

## Embryology week exercise for early feedback on your university learning.

### **What is the point of this exercise?**

This exercise is a short piece of work that is designed to allow you to get some early feedback on how well you are doing at university-level learning and writing. It is **not** a formal in-course assessment: it does not contribute anything to any of your end-of-semester or end-of-year marks and does not even enter your student record. It is voluntary, not compulsory – but if you choose not to do it, please do not then complain that we give you no early feedback on your performance! The exercise is related to the learning objectives but takes you beyond them in one specific area.

### **The exercise itself**

Type no more than one page of A4 (font 12, normal margins) to address the following question:

*In mammalian sex determination, the female outcome is often presented as the default path and the male as the one that needs a specific genetic pathway. In the light of what is now known about sex determination, is this view defensible?*

You will not be able to answer this question from my lectures alone, so you will have to read around. As in all academic writing, you should indicate where you got your information. There is a guide to doing this (using references) on EEMEC.

By all means use Wikipedia *etc.* for your initial searches, but then go on to find a proper source of that information in journal articles or textbooks. The reason is that anyone can write anything in Wikipedia, so it cannot be relied on for medical information (although it is generally correct, you must not rely on it). Journals and textbooks have are reviewed by experts before publication, and are regarded as much safer. You must never copy other people's text (this would be plagiarism). You may draw (not copy!) a diagram to help clarify your argument if you like, but everything must fit into the one A4 page. Writing concisely is an important skill, and is difficult. That is why I am asking you to start now.

There is no one 'right answer' to the question, by the way – I just want to see how well you can find and use biomedical scientific information.

### **How to 'hand in' your work.**

Please e-mail your work directly to me ([jamie.davies@ed.ac.uk](mailto:jamie.davies@ed.ac.uk)) as a .pdf

DEADLINE = **noon on the Monday of week 3.**

### **What you get in return**

You will get feedback on your performance, consisting of ;

- a grade
- an indication of the best things about your work that you should keep doing
- an indication of the things you most need to improve.

*I will send the feedback to the e-mail address from which you sent me your work.* This exercise is not anonymous, because it does not count for anything; it just gives you a way to see how you are getting on, without pressure.

Many of you will not be used to receiving any negative comments about your work, and may be overly worried if you happen to receive them now. Please realize that it is normal to get a balance of positive or negative. If I am really worried about anyone, I will say explicitly in my feedback that they should see me or their PT. If I have not said this, I am not worried about you. JAD.