



Higher National Graded Unit specification

General information for centres

This Graded Unit has been validated as part of the HNC Animal Care. Centres are required to develop the assessment instrument in accordance with this validated specification. Centres wishing to use another type of Graded Unit or assessment instrument are required to submit proposals detailing the justification for change for validation.

Graded Unit title: Animal Care: Graded Unit 1

Graded Unit code: F4CC 34

Type of Graded Unit: Examination

Assessment Instrument: Closed-book Examination

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 National 1 to Doctorates.*

Purpose: This Graded Unit is designed to provide evidence that the candidate has achieved the following principal aims of the HNC in Animal Care:

- ◆ enable progression within the SCQF
- ◆ prepare candidates for entry to the animal care industry at team leader/supervisor level by developing the required key competences
- ◆ provide a basis for future career and personal development
- ◆ develop knowledge and understanding of animals
- ◆ develop knowledge and skills in animal care
- ◆ provide underpinning knowledge and skills for careers in a variety of animal care sectors
- ◆ develop an understanding of the importance of health & safety in animal care and in the animal care industry

General information for centres (cont)

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that the candidate should have completed or be in the process of completing the following Units relating to these specific aims prior to undertaking this Graded Unit:

- F3V1 34 *Companion Animal Anatomy and Physiology*
- DJ07 34 *Small Animal Nutrition*
- F3V3 34 *Companion Animal Handling and First Aid*
- F3TX 34 *Animal Welfare*

Core Skills: There are no Core Skills embedded in this Graded Unit specification.

Assessment: This Graded Unit is a closed-book examination of 3 hours' duration. The examination will be in two sections with Section A lasting one hour and Section B, 2 hours.

Administrative Information

Graded Unit code: F4CC 34
Graded Unit title: Animal Care: Graded Unit 1
Original date of publication: August 2008
Version: 02

History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Update of Conditions of Assessment	Jul 2018

Source: SQA

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Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates

Graded Unit title: Animal Care: Graded Unit 1

Conditions of assessment

The assessment is based on a closed-book examination, lasting 3 hours.

The examination should be unseen and the assessment must be conducted under controlled conditions.

Reasonable assistance is the term used by SQA to describe the difference between providing candidates with some direction to generate the required evidence for assessment and providing too much support which would compromise the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable assistance is part of all learning and teaching processes.

In relation to the assessment of Higher National Examination-based Graded Units, assessors may provide advice and guidance on examination technique and clarification on the meaning of command words which may appear within an examination paper, prior to the formal examination.

Remediation is not allowed in Examination-based Graded Unit assessments.

Any candidate who has failed their Higher National Examination-based Graded Unit or wishes to upgrade their award must be given a re-assessment opportunity, or in exceptional circumstances, two re-assessment opportunities. This must be done by using a substantially different examination.

The final grading given must reflect the quality of the candidate's evidence at the time of the completion of the graded unit. Candidates must be awarded the highest grade achieved, whether through first sitting or through any re-assessment.

At all times, the security, integrity and confidentiality of examinations must be ensured.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Instructions for designing the assessment task:

The examination should be designed to assess the candidate's critical knowledge and understanding of the topics relating to the aims which this Graded Unit is designed to cover. The examination should require candidates to integrate knowledge and understanding in Animal Care, as drawn from the four Units given as recommended prior knowledge and skills.

The questions and corresponding marks should be designed in accordance with the ranges indicated in the table that follows. However, the overall total mark for the examination is 100.

The format of the examination paper should be designed to meet the following requirements:

- ◆ The examination paper will be in two sections
- ◆ Section A will last one hour and should consist of five questions based on stimulus material of 75–100 words, each worth 8 marks
- ◆ Candidates will be required to attempt all questions in section A
- ◆ Section B will last 2 hours and should consist of three essay questions from which candidates will be required to answer two

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Key topics	Level of demand	Percentage weighting per topic
<p>Section A.</p> <p>Stimulus material of 75–100 words integrating the following topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>anatomy and physiology of companion animals</i> ◆ <i>nutrition and dietary management in small animals</i> ◆ <i>animal welfare practices</i> 	<p>Candidates must use a range of approaches to address routine problems relating to animal nutrition and their associated physiological and welfare issues.</p> <p>Stimulus material enabling candidates to demonstrate knowledge that is embedded in the main theories, concepts and principles relating to the key topics of animal anatomy and physiology, animal nutrition and dietary management and animal welfare practices should be presented. Candidates are required to identify the key problems arising from the stimulus material, and suggest appropriate solutions with supporting reasoning to alleviate these problems.</p>	<p>40</p>
<p>Section B.</p> <p>Essay questions integrating the following topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>handling of animals</i> ◆ <i>first aid issues</i> ◆ <i>anatomy and physiology of companion animals</i> ◆ <i>nutrition and dietary management in small animals</i> ◆ <i>animal welfare practices</i> 	<p>Candidates must present and evaluate arguments, information and ideas which are routine to the subjects.</p> <p>The questions must present a situation or topic which requires candidates to explain how a situation may be managed, issues surrounding that topic and the future and/or wider issues that may arise. The explanation must utilise the knowledge gained from areas of animal handling and first aid, companion animal anatomy and physiology, small animal nutrition and dietary management and animal welfare practices. The explanation must convey complex ideas integrating the topic areas and providing linkages where appropriate. The explanation should be presented in a well structured coherent manner and must provide appropriate conclusions and recommendations.</p>	<p>60</p>

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

The examination will be marked out of 100. Assessors will aggregate the marks achieved by the candidate to arrive at an overall mark for the examination. Assessors will then assign a grade to the candidate for this Graded Unit based on the following grade boundaries:

- ◆ A = 70% — 100%
- ◆ B = 60% — 69%
- ◆ C = 50% — 59%

Guidance on grading candidates

Candidates who meet the minimum Evidence Requirements will have their achievement graded as a C (competent), A (highly competent), or B (somewhere between A and C). The grade related criteria to be used to judge candidate performance for this Graded Unit is specified in the following table:

Grade A	Grade C
<p>Is a seamless, coherent piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ interprets and understands the stimulus material and questions in a way which demonstrates insight and clear understanding of issues, relationships ◆ responses are logically structured and coherently expressed demonstrating consistent use of correct terminology ◆ consolidates and integrates required knowledge and skills linking concepts and ideas and relating answers explicitly to the question ◆ provides a strong understanding of the subject or problem posed and signposts the subsequent direction the answer takes ◆ provides strong conclusions / recommendations that demonstrate a strong understanding of the situation or problem posed, and the most appropriate solutions 	<p>Is a co-ordinated piece of work which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ interprets and understands the stimulus material and questions by identifying the key issues arising and provides an explanation of the relationship between the topic areas ◆ makes relevant points, though responses may be uneven ◆ consolidates and integrates knowledge and skills but may lack continuity and consistency and fails to show clear links to concepts and ideas ◆ provides an understanding of the subject and problem posed ◆ provides appropriate conclusions / recommendations that reflect the situation or problem posed

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Support notes

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

The SCQF level 8 Small Animal Health and Disease is included because, while complex in nature, health and disease is a fundamental aspect of animal care. Care must be taken when selecting topics which integrate aspects of this Unit, to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to achievement.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Graded Unit is intended for candidates who are studying Animal Care HNC/first year HND. Additional information relating to the assessment task is given below.

Section A — Stimulus material

This section should allow candidates to show that they have the required knowledge and understanding to link concepts and ideas across the following Units: *Companion Animal Anatomy and Physiology* (F3V1 34), *Small Animal Nutrition* (DJ07 34) and *Animal Welfare* (F3TX 34).

The stimulus material must be related to nutrition and the associated anatomical, physiological and welfare issues which may arise. Candidates should be able to identify the likely problems and suggest appropriate solutions to alleviate these problems.

The following examples are provided as guidance:

- ◆ A pup is on an all meat diet. What is the problem here, what are the likely anatomical and physiological effects of this diet, what steps should be taken to correct the problem?
- ◆ The owners of an obese cat need dietary advice. Explain why the cat must lose weight; explain how this weight loss is best achieved; explain how a stable weight could be maintained in the long-term.
- ◆ An owner of pet rabbits proposes to set up a breeding programme, but the rabbits have had dental health problems in the past. What might be causing this problem and what dietary and health care advice would you give to ensure the long term welfare of the breeding stock.

Higher National Graded Unit specification: instructions for designing the assessment task and assessing candidates (cont)

Section B — Essay questions

This section should demonstrate candidates' integration of knowledge, understanding and cognitive skills, across all Units given in the 'Recommended prior knowledge and skills section' on page 1.

The questions may present a topic that requires candidates to explain how a situation may be managed, issues surrounding that topic and the future and/or wider issues that may arise. This may include presenting specific first aid scenarios and requiring candidates to explain how they would deal with the problems arising in each situation alongside wider issues of nutrition, dietary management, animal welfare practices and animal anatomy and physiology.

The following examples are provided as guidance:

- ◆ Explain the possible causes of gastric dilation/volvulus in dogs (including breed predisposition), the urgency of the condition and the steps that may be taken to prevent future episodes.
- ◆ Explain why certain breeds of dogs may be predisposed to dystocia. What are the problems associated with this condition in terms of the welfare of the dam and the pups; and how may these be overcome?
- ◆ A number of dogs in a long term boarding facility are losing weight and showing abnormal behaviours, eg pacing and running at the kennel doors. Explain what factors may be contributing to the problem and the implications for the animals' immediate and future welfare, in terms of adverse physiological changes and resultant disease processes. How could conditions for these dogs be improved?
- ◆ A local cat breeder has had an outbreak of FPV. Explain, with reasons, the advice that should be given for the management of the cattery, treatment of existing cats and future breeding programmes to ensure the welfare of these animals.

Equality and inclusion

This graded unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Equality and inclusion*, which is available on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

General information for candidates

This Unit provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to integrate knowledge, understanding and skills from the following Units:

F3V1 34	<i>Companion Animal Anatomy and Physiology</i>
DJ07 34	<i>Small Animal Nutrition</i>
F3V3 34	<i>Companion Animal Handling and First Aid</i>
F3TX 34	<i>Animal Welfare</i>

These Units support the aims of the Animal Care HNC and will be assessed by means of a three hour examination. The questions in the examination will allow you to show how issues of anatomy, physiology, nutrition, dietary management, animal welfare practices and first aid are related, and allow you to identify links between them. The examination will be in two sections with Section A worth 40 marks and Section B worth 60 marks.

Section A

In this section you will be provided with short stimulus material that asks you to identify key problems and make suggestions for the alleviation of the problems. This section will last approximately one hour and will consist of five questions, all of which you will need to answer. Questions may be in a format similar to the example below.

- ◆ A pup is fed an all meat diet. In this situation, what are the problems, what are the likely anatomical and physiological effects of the diet what and what steps should be taken to correct these?

Section B.

In this section you will be presented with a topic or situation that is more complex and requires you to identify the immediate and wider long term issues, remedies for the immediate issue and discuss some of the wider issues, eg welfare practice, legislative matters, dietary issues, breeds and breed disposition. This section will last 2 hours and will require you to answer two essay questions from three.

Questions may be in a format similar to the example below.

- ◆ Explain the possible causes of gastric dilation/volvulus in dogs (including breed predisposition), the urgency of the condition and the steps that may be taken to prevent future episodes.

Your centre will provide you with support in preparing for and undertaking the examination.