

Level 4 Certificate for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) – Companion Animal VSSQPC006

Qualification Handbook

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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). Our aim is to be the leading awarding organisation within the veterinary and animal care sectors.

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

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 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 with 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

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 the training and development of people working in the animal industry wishing to gain the necessary qualification to be able to prescribe veterinary medicines to companion animals. Such individuals may be working in veterinary practice or in a Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) retailer approved to retail supply VPS medicines. It is intended to provide relevant practical skills and underpinning knowledge that will enable prescription of medicines that fall under the POM-VPS and NFA-VPS categories within the companion animal group. Additionally, SQPs will develop a broad understanding of animal health and disease, and the skills to identify parasite infestations and select appropriate medicines to prescribe. The SQP must be able to provide advice on the safe use, handling, administration and disposal of all medicines that fall within the companion animal category. Many individuals will also carry responsibility for maintaining the dispensary and training other staff members. Being a regulated professional, the SQP is required to maintain and update their knowledge and skills by means of undertaking relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

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 qualification is valid from the date of certification. Only SQPs who are listed on an approved Register may refer to themselves as an SQP and perform the role of an SQP.

2.2 Overview

Qualification title and level:	VetSkill Level 4 Certificate for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) – Companion Animal		
Subject area:	3.3 Animal Care and Veterinary Science		
VetSkill qualification number:	VSSQPC006	Regulated Qualification number:	603/3953/6
First registration date	01/01/2019		
Last registration date	31/12/2021		
Last certification date	30/12/2022		

2.3 Qualification structure

The VetSkill Level 4 Certificate for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) – Companion Animal is comprised of four mandatory units.

Learners must achieve 20 credits in order to complete the qualification.

VetSkill unit No	Accredited No:	Title	Level	Credit	GLH	TQT
SQP C01	H/617/4043	Legislation and Professional Requirements	4	3	30	40
SQP C02	K/617/4044	An Introduction to Companion Animal Anatomy, Physiology and Nutrition	4	6	40	60
SQP C03	M/617/4045	Companion Animal Health, Disease and Parasite Management	4	6	40	60
SQP C04	T/617/4046	Prescribing and Supplying Veterinary Medicines to Owners/Keepers of Companion Animals	4	5	40	50

2.4 Assessment methods

VetSkill Unit No	Title	Unit Level Assessment (conducted by centre)		Qualification Summative Assessment (conducted by VetSkill)
		Assessment of K & U	Assessment of Skills	
SQP C01	Legislation and Professional Requirements	VetSkill multiple choice online examination Written assignment		
SQP C02	An Introduction to Companion Animal Anatomy, Physiology and Nutrition	VetSkill multiple choice online examination Written assignment		
SQP C03	Companion Animal Health, Disease and Parasite Management	VetSkill multiple choice online examination Written assignment		
SQP C04	Prescribing and Supplying Veterinary Medicines to Owners/Keepers of Companion Animals	VetSkill multiple choice online examination Written assignment		Practical examination – Summative Licence to Practice OSCEs

2.4.1 Multiple choice online exam (MCQ)

A multiple choice online examination (MCQ) set and marked by VetSkill will assess the **knowledge** elements of the qualification.

MCQ test	Examining units: SQPC01 - 1.b, 1.c, 1.d, 1.e, 1.f, 2.a, 3.a, 3.c, 3.d, 3.h, 4.a, 5.a, 5.b, 5.c SQPC02 - 1.a, 1.b, 1.e, 2.d, 3.g, 4.a, 4.d, 5.d, 5.e, 6.a, 6.b, 7.a, 7.b, 7.c, 7.d, 7.e, 7.f, 8.a, 8.b, 8.c, 8.d, 9.c, 10.a, 10.b, 10.d SQPC03 - 1.a, 1.b, 2.a, 3.a, 3.c, 3.d, 3.e SQPC04 - 1.a, 1.b, 1.c, 3.a, 3.b, 4.a
Duration:	SQPC01 - 45 minutes SQPC02 - 45 minutes SQPC03 - 45 minutes SQPC04 - 45 minutes
Number of questions:	SQPC01 - 45 questions SQPC02 - 45 questions SQPC03 - 45 questions SQPC04 - 45 questions
Exam Dates:	On-demand
Marked by:	VetSkill

2.4.2 Written assignment assessment

The written assessment is made up of a series of four written assignments which will demonstrate application of **theoretical knowledge** gained throughout the programme of study.

Assignment	Assessing units: SQPC01 - 1.a, 2.b, 2.c, 2.d, 2.e, 3.b, 3.e, 3.f, 3.g, 3.i, 3.j, 4.b, 6.a, 6.b SQPC02 - 1.c, 1.d, 1.f, 2.a, 2.b, 2.c, 3.a, 3.b, 3.c, 3.d, 3.e, 3.f, 4.b, 4.c, 4.e, 5.a, 5.b, 5.c, 9.a, 9.b, 9.d, 10.c SQPC03 - 2.b, 2.c, 3.b, 4.a SQPC04 - 1.d, 1.e, 2.a, 4.b, 4.c, 5.a, 5.b, 5.c, 5.d, 5.e, 5.f
Word count:	SQPC01 - 2000 +/-10% SQPC02 - 2000 +/-10% SQPC03 - 2000 +/-10% SQPC04 - 2000 +/-10%

Marked by:	Centre
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2.4.3 Practical assessment: Summative Licence to Practice Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)

The practical assessment is made up of a series of two, 8 minute (this includes 2 minutes reading and preparation time) scenario based tasks which assess the **skills** elements of the qualification.

Practical Assessment	Assessing units: SQPC04 - 6.a, 6.b, 6.c, 7.a, 8.a, 8.b, 9.a, 9.b, 10.a, 10.b, 11.a, 12.a, 12.b, 12.c, 12.d, 13.a
Number of tasks:	2 (scenario based)
Duration:	20 minutes (8 minutes per practical assessment – including 2 minutes reading and preparation time)
Exam Dates:	Pre-set exam dates
Marked by:	VetSkill

2.5 Entry requirements

Learners undertaking this programme may already have completed a Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing and be an RCVS Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN), or a lay person with no prior veterinary related qualifications working in a position that requires them to prescribe and dispense POM-VPS and NFA-VPS medication to companion animals. Employment or work experience within a Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) registered premises, a veterinary practice registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), or a retail pharmacy registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) will be beneficial in assisting preparation towards the final assessment. 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 position to achieve the qualification within a reasonable time scale.

Access to this qualification is available to all candidates who meet the entry requirements specified. The head of centre should ensure that all candidates 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.

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 150 hours.

2.8 Total Qualification Time (TQT)

The expected number of hours required by a learner to complete this qualification is 210 hours.

2.9 Exemptions

No exemptions have been identified.

2.10 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is permitted on an individual, case by case, basis for level 4 unit credits awarded by an Ofqual accredited awarding body or QAA recognised university that can be demonstrated to cover learning outcomes required for this qualification. VetSkill offers an RPL service in accordance with its published fees at the time of application.

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*.

2.14 Re-sits

Learners may undertake a maximum of 3 re-sits for any single assessment.

Where a learner has undertaken 2 re-sits but has not achieved the required pass mark, centres are required to ensure that the learner undertakes a minimum of 3 months' relevant study before being enrolled for the 3rd and final permitted re-sit.

Learners who fail their 3rd attempt are withdrawn from the qualification and may not re-apply for learner registration until a period of 6 months have lapsed from their date of withdrawal.

3. Centre requirements

Centres offering this qualification must have approval from VetSkill.

3.1 Centre approval

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 4 Certificate for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) – Companion Animal. 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 learner official photo ID is also uploaded onto the system secured at the time of registration. This must be retained for audit by VetSkill Quality Visitors.

Tutors and examination officers should ensure that learners are registered onto Level 4 Certificate for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) – Companion Animal qualification and are using all assessment documentation for teaching and administration provided by VetSkill.

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).

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 4 qualification in veterinary nursing, veterinary science/medicine, or must themselves be a Suitably Qualified Person for the relevant species category being taught
- be technically competent in the area and subject for which they are delivering training
- have recent relevant experience in the specific area they will be delivering and assessing
- be occupationally knowledgeable in the area for which they are delivering training
- hold or be working towards a nationally recognised teaching or assessing qualification

5.2 Support materials

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

- Teaching and delivery support
- Assessment guide
- Sample multiple choice questions
- Assignment packs
- Sample practical examination materials
- Learner Handbook

5.3 Sources of additional information

Veterinary Medicines Directorate	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterinary-medicines-directorate
Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/2033/contents
Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1966/36
RCVS	http://www.rcvs.org.uk/home/
VMD SQP Code of Practice	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterinary-medicines-directorate

6. Assessment

6.1 Assessors

Assessors must be occupationally competent in the area they are assessing, and must be:

- a registered SQP in the area of assessment, e.g. Companion Animal, or
- a Pharmacist, or
- an MRCVS
- they must have recent experience of working in the industry at this level
- they should also hold A1 or D32/33 or a TAQA qualification for assessors, or
- be working towards the current TAQA qualification for assessors

6.2 Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs)

Internal Quality Assurers must be occupationally competent and qualified to level 4 or above. IQAs:

- must have significant and current experience of working in the industry at this level
- should also hold assessor qualifications, as above, and hold V1 or D34 or a TAQA qualification for IQAs, or
- be working towards the current TAQA qualification for IQAs

6.3 Physical resources

Centres delivering this qualification must have access to practical skills training resources.

6.4 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Centres are expected to support their staff in ensuring that their knowledge of the occupational area and of best practice in delivery, mentoring, training, assessment and internal quality assurance remains current, and that it takes into account any national or legislative developments.

6.5 External quality assurance

Centres and their satellite sites will each 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 on programme delivery and administrative systems, including the quality of record keeping, assessments, and learner support.

Centres conducting examinations (MCQ, practical or written) may be subject to an exam monitoring visit by a Quality Visitor which may be scheduled with the centre or be unannounced.

6.6 Confidentiality and privacy

At all times, clients' rights to confidentiality, dignity and privacy must be maintained. All clients' records presented as learner's assessment evidence must be stored in a secure location within the workplace. Please refer to the General Data Protection Regulations.

7. Units

Unit SQPC01 - Legislation and Professional Requirements

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for all learners undertaking the Level 4 Certificate for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) – Companion Animal. This unit must be studied prior to any other units within this qualification.

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the role and remit of the SQP in conjunction with their legal responsibilities when supplying veterinary medicinal products. The unit provides a generic foundation in legislative requirements of SQPs prior to a more species-specific approach taken in subsequent units.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with a grounding in the role, remit and responsibilities of the SQP. Learners will understand the key principles of the legislation governing supply of Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMPs), in addition to the principles of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Code of Practice which underpins their role.

The learner will develop the necessary skills to understand the limitations of their role, know when to refer cases to the veterinary surgeon, as well as keep effective records and report adverse medicine reactions to the VMD under the Adverse Event/Reaction Reporting system (previously referred to as SARSS, the Suspected Adverse Reaction Surveillance Scheme).

Assessment

A 45-minute multiple-choice online exam and a written assignment (to demonstrate application of theoretical knowledge) will be undertaken in order to achieve this unit.

Links

This unit is linked to the VMD Code of Practice for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs), the RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses, and the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses:

Code of Practice: [VMD Code of Practice](#)

Day One Skills: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 4.10, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Day One Competences: 3, 6, 12, 13, 22, 23, 24, 32

Unit SQPC01 – Legislation and Professional Requirements

Unit level: 4
 Unit credit: 3
 Guided Learning Hours: 30
 Total Unit Time: 40

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand the role, responsibilities and remit of the Suitably Qualified Person (SQP)	1.a	Explain the role of the SQP (including SQP nomination) and the categories under which SQPs may work
	1.b	Determine the responsibilities of the SQP to their clients, animals under their care, and their profession
	1.c	Determine the scope of the role and action to take when work falls beyond the remit of the SQP
	1.d	Assess the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements as an SQP and maintenance of an SQP registration
	1.e	Establish the procedure for supplying medicines prescribed by another Registered Qualified Person (RQP)/SQP, and the procedure for delegating to non-SQPs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within same premises • Within different premises
	1.f	Differentiate between responsibility when acting under the direction of a veterinary surgeon and acting under own authority as an SQP
2. Understand the principles of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Code of Practice for Registered Qualified Persons (RQPs) and SQPs	2.a	Classify the three categories of RQP as set out in the VMD Code of Practice
	2.b	Determine the principles of the VMD Code of Practice for RQPs
	2.c	Apply the principles of the VMD Code of Practice to the role of the SQP

	2.d	Consider the key principles of legislation which govern the role of the SQP
	2.e	Interpret what constitutes an offense in respect to supply by an SQP under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations (VMR) and the consequences of such actions
3. Understand the general principles of supply and distribution of animal medicines, including products exempt from the Veterinary Medicines Regulations	3.a	Differentiate between the distribution categories for animal medicines
	3.b	Compare the regulations governing supply of medicines within the different distribution categories
	3.c	Distinguish the distribution categories that may be supplied by SQPs
	3.d	Determine the correct storage and means of disposal of Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMPs)
	3.e	Clarify the regulations in regard to packaging, labelling and the splitting of packs of medications
	3.f	Explain the principles of the prescribing cascade (including labelling requirements) and its relevance to SQPs
	3.g	Illustrate the principle of withdrawal periods for animals/animal products intended for human consumption
	3.h	Classify the different means of the supply and distribution of veterinary medicines and the regulations governing these
	3.i	Justify exemptions from the Veterinary Medicines Regulations that allows certain animal medicines to be sold without an authorisation
	3.j	Detail medicines not included in the exemption, labelling requirements, pack sizes, pharmacovigilance and exempted products in relation to the prescribing cascade

4. Know the requirements for obtaining and maintaining Registered Approved Premises status	4.a	Recognise requirements for liability insurance for premises and SQPs prescribing on these premises
	4.b	Detail the requirements for obtaining and maintaining Registered Approved Premises status
5. Know the key requirements for record keeping	5.a	Recognise incoming and outgoing transactions which require records to be kept
	5.b	Identify the information that must be recorded for incoming and outgoing transactions
	5.c	Establish the duration for which records must be kept
6. Understand the requirements for reporting under the UK Adverse Event/Reaction Reporting (SARSS)	6.a	Summarise the requirements for reporting under the UK Adverse Event/Reaction Reporting (SARSS) and to marketing authorisation holders
	6.b	Advise clients appropriately on responsible reporting under Adverse Event/Reaction Reporting (SARSS)

Unit SQPC02 - An Introduction to Companion Animal Anatomy, Physiology and Nutrition

Unit Aim

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to apply the structural and functional knowledge of the anatomy, physiology and nutrition of a range of species, to include:

- Cats
- Dogs
- Rabbits
- Ferrets

For all learning outcomes, the learner should study the differences for all species listed above.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with a grounding in the anatomy and physiology of the companion animal via a systems-based approach. Learners will also gain an understanding of basic companion animal nutrition and feeding.

Learners will understand the nutritional requirements of companion animals, plus the anatomy and physiology of the:

- Cardiovascular system
- Respiratory system
- Digestive system
- Excretory system
- Immune system
- Reproductive systems
- Endocrine system
- Musculoskeletal system
- Integumentary system
- Nervous system

The learner will develop the necessary skills to understand and interpret anatomical and physiological terms, and be able to provide clients with advice on appropriate nutrition and feeding. In subsequent units, these skills will be applied to the maintenance of health and prevention of disease.

Assessment

A 45-minute multiple-choice online exam and a written assignment (to demonstrate application of theoretical knowledge) will be undertaken in order to achieve this unit.

Links

This unit is linked to the VMD Code of Practice for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs), the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses, and the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses:

Code of Practice: [VMD Code of Practice](#)

Day One Skills: 4.4

Day One Competences: 15

Unit SQPC02 - An Introduction to Companion Animal Anatomy, Physiology and Nutrition

Unit level: 4
 Unit credit: 6
 Guided Learning Hours: 40
 Total Unit Time: 60

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand the normal structure and function of the companion animal's cardiovascular system for a range of companion animals	1.a	Determine the constituent parts and function of the blood, serum and plasma
	1.b	Locate the major veins and arteries of the body, and the location of important pulse points
	1.c	Summarise the structure and function of the heart and circulatory system
	1.d	Illustrate the cardiac cycle and path of blood through the body (including the hepatic portal vein)
	1.e	Distinguish the main sites of haematopoiesis
	1.f	Compare the structural and functional differences of the cardiovascular system of cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
2. Understand the normal structure and function of the companion animal's respiratory system	2.a	Describe the structure and function of the respiratory tract and thoracic cavity
	2.b	Compare the process of respiration and mechanisms for neural and chemical control of respiration
	2.c	Determine the process of gas exchange
	2.d	Differentiate the structural and functional differences of the respiratory system of cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
3. Understand the normal structure and function of the	3.a	Describe the structure and function of the digestive tract, from lips to anus, including the liver, pancreas and gall bladder

digestive and excretory systems of a range of companion animals	3.b	Determine the processes of physical and chemical digestion, and the absorption of nutrients
	3.c	Describe the dentition of the companion animal and the anatomy of the generic tooth
	3.d	Detail the structure of the urinary tract, from kidneys to urethra
	3.e	Determine the structure of the renal nephron and the process of ultrafiltration of urine
	3.f	Distinguish the endocrine function of the kidney in maintenance of blood pressure, water balance, and red blood cell production
	3.g	Differentiate the structural and functional differences of the digestive and excretory systems of cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
4. Know the normal structure and function of the companion animal's immune system	4.a	Distinguish between the different leucocytes and explain their role in immune function
	4.b	Determine the structure of a lymph node and locate the main superficial and deep lymph nodes and other lymphatic tissues
	4.c	Describe the structure of the lymphatic system and location of the main lymphatic vessels
	4.d	Identify the composition of lymph and its flow through the body
	4.e	Distinguish the processes of cell mediated and humoral immunity
5. Understand the normal structure and function of the reproductive system of a range of companion animals	5.a	Describe the structure and function of the female reproductive system
	5.b	Describe the structure and function of the male reproductive system
	5.c	Determine the endocrine control of the female reproductive system
	5.d	Determine the endocrine control of the male reproductive system
	5.e	Differentiate the structural and functional differences of the reproductive systems of cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
6. Understand the normal basic structure and function of the	6.a	Recognise functions of the endocrine system, and identify composite organs and their associated hormones

endocrine system of the range of companion animals	6.b	Determine positive and negative feedback control mechanisms
7. Understand the normal structure and function of the companion animal's musculoskeletal system	7.a	Classify the six main bone types: long, irregular, short, flat, sesamoid and pneumatic, providing examples of each
	7.b	Identify the bones of the axial, appendicular and splanchnic skeletal systems
	7.c	Classify the function of bones, muscles and joints (including joint types)
	7.d	Categorise the clinically relevant major muscle groups
	7.e	Distinguish between ligaments and tendons, and identify ligaments and tendons of clinical importance
	7.f	Differentiate the structural and functional differences of the musculoskeletal system of cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
8. Understand and differentiate between the normal structure and function of the integumentary system of a range of companion animals	8.a	Identify and describe the features of the three layers of the skin (including glands)
	8.b	Distinguish between the different hair types
	8.c	Identify the keratinised structures of the epidermis
	8.d	Differentiate the structural and functional differences of the integumentary system of cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
9. Know the normal structure and function of the companion animal's nervous system, including the special sense organs	9.a	Describe the basic structure and function of the nervous system
	9.b	Detail the structure of the neuron and the process of neurotransmission
	9.c	Locate major peripheral nerves of clinical importance
	9.d	Detail basic structure and physiology of special sense organs (ears, eyes, taste, olfaction)
10. Know the comparative nutritional requirements of a range of companion animals	10.a	Identify the functions and sources of essential nutrients
	10.b	Recognise how nutritional requirements alter with life-stage and disease
	10.c	Advise clients on basic nutritional requirements and feeding plans

	10.d	Differentiate between the particular nutritional and feeding requirements of cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
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Unit SQPC03 - Companion Animal Health, Disease and Parasite Management

Unit Aim

Units SQPC01 and SQPC02 must have been successfully completed prior to the commencement of this unit.

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to determine the principles of maintaining healthy patients using preventative health care and use of control programmes. Concepts of disease will be introduced to enable learners to recognise signs of disease and common conditions affecting companion animals. This unit builds upon knowledge of anatomy and nutrition gained in unit SQPC02, and serves as a foundation for unit SQPC04, where medicines used in the treatment of these conditions will be addressed.

Species range to include:

- Cats
- Dogs
- Rabbits
- Ferrets

For all learning outcomes, learners should study the differences for all species listed above.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with a grounding in the principles of health and disease prevention, as well as the common parasitic, and other diseases, which may affect the patients seen. The learner will develop the necessary skills to recognise common parasitic infestations, and common diseases, and will be able to create control programmes and interpret health plans to assist owners/keepers with disease prevention.

Assessment

A 45-minute multiple-choice online exam and a written assignment (to demonstrate application of theoretical knowledge) will be undertaken in order to achieve this unit.

Links

This unit is linked to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Code of Practice for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs), the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses, and the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses:

Code of Practice: [VMD Code of Practice](#)

Day One Skills: 2.6, 8.1

Day One Competences: 21, 32

Unit SQPC03 - Companion Animal Health, Disease and Parasite Management

Unit level: 4
 Unit credit: 6
 Guided Learning Hours: 40
 Total Unit Time: 60

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand the principles of recognising and maintaining companion animal health	1.a	Differentiate between healthy and unhealthy presentations of animals in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appearance • Behaviour • Gait/mobility • Excretions and secretions
	1.b	Recognise the principles of maintaining animal health/prevention of disease in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding • Accommodation • Grooming • Exercise requirements • Parasite control • Vaccination • Dental care
2. Know how to identify and distinguish between the characteristics of the common companion animal parasites found in the UK	2.a	Identify the common ecto- and endoparasites affecting companion animals: Endoparasites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roundworm (<i>T. canis/felis, T. leonina</i>) • Tapeworm (<i>D. caninum</i>) • Lungworm (<i>A. vasorum</i>) • Hookworm (<i>A. caninum, U. stenocephala</i>) • Heartworm (<i>D. immitis</i>) • Whipworm (<i>T. vulpis</i>) Ectoparasites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fleas (<i>D.caninum/felis</i>) • Ticks (<i>I. ricinus</i>) • Ear mites (<i>O. cynotis</i>)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarcoptic mange mite (<i>S. scabiei</i>) • Notoedres mange mite (<i>N. cati</i>) • Psoroptic mange mite (<i>P. cuniculi</i>) • Harvest mite (<i>N. autumnalis</i>) • Demodex (<i>D. canis</i>) • Biting lice (<i>T. canis</i>, <i>F. subrostratus</i>) • Sucking lice (<i>L. setosus</i>)
	2.b	Describe and compare the appearance, characteristics, and life cycles of the common ecto- and endoparasites (including protozoa) affecting companion animals
	2.c	Advise appropriate methods of ecto- and endoparasite (including protozoa) prevention
3. Know common UK diseases of companion animals relevant to Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs)	3.a	Identify causes of ectoparasitic skin disease: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fleas, Flea Allergic Dermatitis (FAD) and feline miliary dermatitis • Pediculosis • Cheyletiellosis • Sarcoptic, Notoedric and Psoroptic mange • Demodectic mange • Parasitic otitis externa • Ticks • Myiasis
	3.b	Explain the clinical effects of endoparasitic burden (including protozoa)
	3.c	Categorise the common fungal skin conditions of companion animals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dermatophytosis • Malassezia
	3.d	Identify the pathological mechanisms of gastrointestinal disease: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diarrhoea • Exocrine pancreatic insufficiency (EPI)
	3.e	Recognise the basic principles of wound management and skin care

4. Understand how to interpret and apply the principles of control programmes, covering a range of conditions relevant to companion animals	4.a	Apply the principles of control programmes, covering a range of conditions relevant to cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets
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Unit SQPC04 - Prescribing and Supplying Veterinary Medicines to Owners/Keepers of Companion Animals

Unit Aim

This unit is intended for learners who have successfully completed units SQPC01, SQPC02 and SQPC03.

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to apply knowledge of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Code of Practice to the safe and effective dispensing of companion animal medicines. This unit will introduce the distribution categories and types of medicines that may be dispensed by C-SQPs. It is intended for learners to develop a broad knowledge of these medicines, how to act on the patient, and the advice that must be given to owners/keepers administering these medicines. This unit serves to consider the medicines that can be dispensed for the conditions addressed previously within unit SQPC03, thus building upon this existing knowledge. It also assumes knowledge of the VMD Code of Practice studied within unit SQPC01.

Species range to include:

- Cats
- Dogs
- Rabbits
- Ferrets

For all learning outcomes, the learner should study the differences for all species listed above.

Guidance on delivery and assessment

Delivery

This unit is designed to provide learners with an applied understanding of the medicines that may be dispensed by C-SQPs and how they interact with the body, following administration. The emphasis is placed on the safe and effective dispensing of medicines, following the VMD Code of Practice, to create safe and knowledgeable practitioners. Learners will develop the skills to select appropriate medicines to treat relevant conditions of companion animals within their remit, and advise owners/keepers regarding their use. The learner will also establish skills in interpreting pharmaceutical terminology and abbreviations.

Assessment

A 45-minute multiple-choice online exam and a written assignment (to demonstrate application of theoretical knowledge) will be undertaken in order to achieve this unit.

Additionally, a timed 8-minute practical assessment will be undertaken in order to achieve this unit, this includes 2 minutes reading and preparation time. The assessment will be based on a scenario relevant to companion animal prescribing and supply of medicines.

Links

This unit is linked to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Code of Practice for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs), the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses, and the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses:

Code of Practice: [VMD Code of Practice](#)

Day One Skills: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 7.1, 7.2

Day One Competences: 3, 4, 5, 12, 22, 23, 24, 32

Unit SQPC04 - Prescribing and Supplying Veterinary Medicines to Owners/Keepers of Companion Animals

Unit level: 4
 Unit credit: 5
 Guided Learning Hours: 40
 Total Unit Time: 50

Learning Outcome – <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria – <i>The learner can:</i>	
1. Understand how to interpret and apply the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Code of Practice for Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs) to those prescribing companion animal medicines	1.a	Determine the Companion Animal Suitably Qualified Person's (C-SQP's) responsibility to clients, animals and the profession
	1.b	Differentiate the scope of the C-SQP's role and the action to take when work falls out of their remit
	1.c	Determine the procedure for supplying medicines prescribed by another Registered Qualified Person (RQP)/C-SQP and for delegating to non-SQPs
	1.d	Interpret and apply the key principles of legislation which govern the role of the C-SQP
	1.e	Detail what constitutes an offense in respect to supply by a C-SQP under the VMR, and the consequences of such actions
2. Know the relevant veterinary medicines that may be legally and appropriately supplied to owners/keepers of companion animals	2.a	Apply understanding of the distribution categories and types of medicines that may be supplied by C-SQPs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic and trade names of relevant medicines • Distribution categories • Legal restrictions for prescription and supply of these medicines
3. Know and use common terms used in pharmacology	3.a	Identify and select commonly used abbreviations and terms used in pharmacy (to include route, frequency and timing of administration)
	3.b	Recognise the difference between, and utilise, generic and trade drug names
4. Understand the ways in which medicines act on the body, and employ this to offer advice to	4.a	Select the action, routes of administration, uses, contraindications, side effects, drug interactions, and safety precautions for the following groups of drugs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respiratory stimulants

owners/keepers regarding the use of Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMPs)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antimycotics • Anthelmintics • Ectoparasitics • Antidiarrhoeals • Analgesics • Topical medications (to include shampoos, antiseptics, creams and dressings)
	4.b	Detail the metabolism and excretion of commonly used medicines
	4.c	Advise clients on the factors that affect the duration of the action of medicines
5. Know the requirements for safe and effective supply of Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMPs)	5.a	Explain the act of prescribing medications and the factors to be considered when prescribing VMPs
	5.b	Discuss the information required from a client to inform decision-making when supplying VMPs
	5.c	Determine and justify the requirements for a written prescription
	5.d	Detail the safe supply of VMPs and provide clients with advice on their safe handling and administration
	5.e	Detail regulations in regards to packaging and labelling requirements and dispensing appropriate quantities of medication
	5.f	Detail requirements for despatch and distribution of medicines (postal regulations)
6. Be able to interpret and apply the legal principles affecting prescription and supply of veterinary medicines by a Companion Animal Suitably Qualified Person (C-SQP)	6.a	Demonstrate correct procedure when dispensing medications based on prescriptions from other SQPs
	6.b	Demonstrate application of the Code of Practice to your actions when supplying medicines
	6.c	Act within the legal limitations of your role as a C-SQP
7. Be able to show competence in providing advice to owners/keepers of companion animals	7.a	Provide detailed and accurate advice regarding administration, safe handling, drug interactions, and disposal of medicines
8. Be able to recognise limitations of own role and know when to refer to a veterinary surgeon	8.a	Act within remit and competence at all times
	8.b	Demonstrate examples of when to refer cases to a veterinary surgeon and/or the prescribing Registered Qualified Person (RQP)

9. Be able to appropriately participate in the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Adverse Event/Reaction Reporting (SARSS)	9.a	Demonstrate application of the Adverse Event/Reaction Reporting (SARSS) system and explain when/how to report adverse reactions
	9.b	Advise owners/keepers about reporting under Adverse Event/Reaction Reporting (SARSS)
10. Be able to legally supply medicines to owners/keepers of companion animals	10.a	Supply medicines in line with current legislation and Code of Practice
	10.b	Supply medicines using appropriate and sufficient labelling and packaging
11. Be able to access and make use of the VMD Product Information Database (PID)	11.a	Access and make correct use of the VMD Product Information Database (PID), demonstrating its use in detailing the most current, listed, authorised veterinary medicines and their distribution category
12. Be able to select and issue an appropriate prescription for a range of conditions, with justification	12.a	Work with a range of conditions relevant to companion animal species
	12.b	Create a written prescription for owners/keepers
	12.c	Obtain relevant and sufficient information from the owner/keeper in order to select appropriate medicine(s) to dispense
	12.d	Select appropriate medicine(s) for prescription from a suitable distribution category and justify choice
13. Be able to demonstrate approaches to problem-solving	13.a	Demonstrate approaches to problem-solving (relate to the specific LOs above)