

Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support

VSVCS004

Qualification Handbook

August 2018 Version 2.7

Contents

Section	Form	Page
1	Introduction	3
1.1	About VetSkill	3
1.2	Customer Service Statement	3
1.3	Centre Support	4
2	Qualification information	5
2.1	Purpose	5
2.2	Overview	5
2.3	Structure	5
2.4	Methods of assessment	6
2.5	Entry requirements	7
2.6	Age restrictions	8
2.7	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	8
2.8	Total Qualification Time	8
2.9	Exemptions	8
2.10	Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	8
2.11	Reasonable adjustments	8
2.12	Special considerations	8
2.13	Appeals	8
3	Centre requirements	9
3.1	Centre approval	9
3.2	Qualification approval	9
4	Registration & Certification	9
4.1	Registration of Learners	9
4.2	Certification	9
5	Delivering the qualification	9
5.1	Tutors/ Delivery staff	9
5.2	Support materials	10
5.3	Sources of additional information	10
6	Assessment	10
6.1	Assessors	10
6.2	Internal Quality Assurers	10
6.3	Physical Resources	11
6.4	External Quality Assurance	11
7	Units	12

1. Introduction

1.1 About VetSkill

We are an awarding organisation, recognised by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA Regulation). Our aim is to be the leading awarding organisation within the veterinary and animal care sectors.

The majority of our qualifications will be designed especially for the veterinary care sector, providing for veterinary related occupations such as veterinary nurses, care assistants, receptionists and practice managers. We also offer a range of other qualifications which will service a wider animal welfare related clientele as well as others.

We are committed to developing qualifications that support dynamic career development pathways for learners whilst meeting the changing needs of Employers.

1.2 Customer service statement

The way in which our qualifications are delivered is key to the reputation of VetSkill and our centres. We will therefore support centres and learners in every possible way to help you meet our quality standards.

Communication

We will:

- be easy to contact during our office opening hours of 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays. We will notify you at least 1 month in advance of any additional planned office closures
- answer queries courteously, promptly and knowledgeably
- acknowledge correspondence (letters and emails) within 2 working days of receipt
- respond to correspondence (letters and emails) within 10 working days of receipt
- respond to telephone queries within 2 working days of receipt of your call
- answer detailed telephone enquiries within 5 working days
- ensure that our published information is accessible, easy to understand and up-to-date

Registration and certification of learners

We will:

- process learner registrations within 5 working days of receipt of a valid application
- issue multiple choice external examination results within 20 working days of a test date
- publish a result schedule for other types of external assessment
- issue qualification certificates within 7 working days of receipt of a valid claim

External Quality Assurance

We will allocate you a named Quality Visitor (QV) when you receive confirmation of qualification approval. Your Quality Visitor will:

- visit your centre at least once a year, and visit a sample of work placement locations where relevant to the qualifications you offer
- provide you with an annual visit plan detailing the visits and other quality assurance activities to be undertaken
- provide a minimum of 40 working days' notice in relation to routine quality visits

- provide you immediate oral feedback following each visit, along with the opportunity to discuss findings and possible actions
- ensure you receive a written report within 5 working days of the visit date

1.3 Centre support

We will support our centres and learners in every possible way to help you meet our quality standards.

We will:

- provide an informative and accessible website where you can find up-to-date information for learners and centres and download publications free of charge
- offer free or at-cost networking and training events throughout the year
- provide exemplar examination and assignment materials
- send email bulletins and a regular newsletter
- support the development of new centres

Helping us to help you

We can support you more effectively if you:

- quote your centre number, and learner numbers where appropriate, on all correspondence with us
- refer to our publications and disseminate them to staff and learners promptly
- observe instructions, especially on application forms e.g. registration and examination applications
- keep appointments with VetSkill representatives
- tell us promptly about any specific problems – by letter, email or telephone
- make the focus of your call clear when you contact us e.g. registrations, centre visits, examinations etc. so that we can quickly direct you to the appropriate person

Appeals and complaints

We will make every effort to resolve concerns that you may have. All enquiries, complaints and appeals must be addressed to the Standards Manager.

The VetSkill enquiries and appeals procedure in relation to assessment and quality assurance decisions is set out within the VetSkill Centre Handbook. We make a charge for the consideration of appeals, which is fully refundable in successful cases.

For help or advice please contact the VetSkill Customer Service Team:

Vet Skill Ltd
 Unit 1 Headland House
 Chord Business Park
 London Road
 Godmanchester
 Cambridgeshire
 PE29 2BQ

Tel: 01480 278 580

Fax: 01480 278 581

Email: info@vetskill.com

Website: www.vetskill.com

2. Qualification information

2.1 Purpose

This qualification is designed for those working in Veterinary practice, in a veterinary care supporting role.

It is intended to provide relevant practical skills and underpinning knowledge that will enable learners to provide a good level of support to the veterinary nurse and veterinary surgeon. Furthermore, it may be used as a stepping stone onto VetSkill's Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Companion Animal) qualification, subject to additional entry conditions being met.

The supporting taught programme should include a balance of teaching and learning strategies, designed to help learners develop knowledge, understanding and effective practical skills.

Learners may not legally perform any action either during their training, or post-qualification, which may be interpreted as an act of veterinary surgery as defined by the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966.

Information about this can be obtained from the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons www.rcvs.org.uk

This document contains the information that centres need to offer the following qualification:

2.2 Overview

Qualification title and level:	VetSkill Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support		
Subject area:	3.3 Animal Care and Veterinary Science		
VetSkill qualification number:	VSVCS004	Regulated qualification number:	603/3568/3
First registration date	22.08.2018		
Last registration date	31.08.2021		
Last certification date	31.08.2023		

2.3 Qualification structure

The Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support comprises of 6 mandatory units. These 6 units satisfy the requirements for the apprenticeship framework for Animal Care and Welfare Assistant – Veterinary Care Support.

Learners must achieve all units in order to complete the qualification.

2.3.1 Pathways available:

There are no pathways available for this qualification.

2.3.2 Mandatory units:

VetSkill unit No	Accredited No	Title	Level	Credit	GLH	TQT
VCS01	J/617/1958	Legislation and Safe Working Practices	2	3	30	80
VCS02	L/617/1959	Animal Health and Welfare	2	4	40	160
VCS03	F/617/1960	Animal Environment and Accommodation	2	5	50	180
VCS04	J/617/1961	Introduction to Patient Care	2	4	40	170
VCS05	L/617/1962	Introduction to Animal Anatomy and Physiology	2	4	40	90
VCS06	R/617/1963	Veterinary Care Support	2	4	40	160

2.3.3 Optional units:

There are no optional units in the Veterinary Care Support Qualification.

2.4 Assessment methods

		Unit level assessment (conducted by centre)		Qualification Summative Assessment
VetSkill Unit No	Title	Assessment of K & U	Assessment of Skills	
VCS01	Legislation and Safe Working Practices	Portfolio		Portfolio
VCS02	Animal Health and Welfare	Portfolio		Portfolio
VCS03	Animal Environment and Accommodation	Portfolio		Portfolio
VCS04	Introduction to Patient Care	Portfolio		Portfolio
VCS05	Introduction to Animal Anatomy and Physiology	Portfolio		Portfolio
VCS06	Veterinary Care Support	Portfolio		Portfolio

2.4.1 Assessment

Each unit is assessed by portfolio. The portfolio will assess knowledge, skills and behaviours, to cover all learning outcomes in the qualification.

The portfolio can be an e-portfolio, or paper based. It is recommended that Centres use the VetSkill devised templates contained in the Assessment Guide, in order to fulfil all the requirements of the qualification. Centres who wish to use their own material to complete the portfolio are required to cross reference their material to the qualification learning outcomes, in order that the whole qualification is covered. This should then be submitted to VetSkill for approval prior to learner enrolment.

2.4.2 Skills and behaviour assessment

Practical assessments are contained within the template section of the Assessment Guide. These practical assessments cover those learning outcomes that are skills and behaviour based and can be tailored to suit individual learner requirements. All learning outcomes must be demonstrated.

2.4.3 Knowledge assessment

Assessment proformas can be found in the Assessment Guide. There are a variety of assignments, case studies and scenarios that allow the learner to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding relating to each unit.

2.5 Entry requirements

There are no formal or specific academic or learning entry requirements for learners undertaking this programme. However, learners must be working (paid or voluntary) within a veterinary practice in order to fulfil the practical requirements of the qualification.

The nature of both the learning and assessment required for the qualification is such that learners will require basic literacy and numeracy skills. It is for the centre to determine if an applicant meets these requirements prior to the learner commencing the programme through a process of initial assessment. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that learners are in a realistic position to achieve the qualification within a reasonable time scale.

Access to this qualification is available to all learners who meet the entry requirements specified. The head of centre should ensure that all learners have access to the taught programme and assessment. Centres are required to actively check that equal opportunities policies are being adhered to.

Learners must, with reasonable adjustments, be able to achieve the full range of competencies stipulated in the assessment criteria.

There is an experiential requirement for this qualification. Learners may be of an employed, voluntary or non-employed status, but they must be able to gain real experience of a veterinary care environment. Learners must undertake a substantial period of recorded work experience within a suitable veterinary care environment, which cannot be simulated. It is the training providers responsibility to ensure these hours are met, and recorded in an auditable manner.

It is the approved centre's responsibility to ensure that the experience gained is sufficient in length, quality and appropriate in nature for the learner to be able to achieve the qualification. A minimum of 600 hours of veterinary experience, excluding breaks, statutory holidays, annual leave or sickness, is required for the learner to gain the required veterinary care experience and develop the practical competence to successfully achieve the award's outcomes. The veterinary environment must enable learners to experience the full range of activities in this qualification.

It is the responsibility of the Centre to ensure that the work experience placement is of sufficient quality to support the learner, particularly if the learner is of non-employed status. The placement must meet the minimum legal requirements for employing personnel. The quality assurance of placements should be monitored by the quality visitor as part of the verification process.

Experience in a non-veterinary environment, such as a centre's animal housing unit or in non-veterinary work placements, may assist learners to gain knowledge but are not considered an appropriate replacement for gaining professional veterinary experience.

2.6 Age restrictions

This qualification is available to learners aged 16 years and over. VetSkill cannot accept any registrations for learners below 16 years of age

2.7 Guided learning hours (GLH)

The guided learning hours requirement for this qualification is 240 hours.

2.8 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

The expected number of hours required by a learner to complete this qualification is 840 hours (including 600 recorded veterinary practice hours).

2.9 Exemptions

No exemptions have been identified.

2.10 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

RPL is permitted for this qualification. The process is available on our website www.vetskill.com

2.11 Reasonable adjustments

Learners who are able to provide evidence of special assessment adjustments required (either educational or medical) will be catered for in accordance with the guidance provided in the *VetSkill Centre Handbook* and *Reasonable Adjustments Policy*.

2.12 Special consideration

Requests for special assessment consideration will be addressed in accordance with the guidance provided in the *VetSkill Centre Handbook* and *Special Consideration Policy*.

2.13 Appeals

Centres must have in place an auditable appeals procedure. If a learner is not satisfied with the conduct of an assessment, the head of centre should address the problem via the appeals procedure. If the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of his/her appeal VetSkill will conduct a review of the process to ensure equitable management and outcome. All appeals must be clearly documented and made available to the quality visitor or to VetSkill if a review is requested.

Appeals in relation to VetSkill external examinations will be conducted in accordance with the *VetSkill Examination Appeals Rules and Procedures*

3. Centre requirements

Centres offering this qualification must have approval from VetSkill.

3.1 Centre approval

Delivery of this qualification is subject to approval by VetSkill. New centres must apply for centre and qualification approval and will be subject to a site visit before approval can be granted.

3.2 Qualification approval

Existing VetSkill approved centres must apply for specific approval to deliver the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support. Full details of the process for centre/qualification approval and the associated forms can be obtained from info@vetskill.com.

4. Registration and Certification

4.1 Registration

Learners must be registered for the qualification at the commencement of their course using the relevant application form available from VetSkill or by using the web portal system.

Centres must ensure that a certified copy of the learner's official photo identification is provided at the point of registration.

Tutors and examination officers should ensure that learners are registered onto the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support qualification and that all assessment documentation for teaching and administration with VetSkill is used.

4.2 Certification

The award of full certificates (or unit certificates) will be provided to learners on receipt of a valid claim from the centre. Learners must have passed all specified assessments in order to achieve the full qualification (or unit).

A Quality Visitor must sample completed portfolios and approve the centre to be able to claim certificates for successful learners.

5. Delivering the qualification

Centre staff may undertake more than one role, e.g. tutor and assessor or internal quality assurer, but cannot internally quality assure their own assessments.

5.1 Tutors/Delivery staff

Staff delivering this qualification must:

- hold at least a Level 3 qualification in an appropriate Animal Welfare/Animal Care or Veterinary Nursing Qualification
- be technically competent in the area and subject for which they are delivering training and have credible experience of providing training both theoretical and practical
- have recent relevant experience in the specific area they will be delivering and assessing
- learners will be expected to have a **mentor** within the veterinary practice, to provide help and guidance. The mentor should be occupationally knowledgeable in the area of animal health

and welfare for which they are delivering training. This knowledge must be at least to the same level as the training being delivered

5.2 Support materials

VetSkill provides the following publications and resources specifically for this qualification:

- Teaching and Delivery Support guide
- Assessment Guide
- Practical assessment sheets
- Assignment/case study/scenario assessments

5.3 Sources of additional information

Animal Welfare Act (England) 2006	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/contents
Lantra	http://www.lantra.co.uk
Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1966/36
RCVS	http://www.rcvs.org.uk/home/
Animal Care and Welfare Assistant Apprenticeship Standards	https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org

6. Assessment

6.1 Assessors

Assessors must be occupationally competent and must be qualified to level 2 or above in animal care/veterinary care. Assessors must:

- have significant current experience of working in the industry at this level
- hold A1 or D32/33 or TAQA qualification for assessors or;
- be working towards the current TAQA qualification for assessors

6.2 Internal quality assurers

Internal quality assurers/qualification co-ordinators must be occupationally competent, either qualified to at least level 3 or above and:

- have significant and current experience of working in the industry at this level
- hold assessor qualifications, as above, and hold V1 or D34 or TAQA qualification for IQA's or;
- be working towards the current TAQA qualification for IQA's

6.3 Physical resources

This qualification requires learners to have access to veterinary practice. This may be in a full or part time capacity, paid or unpaid.

Centres may have arrangements in place for work experience, however, the time spent in the workplace must be of sufficient time and value to allow for competency to develop in all areas of the qualification, and be a minimum of 600 hours, excluding holiday, sickness and bank holidays.

6.4 External quality assurance

Centres will be subject to a minimum of one external quality assurance visit annually by a VetSkill Quality Visitor. The frequency of visits and monitoring will be determined in accordance with VetSkills' risk policy. During visits, audits will take place of programme delivery and administrative systems including the quality of record keeping, assessments, learner support and training practice.

7. Units

Unit VCS01 - Legislation and Safe Working Practices

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for those studying the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support.

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to identify the key legislation that affects working practices in UK veterinary establishments. This will include but is not limited to animal welfare in veterinary practice, as well as health and safety legislation.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with grounding in key working practices that are governed by legislation

Learners will understand the key features of current legislation, when it came into force, and the effect on veterinary practice, its staff and its clients and patients.

The learner will develop the necessary skills to work within the confines of the law, and with due regard to the welfare of the patients under veterinary care.

Assessment

Assessment will be by portfolio, covering all the criteria necessary to meet the Apprenticeship Standard in Animal Care and Welfare Assistant (Veterinary Care Support). The portfolio may contain assignments, scenarios, case studies and practical observations. Detailed guidance on the content of the portfolio can be found in the Assessment Guide that should be read in conjunction with this document.

Links

This unit is linked to the following knowledge, skills and behaviours in the Apprenticeship Standard for the Animal Care and Welfare Assistant.

UK and EU Animal related legislation

Current legislation, policies, procedures, guidelines, Codes of Practice and ethics relevant to the workplace and the health and welfare of animals

The behaviours of the animal, applicable to the species and how it impacts its care and welfare such as stress/distress/pain/fear/frustration

Data Protection and records in line with legislation, Codes of Practice and workplace requirements

Comply with UK and EU Animal related legislation

Work effectively in a safe and healthy working environment following current/relevant health and safety legislation and workplace policies

Identify and report potential hazards and breaches of security within animal accommodation/enclosures
Store, use and administer medication in line with legislative and veterinary instructions as appropriate
Identify and describe animals using appropriate methods to the species involved (e.g. scanning for microchips)
Maintain, update and reference correct records in accordance with current legislation
Safe Working
Work Ethic
Responsibility
Team Work
Communication
Professionalism
Legislation in relation to the dispensing and administering of medication

Unit VCS01 - Legislation and Safe Working Practices

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 3
 Guided Learning Hours: 30
 Total Unit Time: 80

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand UK and EU Animal related legislation and its relevance to a veterinary practice	1.a	Describe key pieces of current legislation, relevant to veterinary practice To include: basic understanding of how the following legislations affect veterinary practice, its staff and clients and the practical application of the legislation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 • Animal Welfare Act 2006 • Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 • Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999 • Breeding of Dogs Act 1991 • Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 • The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 • The Microchipping of Dogs (Scotland) Regulations 2016 • The Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2016 • Pet travel scheme (pet passports) • Local authority by-laws concerning dog control, fouling <p>Where legislation changes during the lifespan of the qualification, it is expected that the learner is knowledgeable on the most recent legislation</p>
	1.b	Provide an overview of each legislation to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date it came into force • Reason for the Legislation • Who it applies to

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical application of the legislation, relevant to veterinary practice
2. Understand workplace policies and procedures relevant to the health and welfare of animals	2.a	State workplace Codes of Practice and procedures relevant to the health and welfare of animals
	2.b	Explain how these policies protect the health and welfare of animals in the veterinary practice
	2.c	Explain the term ethics
	2.d	Identify the ethical considerations in relation to the health and welfare of animals in veterinary practice
3. Understand safe working practices in the veterinary environment	3.a	State key features of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
	3.b	Explain practice policies, and procedures in place to maintain health and safety
	3.c	Explain basic principles of Manual Handling
	3.d	Explain how cleanliness in the veterinary environment impacts on safety
	3.e	Identify injuries reportable under Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and how reporting is carried out
	3.f	Identify the key features of current Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)
	3.g	Identify the key features of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) relevant to veterinary practice
4. Be able to work safely within the veterinary environment	4.a	Demonstrate waste disposal requirements
	4.b	Work safely with regard to potential injuries from animals
	4.c	Demonstrate lifting and carrying appropriate loads (including animals) in a safe manner

	4.d	Demonstrate safe working practices around veterinary practice equipment
	4.e	Demonstrate safe working practices with laboratory samples, anaesthetic gases and radiation
5. Be able to maintain, update and reference correct veterinary medical records in accordance with current legislation	5.a	Maintain a range of client medical records
	5.b	Update client records as required
	5.c	Reference client records appropriately
	5.d	Demonstrate working within the confines of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
	5.e	Follow practice policies and procedures with reference to record keeping
6. Understand the importance of good customer experience (internal and external)	6.a	Describe good telephone answering techniques
	6.b	Explain the role of questioning techniques to facilitate information gathering from customers
	6.c	Describe how to run an appointment based surgery
	6.d	Identify the importance of body language, yours and clients, when dealing with face to face meetings
	6.e	Identify key information and guidance required by clients (internal and external)
	6.f	Explain key features of a customer care practice policy
7. Be able to deliver customer experience (internal and external), where applicable, in line with workplace policies and procedures	7.a	Answer the telephone in line with practice requirements
	7.b	Organise appointment diary, including changing priorities when the situation dictates
	7.c	Greet clients and customers in line with practice procedures
	7.d	Assist clients in their requirements for help and advice, within the confines of the Veterinary Care Support (VCS) role

	7.e	Deliver customer (internal and external) experiences appropriately
	7.f	Demonstrate an ability to liaise with other professionals, both internal and external, in line with practice policies, showing good team working skills
	7.g	Work reliably, punctually and with respect

Unit VCS02 - Animal Health and Welfare

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for those studying the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support.

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to assist with care to animals in the veterinary environment.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with grounding in animal health, the care, use and storage of medications and animal first aid.

Learners will understand how to monitor, record and report animal health concerns, care for sick pets in the veterinary environment and be able to apply this learning to a variety of species. They will gain knowledge of medications, their uses and be able to administer medication under supervision. Learners will also gain an insight into animal emergencies, the steps taken and the role they are able to fulfil in the first aid situation

The learner will develop the necessary skills to successfully assist with the provision of care to patients in the veterinary practice.

Assessment

Assessment will be by portfolio, covering all the criteria necessary to meet the Apprenticeship Standard for Animal Care and Welfare Assistant (Veterinary Care Support). The portfolio may contain assignments, scenarios, case studies and practical observations. Detailed guidance on the content of the portfolio can be found in the Assessment Guide that should be read in conjunction with this document.

Links

This unit is linked to the following knowledge, skills and behaviours in the Apprenticeship Standard for the Animal Care and Welfare Assistant.

Signs that indicate potential problems with animals' health and welfare and the actions that should be taken

The types of basic medication, routes of administering medication, safe handling and disposal of medication

Animal First Aid, urgent, ongoing and preventative care

The different methods required to meet the animals' need for enrichment/exercise opportunities, appropriate to species and individual animal

The changing needs of animals' dependent on their life stage

Dispose of waste in a safe and appropriate manner in line with legislative and workplace requirements

Monitor, record and report the health and welfare of animals in line with animal welfare legislation and workplace policies

Exercise/socialise animals and provide appropriate enrichment relevant to their specific needs

Provide appropriate care, for example coat, skin, scales, plumage and feet to ensure good health and appearance
Deliver customer experience (internal and external), where applicable, in line with workplace policies and procedures
Respond to animal first aid, urgent, ongoing and preventative care requirements as appropriate
Safe Working
Work Ethic
Responsibility
Team Work
Communication
Professionalism
The dispensing and administration of medication
Legislation in relation to the dispensing and administering of medication

Unit VCS02 - Animal Health and Welfare

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 4
 Guided Learning Hours: 40
 Total Unit Time: 160

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know the types of basic medication, routes of administering medication, safe handling and disposal of medication	1.a	State the commonly used groups of medications used in veterinary practice
	1.b	State potential routes of drug administration
	1.c	Explain safe handling and disposal of veterinary medications in line with current legislation
	1.d	Determine how to administer a range of medication to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topical • Oral
	1.e	Recognise common pharmaceutical terms, to include prescription abbreviations such as BID, TID
	1.f	State current legal requirements for drug labelling, container requirements, and prescription writing
	1.g	Explain current legislation regarding the role of the veterinary surgeon, registered veterinary nurse and the Suitably Qualified Person, in relation to drug dispensing
2. Be able to store, use and administer medication in line with legislative and veterinary instructions as appropriate	2.a	Store medication in line with current legislative and veterinary instructions
	2.b	Administer medication, under supervision, according to current medicine regulations and veterinary practice protocols (oral and topical)
	2.c	Handle medication safely and appropriately

	2.d	Dispose of medication in line with current legal, and practice, requirements
	2.e	Prepare medications for dispensing
	2.f	Demonstrate use of current legislation for the supply, sale, use of veterinary medications
	2.g	Monitor animals after administration of medications
3. Understand signs that indicate potential problems with animals' health and welfare and the actions that should be taken	3.a	Identify indicators of potential problems with the health and welfare of animals in the veterinary practice environment to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation concerns • Enrichment issues • Health and safety issues
	3.b	Explain actions that should be taken in the event of health and welfare concerns
4. Be able to monitor, record and report the health and welfare of animals in line with animal welfare legislation and workplace policies	4.a	Monitor the health and welfare of animals in line with current legislation and practice policy
	4.b	Record the health and welfare of animals in line with current legislation and practice policy
	4.c	Report concerns with animal health and welfare according to legislation and practice policy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation concerns • Enrichment issues • Health and safety issues
5. Be able to observe and be aware of the behaviour of animals and take appropriate actions	5.a	Record the behaviours of commonly presented animals in veterinary practice
	5.b	Demonstrate how this knowledge is applied to each species seen in veterinary practice
	5.c	Demonstrate how animal care in veterinary practice is influenced by their behaviour
	5.d	Identify the changing needs of animals dependent on their life stage

	5.e	Identify how stress/distress/pain/fear and frustration can impact on care
6. Know how to provide appropriate care, for example coat, skin, scales, plumage and feet to ensure good health and appearance	6.a	Categorise different coat types and their appropriate care
	6.b	Explain appropriate coat care to animals in the veterinary environment
	6.c	Describe appropriate enrichment methods for in patients, according to their species and individual needs
	6.d	Educate owners in enrichment methods for their pets
7. Know how to assist with animal first aid, urgent, ongoing and preventive care requirements as appropriate	7.a	Explain the fundamental requirements of animal first aid
	7.b	Explain the limitations of animal first aid
	7.c	List possible causes of animal injuries
	7.d	Describe first aid treatment of basic injuries
	7.e	Explain methods of haemorrhage control in the first aid situation
	7.f	Describe ongoing monitoring of the first aid patient in practice
	7.g	State methods to prevent accidents and injuries occurring to pets
8. Be able to assist with emergency care	8.a	Assist qualified staff with an emergency/first aid situation
	8.b	Provide ongoing monitoring of the first aid patient

Unit VCS03 - Animal Environment and Accommodation

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for those studying the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support.

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to maintain the veterinary environment, appropriate for the species presented.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with grounding in animal accommodation – design and hygiene, handling practice patients, feeding and nutrition.

Learners will understand how to clean animal accommodation, provide enrichment opportunities to patients, and manage food stuff within the veterinary environment.

The learner will develop the necessary skills to assist with hygiene maintenance within the veterinary practice, handling, moving and restraining patients, and feeding appropriate diets in patients in the veterinary practice.

Assessment

Assessment will be by portfolio, covering all the criteria necessary to meet the Apprenticeship Standard in Animal Care and Welfare Assistant (Veterinary Care Support). The portfolio may contain assignments, scenarios, case studies and practical observations. Detailed guidance on the content of the portfolio can be found in the Assessment Guide that should be read in conjunction with this document.

Links

This unit is linked to the following knowledge, skills and behaviours in the Apprenticeship Standard for the Animal Care and Welfare Assistant.

Accommodation and environment requirements that are suitable and safe for animals

The use of different cleaning materials and equipment

Hygiene, bio security procedures and infection controls when working with animals including quarantine, zoonoses, anthroponosis, isolation protocols

Identify and report potential hazards and breaches of security within animal accommodation/enclosures

Clean and maintain animal accommodation/enclosures/environment and equipment and provide appropriate resources including species specific enrichment (e.g. hiding, perches and areas to dig)

Maintain hygiene, bio security procedures and infection controls when working with animals including quarantine and isolation

Safe Working

Work Ethic
Responsibility
Team Work
Communication
Professionalism

Unit VCS03 - Animal Environment and Accommodation

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 5
 Guided Learning Hours: 50
 Total Unit Time: 180

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand accommodation and environment requirements that are suitable and safe for animals	1.a	State requirements for animal accommodation within veterinary practice to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog and/or • Cat and/or • Other animal
	1.b	Describe appropriate hygiene protocols for veterinary practice accommodation
	1.c	Determine fixtures and fittings for a range of commonly seen animals in veterinary practice
2. Be able to identify and report potential hazards and breaches of security within animal accommodation/enclosures	2.a	Identify potential hazards and security breaches in animal accommodation within veterinary practice
	2.b	Report potential hazards and security breaches in animal accommodation within veterinary environment
3. Understand the use of different cleaning materials and equipment	3.a	Define the following terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asepsis • Antiseptic • Detergent • Disinfectant • Efficacy • Dilution rates

	3.b	State appropriate cleaning products and protocols for veterinary practice accommodation
	3.c	Explain the reasons for dilution rates
4. Be able to clean and maintain animal, accommodation, enclosures, environment and equipment and provide appropriate resources including species specific enrichment	4.a	Demonstrate cleaning and maintaining animal accommodation within veterinary practice, in a timely and efficient manner
	4.b	Provide species specific accommodation and enrichment opportunities to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiding areas • Substrate as appropriate
5. Understand hygiene, bio security procedures and infection controls when working with animals including quarantine and isolation	5.a	Explain the terms quarantine, zoonosis, anthroponosis and their relevance to veterinary practice
	5.b	Define barrier nursing, and its relevance to veterinary care assistant role
	5.c	Outline requirements of isolation facilities within the confines of veterinary practice
6. Be able to maintain hygiene, bio security procedures and infection controls when working with animals including quarantine and isolation	6.a	Assist with maintenance of veterinary practice hygiene
	6.b	Demonstrate barrier nursing and isolation protocols and bio security measures
	6.c	Apply working practices that assist infection control

Unit VCS04 – Introduction to Patient Care

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for those studying the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support.

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to provide a variety of care for animals within the veterinary practice environment.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to provide a good standard of care to animals within the veterinary practice environment. This will include animals that are admitted for surgery and also for medical treatment. Learners will begin to understand, and develop the skills for a range of nutritional requirements, as well as exercise and enrichment needs of animals.

Learners will begin to develop knowledge and skills in sterilising equipment and in theatre preparation and operation.

Assessment

Assessment will be by portfolio, covering all the criteria necessary to meet the Apprenticeship Standard in Animal Care and Welfare Assistant (Veterinary Care Support). The portfolio may contain assignments, scenarios, case studies and practical observations. Detailed guidance on the content of the portfolio can be found in the Assessment Guide that should be read in conjunction with this document.

Links

This unit is linked to the following knowledge, skills and behaviours in the Apprenticeship Standard for the Animal Care and Welfare Assistant.

The species/breeds specific to your role and common characteristics

Animal first aid, urgent, ongoing and preventative care

Feeding, watering and basic nutrition and characteristics of foodstuffs

How to safely approach/handle/restrain/move animals

How the animal you are working with learns and the basic principles of re-enforcement techniques

How an animal's natural behaviour impacts its diet and feeding patterns

Basic awareness of capture techniques

Observe and be aware of the behaviour of animals and take appropriate actions

Approach/handle/restrain/move/recapture animals as part of routine husbandry appropriate for the species and individual

Provide appropriate care, for example coat, skin, scales, plumage and feet to ensure good health and appearance

Provide food and water to animals and monitor the intake
Store and care for foodstuffs
Safe Working
Work Ethic
Responsibility
Team Work
Communication
Professionalism

Unit VCS04 – Introduction to Patient Care

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 4
 Guided Learning Hours: 40
 Total Unit Time: 170

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand basic capture techniques	1.a	State the principles of basic capture techniques
	1.b	List capture techniques appropriate for the range of species commonly seen in veterinary practice
	1.c	Describe species appropriate capture techniques
2. Know how to approach/handle/restrain/move/recapture animals as part of routine husbandry appropriate for the species and individual	2.a	Explain how to approach animals in veterinary accommodation appropriately
	2.b	Describe how to move animals between accommodation safely
	2.c	Recognise how to restrain animals for a variety of veterinary procedures
3. Be able to approach/handle/restrain/move/recapture animals as part of routine husbandry appropriate for the species and individual	3.a	Approach animals in veterinary accommodation appropriately
	3.b	Move animals between accommodation safely
	3.c	Restrain animals for a variety of veterinary procedures to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood sampling • Clinical examination • Intravenous (IV) catheter placement • Aural examination • Administration of medication

4. Be able to identify and describe animals using appropriate methods to the species involved (e.g. scanning for microchips)	4.a	Identify the basic features of the common species seen in veterinary practice, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breeds • Types, • Colours
	4.b	Describe common animal identification methods to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringing, • Tattooing • Microchipping
5. Understand how the animal you are working with learns and the basic principles of re-enforcement techniques	5.a	Outline the common theories about how dogs and cats learn, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 quadrants of learning theory • Operant learning • Classical learning • Desensitisation
6. Be able to exercise/socialise animals and provide appropriate enrichment relevant to their specific needs	6.a	Plan exercise and enrichment activities for hospitalised patients
	6.b	Provide exercise and socialisation activities for hospitalised patients
	6.c	Demonstrate how knowledge of animal learning can be used to provide training opportunities for long term patients
7. Understand the feeding, watering and basic nutrition requirements of animals, and characteristics of foodstuffs	7.a	Explain the nutritional requirements for the commonly presented species seen in veterinary practice
	7.b	State the meaning of the terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omnivore • Carnivore • Herbivore • Meal feeder • Scatter feeding

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grazing animals
	7.c	Describe the basic ingredients of food stuff, suitable for the commonly presented species
	7.d	Determine the function of protein, fat, carbohydrate, water, vitamins and minerals, in the animal diet
	7.e	Recognise changing needs of animal diets throughout life stages
	7.f	Outline the impact of hospitalisation on dietary requirements
8. Be able provide food and water to animals in the veterinary practice environment	8.a	Provide food to animals appropriate for their individual requirements
	8.b	Use feeding equipment appropriate for individual animals
	8.c	Record and report food and water consumption
	8.d	Provide a suitable post-operative diet
	8.e	Store and care for food stuff appropriately in the veterinary practice environment

Unit VCS05 – Introduction to Animal Anatomy and Physiology

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for those studying the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support.

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to have an understanding of the anatomy and physiology that underpins nursing care given in veterinary practice.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with grounding in the anatomy and physiology of all the major body systems in the mammal.

Learners will understand how a mammalian body functions and produces the parameters monitored in veterinary practice.

The learner will begin to develop the necessary skills to apply this knowledge to practice.

Assessment

Assessment will be by portfolio, covering all the criteria necessary to meet the Apprenticeship Standard in Animal Care and Welfare Assistant (Veterinary Care Support). The portfolio may contain assignments, scenarios, case studies and practical observations. Detailed guidance on the content of the portfolio can be found in the Assessment Guide that should be read in conjunction with this document.

Links

This unit is linked to the following knowledge, skills and behaviours in the Apprenticeship Standard for the Animal Care and Welfare Assistant.

Basic anatomy and physiology

Basic reproduction and obstetrics and reproductive behaviour, including neutering

Unit VCS05 - Introduction to Animal Anatomy and Physiology

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 4
 Guided Learning Hours: 40
 Total Unit Time: 90

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Know basic anatomy and physiology terms	1.a	Define the terms anatomy and physiology
	1.b	Name key systems of the animal body
	1.c	Describe fundamental differences between 3 species (with regard to anatomy and physiology)
2. Understand basic cell structure	2.a	Identify key organelles in a typical animal cell
	2.b	State the function of each of the key organelles in a typical animal cell
3. Understand basic tissue types	3.a	List the main tissue types found in the mammal
	3.b	Describe the function of each of the above tissue types
4. Understand the skeleton – function and basic bone identification	4.a	Explain the function of the animal skeleton
	4.b	Outline key parts of a skeleton of the dog and cat
5. Understand the heart, lungs and circulatory system	5.a	Identify the key features of the heart
	5.b	Outline key parts of the circulatory system and the organs associated with it

	5.c	Explain oxygenation of tissues
6. Understand the digestive tract and associated organs	6.a	List main organs associated with the digestive tract of the dog and cat
	6.b	Explain the function of each of the key organs concerned with the digestive tract
	6.c	Identify what occurs at each stage along the digestive tract
7. Understand the role of the liver and kidneys	7.a	Locate the liver and identify its key features
	7.b	Explain how the liver links to digestion and excretion
	7.c	State the key features and functions of the kidneys
8. Understand the endocrine system	8.a	List the main organs that have endocrine functions
	8.b	Explain the hormones released from each
	8.c	Identify the target cell/tissue/organ
9. Understand the structure and function of the nervous system	9.a	State the structure and function of the Central Nervous System (CNS)
	9.b	Describe the functioning of the peripheral nervous system
	9.c	Describe the functioning of the autonomous nervous system
	9.d	Explain the relationship between the nervous system and the endocrine system
10. Understand basic reproduction and obstetrics and reproductive behaviour, including neutering	10.a	Determine the key features of the reproductive system
	10.b	Explain the reproductive cycle of the mammal (dog/cat/small mammal as appropriate)
	10.c	Explain reproductive behaviours of commonly encountered species

	10.d	State advantages and disadvantages of neutering common species seen in veterinary practice
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Unit VCS06 - Veterinary Care Support

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for those studying the Level 2 Certificate in Veterinary Care Support.

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to assist in the provision of nursing care to veterinary practice clients and their animals.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with grounding in care giving – pre, post and peri operatively, general nursing care, record keeping, assisting with diagnostic imaging and tests, and assisting with medicine dispensing. End of life care is also considered.

Learners will understand the importance of care planning and giving in a range of situations, and veterinary practice record keeping.

The learner will develop the necessary skills to assist with the nursing of animals before, during and after surgery, general care provision and medicine dispensing.

Assessment

Assessment will be by portfolio, covering all the criteria necessary to meet the Apprenticeship Standard in the Animal Care and Welfare Assistant (Veterinary Care Support). The portfolio may contain assignments, scenarios, case studies and practical observations. Detailed guidance on the content of the portfolio can be found in the Assessment Guide that should be read in conjunction with this document.

Links

This unit is linked to the following knowledge, skills and behaviours in the Apprenticeship Standard for the Animal Care and Welfare Assistant.

Support, as directed, a veterinary surgeon/veterinary nurse in a clinical environment with:

- Dealing with potential and actual emergency situations
- Pre and post-operative care
- Patient monitoring for example anaesthetic monitoring in-patient care
- Common medical, behavioural and surgical care requirements
- The principles of care and related procedures and how to deal with these

Clinical parameters of common species seen in a veterinary environment
Diagnostic care/tests/X-rays – positioning and exposing
End of life care for pets and providing support for the owner
How to deal with emotional customers/clients
The importance of the human and animal bond
Safe Working
Responsibility
Team Work
Communication
Professionalism

Unit VCS06 - Veterinary Care Support

Unit level: 2
 Unit credit: 4
 Guided Learning Hours: 40
 Total Unit Time: 160

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Be able to provide general care in the veterinary environment	1.a	Demonstrate an ability to deal with potential and actual emergency situations within the veterinary practice
	1.b	Supply in-patient care to a range of animals commonly presented in veterinary practice
	1.c	Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of care planning
	1.d	Maintain surgical instruments appropriately to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning • Packaging • Sterilisation • Monitoring of sterilisation
2. Be able to provide specific nursing care to animals	2.a	Identify a range of common medical and surgical case care requirements to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine surgical e.g. neutering, and medical conditions e.g. those requiring regular monitoring • Intravenous Fluid Therapy (IVFT) cases
	2.b	Provide pre-operative care to animals to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting with pre medication • Preparation of anaesthesia records

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-operative parameter monitoring
	2.c	Provide post-operative care to animals to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery position • Routine observations • Monitoring of fluid therapy rates • Record keeping
	2.d	Provide peri-operative care to animals to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting with theatre duties • Assisting with anaesthesia monitoring
	2.e	State normal parameters of the species being nursed
	2.f	Record and report pre, post and peri operative parameters for the species nursed
3. Be able to assist with diagnostic procedures	3.a	Assist with positioning of animals for diagnostic imaging
	3.b	Select exposure settings and positioning aids
	3.c	Work safely within the current Ionising Radiation regulations
	3.d	Demonstrate cleaning diagnostic imaging equipment
	3.e	Identify images of diagnostic quality
4. Be able to assist with end of life care	4.a	Explain the importance of the Human-Animal bond
	4.b	Explain end of life care process, procedures and client choices
	4.c	Recognise the need for an ability to show empathy with emotional clients

	4.d	Explain current legislation and limitations of this, in relation to the role and responsibilities of the veterinary practice
	4.e	Describe the support required by owners and animals with end of life care
5. Understand common diagnostic tests carried out in veterinary practice	5.a	State parameters being determined by basic, routine urinalysis (dipstix)
	5.b	List common biochemistry and haematological tests carried out in veterinary practice
	5.c	List and describe common endo and ectoparasites found in veterinary practice
	5.d	Describe equipment maintenance required in the veterinary laboratory
6. Be able to perform diagnostic tests in veterinary practice	6.a	Carry out routine urinalysis using dipstix and refractometer
	6.b	Perform biochemical and haematological tests using vet test analyser (or other veterinary practice analysers)
	6.c	<p>Identify common endo and ecto parasites seen in veterinary practice.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flea • Lice • Tick • Mange mites – demodex, sarcoptes, otodectes • Round worm • Tapeworm
	6.d	Demonstrate appropriate use of a microscope to carry out diagnostic functions