

Equine Physiotherapy Diploma Programme

January 2021



IRVAP



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Programme Title: Equine Physiotherapy Diploma Programme

Programme Reference: Eq Phys Dip

Academic Levels: 4, 5 and 6

Number of Units: 15

Total Qualification Time: 3600 hours

Course Duration: 4 years

Programme Start Date:

September 2020

This programme is accredited by the:

Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP)

Institute of Registered Veterinary & Animal Physiotherapists (IRVAP)

International Association of Animal Therapists (IAAT)

Outline Programme Description

Following veterinary assessment, certain health conditions require physiotherapy, and the veterinary surgeon may refer the horse for further treatment to be administered by a suitably qualified therapist. Completion of this programme will meet the needs of learners aiming to work in the field of equine physiotherapy, providing the skills set needed to work as an equine healthcare paraprofessional and carry out non-invasive therapeutic techniques. The programme provides the basis for additional specialist training within specific modalities, and also for post-graduate study.

Learners will study the legal framework applicable to veterinary professionals and paraprofessionals ensuring a full comprehension of the legal and ethical responsibilities incumbent on the equine health practitioner. This programme will enable learners to understand the static and dynamic structure of the horse and the link between structure, movement, soundness and performance.

Learners will develop an understanding of the merits, modalities and application of a range of physical therapies and rehabilitation strategies used to restore and maintain mobility, function and performance in the horse. It is designed to develop skills of independent enquiry and an awareness of developments in equine therapies, broadening the learner's perspective on the treatment of equine disease and injury.

Learners will investigate the range of manual therapies and therapeutic machines, appraising their benefits and mode of use. Upon completion of this programme learners will have encountered concepts that encompass all aspects of equine therapy from massage techniques to the use of therapeutic machines and equipment, and will be equipped to enter postgraduate study and/or progress into this emerging field as an educated equine therapeutic practitioner.

The programme is comprised of:

120 credits (1200 hours of study) at level 4 (equivalent to the first year of an undergraduate degree)

120 credits (1200 hours of study) at level 5 (equivalent to the second year of an undergraduate degree)

120 credits (1200 hours of study) at level 6 (equivalent to the third year of an undergraduate degree)

- It is compulsory to complete the level 4 units before studying at level 5
- It is compulsory to complete the level 5 units before studying at level 6

Upon completion of the programme graduates will have completed 3600 hours of study, including 1000 hours of practical work (856 hands-on, 144 observational), delivered over four years via structured blended learning.

Practical work will be undertaken via study weeks at TOCES, occupational experience shadowing practitioners, externships (independent work) and placements at equine welfare centres over the course of the programme.

Aims of the Programme

The aims of the programme are to:

- instil an understanding of the ethical and legal principles applicable to the application of equine therapy;
- equip learners with the skills and knowledge required to:
 - administer first aid to horses following injury
 - maintain or restore health and soundness in the horse
 - enable them to plan and implement optimum rehabilitation programmes;
- promote effective communication and liaison with owners, veterinary surgeons and other professionals when planning and implementing treatment and rehabilitation programmes for equine patients;
- develop the academic and professional skills that will allow learners to identify further specialist training needs and areas for professional development;
- provide a progression route to post-graduate study;
- encourage learners to explore and evaluate the scientific evidence and recent developments relating to the use of a range of therapeutic modalities in treatment and rehabilitation programmes;
- provide a programme of training which permits registration onto the Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) www.rampregister.org.

Graduates of the Equine Physiotherapy Diploma Programme will be required to sign a declaration agreeing to:

- work as part of a wider multi-professional team with due regard for the restrictions that apply under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966;
- practice to the extent that they have established, maintained and developed their ability to work safely and competently;
- ensure that they have appropriate professional liability insurance cover for that practice;
- undertake career-long learning, continuing professional education (CPD) and development to maintain fitness to practise.

Teaching Delivery

The programme is taught via tutor-supported e-learning and attended sessions at study weeks. During study weeks lectures combine classroom and yard-based studies with the content predominately practical. The different topics of the programme will be taught and assessed by appropriately qualified staff, with a wealth of experience in their field.

Study weeks are held at TOCES in Suffolk. During the study weeks there will be a high level of hands-on practical work. You are responsible for arranging, and paying for, your accommodation during study weeks.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we have deferred face-to-face attended study weeks until September 2021 when it will hopefully be safe, and permitted, to hold them again. In the meantime theoretical study week content is being delivered remotely using BigBlueButton, a great interactive and easy to use online delivery platform. We're making excellent use of live and pre-recorded webinars and online teaching sessions so, although our syllabus scheduling has had to change, we are ensuring no delivery, practical or theoretical, is missed.

The programme is delivered via blended learning using a combination of:

Distance learning

- Tutor-supported e-learning
- Printed learning materials
- Online lectures and webinars (live and pre-recorded)
- Online assessments
- Essay style assessments
- Critical analysis of primary literature
- Supported self-directed investigation and project work
- Case study tutorials
- Portfolio completion

Study weeks

- Practical lecture demonstrations
- Guided hands-on practical learning
- Skill application and practice
- Project and case study tutorials
- Analysis of the static horse
- Gait analysis of the dynamic horse
- Visits to equine therapy units, equine swimming pool, etc
- Classroom based lectures
- Cadaver dissections
- Tutorials
- Portfolio completion
- Practical assessments

Professional occupational experience

- Shadowing qualified equine practitioners
- Case study work

Externships and welfare placements

- Veterinary consultation
- Application of therapeutic techniques
- Case study work
- Portfolio completion

Practical Delivery

| Practical Activity | No. | Total Practical Hours |
|--|----------|-----------------------|
| Study weeks - 4½ day blocks | 18 | 441 |
| Externships – independent work arranged by student | Variable | 343 |
| Professional occupational experience - Individual days jointly arranged by TOCES and student | Variable | 144 |
| Welfare placement - Individual days jointly arranged by TOCES and student | Variable | 72 |

Programme Accreditation and Approval Status

This unique programme forms a bespoke training course, designed to fulfil the aims listed above, and is currently classified as customised provision, quality assured and approved by Pearson Assured (<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/pearson-assured.html>) In addition to the Open College of Equine Studies' certificate, you will also receive a Pearson Assured Certificate.

Whilst courses that are classified as customised provision are not on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) or regulated by Ofqual, throughout every aspect of the design of this course, rigorous quality standards have been the top priority, including:

- **course syllabus** and **content** - to ensure the course is 'fit for purpose';
- **academic level** and **workload** - to ensure the course is academically rigorous;
- **teaching strategy** - to ensure learners will benefit from a team of highly qualified professionals in both the face to face setting, and whilst studying online;
- **practical tuition** - to ensure learners are taught to the highest standards in a practical setting;
- **skills practice** - to ensure learners undertake a minimum of 1000 hours of practical work;
- **assessment strategy** - to ensure both practical skills and academic knowledge and understanding are assessed using a range of assessment techniques.

The course has been designed with reference to the requirements of the Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) and the Sector Skills Council's (Lantra) National Occupational Standards (NOS).

If, upon completion of the Equine Physiotherapy Diploma Programme you intend to progress to post-graduate study, check the exact entry requirements of the university offering the MSc you wish to apply for.

The validation/accreditation status of this programme may change in the future.

Assessment Methods

A range of assessment methods will be used, including:

- Essay style assignment submissions
- Online assessments (inc MCQs)
- Practical and oral assessment at study week
- Invigilated written examinations at study week
- Case studies
- Poster presentations
- Peer group presentations
- Video

- Project work
- Portfolio completion
- Dissertation thesis
- Viva voce.

| UNITS | | Study Hours |
|----------------|--|--------------------|
| Level 4 | | |
| Unit 4.1 | Study Skills in Higher Education | 100 |
| Unit 4.2 | The Legal, Professional and Ethical Framework | 200 |
| Unit 4.3 | Equine Anatomy and Physiology | 300 |
| Unit 4.4 | Equine Health Management | 200 |
| Unit 4.5 | Equine Veterinary Management | 200 |
| Unit 4.6 | Thermal, Magnetic and Electro Therapies | 200 |
| Level 5 | | |
| Unit 5.7 | Equine Biomechanics | 200 |
| Unit 5.8 | Applied Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation 1 | 300 |
| Unit 5.9 | Equine Orthopaedics and Neurophysiology | 300 |
| Unit 5.10 | Manual Therapies | 200 |
| Unit 5.11 | Exercise and Movement Therapy | 200 |
| Level 6 | | |
| Unit 6.12 | Research Methods | 200 |
| Unit 6.13 | Applied Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation 2 | 300 |
| Unit 6.14 | Applied Equine Physiotherapy | 300 |
| Unit 6.15 | Dissertation (Physiotherapy Investigative Project) | 400 |

Unit Content

Unit 4.1 Study Skills in Higher Education

- Planning study time taking into account other commitments
- Planning and carrying out literature searches
- Accessing information from a range of sources
- Making judgements about the validity and integrity of information sources
- Presenting academic information effectively in a range of formats, avoiding plagiarism

Unit 4.2 The Legal, Professional and Ethical Framework

- The ethical and legal principles of the application of equine therapy
- The need to work as part of a wider multi-professional team with due regard for the restrictions that apply under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966
- The requirements of professional practice within the field of equine physiotherapy
- The need to be able to establish and maintain safe environments for practice, which minimise risks to service users, those treating them and others, including the use of hazard and infection control

Unit 4.3 Equine Anatomy and Physiology

- Structure and function of mammalian cells and tissues
- Equine structural anatomy
- Anatomy and physiology of the horse's body systems
- Equine conformation
- How to palpate surface anatomy

Unit 4.4 Equine Health Management

- Routine husbandry and health management
- The role of farriery in horse health
- The effect of pain on equine behaviour
- The importance of correct dental care
- How saddles should be fitted

Unit 4.5 Equine Veterinary Management

- Physiology of wound healing
- Effective wound treatment strategies
- How to differentiate between a sound and an unsound horse
- Diagnostic techniques used by the veterinarian
- The role of the physiotherapist in the team

Unit 4.6 Thermal, Magnetic and Electro Therapies

- Physics underpinning electrotherapy, laser, magnetic therapy and therapeutic ultrasound
- Therapeutic effects of cryo-, heat-, electro-, laser and magnetic therapy, therapeutic ultrasound
- Indications and contra-indications of these modalities
- How to devise appropriate treatment plans for these modalities
- How to apply these modalities in clinical practice

Unit 5.7 Equine Biomechanics

- Biomechanics of equine locomotion
- Uses and methods of gait analysis
- Biomechanical effects of exercise

Unit 5.8 Applied Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation 1

- Clinical history recording
- Liaison with the veterinary surgeon
- Contra-indications relevant to a range of therapeutic modalities
- Application of a range of therapeutic modalities

Unit 5.9 Equine Orthopaedics and Neurophysiology

- Common equine skeletal pathologies
- Common equine soft tissue disorders
- Common disorders of the equine neurological system
- Imbalance of the musculoskeletal system
- Pathophysiology of the neuromusculoskeletal system

Unit 5.10 Manual Therapies

- Handling horses safely and optimize own safety during treatments
- Principles underpinning the use of certain therapeutic modalities, including contraindications
- Application of stretch and massage therapies in the treatment of horses

Unit 5.11 Exercise and Movement Therapy

- Therapeutic exercise to correct impairments, improve musculoskeletal function, and/or maintain the horse's well-being
- How to carry out in-hand therapeutic exercises
- How lunging and training aids can be incorporated into therapeutic exercise regimes
- The role of exercise equipment and facilities within a therapeutic exercise regime

Unit 6.12 Research Methods

- Appropriate research questions and hypotheses whilst considering ethics in research
- Types of research design and types of data that can be gathered
- Simple statistical tests using computer software and example data
- Interpret statistical findings and relating to the research hypothesis

Unit 6.13 Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation 2

- Theoretical knowledge of anatomy into practice through palpation
- Practical application of therapeutic modalities
- Consolidation of level 5 practical work
- interpret findings of symmetry and balance in health and neuromusculoskeletal disease

Unit 6.14 Applied Equine Physiotherapy

- The prevalence, or otherwise, of equine scientific and clinical research and literature in the field of equine physiotherapy
- How to develop appropriate therapy plans for horses with specific problems
- The correlation between clinical research and the application of equine physiotherapy

Unit 6.15 Dissertation (Physiotherapy Investigative Project)

- Plan a unique, valid and relevant project
- Identify data and information sources and devise systematic methods of collecting and presenting information and data
- Strategic planning and effective time management skills
- Explore and evaluate the scientific evidence relating to the use of a range of therapeutic modalities in treatment and rehabilitation programmes

Entry Criteria

1. Applicants must be aged 18 years and over
2. Applicants must be competent and confident handling horses with extensive equine experience. This experience may be employment based and/or gained through competition experience.
3. Non-native English speakers or those who have not studied the final two years of school in English, must demonstrate capability in English at a standard commensurate with IELTS 5.5
4. Applicants who have recently been in education should have at least one of the following:
 - Level 3 qualification in Horse Management or equivalent;
 - GCE AS and A level profile that demonstrates strong performance in a relevant subject or an adequate performance in more than one GCE subject. This profile is likely to be supported by GCSE grades at A* to C;
 - other related level 3 qualifications;
 - an Access to Higher Education Certificate received from an approved further education institution;
 - related work experience.
5. Mature applicants (i.e. over 21) may present a more varied profile of achievement that is likely to include extensive work experience (paid and/or unpaid) and/or achievement of a range of professional qualifications in their work sector.

Enrolment Process

There are two cohorts per annum: spring and autumn. Applications can be submitted throughout the year by submitting the Enrolment Form.

Course Fee

The total course fee for this 4 year programme is £19, 830.

It may be paid in four annual payments:

| Payment Stage | Study Period | Fee due |
|---------------|--------------|---------|
| 1 | Year 1 | £5950 |
| 2 | Year 2 | £4627 |
| 3 | Year 3 | £4627 |
| 4 | Year 4 | £4627 |

There is the option of spreading the cost further using the Pay as You Learn option:

| Pay as You Learn |
|-----------------------------|
| Initial fee: £2974 |
| 45 monthly payments of £375 |

The above fees include all study weeks, assessments and examinations. The fees do not include travel or study week accommodation and meal costs.
