effectiveness.
- There must be a routine monthly visit to check health and welfare by the veterinary practice and the veterinary record kept.
- A person that is competent in providing for the welfare of the animals must be on the premises at all times.

Rabbits

Required

- Where rabbits are housed in hutches, they should have permanent attached access to a secure pen.
- Enclosure sizes must be adhered to as described in table E-02.
- Litter trays must be provided that are impermeable, easy to clean and disinfect or be disposable. Where used litter trays must be deep cleaned at least weekly.
- Containers must open from the top to facilitate removal of the animal. Containers must be lined with newspaper or bedding to absorb urine.
- Hay must be provided in a hay receptacle or feeder at an appropriate height, which keeps it off the floor and reduces the risk of contamination of the hay.
- Foraged foods (that have been foraged in uncontaminated areas and correctly identified) must be fed to the rabbits. Commercially available dried forages including willow can also be used to supplement the diet and provide a low risk alternative to foraged foods.
- Dietary enrichment must be used. For example, nuggets can be scattered around the enclosure, fed in puzzle feeders or hidden in paper bags/cardboard tubes. Where puzzle feeders/dispensers are used, rabbits must be monitored to ensure they can access the food.

Optional

- For open top cages rabbits that are physically able to use platforms must be provided with access to a platform or multiple platforms. For closed top cages, rabbits must be able to access these easily and be able to sit on them fully without touching the cage roof.
- Rabbits must be provided with access to growing grass to graze on, which can be in planted grass trays. Alternatively, rabbits can be provided with two different types of hay.
- Water must be provided for rabbits in multiple bottles or bowls. During hot weather, both a bottle and a bowl must be provided (unless kittens are present, in which case only bottles are suitable).

Guinea pigs

Required

- Where guinea pigs are housed in hutches, they must have permanent attached access to a secure pen.
- Minimum enclosure sizes must be adhered to as described in table F-02.
- Carriers must open from the top to facilitate removal of the animal. Carriers must be lined with newspaper or bedding to absorb urine.

- Forage foods (that have been collected in uncontaminated areas and correctly identified) must be fed to the guinea pigs. Commercially available dried forages including willow can also be used to supplement the diet and provide a low risk alternative to foraged foods.
- Dietary enrichment must be used. For example, nuggets can be scattered around the enclosure, fed in puzzle feeders or hidden in paper bags/cardboard tubes. Where puzzle feeders/dispensers are used, guinea pigs must be monitored to ensure they can access the food.
- Where guinea pigs have to be housed singly they must be provided with extra sources of enrichment. A plan must be in place for singly housed guinea pigs.

Optional

- Guinea pigs must be provided with access to growing grass to graze on. This can be achieved by placing planted grass trays in their exercise areas. There must be enough grass for all guinea pigs housed to graze simultaneously. Alternatively, guinea pigs can be provided with fresh vegetables high in vitamin C every day.

Ferrets

Required

- Carriers must open from the top to facilitate removal of the animal; cardboard carriers are not advised as they are easily chewed and can become damp/insecure. Carriers can be lined with newspaper and some bedding material, e.g. good quality dust-free hay and/or shredded paper can be provided for comfort.
- Dietary enrichment must be used. For example, nuggets can be scattered around the enclosure, fed in puzzle feeders or hidden in paper bags/cardboard tubes. Where puzzle feeders/dispensers are used, ferrets must be monitored to ensure they can access the food.
- Where ferrets have to be housed singly they must be provided with extra sources of enrichment. A plan must be in place for all singly housed ferrets.

Domestic small rodents

Required

- Enclosure sizes must be adhered to as described in table H-02.
- Light-reducing shelters for rats, mice and hamsters (such as, but not limited to, a box or red tinted acrylic) must be provided. However, these must be monitored daily for signs of chewing and removed/replaced as necessary.
- Small rodents must be provided with a choice of different nesting materials.
- After cleaning, some used unsoiled litter and nesting material must be transferred back to help keep scents familiar for them.
- Where social species of small rodents have to be housed singly they must be provided with extra sources of enrichment. A plan must be in place for singly housed small rodents (only those of a social species).

Optional

- Small rodents that are physically able to use platforms must be provided with access to a platform (singly housed) or multiple platforms. Animals must be able to access these easily and be able to sit (ideally stand) up on it fully without touching the cage roof.

- When work is occurring near, or nocturnal animals are checked at night, dim red light or dim white light must be used to minimise disturbance. Light level must be sufficient enough for observation/to undertake required tasks.

Other Non-Domestic Species (Mammals)

Optional

- A written programme must be available setting out a variety of appropriate enrichment provided.

Birds

Required

- Cages/aviary sizes must meet, or exceed, higher requirements set out in the Schedule E Section 4.2 below. The enclosure size must allow the bird to have variety and choice in its environment.
- Birds must be displayed for sale in aviaries that are 4 times the bird's flying wingspan or larger in size for length, depth and height. for an individual bird and 20% increase for each successive bird for multiple occupancy.
- A variety of substrates, including a variety of perches for arboreal birds must be provided. Perches of a variable thickness and materials must be provided.
- Output of UVB bulbs must be monitored with a UV meter and recorded. Species specific requirements must be documented and available for inspection.
- Specialist nutritional advice must be sought where appropriate.
- Birds must not be housed or sold with their wings clipped. Wings are kept entire and flight actively encouraged.
- All birds of prey, or other trained birds where appropriate, must have daily periods of flight; either in aviaries or flown outdoors by a competent person.
- Birds must not be removed from their parents (for 'hand rearing') until their eyes have been opened for more than one week to avoid risk of mal imprinting on humans as adult birds.
- Adult non-colonial birds must be managed in large flights, to allow birds space to escape from each other if required to prevent behavioural problems. Sufficient staff to manage the population must be provided as needed.

Optional

- All cages must have direct access to a flight aviary.
- Furniture must be changed on a regular basis to provide novelty and enclosures designed to provide choice for the animals within.
- The licence holder must have signage identifying potentially aggressive birds including clearly labelled aviaries/cages.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Required

- For thermostatically stable vivaria temperature assessment must be increased to 3 times weekly to document maximum and minimum temperatures.
- Where applicable a minimum of two hides or sheltered areas must be provided, located in different areas of the thermogradient.

- Output of UVB lamps must be monitored with a UV meter and recorded on a weekly basis. Species specific requirements must be documented and available for inspection.
- Specific written protocols for the quarantine and/or prevention of release of chytridiomycosis and potentially other biological agents must be available for inspection where amphibians are maintained.
- A dedicated area of isolation or quarantine must be available with associated protocols and policies in place to ensure biosecurity of the premises.

Optional

- Sizing of vivaria and associated environmental parameters must meet or exceed those outlined in the higher standards (table K-02).
- For species that require brumation, designated facilities must be available and a related policy regarding temperature and other husbandry requirements available for inspection.
- Suitable thermogradient, humidity and UVB index, where applicable, for the species must be displayed on each vivarium.
- Large established or permanent reptilian vivaria with water features must have water filtration systems to ensure hygiene is maintained.
- Moist, non-powdered nitrile gloves, or similar, must be used to handle amphibians.

Fish

Required

- Water quality must be assessed 3 times weekly and documented.
- There must be evidence that UV systems are maintained regularly.
- The business must have in place reasonable measures to prevent the import, outbreak and spread of disease/pathogens. This must be demonstrated by implementation of a biosecurity plan.

Optional

- A suitable temperature range for the fish must be displayed on each tank
- For premises with no natural light there must be automated systems and/or procedures to ensure gradual change in light levels.

Businesses consolidating imports of fish

Required

- Businesses must have documented procedures that control and manage the purchase and sale of fish, internal controls in place to detect irregular transactions and a well maintained accounting system with a full audit trail.

Scoring Matrix		Welfare Standards		
		Minor Failings (existing business that are failing to meet minimum standards)	Minimum Standards (as laid down in the schedules and guidance)	Higher Standards (as laid down in the guidance)
Risk	Low Risk	1 Star 1yr licence Min 1 unannounced visit within 12 month period	3 Star 2yr licence Min 1 unannounced visit within 24 month period	5 Star 3yr licence Min 1 unannounced visit within 36 month period
	Higher Risk	1 Star 1yr licence Min 1 unannounced visit within 12 month period	2 Star 1yr licence Min 1 unannounced visit within 12 month period	4 Star 2yr licence Min 1 unannounced visit within 24 month period