



BSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare

UCAS code	OD06
Institution code	H12
Duration	4 years (full-time) including a one-year work placement. A three year programme is available for applicants with at least two years, full-time relevant work experience.
Start date	September 2021
Location	Harper Adams University campus (and location of work placement)

The course

Do you long to find out why animals behave the way they do and what this can tell us about their welfare? Do you care passionately about the welfare of animals but realise that applying scientific principles is likely to achieve better results than responding in a purely emotional way? Then this course is for you.

This degree enables those interested in the behaviour and welfare of companion and farm animals to study at degree level without covering the broader animal health sciences in detail. You will examine animal biology as it relates to the behaviour and welfare of animals, and have the opportunity to study ecology in relation to animal habitats.

All main groups of farm animals are represented on [our farm](#) and the [Companion Animal House](#) has a range of exotic and companion animals.

Students carry out an animal-based investigational project in their final year, looking at an aspect of animal behaviour or welfare.

Duration

4 years (full-time) including a one-year work placement. A three year programme is available for applicants with at least two years, full-time relevant work experience. Please contact [Admissions](#) for further information on this option.

A-level entry requirements

- Offers tend to be in the region of **72 - 80** UCAS points
- Students should typically be studying **2 subjects at A2 level** to be considered
- **4 GCSEs at grade C/4 or above**, including English Language, Maths and a Science
- Applicants can expect to receive offers including specific grades in specific subjects (for example, a B or C at A level, or an M or D for BTEC modules)
- Key Skills (and other level 2 variants) and First Certificates/Diplomas are not accepted in place of GCSE passes
- Overseas applicants please check our [English Language Requirements](#)
- The majority of candidates will not be called for an interview and a decision will be made via UCAS Track. However, for some students a telephone interview or campus based guidance session will be required. We will simply want to meet you to understand if the course is the right choice for you and

to discuss your application in more detail. We will be keen to know your reasons for choosing the course and your career aspirations.

- We have developed a range of measures and initiatives to give everyone the best chance to access our undergraduate degree programmes. The main feature of **Access to Harper** is our contextualised offer scheme. A contextualised offer is an offer which is reduced, by one grade or more from the standard entry requirement and is made to those applicants who may have experienced personal circumstances which put them at a disadvantage during their education, such as attending a low achieving school, living in an area of low participation in Higher Education or being a Care Leaver. The aim of this is to make the University more accessible for those applicants who may not have previously thought that they were eligible to apply. We have also introduced reduced entry requirements for those applicants who are over 21 years of age and further initiatives to make the application process easier for those applicants who need it.

To check if you qualify please visit the [Access to Harper](#) page.

Note: Entry Requirements are for guidance only, please check the UCAS website or contact Admissions for further information.

Work placement

Students undertake a placement during their third year in an animal-related organisation of their choice. You may want to gain experience working at animal hospitals and shelters, research facilities, zoos and wildlife parks, veterinary practices, livestock farms, stables, catteries and kennels or other animal-based organisations.

Teaching and learning

Lectures are complemented by tutorials, visits and practical classes. Depending on the module, practicals may take the form of laboratory work, behaviour/welfare assessments or animal handling in the Companion Animal House or on the farm.

Assessment methods

A wide range of assessment methods are used. Depending on the module these include examination, assignments, practical spot-tests and presentations.

Learning in Higher Education – how is it different?

Whilst a student's prior experience or qualifications should prepare them for Higher Education, most will find that study at university level is organised differently than they might have experienced at either school or college. Higher Education sets out to prepare students to think and learn independently, so that they are able to continue learning new things beyond their studies and into the workplace, without needing a tutor to guide them. This means that the time spent in classes with tutors provides direction, guidance and support for work that students undertake independently through:

- finding useful information sources and compiling bibliographies of reading material, in paper and online
- reading and making notes to help make fuller sense of subjects
- engaging with online materials and activities found on the College's own virtual learning environment
- preparing assignments to practise skills and develop new insights and learning
- preparing for future classes so you can participate fully

In order to develop the skills of a graduate (whether at Foundation Degree or Honours Degree levels), students are expected to not only be able to recall and explain what they know but also to be able to:

- **apply** what they know to new problems or situations
- **analyse** information and data and make connections between topics to help make sense of a situation
- **synthesise**, or draw together, the information and understanding gained from a range of sources, to create new plans or ideas
- **evaluate** their own work and also the work of others, so that they can judge its value and relevance to

a particular problem or situation

Tutors will expect students working towards a Degree to be able to use what they know to solve problems and answer meaningful questions about the way in which aspects of the world work and not just rote-learn information that they have been told or read, for later recall. This means using all the bullet-pointed skills and to think critically by questioning information, whilst also being rigorous in checking the value of the evidence used in making one's own points. Students will be expected to become increasingly responsible for recognising the areas where they themselves need to develop. Taking careful note of tutor feedback can help to identify the skills and abilities on which attention could usefully be focused. To be successful, students need to be self-motivated to study outside of classes, especially since in higher education, these higher level skills need to be practised independently.

At Harper Adams students are gradually supported to become less reliant on class-based learning, so that they are able to spend a greater proportion of their time in their final year working on projects of interest to themselves and in line with their future career aspirations. Whilst in the first year of a course, a student might spend around one-third of their time in class, they will typically spend 15 - 20% in class by the time they reach their Honours year. At Harper Adams, we are fortunate to have not only an extensive estate and great facilities for students to use as a source of information and inspiration, we also have a well-stocked library and access to countless specialist sources of paper-based and online information. Many of the staff at Harper Adams are involved in research work, which helps ensure the content of the courses is at the forefront of the discipline. This also means that amongst the library books and online journals that students use, there may be some familiar names.

The [Bamford Library](#) and [Faccenda Centre](#) each have spaces in which students can work, either individually or in small groups, using either their own laptop computers or the provided desktop computers, all of which can access the network. Working spaces are zoned to reflect different working conditions, so there is a study space for everybody, whether they need silence or work better in a livelier environment.

Careers

This course prepares graduates for careers involving animal behaviour and also in animal welfare and management. Increased awareness of animal welfare and behaviour issues has opened up more employment opportunities in the animal sector.

Organisations that house animals are becoming more aware of the need for employees to understand animal welfare and behaviour.

Welfare organisations are expanding, and nutrition and pharmaceutical companies have careers suitable for graduates with a sound welfare education. Many graduates move into higher education as lecturers or researchers and others choose further postgraduate study.

What will I study?

Year	Study time (The percentage of time spent in different learning activities)			Assessment methods (This is the breakdown of assessment methods)		
	% time in lectures, seminars and similar	% time in independent study	% time on placement	Written exams	Practical exams	Coursework
1	34%	66%	0%	60%	0%	40%
2	30%	70%	0%	60%	0%	40%
3	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
4	19%	81%	0%	36%	20%	44%

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Professional Scholarship Programme (PSP) 1 - Academic Skills Development (A4001C17) 15	Behavioural Methodology (A5015C17) 15	Placement year	Degree Review Project (DRPROJC17) 15
Fundamentals of Physiology (A4007C17) 15	Companion Animal Studies (A5012C17) 15		Integrated Health Management (A6017C17) 15
Companion Animal Management (A4013C17) 15	Farm Animal Science (A5016C17) 15		Applied Clinical Animal Behaviour (A6006C17) 15
Large Animal Management (A4015C17) 15	Principles of Animal Behaviour and Welfare (A5008C17) 15		Applied Companion Animal Health, Welfare and Behaviour (A6007C17) 15
Introduction to Animal Health (A4008C17) 15	Animal Ethics (A5014C17) 15		Advances in Farm Animal Health, Welfare and Behaviour (A6003C17) 15
Introduction to Animal Welfare, Behaviour and Ethics (A4009C17) 15	Principles of Animal Behaviour and Welfare (A5008C17) 15		Options
Adaptive Biology (A4002C17) 15	Options		International Perspectives on the Management of Animal Populations (C6010C17) 15
Introduction to Ecology (C4004C17) 15	Introduction to Small Business Management (F5005C17) 15		Animal Improvement and Bioethics (A6005C17) 15
	Wildlife Identification and Conservation (C5011C17) 15		Advances in Equine Science (A6002C17) 15
	Equine Science (A5013C17) 15		

Professional Scholarship Programme (PSP) 1 - Academic Skills Development

Year of study 1
Code A4001C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Mrs Emily Chapman-Waterhouse](#)

This module supports the development of students' personal, academic, employability and self-management skills for students in the first year of their undergraduate studies. Whilst the module provides a basis for the rest of the Professional Scholarship Programme it also supports learning in every other module. The module will be delivered throughout the academic year to students on animal-health related undergraduate courses. The main rationale for a first year module of this type is to ensure all students are fully equipped for higher education and to provide space in the curriculum in which to develop relevant skills to aid progression within and out with technically oriented modules. The key themes addressed by this module include transition into higher education and beyond the first year, approaches to learning, independent study, effective communication for animal health-related vocations, reading and reviewing literature, referencing convention, using feedback for learning and using technology to enhance

learning. Whilst the roots of the module are in academic skill development, learning resources and assessments will be tailored to the vocational areas relevant to students. Students will need to actively undertake a self- review of progress at regular intervals and develop action plans for self-development.

Fundamentals of Physiology

Year of study 1
Code A4007C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Jim Huntington](#)

This module introduces important anatomical terms and describes the concepts required to understand the processes involved in the functioning of organ systems and the maintenance of homeostasis in vertebrate species, including humans, food producing animals, companion animals and other species addressed within the programmes this module has been validated for. A broad knowledge of normal body structure and functioning provided by this module will be invaluable for students studying modules within the animal related programmes such as *Companion Animal Studies*, *Principles of Animal Health*, and *Animal Disease Sciences*. For those studying food related programmes the module will be invaluable for the study of *Well-being Through the Lifecycle* and later modules such as *Advanced Aspects of Nutrition*. This module is designed to be a prerequisite (for some courses) to either *Veterinary Physiology* or *Applied Anatomy and Physiology*.

Companion Animal Management

Year of study 1
Code A4013C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Mrs Jennifer Sadler](#)

An understanding of companion animal management practices is essential for working within the animal industry to promote good health and welfare for companion, collection and experimental animals.

The module will provide learners with knowledge of relevant companion animal management practices with emphasis placed on environmental requirements, nutritional needs, and animal management.

The module will underpin several modules at Levels 5 and 6 including Companion Animal Studies, and Applied Companion Animal Health, Welfare and Behaviour.

Large Animal Management

Year of study 1
Code A4015C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core

It is important that students studying animal-based courses have an understanding of the systems involved with the keeping of large animals and appreciate the commercial context in which many of these animals are kept. This module will highlight the differences in the approach to the management of large animals in comparison to that for companion animals (covered in Companion Animal Management). The underpinning knowledge gained in this module will enable these students to evaluate behavioural adaptation and the welfare of large animals and understand how management can impact upon the health of the animal. The students will be introduced to the husbandry requirements associated with the most common agricultural systems involving animals such as cattle (dairy and beef), sheep, pigs, poultry and horses. Students will gain sufficient knowledge of the requirements of the system, and the effects of the management of the animal on its health and welfare status.

Introduction to Animal Health

Year of study 1
Code A4008C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Mrs Helen Cartlidge](#)

Knowledge and understanding of key topics related to animal health, such as causes of disease, how the body responds to disease and preventative health care, are essential for all persons working with animals. This module aims to introduce students to these key topics creating a foundation of knowledge in animal health that can be built on in subsequent modules (follow on modules will vary depending on the individual course being studied).

Introduction to Animal Welfare, Behaviour and Ethics

Year of study 1
Code A4009C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core

This module will introduce students to the science of animal behaviour and the importance of behaviour in our understanding of animal welfare. It will also consider the ethics of society's usage of different types of animals and the role of legislation and different organisations in the promotion of the interests of animals. Examples will be drawn from a range of diverse species and scenarios to illustrate the principles and practices discussed.

The content of this module will be of benefit to anyone considering working either directly or indirectly with animals in a range of environments. An appreciation of the science of animal behaviour and welfare and how underlying ethical values may influence the acceptability of animal use, will enhance the ability of the individual to undertake welfare assessments of the animals they are responsible for. The knowledge and understanding gained in the module will be an important foundation for those going on to study the module Principles of Animal Welfare and Behaviour.

Adaptive Biology

Year of study 1
Code A4002C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Professor Mark Rutter](#)

This module provides a broad overview of how the process of evolution through Darwinian natural selection has resulted in the diversity of life seen on Earth. Historic theories of evolution are evaluated, and the mechanisms underpinning evolution are explored, from microevolution, through speciation to macroevolution. The role of DNA and mechanisms of inheritance are studied, as is animal taxonomy. The evolution of humans is considered, along with the history and process of animal domestication. The effects of evolution and domestication on animal physiology and behaviour are explored. The module is designed to give the students a deeper understanding of evolution and its role underpinning the biological sciences.

Introduction to Ecology

Year of study 1
Code C4004C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Nicky Hunter](#)

Ecology is about understanding the dynamic changes in individuals, populations, communities and

ecosystems in relation to each other and the physical environment. This requires knowledge of the essential processes that determine the distribution and abundance of organisms and the variety of complex biotic and abiotic interactions that take place. This module is designed to provide students with a general understanding of the ecology of living systems together with an introduction to basic ecological theory. This module will include a field studies element which will deliver the practical elements of identification, sampling and analysis of data collected.

Behavioural Methodology

Year of study 2
Code A5015C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Professor Mark Rutter](#)

This module will cover the principles and methods of quantitative studies of animal behaviour. The often subjective nature of animal behaviour makes it all the more important to devise and conduct experimental studies that allow behavioural data to be recorded, analysed and interpreted objectively. This module aims to teach students to devise and conduct a variety of behavioural experiments, and use the knowledge and understanding gained from the module Principles of Animal Behaviour and Welfare to interpret their data. The synthesis of these should enable them to critically appraise published behavioural research papers. Note that this module will not teach statistical methods – these are taught as part of the Research Methods module.

Companion Animal Studies

Year of study 2
Code A5012C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Mrs Susan Jeavons](#)

An understanding of the principles of companion animal nutrition, health, and reproduction is essential for the successful management of companion animals.

This module is designed to introduce students to the principles of companion animal nutrition and the effects of differences in digestive anatomy. As well as the physiological processes on nutrients supply, nutrient requirements and diet composition.

Reproductive processes of a variety of companion animals will also be considered, with an understanding of how genetic information can be passed to the next generation in breeding programmes.

Companion animal health will be explored for a variety of companion animal species. The effect of health on welfare and behaviour will also be considered.

Farm Animal Science

Year of study 2
Code A5016C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Dr Emma Bleach](#)

The ability of farmers to manipulate the outputs of animal production systems and consequently their productivity, environmental impact and profitability depends on the successful application of animal sciences. This module will build on the first year agricultural /animal science and animal production modules and will cover the essential principles of animal reproduction, lactation, breeding, nutrition, growth and health & welfare in a number of farm animal species and a range of livestock production systems.

Principles of Animal Behaviour and Welfare

Year of study 2
Code A5008C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core

Their complex behaviour is one of the main factors that distinguish the Animalia from the other Kingdoms of Life. This module aims to explore the richness and diversity of the behaviour we see in the animal kingdom, considering the various factors that have influenced its evolution. Although there will be an emphasis on the more complex behaviour patterns seen in the higher animals, this module will consider the behaviour of animals in general, and will not focus on just the domesticated species. This diverse approach will help in the understanding of the general principles which underpin the development of the various patterns of behaviour we observe in animals.

Animal welfare is of major concern to those working in the animal industry as well as the general public. In this module, students are encouraged to consider the issues that affect the welfare of many groups of animals such as farm, companion, zoo and research animals. The physiological and behavioural changes which occur when welfare is compromised will be studied and how these may be used to assess an animal's welfare status. The philosophical and ethical considerations of how we use animals will be discussed and an overview is given of the legislation which governs animal welfare across a range of species.

Animal Ethics

Year of study 2
Code A5014C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Mr Stephen Baugh](#)

Most of us interact with animals on a daily basis, whether that be via our pets, via commercial animals in a work environment or through the animal products that most of us eat. Through these interactions animals are treated by humans in particular ways dependent on many factors including species, utility, religious or cultural beliefs and beliefs based on an animal's sentience or intrinsic value. This module considers our interactions with animals and explores the challenges we face when making moral judgements about how we utilise and treat animals. We will consider many questions that underpin our beliefs about other species and our interactions with them. How should we treat animals? Is it acceptable to use animals for our own benefit? Do animals have intrinsic value? Do animals have rights?

The main ethical theories that are useful when exploring these issues are discussed and explained and examples of how these theories can be applied to our interactions with animals are discussed.

Principles of Animal Behaviour and Welfare

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Code A5008C17
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Core/option Core

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welfare status. The philosophical and ethical considerations of how we use animals will be discussed and an overview is given of the legislation which governs animal welfare across a range of species.

Introduction to Small Business Management

Year of study 2
Code F5005C17
Credits 15
Core/option Option
Module contact [Mary Munley](#)

This module provides a general introduction to business creation and management for students training to be animal health practitioners and other related disciplines in the veterinary sector. This module introduces students to the business planning approaches necessary to establish and manage a small business.

The module will present basic managerial concepts and techniques in marketing and finance that students need to understand to operate a small business. It enables them to acquire and demonstrate attitudes and skills necessary for communication, numeracy, problem solving and teamwork skills. It is designed to be a stand-alone module although students may have the opportunity to develop their interests further in subsequent modules.

Wildlife Identification and Conservation

Year of study 2
Code C5011C17
Credits 15
Core/option Option
Module contact [Nicky Hunter](#)

This module aims to provide students with an extension of knowledge from the level 4 ecology module and to focus primarily on the synthesis and analysis of the ecological requirements of species and habitats, and the issues around conservation and funding currently in the UK. In order to fully understand the ecology of species, correct identification and adaptation features for the major groups of fauna and flora needs to be recognised.

A practical knowledge and skills-based understanding of the selection and use of identification keys and community classification systems is one of the corner stones to effective assessment of biodiversity for conservation. Students will develop practical knowledge of, and skills in, the use of species identification techniques. Particular attention will be focused on species that are associated with the UK countryside, but the module will also address globally applicable general principles and concepts. Essentially a hands-on approach to learning is encouraged introducing students to the flora and fauna found in a range of habitats which will reinforce the competences of survey skills studied previously.

Equine Science

Year of study 2
Code A5013C17
Credits 15
Core/option Option
Module contact [Dr Malgorzata Behnke](#)

It is estimated that there are around 1 million horses in the UK and the equine industry is the second largest contributor to the rural economy behind agriculture. Consequently, the ability to successfully manage and maintain the well-being of horses is very important. The well-being of horses depends on the provision of an appropriate environment, adequate nutrition and the management of health status.

This module aims to develop an understanding of the principles of equine science, in particular environmental management, nutrition, health and reproduction. Common and important health problems associated with horses are covered and the roles of management and husbandry in their prevention and control are explored.

Placement year

Year of study 3
Core/option Core

Read our dedicated [Placement Learning](#) pages for information on the many benefits of the placement year.

Degree Review Project

Year of study 4
Code DRPROJC17
Credits 15
Core/option Core

Although Ordinary Degree students are not required to engage in the research based major projects completed by honours degree candidates, it is necessary that they display the ability, at Honours level, to learn independently and display the skills required for lifelong learning; to demonstrate awareness of the provisional nature of facts and principles and to marshal evidence and apply it in a balanced way in an argument and to draw soundly based conclusions. The development of these skills is the purpose of this module.

Integrated Health Management

Year of study 4
Code A6017C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Dr Claire Kershaw](#)

Often factors affecting animal health, disease, welfare and production such as nutrition, reproduction and epidemiology are taught independently. Within this module, students will learn the importance of considering how these individual factors influence one another. This module integrates these factors to develop student's ability to assess the management status of various animal management systems.

The application of knowledge and intellectual skills gained from the module and from experience within the animal industry will be required to formulate appropriate programmes for the maintenance of the health and welfare of the animals and also of the health and safety of staff members and the public.

Applied Clinical Animal Behaviour

Year of study 4
Code A6006C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Mr Stephen Baugh](#)

Effective and professional interactions with clients are vital to ensure the successful outcome of a behavioural case. Practitioners need to be skilled in the art and science of counselling and be able to effectively analyse data gathered in order to apply this knowledge to synthesize effective treatment protocols.

This module introduces the student to the underpinning theories of counselling and discusses the skills required of the counsellor in order to effectively gather relevant information to ensure that effective treatment protocols can be synthesized. An evaluation of client understanding and compliance is essential to maximise a successful outcome and a full understanding of the limitations is required. A sound understanding of the legal, professional and ethical issues that the practitioner may encounter are vital.

Applied Companion Animal Health, Welfare and Behaviour

Year of study 4
Code A6007C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core
Module contact [Mr Stephen Baugh](#)

An integrated understanding of companion animal health, welfare and behaviour is essential for the development of companion animal management programmes that ensure optimum welfare.

This module is designed to provide a detailed knowledge of the factors involved in the aetiology and development of common diseases seen in companion animals (cats, dogs, small mammals, birds and reptiles) and develops the skills required to recognise signs of ill health in animals and to develop disease control and prevention strategies.

The behaviour of companion animal species will be considered, how health can influence behaviour, why certain behaviours may be suppressed in domestic settings and how this may lead to the development of pathology and inappropriate or abnormal behaviours. The prevention and control of behavioural problems will also be considered.

Aspects of animal physiology, nutrition, health and general husbandry introduced in earlier modules will form an essential background for this module.

Advances in Farm Animal Health, Welfare and Behaviour

Year of study 4
Code A6003C17
Credits 15
Core/option Core

This module will deepen students' understanding of farm animal welfare and its links to animal health, behaviour and disease control. With the increasing public interest in the welfare of farm animals, an understanding of different indicators and how these may show an animal's welfare status is required by those involved in any aspect of animal production. The welfare of animals is important not only during their housing and management but in response to handling, transport and slaughter; this module will focus on the welfare of farm animals in all of these situations. There is also growing public concern for human food safety and the importance of animal health; graduates in all fields of animal science need to understand efficient diagnostic techniques and disease surveillance and possibilities for the future in this field. Understanding the production of effective animal medicines is also necessary.

International Perspectives on the Management of Animal Populations

Year of study 4
Code C6010C17
Credits 15
Core/option Option
Module contact [Dr Nicola Randall](#)

This module aims to enable students to use evidence-based research to inform management decision making for animal populations. Through their behaviour, organisms establish their place in the environment and their relationship with other species. Success is also affected by human induced factors such as habitat loss and fragmentation, introduced/invasive species, climate change and overharvesting.

This module will build on the animal behaviour concepts studied in levels 4 and 5, and how behavioural strategies and adaptations of different species combine with external factors to influence their fitness and survival. The module will consider how an understanding of behaviour can aid wildlife management with particular reference to one or more species of concern.

Animal Improvement and Bioethics

Year of study 4
Code A6005C17
Credits 15
Core/option Option

With the rapid developments in animal breeding technologies an understanding of the processes involved and their application to modern livestock production is required. This module will provide the student with the opportunity to apply the genetic principles underlying animal breeding to a number of species of animals and systems of livestock production. To undertake this, students will require an understanding of the systems used in livestock production and other roles to which animals are currently put and may be used for in the future in the context of the socio-economic environment in which they operate. In addition, the relationship between animals and humans is explored and consideration is given to the ethical implications of the various roles of animals in society and the manipulation of animals by biotechnology.

Advances in Equine Science

Year of study 4
Code A6002C17
Credits 15
Core/option Option
Module contact [Carole Brizuela](#)

Knowledge of the scientific principles that underlie recent advances in areas relating to equine health, nutrition and reproduction is increasingly important in an industry that has advanced considerably over the last decade. This module will build on the concepts learned in Equine Science and allow the student to develop a deeper understanding of issues affecting the equine industry in these three areas. Considerable independent study will permit students to develop the ability to discriminate, evaluate and analyse information from a variety of sources.

- Evaluate current issues affecting equine health, nutrition and reproduction.
- Critically comment on future and potential developments within equine reproduction.
- Apply advances in animal disease and nutritional science to the management of equine animals.