



## Higher National Unit specification

### General information for centres

**Unit title:** Animal Behaviour

**Unit code:** F3TY 34

**Unit purpose:** This Unit will provide knowledge in the behaviour of animals. This will include the developmental stages of behaviour, aspects of animal biology relevant to behaviour, feeding and reproductive behaviours and an introduction to animal societies. It is designed for candidates wishing to work in the animal care sector or who wish to care for animals.

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

- 1 Describe the developmental stages of behaviour in animals.
- 2 Describe the aspects of animal biology relevant to their behaviour.
- 3 Describe feeding, reproductive and rearing behaviours in animals.
- 4 Describe animal societies.

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

*\*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.*

**Recommended prior knowledge and skills:** Access to this Unit will be at the discretion of the centre. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had practical knowledge of animal care or had achieved relevant Units at SCQF level 5 or 6 eg D7H8 11 *Small Animal Husbandry: Behaviour*. It would also be beneficial if candidates had Communication skills at SCQF level 5 or equivalent.

**Core Skills:** There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6 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.

**Assessment:** Outcome 1 could be assessed by restricted response questions. Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 could be assessed by individual reports.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards**

**Unit title:** Animal Behaviour

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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 developmental stages of behaviour in animals

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Developmental life stages
- ◆ Genetics and evolution
- ◆ Habituation
- ◆ Socialisation

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can, for two species of animal:

- ◆ describe the neo-natal, juvenile and adult developmental stages
- ◆ describe the influence of genetics and evolution on behaviour
- ◆ describe the influence of socialisation (to include with humans, same species and other species) and the influence of habituation (to the physical environment) on behaviour

This Outcome will be assessed under closed-book, supervised conditions.

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

This Outcome could be assessed by a series of restricted response questions.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Animal Behaviour

### **Outcome 2**

Describe the aspects of animal biology relevant to their behaviour

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Senses
- ◆ Musculo-skeletal structure
- ◆ Dentition

#### **Evidence Requirements**

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can, for three species of animals:

- ◆ describe the contribution of touch, hearing, smell, taste and sonar to the behaviour
- ◆ describe the effect of musculo-skeletal structure and dentition on behaviour

The three chosen species must include at least one domestic species and one wild species of animal.

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

This Outcome could be assessed by a report describing the aspects of the animal's biology relevant to behaviour.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Animal Behaviour

### **Outcome 3**

Describe feeding, reproductive and rearing behaviours in animals

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Feeding behaviours
- ◆ Reproduction behaviours
- ◆ Rearing behaviours

#### **Evidence Requirements**

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

- ◆ describe the feeding behaviours of three species of animals chosen from the following categories grazers, browsers, scavengers, foragers, hoarders, active predators and ambush predators
- ◆ explain using examples of animals each of the following different reproduction behaviours: 'pair for mating', monogamous pairs and polygamous reproductive behaviour
- ◆ explain using at least four examples of animals each of the following different rearing behaviours: solo parent, pair, group and nil parenting behaviour

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

This Outcome could be assessed by a report researching the feeding, reproduction and rearing behaviours in animals.

## **Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)**

**Unit title:** Animal Behaviour

### **Outcome 4**

Describe animal societies

#### **Knowledge and/or Skills**

- ◆ Types of animal societies
- ◆ Benefits

#### **Evidence Requirements**

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

- ◆ describe matrilineal, harem, troop, pack and altruistic animal societies. Candidates' descriptions must use at least two examples for each type.
- ◆ describe each animal society's benefits to the individual animal, in terms of the following: habitat choice, target species, size, safety and rearing of young.

#### **Assessment Guidelines**

This Outcome could be assessed through candidates conducting their own research into animal societies.

## Administrative Information

**Unit code:** F3TY 34  
**Unit title:** Animal Behaviour  
**Superclass category:** RH  
**Original date of publication:** August 2008  
**Version:** 02 (August 2022)

### History of changes:

| Version | Description of change                   | Date     |
|---------|---|----------|
| 02      | Minor updates made to Outcomes 1 and 3. | 15/08/22 |
|         |   |          |
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## **Higher National Unit specification: support notes**

### **Unit title:** Animal Behaviour

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 designed to provide knowledge of the influences on normal animal behaviour. The Unit is expressed in generic terms to enable candidates to study a range of animals relevant to their vocational area.

#### **Outcome 1**

This Outcome covers the stages of behavioural development from complete dependence on the parent or parents through the stages of learning from parents and experience. For the purposes of this Unit the development stages can be considered complete at puberty when sexual behaviours commence.

#### **Outcome 2**

This Outcome enables the candidate to compare the senses of different species and recognise the effects on the behaviour of the animal. This could include some knowledge of how different species use their senses for communication and the relative importance of different methods in different species. This could include visual signalling in birds compared with olfactory communications in canids. The importance of physical structure of the animal on its behavioural characteristics — eg the ability to burrow or climb may also be incorporated.

#### **Outcome 3**

This Outcome covers the range of feeding and reproductive behaviours in animals. Comparisons could be made between the different types of behaviour and the relative advantages to individual animals and species.

#### **Outcome 4**

This Outcome covers the types of social organisation in which animals live and the relative advantages and disadvantages of each. A range of species such as wolves, lions, orcas, primates, bees, primates and ants could be considered to enhance the understanding of the complexities of social organisations.

### **Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit**

This Unit is part of the HNC/HND in Animal Care and enables the candidate to be familiar with the influences on and behaviours of animals.

It is expected that dogs will form the major species covered in this Unit but other domestic species including cats could be included. Different behaviours best demonstrated by wild species are also included to allow candidates to appreciate the range and complexity of animal behaviour.

## Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

### Unit title: Animal Behaviour

Outcome 1 could be assessed through a series of restricted response questions designed to assess understanding of the influences on behaviours. This must be conducted as a closed-book assessment under supervised conditions to ensure that candidates have a good understanding of the basic influences on behaviour.

Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 could be assessed by candidates conducting research for each Outcome and presenting short reports of approximately 1,000 words or equivalent. Alternatively, centres may wish to have candidates present their findings orally.

### *Opportunities for developing Core Skills*

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Assessment for Outcome 2, 3 and 4 is likely to require candidates to research topics relating to animal behaviour and to present findings for each Outcome as a report. This may provide the opportunity to develop the Written Communication component of the Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 6. Alternatively, should candidates present findings orally there may be the opportunity to develop the Oral Communication component at SCQF level 6.

### Open learning

This Unit is suitable for Open Learning providing that Centres make appropriate arrangements for materials, support and assessment.

### Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

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. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## General information for candidates

### Unit title: Animal Behaviour

This Unit is designed to provide you with knowledge in the normal behaviour of animals. This will include the developmental stages of behaviour, the aspects of their biology relevant to behaviour, feeding and reproductive behaviours and an introduction to animal societies. It is designed for candidates wishing to complete HNC/HND Animal Care award and/or work in the sector or care for animals.

The Unit is made up of four Outcomes:

Outcome 1 covers the neo-natal, juvenile and adult developmental stages of animals, the influence of genetics and evolution on behaviour and the influence of socialisation (with humans, same species and other species) and habituation (to the physical environment) on behaviour.

Outcome 2 covers the effect of senses (touch, hearing, smell, taste and sonar) on animal behaviour and communication and the effect of physical structure (musculo-skeletal structure and dentition) on behaviour.

Outcome 3 covers the feeding behaviours of grazers, browsers, scavengers, foragers, hoarders, active predators and ambush predators. Reproduction and rearing behaviours including pair for mating, monogamous pairs and polygamous reproductive behaviour as well as solo parent, pair, group and 'nil parenting' behaviours are also covered.

Outcome 4 covers types of animal societies (matrilineal, harem, troop, pack and altruistic) and the benefits of an animal society to the individual animal in terms of the following: habitat choice, target species size, safety and rearing of young.

In order to complete this Unit successfully you will be required to achieve a satisfactory level of performance in four assessed pieces of work. The first assessment could be in the form of a closed-book short answer questions presented at the end of the Outcome. Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 may give you the opportunity to research areas relevant to you. For each of these Outcomes you may be asked to research a topic looking at behavioural issues relevant to different species of animals and may be required to present your findings.

Depending on how you present your findings to Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 there may be the opportunity to develop the written and/or oral components of the Core Skill of *Communication*.