



# The Hands-off approach

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&

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# Brief intro to BCA ectotherm house

- 300ish Animal Management Students + foundation and schools.
- 12 hours a week teaching per section.
- On average 5 - 10 extra sessions per week from lecturer-based sessions.
- Allocation sheet is used to book out a specific activity.



# But...

## That never stays the same

- Loads of ad lib groups
- Commercial activity
- And people book on allocation one activity and then do handling as a “reward” at the end.





# Handling for A PURPOSE

- Started noticing negative behaviours in the animals.
- Wanted a teaching point for students that are going into industry (we don't just pick up for fun).
- Handling for health checks/weights still okay but **MUST** be pre-booked.
- Limited weights to once per month unless a health concern. Use of visual health checks.
- The birth of the handling rota.
- Species being handled **MUST** be listed when booking



# Choice based handling

- We do still offer where absolutely necessary handling for the lessons. These MUST be pre booked and checked with the Technician.
- 'Fun Handling' is replaced by training for choice-based handling. Not suitable for all species.
  - Bell training for the tortoises.
  - Luring leopard geckos onto hands.





# Curriculum Demands

- Curriculum still has modules for handling in which all students must demonstrate proper handling.
  - Communication vital- lecturers communicate with the Ectotherm technician about who is most suitable/tolerates handling better than others and then must book individuals.
  - Lessons to be spaced out and different individuals from animal groups to be used so it doesn't all fall on one animal
- If an animal was handled, they **MUST** have a rest day after with no handling!



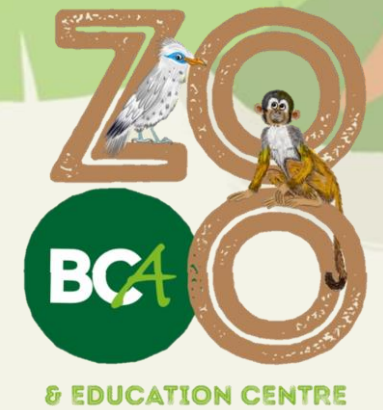
# Any problems...

Generally, NO!!!

- Everyone has been understanding that we are trying to increase our welfare standards.
- We are not stopping any lecturers being able to deliver curriculum
- BIAZA accreditation to use as a teaching point.



# Commercially



- We do reptile encounters and use them in our ZKFTD and Animal Academy
- Already moved all our mammal encounters to training or choice-based interactions and this will only become more stringent with the new SSZMP and BIAZA guidelines
- All encounters should be assessed using the BIAZA close contact assessment form which does make it tricky for animals like snakes that can't choose to be handled.
- Can use the template as a learning tool for lessons

AutoSave Off BIAZA TEMPLATE\_Visitor animal experiences • Saved to this PC

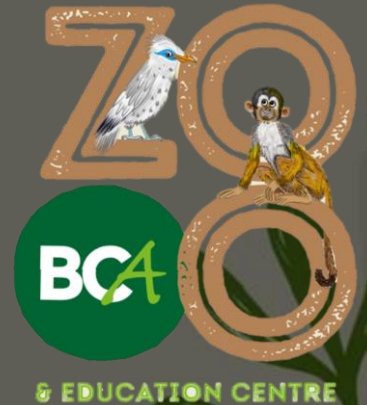
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Clipboard Copy Paste Format Painter Font Alignment Merge & Center Number Conditional Formatting Styles Cell Styles Insert Delete Format Cells AutoSum Fill Sort & Filter Find & Select Sensitivity Add-ins Analyze Data Create PDF and Share link Share via Outlook Adobe Acrobat

F50 Protocols will be written for starting any new experiences and evaluative forms filled in for the success.

General info	Compliance							
Name of experience Meerkat Encounter	Is the experience compliant with the SMZP? Yes							
Description of experience 90 minutes (20 minutes interacting with the animals)	Is the experience compliant with the BIAZA Close Contact Policy? YES							
Animals involved (number, species and ID where possible) 7 individuals however one is boxed as it is a bite risk 3.4.0	Is the experience compliant with the BIAZA Animal Training Policy? Yes							
Number of visitors present (active participants and observers) 8 participants with up to 10 spectators outside enclosure. No other visitors in the Z	Has a risk assessment and SOP been developed - last review date Yes 16/06/2022 due to be revised 16/12/2022							
Number (and type) of staff involved 1 education staff	Has there been consideration of biosecurity Yes footdips and sinks/ hand sanitiser at entrance							
Duration of animal involvement 20 minutes								
Frequency per day/week 1 per week on Saturday or Sunday (usually). 3/4 encounters per week during school								
Location Meerkat Enclosure								
What is the education aim or take home message of the experience? How is this evaluated? The experience includes a guided tour of the zoo which includes information on all the species including conservation. There is no formal evaluation of this at present.								
What is the 'presumed' welfare benefit for animals involved? How is this evaluated? The male is boxed trained which is used at other times for husbandry and health care. He is also offered enrichment whilst crated. N/A to the meerkats used.								
Location & environment	Answer	Risk category	Mitigation	Revised risk category	Ideal / optimal	Opportunity for improvement	Unacceptable / requires action	Mitigation suggestions
Is the animal transported to the experience? If so, can the animal choose whether or not it participates in this aspect of the experience?	No but the male is voluntary box trained in the enclosure. He is offered enrichment in the box for the duration of the encounter.	Ideal / optimal	N/A	Ideal / optimal	Animal has choice to participate at every point of transport e.g. moved voluntarily under trained behaviour e.g. free flight, halter, PRT crate training, leaves crate by choice.	Animal has some choice at specific stages of transport e.g. entering crate or leaving crate. But at other stages choice is not possible e.g. removing animal from crate, Or, a whole tank is moved complete with animal in it.	Animal has no choice and is restrained/ manually caught for transport to experience.	PRT training for transport -to allow animal choice over participation, or use of a space not requiring transport.
Is the animal restrained at any time during the experience?	No	Ideal / optimal	N/A	Ideal / optimal	Restraint is minimal, free movement is allowed and restraint only enforced in the event of a concern e.g. walked on	Animal is restrained partially throughout the experience, or for small periods of time e.g. when passed from person to person.	Yes, restrained throughout whole session. Restraint prevents locomotion e.g. bird of prey held on glove.	Alter experience to allow animal freedom of movement where possible.





# Making Changes

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- For ZKFTD and Animal Academy we now do enrichment.
- We do still hold snakes for Reptile Encounters but get the participants to fill in the handling form.
  - Working with students on choice-based handling especially tortoises bell training.
- Big part of the new guidelines is assessing AFTER interactions, so we currently make notes but looking at incorporating 'fun' ethograms into the encounter.







Dear Father Christmas,

We have all spent the year being super good making sure everyone else is happy and alive.

Did you know, if it wasn't for us, even human beings wouldn't be around for Christmas.

We loooove food so maybe we could have a cockroach Christmas pudding please?

Lots of love,

Bob and Bella (The Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches)X

