

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation

Unit code: DJ0M 34

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed to provide candidates with a knowledge and understanding of the care and rehabilitation requirements of wildlife species needing specialist veterinary attention. This 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. Describe the key characteristics of native vertebrates.
2. Compare the habitat, lifestyle, behaviour, housing and dietary requirements of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species.
3. Explain the specialist care and handling requirements of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species.

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 have a basic understanding of anatomy and physiology. Prior achievement of the HN Unit *Small Animal Anatomy and Physiology* would be particularly beneficial. It would also be beneficial if candidates had some prior experience of working with the animals.

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 HND in Veterinary Nursing.

Assessment: A single closed-book holistic assessment consisting of structured questions and lasting two and a half hours could be used for this Unit.

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

Describe the key characteristics of native vertebrates.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Classification of native mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians.
- ◆ Distinguishing features of commonly occurring amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals.
- ◆ Identification of commonly occurring amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals.

Evidence requirements

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

- ◆ distinguish between two closely related members of four vertebrate groups
- ◆ describe the key differences between two closely related members of four vertebrate groups
- ◆ identify correctly, by common name, seven native mammals, six native birds, one native reptile and one native amphibian.

Assessment Guidelines

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

Outcome 2

Compare the habitat, lifestyle, behaviour, housing and dietary requirements of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Natural habitat.
- ◆ Lifestyle and behaviour.
- ◆ Housing requirements during recovery from injury and disease.
- ◆ Dietary requirements during rehabilitation.
- ◆ Suitable types of food for rehabilitation.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation

- ◆ Food presentation methods during rehabilitation.
- ◆ Frequency of feeding during rehabilitation.

Evidence Requirements

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

- compare the natural habitats, lifestyle and behaviour of three closely related members of two vertebrate groups.
- compare the housing, dietary and feeding requirements of three closely related members of two vertebrate groups.

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 specialist care and handling requirements of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Legislation relevant to handling and caring.
- ◆ Handling equipment.
- ◆ Handling techniques.
- ◆ Risk assessment for wild mammal and bird handlers.
- ◆ Nursing care of injured wildlife species.
- ◆ Nursing care of poisoned wildlife species.
- ◆ Nursing care of diseased wildlife species.
- ◆ Nursing care of oil-contaminated wildlife species.
- ◆ Specialist care for neonate and juvenile mammals and birds.
- ◆ Release of rehabilitated wildlife species.

Evidence Requirements

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

- ◆ explain the handling and nursing care requirements of two wild mammal species undergoing rehabilitation after either injury, poisoning, disease or oil-contamination
- ◆ explain the handling and nursing care requirements of two wild bird species undergoing rehabilitation after either injury, poisoning, disease or oil-contamination

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation

- ◆ explain the specialist care and subsequent release requirements for one orphaned mammal and one orphaned bird
- ◆ complete valid risk assessments relating to the care and handling of one wild mammal and one wild bird.

Assessment Guidelines

The assessment for this Outcome can be combined with Outcomes 1 and 2. This could be conducted as a closed-book written test consisting of structured questions undertaken in controlled conditions and lasting two and a half hours.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DJ0M 34
Unit title:	Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation
Superclass category:	SP
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation

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 is intended for candidates who are studying towards the HND in Veterinary Nursing. The teaching and learning should be delivered in this context. The Unit will also be useful for animal care professionals or enthusiasts who wish to increase their knowledge of the specialist care of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species.

Health and safety should be borne in mind, particularly when considering handling and possible zoonoses.

Additional information relating to each Outcome is given below.

1. Knowledge and understanding of classification should be restricted to the classes, orders and genera of native vertebrates. Further details, including distinguishing features of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, should concentrate on aids to accurate identification of commonly rehabilitated and legally available species. Identification by common name only is acceptable for assessment purposes.
2. This Outcome should focus on the natural environment, lifestyle and behaviour of wildlife and consequent environmental requirements during rehabilitation. This will facilitate the creation of appropriate temporary accommodation during rehabilitation. Factors such as size, design, water, temperature, light and security requirements of accommodation should be included. Similarly, a sound knowledge of the food normally consumed by individual species in their natural habitats, will assist in the creation of appropriate diets during care and rehabilitation. Factors such as live *versus* dead prey, eggs, fodder, fruit, seeds and other vegetable matter and grit should all be included.
3. The legislation included in this Outcome should be current at the time of delivery. All of the following should be included: Animal Health Act 1981; CITES; Dangerous Wild Animals Act; Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act 1976; Zoo Licensing Act 1981, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Abandonment of Animals Act 1996. Handling equipment should include graspers, nets, crushes, cages/carriers, humane traps, blankets, muzzles. The use of sedatives could also be included.

The Outcome should develop knowledge and understanding of health problems that can occur in wildlife species together with the particular care that is necessary during nursing and rehabilitation. In addition to the care of adult wildlife, the specialist care of neonate mammals and fledgling birds should be included. Springtime visits to wildlife rehabilitation establishments would be especially beneficial.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation

Guidance on assessment and delivery

This Unit has been devised with the intention that it forms part of the core framework of an HND in Veterinary Nursing and should be delivered with that in mind. Reference should be made to the most 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.

It would be helpful if the candidate had the opportunity to care for a range of wildlife species. This would reinforce learning and would give practical experience that will complement the theoretical knowledge that this unit provides. Visits to specialist facilities and presentations by visiting speakers will enhance the delivery of the Unit.

Candidates should be given guidance to ensure that they use practical opportunities in the workplace to increase their knowledge and understanding of the topics concerned. Veterinary practices could provide such opportunities, particularly for the Outcome relating to specialist care and handling.

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: Wildlife Husbandry and Rehabilitation

This Unit is designed to provide knowledge and understanding for candidates of veterinary nursing but it may be of value to anyone interested in the rehabilitation of wildlife species.

All topics covered in the Unit relate to the knowledge necessary for you to care for injured and diseased wildlife species. Topics include:

- ◆ classification and identification of native vertebrate species
- ◆ relationships between native vertebrate species
- ◆ natural habitats, lifestyles and behaviour of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species
- ◆ housing and feeding requirements of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species
- ◆ specialist care and handling requirements of commonly rehabilitated wildlife species.

You are advised to use any opportunities that arise to increase your practical knowledge and understanding of wildlife rehabilitation. Veterinary practices could be useful in this context, especially for the care and handling topics. Voluntary work in wildlife hospitals could also be beneficial.

The Unit will be assessed by an holistic closed-book test consisting of structured questions, conducted in controlled conditions and lasting two and a half 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.