

Postgraduate Certificate

Equine Behaviour and Welfare

This is the ideal postgraduate course for those who want to integrate advanced science with the field of equine behaviour and welfare. You'll apply theory to practice in a supported setting, while developing new expertise to advance your knowledge and career.

Key to the course is optimising horse welfare through understanding the associations between behavioural and management strategies, as well as health and performance within the domestic horse.


Enrolment year: 2025 ▼

Key Information

 **Course Duration:** 1 year part-time

 **Part or Full Time:** Part Time

 **Level of Study:** Master's and PhDs

 **Typical Offer:** 2:1 honours degree (2:2 applicants considered individually)

Course information

Overview

You'll benefit from world-class technologies including a well-renowned equine therapy and rehabilitation centre that's leading the way in related research.

Alongside this, you'll be encouraged to attend academic and industry conferences and engage with communities of practice to enhance your learning and professional network, including those hosted at Hartpury.

Our outstanding arenas host over 100 events each year, attracting leading equestrian athletes from across the world. We're also home to over 230 horses and riders in our livery centre, spanning all levels, from novice to semi-professional.

This master's-level qualification is a recognised qualification in its own right, but upon successful completion, you'll also have the option to progress on to our Postgraduate Diploma or MSc in Equine Science, where you'll be able to select from a diverse range of equine behaviour and welfare modules to suit your interests and career goals.

Entry requirements

Academic

2:1 honours degree in a relevant subject. Students with 2:2 and relevant experience will be considered on a case by case basis.

Non-academic

Students with non-relevant qualifications but with sufficient work experience or professional experience will be considered on an individual basis.

International

In addition to the academic qualification an IELTS 6.5 or equivalent is required.

Please contact us for further information.

Employability

Your career

Industry opportunities on this course largely come from our own businesses on campus, as well as the networking facilitated through guest lecturers and field trips.

Field trips

Field trips 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 Redwings Horse Sanctuary, Tweenhills Farm and Stud, and Kingswood Stud, home of the Kurtsystem. The trips facilitate both industry networking and the opportunity to experience the application of science in practice with those using it on a daily basis.

Industry professionals in lectures

Guest lecturers are selected to extend your learning and professional networks, recently including physical therapists, veterinary surgeons and research scientists within the field of equine behavioural science.

On-campus experiences

Our commercial equine therapy and performance centres offer opportunities for students to gain industry experience to support their careers. With teams made up of expert personnel alongside volunteers, you could have the opportunity to get hands-on with clinical cases and to network with the range of allied professionals that involved in the rehabilitation and management of the horses, including veterinarians, farriers, nutritionists and more.

Furthermore, opportunities exist to gain valuable industry experience by volunteering at the national and international level events hosted by our Equine Centre. These include the Five Star Hartpury Horse Trials and the Hartpury International Festival of Dressage.

[Find out more about our commercial equine activities.](#)

Graduate destinations

Whether you have already defined your career goals or you're keen to explore your options, these programmes provide opportunities to develop both the specialist and transferable skills needed for a range of graduate careers.

Our teaching staff, professionals on campus and careers team are on-hand to provide expert advice and guidance, as required.

Recent graduate destinations have included:

- Welfare and Research Officer, Equine Welfare Charity
- Research Manager, Equine Welfare Charity
- [MSc Equine Science](#)

How you'll study

We're committed to supporting you to fulfil your unique potential while you're here so that you can achieve your personal and professional goals.

Duration

One year, part-time

You can study this qualification part-time and subsequently complete it within one year.

Your support network

You'll benefit from a strong support network from day one. This will range from your lecturers, supervisors and personal tutor to our specialist academic (Achievement and Success Centre), employability (Innovation, Careers and Enterprise) and wellbeing teams.

Your learning experiences

You'll experience a range of teaching methods to strengthen your understanding of topics, including lectures, workshops and practical sessions.

Qualifications and modules

Postgraduate Certificate

The focus of this programme is on developing your understanding of the role that human actions and management systems have on the horse's behaviour.

You'll be encouraged to evaluate human, horse and management system interactions, whilst tailoring the focus of your projects and modules to suit your interests and career goals.

You'll have opportunities to gain first-hand experience of advanced technologies at Hartpury, including gait analysis and electromyography equipment, as well as riding simulators used to assess rider influence on horse performance – some of our simulators are among the most advanced in the world at an educational institution.

Developing this bespoke expertise will be valuable for your career performance and progression.

On successful course completion, you may be eligible to further specialise your learning and development, by progressing onto our Postgraduate Diploma or MSc in Equine Science, selecting from a diverse range of equestrian performance modules, as well as others to suit your interests. Please visit the MSc Equine Science course page to find out more.

Modules

Explore the compulsory modules for this course. You'll also be able to choose from a range of optional modules to suit your interests and career goals. Optional modules change each year in line with student, industry and research demands.

Module credits

Upon successful completion of your modules you'll gain academic credit that accumulates towards your award. The marks you gain may contribute towards your final Postgraduate Certificate differential award (pass, merit or distinction).

Compulsory modules

Equine Behaviour

This module introduces you to natural and domestic behavioural patterns of the horse, covering, amongst other topics, learning theory in relation to training and management.

Equine Management for Optimal Performance and Welfare

This module aims to provide students with the knowledge and evaluative skills to debate the ethics and practicalities surrounding management of the horse within a range of societal pressures and the wider social responsibilities of the industry.

Optional modules

Optional modules change each year in line with student, industry and research demands.

Recent subjects have included equine therapy and rehabilitation, equine exercise physiology, research processes and independent study.

Teaching modes

The modules contain a mixture of scheduled learning – lectures, workshops and practical sessions – alongside independent learning. Students are expected to dedicate at least two to three hours of independent study per contact hour. The following breakdowns may vary, depending on module choices.

The course is taught in English.

| | Contact learning | Placement learning | Independent learning |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Postgraduate Certificate | 18% | 0% | 82% |

Teaching contact time

Teaching contact time and method will vary depending on the module that you are studying.

Assessment and Feedback

You'll be assessed through a mixture of written exams, oral exams and presentations, and written assessments. 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 provided to you throughout the course both formatively, with staff feeding back on draft work or in subject discussions, or summatively, provided by the staff commentary accompanying marked assessments. The following breakdowns may vary, depending on module choices.

| | Written exam | Practical exam | Coursework |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------|
| Postgraduate Certificate | 0% | 25% | 75% |

Assessment will vary depending on the optional modules you choose.

Timetables

This course has been specially designed to fit around those working or volunteering within the sector. The course is taught over two, 12-week semesters, normally consisting of four or five scheduled teaching blocks and assessment weeks.

- Scheduled teaching generally takes place across block weekends (Friday – Sunday)
- Delivery on the teaching weekends is normally scheduled between 9.00am – 5.00pm
- Part-time students typically study for fewer block weekends across an academic year
- Attendance dates and timetables are available before enrolment to support the arrangement of annual leave where required

 **View term dates**

Fees and funding

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)

A number of modules require clothing and footwear suitable to wear on the yard, eg. long trousers and boots.

Hartpury University branded clothing is also available through our online shop, for those who wish to purchase it. However, this is not essential.

Optional field trips

Field trips are generally included in the course fees. However, extra costs may be required for specific optional trips.

Livery

We have stabling for 230 horses on campus. If you're interested in having your horse at Hartpury on DIY livery while you study, please [visit our livery page for details and costs](#).

Equine Academy

If you have the talent and drive to develop your skills as an equestrian athlete alongside your studies, you may be eligible to join our Equine Academy. For further details including costs, please [visit our Equine Academy page](#).

Accommodation and living costs

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

Fees & finance

Further course details

Our [Resource Library](#) is where you'll find all the essential details about Hartpury University's courses. It includes *Programme* and *Module Specifications*, along with *Course Information Sheets* for every course. You can easily download a complete revision history for each of these, clearly showing the dates changes were made.

Course Information Sheets: These are PDF versions of the course webpages. They provide an overview of the course, what to expect during your studies, and the topics covered.

Programme Specifications: These are detailed, validated documents containing academic specifics for each programme. They include descriptions of the programme, its aims, learning outcomes, year and module structure, as well as teaching, learning, and assessment strategies.

Module Specifications: Each Programme consists of several Modules. Our Module Specifications outline the topics covered and the expected outcomes for students studying each Module.

Resource library

Discuss this course with an Academic Programme Manager

Book an appointment

Prospective students can book an online appointment with one of our programme managers to discuss our courses and options for postgraduate study at Hartpury University.

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Open up new opportunities

By studying a postgraduate qualification, you'll deepen your expertise as part of a curious and likeminded learning community.

Megan had been overlooked for a job, with employers citing qualifications. That changed after she studied a master's at Hartpury. Find out how it gives you an edge.

Watch via YouTube

Ask us a question about postgraduate study at Hartpury University or enter your contact details to receive updates on news, events and updates on opportunities to visit us.

Full Name *

First name

First Name

Last name

Last Name

Email address *

your.name@company.com

Home country *

Select an Option

Which subject area are you interested in? *

Select an Option

What year are you planning to start your studies? *

Select an Option

If you have a question, please use the space below

How did you hear about us?

Select an Option

Stay in touch

☐ I would like to keep up to date with Hartpury University courses, student life, events and news.

We're committed to protecting your privacy and we promise to keep your personal details private and secure.
Read our privacy policy (<https://www.hartpury.ac.uk/legal/web-privacy-policy/>).
(<https://www.hartpury.ac.uk/legal/web-privacy-policy/>)

Full name *

First name

First Name

Last name

Last Name



Get in touch

Whether you're looking for more details with regards to a specific course, or information on your own academic options or life at Hartpury, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our friendly and knowledgeable Admissions team.

Important information

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of our published course information, however our programmes are reviewed and developed regularly. Changes or cancellation of courses may be necessary to ensure alignment with emerging employment areas, to comply with accrediting body requirements, revisions to subject benchmark statements or as a result of student feedback. We reserve the right to make necessary changes and will notify all offer-holders of changes as and when they occur.