

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Small Animal Nutrition

Unit code: DJ07 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to develop a knowledge and understanding of the dietary requirements of animals routinely encountered by animal care and veterinary nursing candidates. The Unit is suitable for candidates seeking employment in veterinary nursing, animal care or similar professions.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Explain the nutrient requirements of a range of animals.
2. Compare and contrast commercial diet formulations.
3. Explain the factors affecting the nutritional requirements of a range of animals.

Credit points and level: 1 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates should, ideally, have achieved a pass in D7EJ 11 – *Small Animal Husbandry – Feeding*, or equivalent and/or have relevant practical experience.

Core skills statement: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes. It is included in the framework of the HNC/D in Veterinary Nursing.

Assessment: Outcomes 1-3 of this unit should be assessed holistically using a closed-book written assessment lasting two hours and consisting of structured questions, including diagrams where appropriate.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain the nutrient requirements of a range of animals.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Principal classes of nutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, fats, minerals, vitamins, water and fibre).
- ◆ Functions of nutrients.
- ◆ Sources of nutrients for commercial feeds.
- ◆ Preparing animal diets.
- ◆ Energy terms.
- ◆ Energy calculations.
- ◆ Particular nutrient requirements of cats, dogs and rabbits.
- ◆ Particular nutrient requirements of exotics.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the functions of five classes of animal nutrients
- ◆ explain the effects of three different vitamin and mineral deficiencies or excesses
- ◆ describe the sources of nutrients in commercially produced feeds for three animals
- ◆ perform energy calculations accurately for two animal diets.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 2 and 3, details of which are given under Outcome 3.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Small Animal Nutrition

Outcome 2

Compare and contrast commercial diet formulations.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Statutory analysis of feeds.
- ◆ Complete feeds.
- ◆ Complementary feeds.
- ◆ Moist, semi-moist and dry feeds.
- ◆ Budget and premium diets.
- ◆ Pet food labels.
- ◆ Packaging.
- ◆ Marketing concepts (for example, organic, natural and vegetarian diets).
- ◆ Additives and preservatives.
- ◆ Nutraceuticals.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ compare and contrast the statutory analysis of one moist, one semi-moist and one dry diet for one animal
- ◆ explain the differences between complete and complementary diets
- ◆ compare one budget and one premium diet for two different animals.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1 and 3, details of which are given under Outcome 3.

Outcome 3

Explain the factors affecting the nutritional requirements of a range of animals.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Factors affecting nutritional requirements.
- ◆ Effects of factors, including age, body weight, level of activity, reproductive status, environment, health status.
- ◆ Ration adjustments.
- ◆ Feeding regimes.
- ◆ Assisted feeding.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Small Animal Nutrition

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need evidence to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the effects of six factors on nutritional requirements of two animals
- ◆ evaluate ration adjustment requirements for two animals when four factors are changed.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1 and 2. This could be conducted as an holistic end-of-unit test consisting of structured questions, undertaken in controlled conditions and lasting two hours.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DJ07 34
Unit title:	Small Animal Nutrition
Superclass category:	SH
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Small Animal Nutrition

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit may be primarily intended for candidates who are studying towards an HNC/D in Animal Care or Veterinary Nursing and the teaching and learning should be delivered in these contexts.

Additional information relating to each Outcome is given below.

1. This Outcome should cover all of the principal classes of nutrients and their functions. Content should complement, rather than repeat, the relevant parts of the Unit *Small Animal Anatomy and Physiology*. Commercial feeds should be considered to be those processed and prepared by manufacturers. Prepared diets should be considered to be the entire feed for an animal, including grass/grazing, straight cereals (or other materials) and purchased feeds, either incorporated into the feed or fed separately. Energy calculations should include the calculation of the energy requirements of recumbent patients.
2. This Outcome should consider the differences between commercial diets commonly sold in the UK. This should include an appreciation of the range in quality of diets. When discussing different diets, consideration should be given to the ways in which they should be fed and the relative costs of feeding each diet. Visiting speakers from feed manufacturers and/or visits to feed manufacturers' premises would be beneficial.
3. This Outcome should consider the effects of age, body weight, level of activity, reproductive status, health status and environment on nutritional requirements. This should enable candidates to select an appropriate diet according to the needs of individual animals using manufacturers' or other recommendations. Detailed diet formulation is beyond the scope of this unit. The assisted feeding relates to hospitalised patients and should cover methods used when the animal is unable to feed itself i.e. pharyngostomy, naso-oesophageal and gastrostomy tubes. This should include some reference to assisted feeding in rabbits, birds, reptiles and small mammals as well as dogs and cats.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Small Animal Nutrition

Guidance on assessment and delivery

This Unit has been devised with the intention that it forms part of the core framework of an HNC/D in Veterinary Nursing and should be delivered with that in mind. Reference should be made to the current version of the RCVS syllabus if candidates are also being prepared for the professional exam. However, this should in no way limit the delivery of this unit.

Centres should feel free to adopt an appropriate assessment strategy provided that it meets the specifications given in the Statement of Standards for this Unit.

Guidance on Open learning

If this Unit is delivered by open or distance learning methods, additional resources will be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance. For further information and advice, please refer to the SQA guide: *Assessment and Quality Assurance for Open and Distance Learning* (A1030, February 2001).

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Additional Support Needs* (BA 2399, SQA, due 2004).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Small Animal Nutrition

This Unit will provide you with a knowledge and understanding of animal nutrition. It will cover the principal animal nutrients, the functions and sources of these nutrients and energy calculations. You will consider the different types of commercially available feeds and the analysis of these feeds. The Unit will also cover how rations are adjusted according to commonly occurring factors such as the age and the level of activity of animals.

The Unit is organised into three Outcomes, covering the following topics:

1. the nutrient requirements of a range of animals
2. commercial diet formulations
3. factors affecting the nutritional requirements of a range of animals.

There will be one holistic written assessment for this Unit. The assessment will cover all Outcomes and will consist of structured questions. It will be a closed-book test taken in controlled conditions and lasting two hours.

This Unit is included in the framework for the HNC/D in Veterinary Nursing and also addresses the relevant parts of the RCVS syllabus. Please note that if you intend to become a registered veterinary nurse, you must also pass the RCVS external examinations. The 2002 Amendment to Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 states that only registered veterinary nurses may carry out any medical treatment or minor surgery to an animal.

Although the HNC/D prepares you for the RCVS examinations, it does not confer this qualification automatically.