



Group Award Specification for:

**PDA in Animal Science and Communication at SCQF
level 6**

Group Award Code: GT0P 46

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities

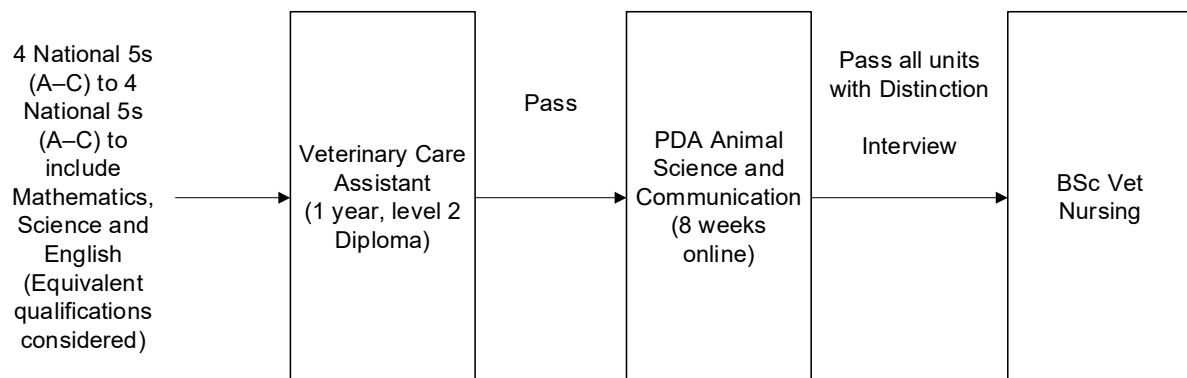
The purpose of the PDA in Animal Science and Communication at SCQF level 6 is to allow learners to develop a range of knowledge and practical skills which will aid their progression to a Veterinary Nursing qualification.

The PDA in Animal Science and Communication is suitable for learners who wish to pursue a career in Veterinary Nursing following completion of a lower level qualification (for example Veterinary Care Assistant) or those who may fall short of the direct entry requirements for a degree programme.

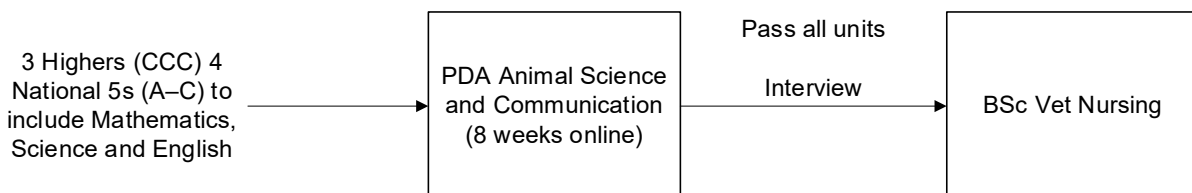
1 Direct entry



2 VCA and PDA



3 PDA only



2 Qualification structure

This group award is made up of 3 SQA unit credits. It comprises 20 SCQF credit points of which 12 are at SCQF level 6 and 8 at SCQF level 7. A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

20 SCQF credit points (3 SQA unit credits) are required to achieve the PDA at SCQF level 6.

4 code	2 code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
DP4L	34	Animal Biology	1	8	7
HY0M	46	Veterinary Terminology	1	6	6
J2GC	46	Communication Skills for Customer Service	1	6	6

3 Aims of the qualification

The principal aim of the PDA is to allow Veterinary Care Assistants to progress to a Veterinary Nursing degree programme.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

- 1 To aid progression within the SCQF.
- 2 To develop a range of vocational knowledge and skills.
- 3 To develop Core Skills.

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

- 4 To develop an awareness of the characteristics of animals within the major animal phyla, the relationship between structure and function of major types of animal tissues and awareness of the relationships between the structure of different animals and their life in different environments.
- 5 To acquire, develop and be able to use an extensive veterinary vocabulary within the animal care and veterinary industry.
- 6 To develop an understanding of the importance of communication in delivering effective customer service and will have been given the opportunity to develop practical skills in communicating with customers.

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry to this qualification is at the discretion of the centre. The following information on prior knowledge, skills, experience or qualifications that provide suitable preparation for this qualification has been provided by the Qualification Design Team (QDT) as guidance only.

Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ Veterinary Care Assistant qualification
- ◆ Three Highers at Grade C or Above
- ◆ Four National 5s including (to include a science, Mathematics and English)
- ◆ Relevant vocational experience

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

The Core Skill entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information would be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
Communication	5	Closed-book and written assessments
Numeracy	5	Calculations in relation to practical activities/laboratory investigations
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	5	Research and production of written work
Problem Solving	5	Practical activities and laboratory investigations
Working with Others	5	Practical activities and laboratory investigations

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification was designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the unit standards with those defined in national occupational standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to units

Code	Unit title	Aims					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
DP4L 34	Animal Biology	X	X	X	X	X	
HY0M 46	Veterinary Terminology	X	X	X	X	X	
J2GC 46	Communication Skills for Customer Service	X	X	X			X

5.2 Mapping of National Occupational Standards (NOS)

Code	Unit title	National Occupational Standard								
		AnC1	AnC2	AnC3	AnC4	AnC5	AnC10	CFACSD13	CFACSD8	CFACSC5
DP4L 34	Animal Biology	X	X	X	X	X	X			
HY0M 46	Veterinary Terminology	X	X	X	X	X	X			
J2GC 46	Communication Skills for Customer Service							X	X	X

AnC1	Maintain the health and welfare of animals under supervision and instruction
AnC2	Clean and check animal accommodation under supervision and instruction
AnC3	Provide feed and water to animals under supervision and instruction
AnC4	Handle animals under supervision and instruction
AnC5	Move animals under supervision and instruction
AnC10	Observe and be aware of the behaviour of animals
CFACSD13	Monitor the quality of customer service transactions
CFACSD8	Work with others to improve customer service
CFACSC5	Monitor and solve customer service problems

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification

Unit code	Unit title	Communication			Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written (Reading)	Written (Writing)	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
DP4L 34	Animal Biology	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S	S	S	
HY0M 46	Veterinary Terminology	S	S	S			S	S					
J2GC 46	Communication Skills for Customer Service	S	S	S					F	S	S	S	S

5.4 Assessment strategy for the qualification

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Animal Biology	Closed-book assessment			Practical laboratory activities and lab report
Veterinary Terminology	Identification exercise	Short answer/multiple choice		
Communication Skills for Customer Service	Project/case study			

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

6.1 Sequencing/integration of units

There is no required sequence of delivery of the units.

There are likely to be considerable opportunities to integrate the delivery and assessment of *Animal Biology* and *Veterinary Terminology* where the learner will be able to increase their specialist vocabulary as they develop their knowledge of animal biology.

6.2 Recognition of prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, a full group award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of units and assessments:

- ◆ HN Graded Units
- ◆ Course and/or external assessments
- ◆ Other integrative assessment units (which may or not be graded)
- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an assessment strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA unit(s) may contribute to this group award. Additionally, they also outline how this group award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression

The PDA has been designed to allow progression to the SRUC Degree in Veterinary Nursing.

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

The PDA lends itself well to e-learning and e-assessment, with particular opportunities to use e-assessment to generate evidence for *Veterinary Terminology* (vocabulary tests, etc) and *Animal Biology* (assessment for Outcomes 1-3).

6.4 Support materials

A list of existing Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) is available to view on SQA's website.

6.5 Resource requirements

Access to a suitably equipped laboratory will be required to deliver the practical aspects of the Animal Biology unit.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The unit specifications making up this group award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Internal and external verification

All assessments used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a group award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the group award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ learners may not be entered for the group award
- ◆ the group award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a group award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ the group award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue
- ◆ the group award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived
- ◆ no new centres may be approved to offer the group award
- ◆ centres should only enter learners whom they expect to complete the group award during the defined lapsing period

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and graded units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Subject unit: Subject units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

9 General information for learners

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

This qualification is suitable for you if you are looking to develop specialist knowledge and practical skills to allow you to progress to a Veterinary Nursing degree programme.

You will be required to complete three units to achieve the PDA:

- ◆ *Animal Biology*
- ◆ *Veterinary Terminology*
- ◆ *Communication Skills for Customer Service*

On completion of these units you will be able to:

- ◆ demonstrate an awareness of the characteristics of animals within the major animal phyla, the relationship between structure and function of major types of animal tissues and awareness of the relationships between the structure of different animals and their life in different environments.
- ◆ use extensive veterinary vocabulary within the animal care and veterinary industry.
- ◆ understand the importance of communication in delivering effective customer service and will have been given the opportunity to develop practical skills in communicating with customers.

You will be assessed through a range of methods, including practical assignments, project/case studies and identification exercises/vocabulary tests.