



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

Unit code: H0YY 35

Superclass: SN

Publication date: March 2012

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to provide candidates with knowledge and understanding of common small animal conditions, their presentation and diagnosis and the treatment options available to veterinary surgeons. 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 aetiology, pathology and pathophysiological effects of common small animal conditions.
- 2 Describe the diagnostic process and selection of diagnostic techniques for small animal conditions.
- 3 Evaluate treatment options for small animal conditions.

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

It is recommended that candidates are familiar with basic nursing skills, and have already achieved SCQF level 7 Units *Veterinary Nursing: Canine and Feline Anatomy and Physiology*, *Veterinary Nursing: Essential Nursing Skills* and *Veterinary Nursing: Pharmacology*.

Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit 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 credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

General information (cont)

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6, *Working with Others* at level 5 and the Oral component of *Communication* at level 5 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.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

Unit code: H0YY 35

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 aetiology, pathology and pathophysiological effects of common small animal conditions.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Aetiology of common small animal conditions
- ◆ Common small animal conditions, including degenerative, infective and neoplastic conditions, affecting body systems
 - cardiovascular
 - respiratory
 - urinary tract
 - endocrine
 - neurological
 - alimentary tract
 - reproductive tract
 - musculoskeletal
 - sense organs and integument
- ◆ Pathology and pathophysiology of common small animal conditions (disease processes, physiology of disordered function)
 - sensory impairment
 - altered behaviour
 - reduced mobility
 - impaired nutrition
 - metabolic disturbance.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the aetiology, pathology and pathophysiological effects of one disease condition in five different small animal body systems.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

Outcome 2

Describe the diagnostic process and selection of diagnostic techniques for small animal conditions.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Differential and definitive diagnoses.
- ◆ Diagnostic techniques for common small animal conditions
 - history
 - clinical examination
 - laboratory diagnostics
 - diagnostic imaging
 - measurement of blood pressure
 - electrocardiogram
 - neurological observation
 - vital signs
- ◆ Rationale for selection of diagnostic techniques.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the difference between a differential and a definitive diagnosis
- ◆ describe two techniques available for the diagnosis of one common disease condition in five different body systems
- ◆ explain the rationale for the selection of the diagnostic techniques in two of the five disease conditions described above

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

Outcome 3

Evaluate treatment options for small animal conditions.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Drug therapy.
- ◆ Radiotherapy.
- ◆ Surgical techniques.
- ◆ Prescription diets.
- ◆ Complementary therapies
 - physical therapy
 - acupuncture
 - homeopathy
 - nutraceuticals
- ◆ Advantages and disadvantages of treatment options for common disorders.
- ◆ Rationale for treatment selections.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ evaluate the treatment options available for one medical and one surgical condition commonly affecting small animals.

When evaluating the treatment options for each condition, candidates must consider a minimum of two drug options for the medical condition and any allied therapies which may augment the treatment plan of both conditions, for example, diet or complementary therapies.

Candidates must also consider the rationale for the treatments selected and the advantages and disadvantages of the selected treatment options for each condition.

Extensive research should be carried out by the candidate and all analysis, description, comparisons and any conclusions drawn must be the candidate's own work. All material used to present the information must be the candidate's own work.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

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

Although this Unit may be taken by candidates wishing to develop and/or enhance their skills, it is primarily intended for candidates who are studying towards the HND in Veterinary Nursing and the teaching and learning should be delivered in this context.

The Unit is specifically designed to introduce veterinary nursing students or other interested parties to the pathophysiology and its impact on the patient, diagnosis and treatment of small animal health conditions.

Additional information relating to each Outcome is given below.

Outcome 1

The candidates will be introduced to the causes, clinical signs and pathophysiological effects of small animal health conditions affecting all body systems. It is expected that the candidates understand the aetiology and clinical signs of common disorders in order to inform their assessment of patients when planning nursing care. It should be made clear that they are not expected to have the same depth and breadth of knowledge as a veterinary surgeon, however they require an understanding of the conditions in order to fulfil the nurse's role.

Common disorders should include degenerative, neoplastic and infectious diseases. When teaching infectious disease, this should include all common infectious diseases of the UK, but knowledge of infections from other countries (particularly from the EU) is also desirable. Candidates should also develop a knowledge of the impact of conditions on the patient's normal functioning. This provides the link between the medical model and nursing models. It is envisaged that this Outcome will sit alongside Outcome 1 of Veterinary Nursing: Advanced Nursing Skills, where the assessment of this normal functioning will be used to form nursing plans.

Outcome 2

Candidates should understand the diagnostic process that the veterinary surgeon follows, the techniques that are used for each condition and the reasons for selecting particular techniques. Other Units such as Veterinary Nursing: Laboratory Techniques and Veterinary Nursing: Diagnostic Imaging will provide details of the majority of techniques so this should not be taught here, but only mentioned in relation to specific conditions. However tests such as those for endocrine and infectious disease may need to be covered briefly within this Unit. This Outcome is designed to complement Outcome 2 of Veterinary Nursing: Advanced Nursing Skills, where abnormal results will be integrated into nursing care plans. The veterinary profession is constantly developing and, in time, it may be necessary to include additional emerging diagnostic techniques.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

Outcome 3

Candidates will evaluate the treatment options available to the veterinary surgeon and understand why particular options are selected. Candidates will be expected to know the common drugs used to treat each condition, however the actions of the drug are not required to be taught within this Unit. A review of the potential side effects should be covered to enable candidates to identify their effects on the patient. The surgical techniques available to veterinary surgeons should also be covered, including a brief summary of the procedure in order for the veterinary nurse to assist the vet effectively in the operating theatre. Where medical and surgical options are available, the veterinary nurse needs to be aware of the reasons for the selection of a particular treatment plan.

Common complementary therapies and the use of prescription diets should be also covered. This should include a summary of the technique/diet, applications and merits of its use. The inclusion of other emerging techniques (eg dialysis, prosthetics or transplants) could also be considered.

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

Although this Unit may be delivered on a stand-alone basis, it has been designed as part of the HND in Veterinary Nursing.

Delivery could involve classroom-based lectures primarily. It is expected that access to an extensive selection of veterinary and veterinary nursing textbooks, journals, DVDs, internet sources and CD-ROMs is available, particularly to facilitate research for the oral presentation for Outcome 3.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed using a test paper consisting of structured and/or scenario-based questions. Five patient cases affected by a range of types of conditions in differing body systems could be presented to the students. Structured questions relating to each of the Outcomes would then enable the students to demonstrate their understanding in all areas.

Outcome 3 could be assessed using a 10 minute presentation on the evaluation of treatment options for one medical and one surgical condition.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

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

Outcome 2

The assessment of this Outcome can be combined with Outcome 1 and could take the form of a closed-book test consisting of structured and/or scenario questions undertaken in controlled conditions and lasting two hours.

Outcome 3

The assessment of this Outcome could take the form of a 10 minute oral presentation prepared in the candidate's own time and delivered during normal class time. The candidate should also provide satisfactory answers to questions from the audience.

Observation checklists should be used to record performance and should be retained for authentication purposes.

Online and Distance 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* (www.sqa.org.uk).

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving* at SCQF level 6, *Working with Others* at level 5 and the *Oral* component of Communication at level 5 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components. The investigation and oral presentation for Outcome 3 provide good opportunities for the development of all of these aspects of Core Skills.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team, telephone 0303 333 0330.

General information for candidates

Unit title: Veterinary Nursing: Small Animal Health Conditions

This Unit is designed to provide you with knowledge of the pathophysiology of small animal health conditions and its impact on the patient, diagnosis and treatment. It would be beneficial for you to have successfully achieved the SCQF Level 7 Units *Veterinary Nursing: Canine and Feline Anatomy and Physiology*, *Veterinary Nursing: Essential Nursing Skills* and *Veterinary Nursing: Pharmacology* before starting this Unit.

The Unit comprises three Outcomes:

Outcome 1

You will be introduced to the presentation and pathophysiology of small animal health conditions affecting all body systems. It is expected that you understand the causes and clinical signs of common disorders in order to inform your assessment of patients when planning nursing care.

You should cover all common infectious diseases of the UK, but knowledge of infections from other countries (particularly from the EU) is also desirable. This Outcome will also provide you with the knowledge of the impact of conditions on the patient's normal functioning. This will assist you to formulate appropriate care plans for patients suffering from a range of conditions.

Outcome 2

This Outcome is designed to help you understand the diagnostic process and the selection of diagnostic techniques for specific conditions. A variety of diagnostic techniques will be covered, however you will also be given the opportunity to apply your knowledge of diagnostic imaging and laboratory diagnostic techniques to specific conditions.

Outcome 3

You will evaluate the treatment options available to the veterinary surgeon and understand why particular options are selected. You will be expected to apply your knowledge of pharmacology and commonly used drugs when considering specific clinical conditions. However you will also be introduced to the surgical techniques available to veterinary surgeons so that you have a clear understanding of the procedure when assisting the veterinary surgeon in the operating theatre.

Common complementary therapies, prescription diets and any emerging techniques, will also be covered.

Assessment

In order to complete this Unit successfully you will be required to achieve a satisfactory level of performance. Outcomes 1 and 2 could be assessed using a written paper consisting of structured and/or scenario-based questions. Outcome 3 could be assessed using a 10 minute presentation evaluating the treatment options available for one medical and one surgical condition.