



Grad Cert Advanced Veterinary Nursing (Exotics, Zoo and Wildlife)

Duration 1 year (part time)

Start date September 2027

Accredited by [Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons](#) (RCVS)

Location Online/blended learning and [Harper Adams University campus](#)

This certificate will allow nurses to develop and advance their skills to critically assess the welfare and nursing requirements of exotics, zoo and wildlife patients.

You will create appropriate nursing plans utilising the highest professional standards, skills and knowledge to improve the health and welfare of exotics, zoo and wildlife patients.

You will be able to critically evaluate personal effectiveness and effectively and accurately communicate with peers and clients when supporting exotics, zoo and wildlife patients undergoing veterinary procedures.

During your studies, you will demonstrate the development of the skills of critical reading, critical thinking and purposeful writing to create and justify recommendations that will improve outcomes for exotics, zoo and wildlife patients undergoing veterinary procedures.

The development of the new RCVS post-registration framework has allowed for the creation of accessible, flexible and focused areas of study, allowing veterinary nurses to further their academic skills alongside their professional skills.

A-level entry requirements

- **Entry requirements for 2027 entry are not currently available. Please contact Admissions for advice**

Accreditation



This course is accredited by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

How will I be taught?

Delivery will be by a combination of distance learning and optional study days where guest speakers, seminars and practical classes support the modules. A range of distance learning methods will be used, including study notes, email and Harper Adams' interactive virtual learning environment 'The Learning Hub'. Access to a computer and broadband internet is essential.

Modules will be assessed by a range of methods, including assignments end of module examination, and

practical exams. Support in assessment skills is available for those who have not sat an examination recently.

What will I study?

Graduate Certificate

Year 1	
Evidence-based Nursing (A5003HF)	20
Graduate Comparative Applied Physiology and Nursing (A6006HF)	20
Graduate Ethics, Welfare and Conservation (A6007HF)	20

Evidence-based Nursing

Year of study 1
Code A5003HF
Credits 20
Core/option Core
Module contact [Susan Howarth](#)

This module encourages students to develop transferable research skills, including analysis, problem-solving, and communication. These skills will help the student gain an appreciation of research and the ability to access information from a variety of sources. Students will acquire the skills to be able to evaluate literature and to apply relevant and valid research to their current practice.

Students who successfully complete this module will be able to:

- Create a literature review using a variety of sources to produce a research-based report that demonstrates accepted conventions of academic writing.
- Evaluate the validity and relevance of literature in relation to veterinary nursing practice.
- Evaluate and challenge current practice in the light of relevant research evidence.

Graduate Comparative Applied Physiology and Nursing

Year of study 1
Code A6006HF
Credits 20
Core/option Core
Module contact [Susan Howarth](#)

The provision of veterinary interventions and nursing care for non-domestic animal species can prove challenging. The number of the public opting to own an exotic animal as a pet is increasing. The veterinary team may also be presented with wildlife patients and animals kept in zoologic collections that require veterinary interventions.

This module will illustrate the diversity of anatomy and functional characteristics for different taxonomic groups and how these variations impact activities such as diagnostic assessments and support, anaesthesia, medical and surgical interventions and nursing care.

Students who successfully complete this module will be able to:

- Recognise and evaluate the key variations in anatomy, physiology and haemostasis across the range of species/taxonomic groups.
- Assess the needs and challenges for a range of exotic species in relation to veterinary diagnostic procedures.
- Assess the needs and challenges for a range of exotic species in relation to veterinary treatment

interventions and nursing care.

- Relate knowledge from outcome 1 to devise nursing plans to provide contextual patient care.
- Evaluate the requirement for effective communication with other professionals and owners/keepers/carers.

Graduate Ethics, Welfare and Conservation

Year of study 1

Code A6007HF

Credits 20

Core/option Core

Module contact [Susan Howarth](#)

This module will equip the veterinary nurse with the ability to consider relevant ethical frameworks, animal sentience and the impact of legislation and how these are applied to keeping and treating non-domestic animal species. It will also consider the science of animal welfare, including how to measure welfare, and the challenges associated with the provision of positive experiences for exotic species. The ethical and welfare implications of human-animal relationships and their impact when keeping exotic animals as pets, in conservation settings and when delivering veterinary interventions and nursing care.

Students who successfully complete this module will be able to:

- Evaluate the main ethical theories that are useful when considering veterinary interactions with animals.
- Analyse situations that require veterinary interventions and/or nursing care and determine a moral stance based on current conservation requirements.
- Appraise the use of welfare assessments and implement improvements.
- Evaluate the requirement for effective owner/keeper/carer support and communication.