

Programme Specification

Part 1: Basic Data			
Primary Programme Title	BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing		
Target Award Titles	Mode and Typical Duration of Study	Professional Accrediting Body Links	Study Abroad / Exchange / Credit Recognition
BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing	Full time, 4 years	Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons	None
Interim Award Titles	BSc Animal Health Studies Diploma of Higher Education Animal Health Studies Certificate of Higher Education Animal Health Studies Undergraduate Certificate in Animal Studies Undergraduate Award in Animal Studies		
Teaching Delivery Method	On-site		
Awarding Institution	Hartpury University		
Teaching Institution	Hartpury University		
Delivery Location	Hartpury and in an approved veterinary nursing training practice		
Department Responsible for Programme	Veterinary Nursing		
Unit-E Code	BSHVVNXX		
Entry Criteria Information	Applicants will have achieved entry criteria appropriate for the stage of entry, which can be found through the Hartpury website (www.hartpury.ac.uk).		
Most Recent Validation Date	15 May 2024	Due for Re-validation By	01 September 2029
Amendment Approval Date	V1.1 - 04 March 2024 V1.2 - 22 May 2026	Approved With Effect From	V1.0 - 01 September 2024 V1.1 - 01 September 2025 V1.2 - 01 September 2026
Professional Accrediting Body Approval Date	16 April 2024	Date For Re-accreditation	2028-29
Version	1.2		

Part 2: Programme Overview

The programme focuses on preparing individuals to become knowledgeable, competent, resilient, flexible and professionally accountable veterinary nurses who may be eligible to apply to join the RCVS Veterinary Nurse Register for employment in the UK veterinary industry. The student will gain a strong educational basis, integrated with professional competences.

Students will be encouraged to work as independent learners, developing analytical and reflective skills that will benefit them throughout their programme, during further academic study and employment as veterinary nurses.

The programme will prepare the learner with a foundation for lifelong learning and:

1. Establish a knowledge and understanding of companion animals in health and disease and apply this knowledge in the context of a present-day veterinary nursing environment
2. Provide students with the specialist knowledge, understanding and skills required to fulfil the role of a Registered Veterinary Nurse, to include but not limited to: nursing care, surgical nursing, diagnostic imaging, laboratory skills, communication with clients and colleagues, and teamwork
3. Develop vocational skills, knowledge and understanding which enables students to be competent to the most recent PAB industry standards (RCVS)
4. Develop coaching skills to prepare for career opportunities as Clinical Coaches in veterinary environments
5. Provide a higher level of veterinary nursing education, exposing students to applicable research, allowing students to think constructively and critically, discuss and evaluate concepts and theories in the field of veterinary nursing, propose sound and reasoned solutions to problems and show clear developments of these skills
6. Provide students with the ability to transfer skills to different working environments and enable students to be adaptable to the changing demands of veterinary business
7. Develop skills and qualities appropriate to all aspects of personal and working life by completing part of their study in a work environment
8. Encourage a culture of self-care and resilience through development of self-awareness via academic support, mentorship and peer support to allow career longevity and satisfaction
9. Meet the needs of the UK industry sector providing the foundation for a range of careers
10. Provide students with an intellectual challenge based on a scientific and analytical approach
11. Assess the abilities of the students in a rigorous and constructive way
12. Enable students to progress into postgraduate study or research.

BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing graduates will have achieved all of the learning outcomes identified in the modules, including completion of a minimum of 1800 hours in an approved veterinary practice setting (minimum of 37 hours per week).

The veterinary practice-based learning allows students to develop their practical veterinary nursing competences in a variety of nursing contexts, in addition to the opportunity to develop career-long professional relationships and future employment opportunities.

The Veterinary Nursing modules validated as part of this programme are accredited by the professional body, The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) and on successful completion students may be eligible to apply to enter the Veterinary Nurses Register.

Part 3: Programme Structure

This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from enrolment through to graduation for a typical **full time student on the primary programme**, including:

- level and credit requirements
- award requirements that are in addition to those described in the Hartpury University Academic Regulations
- module diet, including core and optional modules.

Please note:

*PAB – these modules are subject to additional and variant regulations as part of an accreditation by a professional accrediting body

+ core modules marked + are not eligible for compensation

¹ these modules are accredited by a professional awarding body, but are not subject to variant regulations

^{AV} these modules are subject to additional and variant regulations but are not accredited by a professional awarding body

	Core Modules	Optional Modules	Target and Interim Awards
Stage 1	HVNVQ8-60-4 + Fundamentals of Veterinary Nursing* HVNVR5-60-4 + Introduction to Clinical Veterinary Nursing*		<u>Undergraduate Award in Animal Studies</u> <u>Undergraduate Certificate in Animal Studies</u> <u>Certificate of Higher Education in Animal Health Studies</u>
To progress to Stage 2 you must achieve HVNVQ8-60-4 Fundamentals of Veterinary Nursing			
Stage 2	HVNVRV-120-5 + Veterinary Nursing in Practice 1 *		
To progress to Stage 3 you must achieve at least 120 credits. This must include HVNVR5-60-4 Introduction to Clinical Veterinary Nursing			
Stage 3	HVNVRH-60-5 + Evidence-Based Clinical Veterinary Nursing* HVNVS-30-5 Research Skills for Veterinary Nurses ¹ HVNVQL-30-5 + Veterinary Nursing in Practice 2*		<u>Diploma of Higher Education in Animal Health Studies</u>

	To progress to Stage 4 you must achieve at least 300 credits. This must include HVNVRV-120-5 Veterinary Nursing in Practice 1.	
Stage 4	HVNVR6-45-6 + The Practising Veterinary Nurse* HVNVQT-30-6 The Veterinary Nursing Coaching Practitioner ¹ HVNVRJ-45-6 Veterinary Nursing Dissertation ¹	<u>BSc Animal Health Studies</u> <u>BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing</u> This must include all the core modules.

Part time:
 The part time student journey from entry through to graduation is individually negotiated with the student. Please note part time options for Stage 2 are not offered.

Part 4: Programme Learning Outcomes

Modules in bold are core modules and modules not emboldened are optional modules.
A denotes a module that assesses a learning outcome and B denotes a module aligned with a learning outcome.

Learning Outcomes:	Fundamentals of Veterinary Nursing	Introduction to Clinical Veterinary Nursing	Veterinary Nursing in Practice 1	Veterinary Nursing in Practice 2	Evidence-Based Clinical Veterinary Nursing	Research Skills for Veterinary Nurses	The Practising Veterinary Nurse	The Veterinary Nursing Coaching Practitioner	Veterinary Nursing Dissertation
A) Knowledge and Understanding of:									
1. The critical role fulfilled by veterinary nurses within the UK veterinary industry.	B	A	A	A	A		A	A	
2. A sound knowledge of anatomical, physiological and nutritional principles related to animal health and disease.	A	A	B	B	B		A		
3. Principles behind the healing process in animals and common diseases and malfunctions of the body systems.	A	B	B	B	B		A		
4. Legislative, ethical and welfare issues in treating animals.	A	A	B	B	A		A	A	
5. The ability to apply underpinning principles of nursing techniques to animals in health and disease.	A	A	A	A	A		A		
6. Interpersonal relationships in the modern veterinary practice.	B	A	A		B		A	A	

7. Business organisation in relation to the veterinary practice.	B		B					A	
8. Academic skills to enable further study at higher education level.	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B
9. Techniques to positively impact on wellbeing of self and veterinary colleagues.	B	B	B				A	A	
10. Coaching techniques to support student veterinary nurses.								A	
B) Intellectual Skills									
1. Seek out, analyse and evaluate information in the field of veterinary nursing.	B	A		B	B	A	A	A	A
2. Critically evaluate and synthesise data, which can be used to defend an opinion formed on the basis of evidence.	B	B	B			B	A	B	B
3. Apply given techniques/methods accurately to a well-defined problem, draw appropriate conclusions and make recommendations.	A	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	B
4. Demonstrate the ability to identify, describe and analyse challenging situations in the veterinary environment.	A		B	B	B		A	A	
5. Demonstrate skills of analysis and decision making when discussing modern nursing techniques.	B		B	A	B		B		
6. Reflect on actions and priorities and formulate effective strategies for achieving goals.			A	B				A	B
7. Understand and apply numerical conventions, interpreting trends and data.		A				A			B
8. Debate issues in relation to ethical perspectives.	B	B			B	A			
C) Performance and Practice									
1. Apply practical animal nursing skills, using knowledge and understanding based on scientific principles.	A	A	A	A	A		B		

2. Be competent to relevant industry standards.	A	A	A	A	A		A	A	
3. Recognise moral/ethical dilemmas and issues.	A	B		B		B	A	A	B
4. Be adaptable to the changing demands of a veterinary practice and individuals who engage with it.	A	A	A		B	B	A	A	B
D) Setting, Personal and Enabling Skills									
1. Communicate effectively with a wide range of individuals using a variety of means.	B	B	A	A	B	B	B	A	B
2. Reflect upon academic, vocational and professional performance.							A	A	A
3. Utilise problem solving skills in a variety of theoretical and practical situations.	A	B	B	B	A	B	B	A	B
4. Respond to changing demands in the workplace.			B				B	A	
5. Manage time effectively, work as part of a team, prioritise workloads, and recognise and manage personal emotions and stress.	A	B	B	B	B		A	A	
6. Understand career opportunities and challenges ahead and begin to plan a career path.	A	B	B				A	A	
7. Use information management skills, for example: information technology, library resources, the use of information technology in the workplace.	B	B	B		B	B	A	A	B

Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Journey:

On the BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing programme teaching is a mix of scheduled, independent and veterinary practice-based learning. Students are taught at Hartpury by RCVS Registered Veterinary Nurses or Veterinary Surgeons with industry experience. Clinical Coaches offer support whilst students undertake learning in a veterinary nursing training practice. Clinical Coaches undertake training and standardisation, both of which are offered by Hartpury.

Scheduled learning includes lectures, seminars, tutorials, project supervision, demonstration, practical classes and workshops; veterinary practice learning.

Independent learning includes hours engaged with essential reading, case study preparation, assignment preparation and completion etc.

Veterinary practice learning will include 1800 hours in an RCVS Approved Veterinary Nursing Training Practice.

RCVS Veterinary Nursing Registration

Students who have completed all elements of the programme in no less than 2990 hours may be eligible to apply for RCVS Veterinary Nursing registration. This includes completing 1800 hours (of no less than 37 hours per week) in an RCVS Approved Veterinary Nursing Training Practice for the duration of the veterinary practice-based learning in Stage 2.

The purpose of the programme is to provide a balance of vocational and academic study that is intellectually challenging, vocationally relevant, and provides a foundation for pursuing a career within veterinary nursing. The programme encompasses the RCVS Day One Skills and Competences for Veterinary Nurses and, on successful completion of the programme, the student may be eligible to apply to join the RCVS Register of Veterinary Nurses.

In the honours degree programme, academic knowledge and understanding will reinforce and support the development of vocational skills to equip the student with the skills and knowledge relevant to their employment and to the needs of employers. Level 6 study enhances a student's ability to think critically, allowing application of these skills within the industry. One benefit of this could include competent communication of research outcomes to appropriate audiences, to benefit knowledge exchange within the industry. Experience of coaching Level 4 student veterinary nurses provides graduates with the basis to develop as Clinical Coaches in Veterinary Practices. There has been substantial dialogue with the veterinary industry and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) thus identifying current needs in veterinary nursing and associated professions. Only on successful completion of all of the compulsory modules, and graduating, will the student become a qualified veterinary nurse and be awarded BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing. The programme design is unique to ensure the best learning experience for students.

Stage 1 modules provide the student with a fundamental understanding of veterinary nursing techniques, as well as developing emerging investigative skills for research. Stage 2 is spent completing 1800 hours of work experience (minimum of 37 hours per week), developing vocationally relevant practical skills in an RCVS approved Veterinary Nursing Training Practice. Students complete a Nursing Progress Log (NPL) to evidence

Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

their development against the RCVS Day One Skills and Competences for Veterinary Nursing and expected Professional Behaviours and Attributes. Students are supported in the clinical environment by a Clinical Coach and other qualified and registered colleagues, as well as being allocated a Clinical Tutor based at Hartpury for the duration of their veterinary practice-based learning.

The remaining Level 5 modules are delivered in Stage 3. These modules build on students' clinical skills, exploring surgical veterinary nursing, anaesthesia, diagnostic imaging and laboratory diagnostics. Students can access the Veterinary Nursing Clinical Skills Centre and are given the opportunity to demonstrate the clinical competence evidenced within their Nursing Progress Log (NPL) by sitting an OSCE examination. Stage 3 further builds on research skills, supporting students in developing skills in analysis and evaluation. Stage 4 includes a research project module, allowing students to work independently to plan and execute a well-designed research inquiry, with support from a project supervisor. Professional veterinary nursing continues into this final year of study, with an opportunity to coach Stage 1 student veterinary nurses, preparing for Clinical Coaching roles in the veterinary industry after graduation.

The diversity of experience and transferable skills acquired will give BSc (Hons) graduates a good foundation for Continuing Professional Development.

The programme is designed to facilitate student progression in a timely manner, whilst also maintaining standards. Students who do not pass the Level 5 module Veterinary Nursing in Practice 2 are prevented from enrolling onto The Veterinary Nursing Coaching Practitioner module at Stage 4, as this module includes coaching of Stage 1 students. The programme design does allow students to enrol onto a retake of Veterinary Nursing in Practice 2 in their fourth year (subject to Programme Examination Board agreement), with a sit opportunity occurring prior to the Semester 2 enrolment window for The Veterinary Nursing Coaching Practitioner. This prevents students having to return for an additional year.

Students are provided with learning opportunities in veterinary practices, and are supported through study skills sessions and visiting speakers. Hartpury must obtain permission from the Training Practice's (TP) Primary Centre before the student can commence their veterinary practice-based learning.

The professional and vocational nature of this programme requires that students are fit to practise and may be eligible to apply to enter the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Register on graduation from the university. If students are deemed to be unfit to practise at any point during their programme of studies the current version of the University 'Professional Suitability' annex of the Academic Regulations will be followed to protect the integrity of the award. Reference will be made to the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Fitness to Practise guidance. Students can view the 'Professional Suitability' process by accessing the academic regulations, via the Hartpury website, and navigating to the appropriate annex.

For modules that link to the RCVS Day One Skills and Competences for Veterinary Nurses and Professional Behaviours and Attributes there are limits to the reasonable adjustments to assessment arrangements that can be made. These modules are marked with an asterisk in the Programme Structure table in Part 3. For these marked modules changing assessment type is not permitted and other adjustments, e.g. the use of readers, writers, access to digital software, are not permitted. Each application will be

considered on an individual basis taking into account learning and assessment needs. More information is available on request.

Learners will be supported throughout the programme through online web-based support and individual tutorial sessions with an Academic Personal Tutor. Opportunities for learners to develop their information technology skills are again available through complementary studies. This programme is supported by a VLE where students will be able to find programme / module information. Direct links to information sources will also be provided from within the VLE.

To support learner's career preparations, careers personnel are available, and the students can use online resources as well. Academic Personal Tutors will also offer subject-specific careers advice through module sessions or individual tutorials.

The programme features a range of vocationally relevant assessments designed to give students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding alongside their academic skills and practical competences. The methods used academically challenge students as well as facilitating them to demonstrate safe and effective clinical competence. A key feature of the programme is the use of extended matching questions (EMQ) in written examinations. EMQs allow for the assessment of deep learning and are a reliable and valid method of assessing clinical content.

The student's academic professional development throughout the programme will be documented through a portfolio which they will contribute to at each stage of learning. The portfolio will encourage the students to become reflective practitioners and will act as evidence of their engagement with the programme, including a minimum of 80% attendance at taught sessions for selected modules.

Formative assessment is embedded in modules at each level to support students' academic development and to help to prepare for the summative assessments.

Veterinary Nursing Clinical Skills Centre

Students have access to the equipment in this dedicated veterinary nursing facility, to support development of practical skills at Stage 1 and retention of practical skills at Stages 3 and 4.

Description of any Distinctive Features

1. The purpose of the programme is to provide a balance of vocational and academic study that is intellectually challenging, vocationally relevant, and provides a foundation for pursuing a career within the veterinary sector; on successful completion of the programme, the student may register as a Qualified Veterinary Nurse.
2. Learners will have the opportunity to establish and refine their professional competences.
3. The programme reinforces academic knowledge and understanding, whilst supporting the development of vocational skills to equip the student with the skills and knowledge relevant to their employment. There has been substantial employer input in the design of the programme through vocational panels representing employers from the local area, thus identifying employers' needs and current skills shortages in veterinary nursing.
4. The programme has been designed to build on the competences of a wide spectrum of students. The programme delivery maximises benefits of co-teaching with

Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

students on the BSc (Hons) Equine Veterinary Nursing programme to allow sharing of different industry experiences.

5. For the purposes of training, students are required to enrol with The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) as a student veterinary nurse.
6. In order to complete the programme and gain the highest award title, BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing students must achieve all University module assessment and complete a minimum of 1800 hours of learning (minimum of 37 hours per week) in an RCVS approved Veterinary Nursing Training Practice and complete a minimum of 2990 hours of training from RCVS enrolment to graduation.
7. Students may be eligible to apply to register with The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) prior to graduation.
8. A minimum of 1800 hours of veterinary practice-based learning is a compulsory and essential feature. The veterinary practice-based learning incorporates the completion of the RCVS Day One Skills and Competences and Professional Behaviours and Attributes within the relevant module. The students are supported by their peers and the Veterinary Nursing Team to develop their skills and prepare for their veterinary practice learning. During veterinary practice-based learning students have continued support via a Clinical Tutor based at Hartpury and the University Primary Centre practice staff. University contacts and expertise are used to ensure students gain the most from this important part of the programme.
9. The distinctive nature of this programme means that students will incur additional costs over and above the expected University fees, this may include costs for return to university during their veterinary practice-based learning (travel and accommodation), RCVS enrolment and examination fees where necessary, accommodation and travel to their training practice, veterinary nursing uniforms etc.
10. The fourth year of the programme allows learners to develop further their professional skills, with particular reference to professional obligations, the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct, and Continuing Professional Development.
11. There are no part time study options available for Stage 2. For all other stages part time study options can be individually negotiated with the student.

This programme will be assessed according to the approved Academic Regulations including specific variant regulations:

AV3. Variant to Academic Regulation C2.8

AV5. Variant to Academic Regulation D2.1

AV8. Variant to Academic Regulations C7.6.

Students registered on this programme will have access to the Hartpury University support and wellbeing services.

The distinctive module used by the Programme Examination Board to inform recommending differential awards for students when considering borderline performance profiles will be The Practising Veterinary Nurse.

Professional Accrediting Body documents to which this programme is mapped and or aligned:

The programme is mapped to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Veterinary Nursing Day One Skills and Day One Competences and Professional Behaviours and Attributes.

Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The programme is aligned to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses.

Assessment Map

		Type of Assessment*							
		Coursework	Report	Portfolio	Written Examination	Written Test	Practical Skills Examination	Practical Skills Assessment	Oral Assessment
Core Modules Stage 1	Fundamentals of Veterinary Nursing			B1 (50) Coursework Portfolio B2 (25) Coursework Portfolio B3 (25) Coursework Portfolio	A1 (100) Written Examination				
	Introduction to Clinical Veterinary Nursing				A (50) Written Examination		B (50) Practical Skills Assessment		
Core Module Stage 2	Veterinary Nursing in Practice 1			A (P/F) Coursework Portfolio B (P/F) Coursework Portfolio					
Core Modules Stage 3	Evidence-Based Clinical Veterinary Nursing				A (50) Written Examination B (50) Written Examination				
	Research Skills for Veterinary Nurses	B (60) Coursework					A (40) Practical Skills Logbook		

	Veterinary Nursing in Practice 2			B (P/F) Coursework Portfolio				A (100) Practical Skills Assessment	
Core Modules Stage 4	The Practising Veterinary Nurse				A (75) Written Examination			B (25) Practical Skills Artefact	
	The Veterinary Nursing Coaching Practitioner			A (100) Coursework Portfolio					
	Veterinary Nursing Dissertation		A (70) Project Report						B (30) Oral Presentations with Questions

*Indicative assessment types for new students enrolling on this programme after the date this specification takes effect (Part 1) are shown in terms of either **Coursework**, **Written Examination**, or **Practical Examination** as indicated by the colour coding above.

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found through Hartpury's website (www.hartpury.ac.uk).

Approved Programme Amendment Log

Primary Programme Title:	BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing
Programme Code:	BSHVVNXX
Initial Approval Date:	15 May 2024

Changes: *Most recent at the top of the page*

Current version number: 1.1	
Outline Change Details: In Part 4, for the programme learning outcomes mapping for Fundamentals of Veterinary Nursing, learning outcomes A6, A9 and D1 have been changed from A to B, In Part 5, the assessment map has been updated to reflect the adjustments made to the Fundamentals of Veterinary Nursing module.	
Do the changes presented alter the mapping against the Hartpury University Curriculum Framework (delete as appropriate)? No	
If yes, please provide the details of the changes:	
Material Alteration: No.	
Rationale: The updates reflect the adjustments made to the Fundamentals of Veterinary Nursing module and will support students to progress with the process of using the professional profile, prepared as part of the module, to apply for clinical learning opportunities in clinical practice earlier in the academic year.	
Change requested by: Suzannah Harniman I can confirm that student representatives have been consulted about this change I can confirm that colleagues impacted by this change have been consulted I have retained evidence of these consultations, which will be summarized within the Programme Enhancement Report	
Signature: S. Harniman	Date: 28/10/25
Name of Head of Department: Carly Thornton I confirm that this change does not require additional resources beyond the scope of those already present or planned for by the department;	
Signature: C. Thornton	Date: 02/12/25
Approval Committee and Date:	CSP Chair's Action (LD) 2026 05 22 (from CSP 2025 12 02)
Change approved with effect from:	01 September 2026
Resulting new version number:	1.2

Current version number: 1.0	
Outline Change Details: Parts 1 and 3: interim awards updated in line with current regulations - Undergraduate Award in Animal Studies added,	
Do the changes presented alter the mapping against the Hartpury University Curriculum Framework (delete as appropriate)? No	
If yes, please provide the details of the changes:	
Material Alteration: No	
Rationale: Ensure accuracy	

Change requested by: Suzannah Harniman N/A I can confirm that student representatives have been consulted about this change N/A I can confirm that colleagues impacted by this change have been consulted N/A I have retained evidence of these consultations, which will be summarized within the Programme Enhancement Report	
Signature: S. Harniman Date: 4/3/25	
Name of Head of Department: Catherine Phillips I confirm that this change does not require additional resources beyond the scope of those already present or planned for by the department	
Signature: C. Phillips Date: 4/3/25	
Approval Committee and Date:	CSP 2025 03 04
Change approved with effect from:	01 September 2025
Resulting new version number:	1.1

2024 09 09:

AV8. Variant to Academic Regulations C7.6. added as this was a recommendation at the validation, but the specific variant regulation wording has only been approved recently at Academic Board.

2024 06 26: update to the template in part 3 to provide clarity.

Outline Change Details:	
New programme.	
Approval Committee and Date:	Curriculum Validation Committee Chair's action 2024 05 15
Change approved with effect from:	01 September 2024
Resulting new version number:	1.0