

Animal Behaviour and Welfare

BSc (Hons) Top-up Level 6

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

Top-up your existing qualification to a full BSc degree. Whether you want to become a welfare officer, trainer or researcher, you'll be well-prepared for a range of careers in the animal sector.

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

Key Information

Course Duration: 1 year full-time; part-time available

UC UCAS Code: D316

Level of Study: Top-up Level 6

Typical Offer: A pass at Foundation Degree or HND in an animal science or management related subject

Course information

[Download a PDF](#)

Overview Entry requirements Employability How you'll study

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.

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.

As part of your top-up year, you'll undertake an applied research project. Delve deeper into an area you're passionate about and contribute to research that's making a difference to the lives of animals.

A pass at Foundation Degree or HND in animal science or management related subject.

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

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

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 secure graduate roles with their work placement employers.

Work placements and experience

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
- Instructor, Guide Dogs for the Blind
- 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
- 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

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 Six (year one)

What you'll study

This course builds on the knowledge you have gained in previous studies, to reach the level of a BSc (Hons) degree.

You'll study 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 over the course of your programme will contribute towards your final degree classification.

You'll continue to advance your understanding of the key principles in animal behaviour and welfare. You'll be exposed to contemporary challenges in the subject areas such as animal trade and welfare. Studying advanced theory, you'll gain an insight into where current research is focussing.

Compulsory Modules

Investigative Skills for the Successful Undergraduate

Prepare for undertaking a research project.

Applied Research Project

Independent research and analysis in an animal-related field with one-to-one support from an academic.

Welfare of Trade Animals

The influence of the marketplace on animal welfare including commercial use of wildlife, animals as entertainment and transportation of 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 day trips. Students will also explore topics such as wildlife reintroduction and breeding for conservation.

Cognitive Ethology

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

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.

Year	Contact learning	Placement learning	Independent learning
Level six (year one)	22%	0%	78%

Assessment and Feedback

You will be assessed through a mixture of written exams, practical exams and written assignments. 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 six (year one)	19%	28%	53%

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 8:30 to 20:30 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

If you would like to help out in our animal collections, you'll need to purchase appropriate clothing and footwear before you can start. The most important pieces

of clothing are the animal management overcoat or overalls and steel toe cap boots for working at the farm. Everything is available from our supplier's online shop.

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.