

BSc (Hons)

Equine Behaviour and Welfare

If you're passionate about the human-horse relationship from an equine welfare perspective, and want to understand how horses interpret our world to enhance their wellbeing, then this is the ideal course for you. You don't need to ride horses, you simply need a keen interest in horse behaviour, learning and welfare.

During your degree, you'll develop your understanding of contemporary ethical approaches to horse training and management based on the most up-to-date scientific research, applying theory to practice in real-world settings including our commercial equine yard that's home to 230 horses and riders of all levels.

Key Information



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

UC **UCAS Code:** D43L



Part or Full Time: Full Time / Part Time



Level of Study: Undergraduate Degrees



Placement Year: Optional



Typical Offer: 112 UCAS tariff points

Course information

Overview

We'll support you to adopt an innovative and scientific mind-set, building both specialist and transferable skills to help you stand out when you graduate. Alongside developing equine-

specific expertise, you'll refine entrepreneurial and leadership skills. Work placements will enable you to build a successful career while improving the wider industry.

Graduate opportunities are diverse and could include working for equine charities and welfare organisations or with individuals to improve horse-rider relationships. Graduates of this course will play a vital role in education and implementation of best practice.

Entry requirements

- **UCAS tariff points** | 112 UCAS tariff points.
- **A Levels** | BBC or equivalent from at least two full A Levels.
- **Vocational Awards** | DMM in an Extended Diploma in a relevant subject.
- **Access** | 112 UCAS tariff points in an Access to Higher Education Diploma.
- **International Baccalaureate** | 112 UCAS tariff points in an IB Diploma, to include two Highers at H3 or above.
- **Scottish Highers** | 112 UCAS tariff points from at least two Highers. You must have completed two years study at Higher Level.
- **Irish Leaving Certificate** | 112 UCAS tariff points from at least two Highers.
- **T Level** | An overall grade of Merit, to include grade C or above in the Core component.
- **Additional Information**

In addition to the above, we require a minimum of five GCSEs at grade 9-4 (A*-C), to include English and Maths. We will consider equivalencies including but not limited to functional skills level 2, Irish Ordinary level, National 5s, IB standard level.

We will consider combinations of level three qualifications.

We welcome applications from individuals with equivalent, non-UK qualifications and mature students (over 21). We may interview as part of the application process.

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

Employability

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.

Field trips and guest lecturers

You'll develop a greater understanding of equine behaviour as you take part in study trips to local and national equine organisations. You'll also hear from industry experts and professionals in lectures and explore potential career paths. Previous guest lecturers have included representatives from Three Counties Equine Hospital and charities such as Horse World.

Study internationally

Our Study Abroad programme means you can make the most of opportunities to study, a semester or full year of your degree, at one of our partner institutions while achieving credits towards your degree.

Graduate destinations

As a graduate, you'll be well versed in all aspects of equine management, behaviour and welfare, with the necessary skills to enter a graduate-level position within the equine industry. You'll also have the transferable skills you need for other graduate careers. Our careers team can support you to find, prepare and secure your perfect role. Typical graduate destinations might include:

- Educational Officer
- Training Officer
- Campaigns Officer
- Behaviourist
- Fundraising Manager
- Welfare Officer
- Postgraduate study

How you'll study

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

What you'll study

On this course, you'll cover a range of fundamental behaviour and welfare topics through a combination of compulsory and optional modules, which you'll be able to choose from to suit your interests and career goals.

Compulsory topics will include management of equine wellbeing, equine learning and cognition, and measurements of equine behaviour.

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 third years may contribute towards your final degree classification.

Level four (year one)

You'll focus on key topics relating to equine learning and welfare to gain knowledge and fundamental study skills that underpin your course and equip you to study at higher levels. You'll

also begin to explore human behaviours and interactions to gain skills for influencing future change in equitation science, training and beyond.

Compulsory Modules

Equitation Science

The module aims to give an introduction to evidence-based learning principles for horses and the impact of environmental effects on learning.

Professional Development and Influence within the Equestrian Sector

An introduction to learning theory and human behaviour in relation to developing an understanding of reflection of self and how humans interact and influence others.

Equine Structure and Function

Learn about the biological systems of the horse, how they interact, and how they can be managed.

Managing Equine Wellbeing

Generally, horses spend around an hour per day being trained or exercised. This module focuses on the principals of horse welfare and management for the other 23 hours.

Introduction to Equine Nutrition

Study of the basic principles of equine feeding and nutrition.

Level five (year two)

In this year, more in-depth topics will be explored, taking the fundamental knowledge learned in year one to explore the key factors and principles which underpin behaviour and welfare measurements in more detail. You'll also be supported to complete a work placement, enabling you to gain experience and make connections, ready for your career. Alongside compulsory modules, you'll select from a range of optional modules to further develop your specialist expertise.

Compulsory Modules

Measuring Equine Behaviour and Welfare

Use of behavioural, physiological and physical measures of welfare and welfare assessment in different contexts.

Professional Placement Experience in the Equestrian Sector

You'll be supported to complete a minimum of 150 hours of work experience during the year, which can be in a variety of equine focused establishments in the UK or abroad.

Equine Performance

Understand how performance horses are exercised and trained to meet specific demands of various disciplines.

Equine Learning and Cognition

This module further develops the understanding of learning theory, attachment theory, emotions and learning in relation to evidence-based training of horses.

Optional Modules

Equestrian Event Management and Fundraising

Explore the operational aspects of event management and the customer experience.

Equine Nutrition

The study of the horse's digestive system, their required nutrient intake for different activities, and how to manage the horse's diet.

Independent Report

A chance to review an approved topic area in line with your programme of study and develop your independent working skills.

Either International Academic Study Portfolio OR International Academic Study Project

International Academic Study Portfolio

A reflection upon a period of international study.

International Academic Study Project

A reflection upon a period of international study.

Study Trip

You will engage in a programme relevant study trip which will provide a context for you to synthesise content from across your programme of study and make applications and inferences to this real world setting, while expanding your horizons.

Integrated placement year (optional)

An integrated placement year before your final year allows you to put your knowledge and skills into practice and gain valuable industry experience. Many students get their graduate careers with the organisation with which they completed their work placement.

Level Six (final year)

Your final year allows you to focus on areas of particular interest to you, in line with your career aspirations. One module is your dissertation, a substantial research project that enables you to plan, implement and report on a specialist topic of your choice.

In addition, you'll be exposed to contemporary challenges and developments in the field of equine behaviour, gaining an insight into the direction of emerging research. Optional modules will support you to develop entrepreneurial and leadership skills, including negotiation and conflict resolution, preparing you to drive changes in the industry to improve equine training, behaviour management and welfare.

Compulsory Modules

Undergraduate Dissertation

Partake in independent research and analysis in a related area of your choice.

Research in Equine Behaviour

This module will enable you to undertake a critical review in a chosen area and design a pilot study utilising behavioural, physiological and/or physical measures in order to advance the current evidence base in relation to current management practices.

Equine Ethics and Welfare

Students will build their knowledge of ethical philosophy and key equine welfare contributors/research to enable discussion of contemporary industry issues.

People, Leadership and Change

Exploring the structure, diversity and culture of organisations in relation to leadership and change management.

Optional Modules

Equine Nutrition for Performance

Evolution of feeding strategies to support athletic performance in the horse, whilst maintaining good health.

Sales, Negotiation and Customer Service

Gain strategies and techniques to develop communications skills in order to influence, sell and negotiate within the equine industry.

Sustainability and Global Responsibility within the Equestrian Sector

Explore and analyse current business practice within the global equestrian industry in relation to long term sustainability.

Undergraduate Independent Study

A chance to critically review an approved topic of your choice linked to the programme aims.

Volunteering within the Equine Charity Sector

Practically apply theory and knowledge of the equine charity sector to a real-life volunteering environment, proposing methods of raising awareness of their work as an organisation and reflecting on personal development during time spent in industry.

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. Your course will also include work placement learning as part of some modules.

The course is taught in English.

This programme is currently undergoing consultation but it is estimated that the course will comprise of the following teaching modes.

Year	Contact learning	Independent learning	Placement learning
Level four (year one)	24%	76%	0%
Level five (year two)	19%	69%	12%
Placement year (optional)	1%	19%	80%
Level six (final year)	17%	83%	0%

Assessment and Feedback

Assessments take place 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 informally during scheduled learning and formally following each assessment.

This programme is currently undergoing consultation but it is estimated that the course will comprise of the following assessment methods.

Year	Written exam	Coursework	Practical exam
Level four (year one)	19%	33%	48%
Level five (year two)	20%	49%	31%
Placement year (optional)	0%	100%	0%
Level six (final year)	13%	63%	24%

Timetables

This programme is taught over two semesters, normally consisting of 12 weeks of scheduled teaching and then assessment weeks.

- Scheduled teaching takes place between 8:30 to 20:30 Monday to Friday
- Wednesday afternoons are normally reserved for sports and cultural activities
- Work placements may entail different days and hours
- 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

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.

Below, you'll find extra costs associated with studying this course.

Clothing and footwear

You'll need to purchase some specialist kit and clothing before you enrol, or during enrolment week. In particular, appropriate footwear for practical sessions on the yard. We'll let you know exactly what you need to purchase before enrolment.

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 (up to circa £1800)

You'll have the chance to engage in various trips and visits as part of the course. While many of these are included in the course fees, there is the opportunity to engage in additional significant study tours, experiencing international horse management practices in person. It is estimated these costs will be approximately £1800.

Accommodation and living costs

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

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](#).

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

93% of students say
teaching staff have
supported their
learning well.

Data for courses in Animal science at Hartpury University

For **more** official course
information visit
Discover Uni

[See course data](#)



"Completing my work placement at Hartpury's summer equine events was a great experience. I learnt how to run events, secure sponsorship deals, organise volunteers, and ensure arenas and stables are ready for competitors. I even got to compete in an event myself. I built contacts and connections with a range of people, including the Hartpury Equine management team, which lead to my role as Yard Technician today."

Clarissa Burnell-Price

Ask us a question, or enter your details to be kept up-to-date with news and events from Hartpury University.

Full Name *

First name

Last name

Email address *

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/>)

✔ Submit

Meet our academic team

Get to know our dedicated and passionate teaching staff who'll help you achieve your very best. We're proud to have been awarded Gold in all three areas of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF): Overall, Student Experience, and Student Outcomes. This places Hartpury University in the top 15% of published institutions in England. Plus, we're ranked sixth in the UK for Teaching Quality, in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025.

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.