

Evelyn Welch
Vice-Chancellor and President
University of Bristol

9 May 2023

Dear Professor Welch:

My career has taken me everywhere from Penrith to a galaxy far, far away. And while I've experienced some absurd things on my travels, even I couldn't believe it when I heard that the forced swim test is still used at your university, more than at any other university in the country. I'm writing to join my friends at PETA and the countless supporters and students who have already urged you to see sense and stop using this horrific test.

I can only imagine how terrified rats must feel as experimenters put them into inescapable beakers of water, in which they paddle frantically in search of an escape – pawing at the sides of the beaker and diving to the bottom – but to no avail. Once experimenters have finished subjecting the animals to this cruelty, they kill them.

The scientists at PETA tell me that the forced swim test is used in an attempt to understand stress-related mental health conditions in humans. But the science doesn't add up. These experiments are actually hindering the development of successful treatments for human conditions.

It makes no sense for the university to continue to use an experiment that is both distressing for animals and irrelevant to humans. King's College London and major pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer, AstraZeneca, and GSK have all said they will not use the forced swim test following discussions with PETA entities, and I hope to hear that the University of Bristol will be next.

I'll be in Bristol this week – performing at the Hippodrome – and I hope I can tell my fans that the University of Bristol will no longer use the forced swim test. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard E. Grant". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Richard E Grant

Richard E Grant