

Animal Behaviour and Welfare

BSc (Hons)

Develop your expertise in animal behaviour and welfare and turn your passion into your career. Study the fascinating biology behind behaviour and consider ethical issues.

You'll be exposed to the latest research in the field of animal behaviour and welfare, and develop industry-standard practical skills to assess welfare, measure behaviour, train animals and manage domestic, exotic and wild species.

[Apply now via UCAS](#) [Book an open day](#)

Key Information

Course Duration: 3 or 4 years full-time; part-time available

UC UCAS Code: D329

Part or Full Time: Full Time / Part Time

Level of Study: Undergraduate Degrees

Placement Year: Optional

Typical Offer: 112 UCAS tariff points or equivalent

Course information

[Download a PDF](#)

Overview Entry requirements Employability How you'll study

Gain first-hand experience of fieldwork and research through trips and interactions with industry professionals. Whether you want to become a welfare officer, trainer or researcher, you'll be prepared for a range of careers in the animal sector.

If you're considering going into international conservation, an optional field trip to Mankwe Wildlife Reserve, South Africa, allows you to experience wildlife and conservation in action, for a valuable insight into this rewarding career.

Benefit from a 360-hectare campus that's home to a diverse range of animals. Our 70-species Animal Collection provides opportunities to assess the behaviour and

welfare of domestic and non-domestic animals in different contexts. You'll also have access to our commercial farm and equine yard.

- **UCAS tariff points** | A typical offer for this course is 112 UCAS tariff points or equivalent.
- **GCSE** | A minimum of 5 GCSE A* to C, (or 9 to 4 where numeric grades are being awarded) or equivalent, to include English Language, Mathematics and a Science.
- **A-level** | Typical offer is BBC or equivalent. This must include a minimum of two A Levels.
- **Vocational Award** | Typical offer is a DMM in an Extended Diploma in a relevant subject.
- **Access** | Typical offer is 112 UCAS tariff points in an Access to Higher Education Diploma to include a minimum of a pass preferably in a Biological Science module at Level 3.
- **IB** | Typical offer is 112 UCAS tariff points in an IB Diploma, to include a minimum of two Highers at H3 or above.
This must also include Maths and English Language at a minimum of Standard Level S3 if equivalent GCSEs have not been obtained.
- **Scottish Highers** | Typical offer is 112 UCAS tariff points in Scottish Highers. This must include a minimum of one Advanced Higher and one Higher.
- **Irish leaving Certificate** | Typical offer is 112 UCAS tariff points in the Irish Leaving Certificate. This must include a minimum of two Highers, including one preferably in a Biological Science subject. This must also include Maths and English Language at a minimum of Ordinary Level.
- **OCR Cambridge Technical** | Typical offer is a DMM in a Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma in a relevant subject.
- **T Level** | Typical offer is Merit in a T Level in a relevant subject.

The minimum academic entry requirement for this programme is 80 UCAS tariff points or equivalent providing this is combined with relevant experience.

We welcome students with equivalent qualifications. Please contact us to discuss.

We may interview mature applicants and those with non-traditional qualifications to ensure this is the right course for you.

Previous learning towards a university-level qualification or relevant work experience may count as credit for this course.

Please contact us for further information.

Email us

Your career

Industry opportunities on this course are diverse, to ensure you develop the skills, experience and connections needed for your graduate career. Many of our students get their graduate roles with their work placement employers.

Work placements and experience

The optional integrated placement year, between the second and final year, takes you into industry and prepares you to enter your dream career. Your work placement can be at any animal-based organisation, either in the UK or overseas.

Our commercial canine and equine therapy centres offer opportunities for students to gain industry experience ready for their careers – either on work placement or within voluntary roles. Alongside this, we'll encourage you to find a voluntary role with a local organisation such as an animal rescue shelter, wildlife rehabilitation centre or a zoo. Students have worked with organisations including the Blue Cross and West Midlands Safari Park.

Field trips and guest lecturers

Field trips and industry professionals in lectures form an important part of your learning, enabling you to experience different businesses, careers and best practices.

Recent field trips have included visits to places such as the Forest of Dean, Paignton Zoo, and Mankwe Game Reserve in South Africa. Extra fees are required - please see the fees tab.

Our students have heard from inspirational guest lecturers who are fire investigation dog handlers, conservationists, dog training professionals and zookeepers.

Graduate destinations

As an Animal Behaviour and Welfare graduate, you may go on to work in zoos, aquariums, wildlife parks, rescue, conservation or welfare centres. You'll also have the transferable skills you need for other graduate careers. Our careers team can support you to find and prepare to secure your perfect role. Recent graduate destinations have included:

- Welfare Inspector
- Dog Trainer
- Animal Welfare Assistant, Blue Cross
- Animal Carer

- Editorial Assistant, BSAVA
- Zoo Keeper, Bristol Zoo
- Fundraising and Adoptions Officer
- Animal Welfare Assistant
- Livestock Engagement Officer
- Researcher
- FE Lecturer
- Guest Experience Manager, Bristol Aquarium
- Instructor, Guide Dogs for the Blind
- Postgraduate study – MRes Animal Behaviour and Welfare, MRes Anthrozoology

[Success Stories](#)

Your support network

You'll benefit from a strong support network from day one to be the best you can be. This will range from your personal tutor and specialist academic support team (our Achievement and Success Centre) to dedicated wellbeing and employability (Innovation, Careers and Enterprise) centres.

Academic support

You'll have your own personal tutor while you're here who will support you to succeed in your studies. You'll also have access to our academic and wellbeing support teams who run regular workshops and one-to-one sessions on campus and online.

Alongside this, we have a comprehensive bank of online study skills resources to help you make the most of your qualification.

Your learning experiences

You'll experience a range of teaching methods to strengthen your digestion of topics, including lectures, workshops and practical sessions, as well as supported work placement learning as part of many courses.

Your career

Each year of your course will be made up of two semesters, within which you'll study compulsory and optional modules on different industry-focused topics, enabling you to develop your own unique portfolio of knowledge, skills and experience, ready for your career. The course is taught in English.

Modules

Overview Level four (year one) Level five (year two) Integrated placement year (optional) Level Six (final year)

What you'll study

You'll gain an in depth understanding of key topics in the field of animal behaviour and welfare, with core subjects ranging from behaviour, biology, and genetics, to biodiversity, welfare and ethics.

This course is comprised of both compulsory and optional modules, which you'll be able to choose from to suit your interests and career goals.

Optional modules change each year in line with student, industry and research demands - you'll find recent topics studied below. You can attend introductory sessions for optional modules before deciding which ones to study.

Module credits

On successful completion of your modules, you'll gain academic credit that accumulates towards your award. The marks you gain in your second and final year contribute towards your final degree classification.

Your first year will focus on key topics such as animal biology, health, behaviour and welfare. You'll gain fundamental skills and knowledge that will equip you to study at higher levels in the course. Develop the key academic and vocational skills to be successful in a career in the animal industry.

Compulsory Modules

Animal Behaviour

Explore the factors affecting animal behaviour, including evolution, development, and human influence.

Management of Animal Health

Discover how diseases affect animals, health monitoring, and animal first aid.

Introduction to Animal Welfare

Gain an understanding of animal welfare, including stress, abnormal behaviours, influence of management systems, and legislation.

Systems Biology

Explore the anatomy and physiology of animals.

Genetics, Evolution and Biodiversity

Understand genetic and evolutionary principles and explore how they generate the diversity of life we see in the natural world.

Professional and Academic Skills in Animal Biology

Develop key academic and professional skills and the personal attributes needed to be successful in a career in the animal industry.

You'll cover a range of concepts, including animal welfare assessments and ethics. Depending on the optional modules you choose, you'll explore themes such as ecology, companion animal behaviour, training and management. You'll also start to think about the research process in preparation for your dissertation research project in your final year.

Compulsory Modules

Assessing Animal Welfare

Discover the use of behavioural, physiological and physical measures of welfare and welfare assessment in different contexts.

Ethics and Welfare

Explore the influence of ethical theories upon attitudes towards animals and the consideration of animal ethics and welfare in a range of contexts.

Research Methods for Agricultural and Animal Scientists

This module introduces students to the process of academic research, methods of research and analysis, helping to prepare them for reading research literature and conducting research projects in the future.

Companion Animal Behaviour and Training

This module will examine the behaviour and psychology of the domestic dog and cat and our ability to train these animals to meet our own needs. This module will investigate the role of training in the daily training for obedience, enrichment and husbandry practices. This will include evaluation of the different approaches to

training of such animals, the ethical considerations and the justification of methods used.

Management of Domestic Animals

Develop an ability to evaluate animal welfare legislation and justify industry-relevant improvements to the keeping of captive animals. Knowledge will also be developed regarding how to appropriately handle and sex a range of non-human animal species.

Optional Modules

Field Course

Learn a variety of field techniques to collect data about a wide range of taxa including plants, invertebrates, birds, and mammals. This module includes a residential trip, which in the past has been to South Africa and Devon.

Professional Experience in the Animal Sector 1

Reflect on and evaluate a period of industry experience within the animal sector.

Human Behaviour Change for Animals

Appreciate and apply the principles of how we can positively influence human behaviour in relation to animals and the environment.

An optional integrated placement year between your second and final years gives you the opportunity to put your knowledge and skills into practice and gain valuable industry experience. You could choose to enter a wide range of animal-based organisations, such as charities, zoos, rescue centres, boarding kennels and laboratories, amongst others.

Your final year allows you to focus on areas that are of particular interest to you and will support you in your future career. You'll undertake a substantial research dissertation project, which will provide you with the chance to experience being responsible for planning, implementing and reporting on a specialist topic. In addition, you'll be exposed to contemporary challenges in the subject areas such as animal trade and welfare. You'll focus on advanced theory and gain an insight into where current research is focusing.

Compulsory Modules

Animal and Agriculture Dissertation

This module involves independent research and analysis in an animal or agriculture-related field with one-to-one support from an academic.

Welfare of Trade Animals

Explore the influence of the marketplace on animal welfare, including commercial use of wildlife, animals as entertainment and transportation of animals.

Cognitive Ethology

Develop the ability to critically evaluate the evidence supporting cognitive abilities in non-human animals.

Wildlife and Zoo Management

This module provides the opportunity to work with a UK zoo to explore the application of the biology learnt throughout the course to the practical zoo environment, through a residential trip. Students will also explore topics such as wildlife reintroduction and breeding for conservation.

Optional Modules

Anthrozoology

Anthrozoology is the study of human-animal interactions, exploring the impact animals have on our lives, and the impact they have on ours.

Biodiversity and Conservation

The module will enable students to analyse and evaluate real world biodiversity conservation challenges and develop practical management recommendations based on science and industry best practice. The assessments are based on applied case studies, and incorporate some practical field work, an introduction to QGIS and management planning.

Professional Experience in the Animal Sector 2

Reflect on and evaluate a period of industry experience within the animal sector.

Teaching modes

The modules contain a mixture of scheduled learning – lectures, workshops, seminars and practical sessions – alongside independent learning. You're expected to dedicate at least two to three hours of independent study per contact hour. Some modules offer trips to locations such as zoos or assistance animal breeding centres,

to show you how their knowledge can be applied within the animal industry. Some modules may invite guest lecturers to provide topical and industry-relevant talks.

Year	Contact learning	Placement learning	Independent learning
Level four (year one)	30%	0%	70%
Level five (year two)	22%	0%	78%
Placement year (optional)	1%	80%	19%
Level six (final year)	17%	0%	83%

Assessment and Feedback

You'll be assessed through a mixture of written exams, practical exams and written assignments or course work. Many of the modules will be marked based on a mixture of assessment types, whilst others will be based solely on one type of assessment. Feedback will be given with each assessment either via a feedback sheet or summary page, or via an academic tutorial.

Year	Written exam	Practical exam	Coursework
Level four (year one)	40%	41%	19%
Level five (year two)	34%	6%	60%
Placement year (optional)	0%	0%	100%
Level six (final year)	38%	10%	52%

Timetables

Each year of this course is taught over two semesters, normally consisting of 12 weeks of scheduled teaching and then assessment weeks, with an overview below:

- Scheduled teaching takes place between 8.30am to 8.30pm Monday to Friday
- Wednesday afternoons are normally reserved for sports and cultural activities
- Part-time students may need to attend learning activities five days each week, depending on modules selected
- Timetables are available during enrolment week

View term dates

Fees and funding

Tuition fees and financial support

Please visit our student finance page for information on tuition fees and student loans, as well as non-repayable grants, bursaries and scholarships, eligible to different groups, to support with study costs.

Clothing and footwear (circa £100)

You'll need to purchase appropriate clothing and footwear before you enrol, or during enrolment week. We'll let you know exactly what you need to purchase in your enrolment guide – everything is available from our supplier's online shop for approximately £100.

Optional field trips (up to circa £2,000)

Many field trips are included in the course fees, however, a couple are not, as follows:

- Year two optional module, Field Course, offers one of three field trip options. The first two are residential trips to Mankwe Wildlife Reserve in South Africa and Slapton Ley in Devon, respectively. The third option consist of day visits to sites more locally around Gloucestershire. On each of these trips the students will study the ecology and ethology of the local area. The South Africa trip is popular, and places are limited and costs in the region of £2000, the trip to Devon costs around £600 while the trips around Gloucestershire will be free to those students who choose this option.
- Year three optional module, Wildlife and Zoo Management, offers an optional residential trip to a UK zoo, costing around £150 for accommodation.

Accommodation and living costs

Please [visit our student accommodation page](#) for details.

Fees & Finance

Further course details

For further details about this course, including the programme specification and module descriptions, please visit our document library.

Resource library

Accommodation

Settle into an accommodation option to suit your taste and budget – at Hartpury University, undergraduate students can choose to live on-campus surrounded by Gloucestershire's beautiful countryside or off-campus in the heart of Gloucester City centre. Enjoy the best of both worlds.

Finance

We can help you understand how it all works, and what you need to do next. Find out everything you need to know about tuition fees, student loans and bursaries and scholarships. In 2021/22, we provided assistance to over 1/3 of our students through bursaries, scholarships and grants, totalling a little under £1million.

Support

When you become a student at Hartpury, you become part of our community. As a small university, we provide personalised support based on your individual requirements and aspirations. Our teams cover wellbeing, achievement and success, learning support, careers, and more. From wellbeing, safety and employability, to finance, accommodation and IT, our staff will answer your questions or get you set up with someone who can.

TEF Gold

Our undergraduate provision has been awarded Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Gold in all aspects - Overall, Student Experience, and Student Outcomes.

Teaching quality

Ranked in the top 10 universities for teaching quality (The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide, 2024).

Graduate employability

97% of our graduates are in employment, further study or other purposeful activity (Graduate Outcomes, 2023).

Academic support

We've been named as the top university in England for academic support (National Student Survey, 2023).

Commercial businesses, specialist equipment

Animal facilities

Our 360-hectare rural campus provides the ideal space for wildlife conservation. Our diverse ever-expanding collection includes access to over 70 species comprising invertebrates, reptiles, aquatics, exotics and large and small animals.

Our specialist animal science laboratories and veterinary nursing training centre enable students to apply theory to practice, gain real-life experience and develop scientific research skills.