Programme Specification

Part 1: Basic Data			
Primary Programme Title	MSc Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy		
Target Award Titles	**Mode and Typical Duration of Study**	**Professional Accrediting Body Links**	**Study Abroad / Exchange / Credit Recognition**
MSc Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy	Full time, 1 years Part time, 2-3 years	**None**	**None**
Interim Award Titles	Postgraduate Diploma in Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy Postgraduate Diploma in Animal Studies Postgraduate Certificate in Animal Studies Postgraduate Award in Animal Studies		
Teaching Delivery Method	Mixed		
Awarding Institution	Hartpury University		
Teaching Institution	Hartpury University		
Delivery Location	Hartpury		
Department Responsible for Programme	Animal and Agriculture		
Unit-E Code	**MSTAAACX**		
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	25 July 2024	**Due for Re-validation By**	01 September 2029
Amendment Approval Date		**Approved With Effect From**	V1.0 - 01 September 2024
Professional Accrediting Body Approval Date	None	**Date For Re-accreditation**	None
Version	1.0		

Part 2: Programme Overview
Graduates from the MSc Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy degree have added to their existing skills as qualified mental health practitioners with in-depth theoretical knowledge and understanding of core competences and best practices in Animal Assisted Services (AAS) alongside key practical application, to achieve fitness to practice. They have developed skills in critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation, and can apply these to a range of topics in animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy, allowing them to navigate the complex interface between practice, ethics, legality, and research incorporated within a One Health, One Welfare approach. They can apply critical skills to solve complex problems, develop ideas and evaluate current practices of working with animals within human mental healthcare, and the vital role they share in influencing and optimising the professionalism and best practices within the industry. Most importantly, graduates have developed theoretical knowledge, alongside observational, assessment, and practical skills to provide animals with lifelong care and training, to protect the welfare of animals included in AAS. Graduates have developed the skills of enacting positive changes in AAS to ensure humans benefit, animal welfare is not compromised, and recognising when including animals or clients within sessions may be inappropriate or require amendment

	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		HANVRG-30-7 + Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy in Practice HANVSA-30-7 + Animal Training, Behaviour, and Assessment HANVKG-15-7 Companion and Working Animal Regulations HANVRU-30-7 + Integrating Humans, Animals, and the Environment into Counselling HANVL5-60-7 Postgraduate Dissertation HANXKT-15-7 The Research Process	None	PG Award Animal Studies PG Cert Animal Studies PG Dip Animal Studies PG Dip Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy Must include HANVRU-30-7, HANVSA-30-7, HANVRG-30-7 and HANVKG-15-7 MSc Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy

Part time:
The part time student journey from entry through to graduation is individually negotiated with the student.

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:	Integrating Humans, Animals, and the Environment into Counselling	Animal Training, Behaviour, and Assessment	Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy in Practice	Companion and Working Animal Regulations	The Research Process	Postgraduate Dissertation
A) Knowledge and Understanding of:						
1. How theories and concepts within animal ethics and welfare can be critically applied to the field of animal assisted services.	A	B	A	B	B	B
2. The multidisciplinary nature of animal assisted services associated with its history, development, terminology, and current research and practice.	A	B	A		B	B
3. The diverse and complex nature of the UK animal sector, its legislation, and the challenges faced in maintaining animal welfare and sustainability, both generally and specifically within animal assisted services.	B	B	A	A		B
4. Critical awareness of current best practice informed by research.	A	B	A	B		
5. Creation of management strategies to ensure optimal and ethical care of animals pre, during and post participation in animal assisted services.	B	A	B	B		

6. The complexity of current theories and practices of human-animal interaction and animal behaviour.	A	A	B			
7. The necessity for risk assessment, mitigation and management of human, animal, and environmental factors in animal assisted services.	A	A	A	B		
B) Intellectual Skills						
1. Critically appraise their position as a professional within both animal and mental health sectors.	A		A			
2. Effectively communicate scientific studies, ethical, animal welfare, legal and best practices information to diverse specialist and non-specialist audiences. using both conventional and digital skills.	A	A		B		
3. Critically evaluate current research and practice to create and interpret sustainable solutions to challenges within the field of animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy.	B	A	A	B		
4. Critically evaluate a range of data sources to advance current knowledge and practice.	A	B	B	A		A
5 Effectively conduct an ethical, research project within the field of animal assisted services.						A
C) Performance and Practice						
1. Critically advocate for animal welfare in animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy.	A	B	B	B		
2. Identify key stakeholders, their viewpoints, objectives and ways of working, and devise ethical and sustainable evidence-based plans to optimise best practices in animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy.	A	B	A			
3. Identify practices that could detrimentally affect animal welfare and human wellbeing in animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy, and challenge the rationale for such practices	B	A	A	B		

while identifying practical and sustainable evidence-based alternatives.						
4. Identify and demonstrate the safe and ethical selection, handling, care, behavioural assessment, and training of animals included in animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy.	B	A	A	B		
5. Apply observation, interpretation, and mitigation skills to setting, animals, clients, and co-workers to optimise safety, ethics, welfare, and wellbeing for all involved in animal assisted services.	B	B	A			
6. Incorporate feedback and critical reflection from supervision, assessments or current practice into ongoing practice within animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy.	A	A	A			
D) Setting, Personal and Enabling Skills						
1. Demonstrate originality in dealing with complex issues, tackling and solving problems systematically and creatively in theoretical and practical situations.	B	A	A	B		B
2. Manage change effectively and respond to changing demands, acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.	B	A	A	B	B	A
3.Critically reflect on practical competence in animal handling, and animal welfare assessment, to identify development needs.		A	A			
4. Manage time and prioritise workloads whilst considering personal wellbeing.	B	B	A			
5. Critically evaluate how animal assisted services can affect existing practice and clinical progress, identifying personal limitations and scope of practice.	B	B	A			

Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Journey:

The contact time on this programme encompasses a mixture of both online and on-campus short block delivery of some modules allowing students to engage in face-to-face on-site discussions, and online sessions. Additionally, students will be required to participate in a short block learning experience including workshop-style lectures, seminars, demonstrations, practical sessions, and role playing, located at and supported by established Animal Assisted Service providers in the UK. Independent learning includes significant hours engaged with essential reading, reflective journalling, placement completion, shadowing and supervised practice, animal training and handling, and assignment preparation and completion.

Learning and teaching materials and support will ensure flexibility. Independent learning requires that students complete the required shadowing and supervised placement, as well as significant experience of animal handling, training and welfare assessment.

On the MSc Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy programme, teaching is a mix of scheduled and independent learning with a distinct emphasis on supporting the development of autonomous learning. Students will be expected to engage in a significant amount of independent study during this programme. Successful completion of the programme will be dependent on undertaking the required amount of independent learning via a combination of individual and group activities. A wide variety of interactive tools will be utilised to support this, using technology-enhanced learning, and ensuring students remain engaged with their programme. Furthermore, during these learning activities, students will be required to assimilate complex theories and concepts to solve real world problems and advance current scientific thinking and practice in Animal Assisted Services (AAS).

Engagement with staff research currently undertaken within the institution will further these skills, with a focus on potential publication in peer reviewed literature and conference attendance. Students will be supported in progressing onto level 7 study and studying via a partially distance learning mode with a detailed induction and tutorial support plan to ensure they develop appropriate skills and depth of knowledge. Students will be allocated subject specialist tutors for modules as appropriate, for example to support the research project.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)
This programme is supported by a VLE where students will be able to find programme information. Direct links to information will also be provided from within the VLE. As a significant portion of the programme is delivered online, the teaching resources made available to students reflect this digital nature. The VLE will be used to provide a wide range of online materials including video resources and links to external information and this will be supported by online delivered sessions. Many of the online sessions and the off-site learning experience will be presented by a wide range of visiting lecturers who have been sourced as experts within their field, either academically or professionally, allowing students to not only access diverse expertise but also create opportunities to develop professional networks which may benefit them in their future studies and career. The online studying will be further supported by the Hartpury University Library through digital learning, teaching and assessment provision of books and journals, and through Achievement and Success Centre provision of wider study support.

Part 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Through the onsite components of the course, students may have the opportunity to experience many of our on-campus animal facilities including:

- Animal Collection with Walled Animal Garden and Orchard housing over 70 different species
- Equine centre with some ponies that participate in the local Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA).

These facilities may be beneficial for students in this programme to recognise why some species are more suited to working within Animal Assisted Services than others.

Assessment throughout the programme has been designed to assess the student's ability to apply theoretical principles and philosophies to practice to make an impact on real world issues within the field of animal assisted counselling and psychotherapy. This will be achieved via a wide variety of assessment methods, including innovative utilisation of media (such as video blog production and website design), critically reflective reports and assignments. Such assessments will focus on skill development, including the appropriate use of media, methods of communication and evidenced argument construction. This will be facilitated through formative and summative tasks, activities online, and engagement with academic and industry professionals within animal assisted services. Development of research skills and autonomy in learning will be crucial for the successful graduate from this programme, with independent learning inherent within all assessment. Students will be expected to independently research topics thoroughly, produce robust novel research, supported by comprehensive reviews of literature, and integrate practical experiences with researched information to inform future developments. On completion of the programme, students will be expected to be autonomous learners, able to enter doctorate level study or appropriate employment.

The assessment strategy has been designed to promote effective learning and engagement and to ensure that student knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills required for this programme can be comprehensively evaluated.

This programme will be assessed according to the approved Academic Regulations.

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

The distinctive module used by the Programme Examination Board to inform recommending differential awards for students when considering borderline performance profiles will be:
Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy in Practice

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

Assessment Map

		Type of Assessment*							
		Coursework	Report	Portfolio	Written Examination	Written Test	Practical Skills Examination	Practical Skills Assessment	Oral Assessment
Core Modules Stage 1	Integrating Humans, Animals, and the Environment into Counselling	A (50) Coursework							B (50) Oral Assessment
	Animal Training, Behaviour and Assessment	B (30) Coursework						A (70) Practical Skills Assessment	
	Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy in Practice							A (100) Graduate Skills Logbook	
	Companion and Working Animal Regulations	B (50) Coursework	A (50) Report						
	The Research Process	A (90) Coursework		B (10) Coursework Portfolio					
	Postgraduate Dissertation		A1 (75) Project Report						A2 (15) Poster Defence A3 (10) Oral Presentation

*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:	MSc Animal Assisted Counselling and Psychotherapy
Programme Code:	MSTAAACX
Initial Approval Date:	25 July 2024

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

Current version number: 0	
Outline Change Details: New programme.	
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