

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MSc, Postgraduate Diploma
4	Programme Title	Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare
5	Programme Code	5180/3433
6	Programme Accreditation	Provisionally validated by the ASAB Accreditation Committee as delivering the academic elements necessary for an individual to achieve ASAB certification as a clinical animal behaviourist (conditions to be met by July 2013)
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Biosciences
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	May 2012

10 Programme Aims

The programme aims to:

1. Provide an advanced understanding of the cause and function of domestic and captive animal behaviour and inter-relationships with welfare for animals kept in association with humans.
2. Produce graduates capable of understanding and applying the academic knowledge and skills needed to underpin training as a clinical animal behaviourist or related professional in applied animal behaviour and welfare.
3. Produce Masters graduates capable of undertaking research into applied animal behaviour and/or welfare or a higher degree by research (PhD).
4. Encourage abstract logical thinking and critical analysis.
5. Equip graduates with a suite of key skills including the abilities to communicate effectively, to employ IT and library resources appropriately, to prioritise work and meet deadlines, to use initiative and to solve problems.
6. To provide a programme which meets the FHEQ at level 7.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have been provisionally validated by the Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour Accreditation Committee as meeting with the requirements for academic study for Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists (CCABs).

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have:

- A1 Advanced knowledge and understanding of the cause and function of domestic and captive animal behaviour.
- A2 Critical awareness of the relationship between animal behaviour and animal welfare for animals kept in association with humans.
- A3 Working knowledge of the legal and ethical frameworks for people working with domestic/captive animals and their carers.
- A4 A sound understanding of the principles and methods necessary to interpret and evaluate research relating to applied animal behaviour and/or welfare.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Critically apply knowledge and understanding of domestic and captive animal behaviour to the diagnosis and alleviation of challenges to the welfare of animals kept in association with humans.
- B2 Critically appraise the quality of data and information offered from different sources.
- B3 Synthesise information from disparate sources and use to inform complex problem solving.
- B4 Identify gaps or weaknesses in existing knowledge and identify appropriate means of resolving them.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1 Train animals to respond appropriately to command cues.
- C2 Systematically investigate and diagnose welfare challenges to animals kept in association with humans and influence change to improve associated animal welfare and human well-being.
- C2 Acquire and critically evaluate secondary data.
- C3 Collect primary data and present finding in formats according to accepted disciplinary conventions.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- D2 Operate with effective interpersonal skills.
- D3 Prioritise resources to meet objectives.
- D4 Manage and use information effectively.
- D5 Employ numeracy skills effectively.
- D6 Use IT effectively.
- D7 Take responsibility for own personal and professional development and ethical conduct.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Knowledge and understanding learning outcomes

The primary teaching and learning methods are directed reading with independent reading for assignment tasks. These are supported by lectures, seminars and practicals during the residential schools and by tutorial contact throughout the distance learning stages. All taught modules are designed around core knowledge and understanding acquired by directed reading of recommended texts. The application of this core knowledge to understanding the behaviour and welfare of domestic and captive animals is prompted by assignment tasks that encourage students to research independently for resources that inform application to species and environments that reflect their own interests. Learning outcome A3 is explicitly addressed in the Animal Law & Ethics module and A4 in the Experimental Design for *in vivo* Research and Research project modules, but are also touched upon in all modules where knowledge is applied to practical settings and research findings are critically evaluated.

Intellectual skills learning outcomes

These are developed primarily through assignment tasks. These all require the critical application of knowledge to practical problems in applied animal behaviour and welfare, and provide structured opportunities for the development of the range of intellectual skills. The skills being developed with each task are explicitly introduced to students in the residential school at the start of the module and direction is given to resources that support the development of the skill. On-going support is provided by tutorial contact throughout the distance learning stages. Learning outcome B1 reaches its pinnacle in the Clinical Procedures module, but is implicit in all of the taught modules that feed into this crowning achievement.

Practical skill learning outcomes

These are developed through practicals and workshops during the residential schools and refined by practice during fieldwork and in preparation for assignment tasks. Direction is given to resources that support the development of practical skills and on-going support is provided by tutorial contact throughout the distance learning stages of the module. Learning outcome C1 is addressed in all the taught modules, with different emphasis placed on the knowledge feeding into this skill in each.

Transferable skills learning outcomes

These are developed throughout the programme in all directed activities. These activities are designed to encompass a broad range of tasks and develop the full range of transferable skills that students will need for academic, personal and career success. The importance of mindful development of these skills is impressed upon students at induction and evidence for their development commented upon in formal and informal tutor feedback throughout the programme.

Assessment Strategy

A diverse range of assessment tasks are used throughout the programme as vehicles for the development (see above) and assessment of the module and programme learning outcomes. The majority of modules have two or more assignments built into the assessment strategy to permit specific development of the knowledge and skills learning outcomes prescribed in each module. This provides structured opportunities for students to focus on the knowledge and skills being developed, and for tutors to provide regular and focused feedback to maintain student motivation and reflection upon their development.

Knowledge and understanding learning outcomes are assessed by web-based tests, essays and other assignment tasks requiring the presentation of core knowledge in the subject area.

Intellectual skills learning outcomes are assessed by portfolios, case studies and reflective reports that require the synthesis, analysis and application of core knowledge to problems in applied animal behaviour and/or welfare.

Practical skills learning outcomes are assessed by practical and fieldwork reports or videos and the research project assignments.

Transferable skills in information literacy (D4 and D5) are explicitly assessed in the Applied Ethology module in Semester 1. Along with all other transferable skills learning outcomes, these are also implicitly assessed in all assignments where these skills are required to underpin quality academic and practical work.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The MSc Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare is composed of 120 credits of taught modules delivered in Semesters 1 and 2, and a 60 credit research project related to the subject area undertaken in semester 3.

The Diploma in Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare is composed of 120 credits of taught modules delivered across semesters 1, 2 and 3.

Students on the full-time routes complete their programme of study over one academic year. Students on part-time routes usually complete their programme over two academic years.

Full-time structure:

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
Optional Modules (credits)		
ACE8074 Applied Ethology (20)	ACE8080 Animal Health & Behaviour (10)	
ACE8075 Applied Learning Theory (15)	ACE8078 Animal Law & Ethics (10)	
ACE8076 Animal Welfare Science (10)	ACE8079 Clinical Procedures (30)	
ACE8077 Neuronal and endocrine mediation of behaviour (15)		
Compulsory Masters Modules (credits)		
	MMB8026 Experimental Design for in vivo Research (10)	ACE8095 Dissertation (60)
Compulsory Diploma Modules (credits)		
		ACE8081 Literature review (10)

Part-time structure:

Year 1

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
Optional Modules (credits)		
ACE8074 Applied Ethology (20)	ACE8080 Animal Health & Behaviour (10)	
ACE8075 Applied Learning Theory (15)	ACE8078 Animal Law & Ethics (10)	
Compulsory Masters Modules (credits)		
	MMB8026 Experimental Design for in vivo Research (10)	ACE8095 Dissertation (60) (to be completed in Yr 2 semester 3)

Year 2

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3
Optional Modules (credits)		
ACE8076 Animal Welfare Science (10)		
ACE8077 Neuronal and endocrine mediation of behaviour (15)	ACE8079 Clinical Procedures (30)	
Compulsory Masters Modules (credits)		
		Complete dissertation
Compulsory Diploma Modules (credits)		
		ACE8081 Literature review (10)

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

MSc Applied Animal Behaviour & Welfare is a specialist degree programme designed to prepare students for professional or research careers in the field.

Taught modules cover all relevant areas for advanced understanding of the cause and function of domestic and captive animal behaviour and inter-relationships with welfare for animals kept in association with humans.

The taught modules are designed to correspond exactly with the ASAB Accreditation Committee academic requirements for Certified Clinical Animal Behaviourists and have credit weightings of between 10 and 30 credits as is dictated by this accrediting body.

However, all modules are designed to provide a broad education that can be applied to any career in applied animal behaviour and/or welfare and underpin research in the field or a higher degree by research. Assessments are designed around the application of core subject knowledge and understanding to students own areas of interest and/or career aspirations.

To permit students who have already achieved some of the ASAB Accreditation requirements to select modules to complete the required education, all modules are designed to be self contained so that they may be offered as CPD.

The programme is delivered by blended learning with short residential schools at the University interspersed with guided self-study. Learning is guided by directed reading and practical experience, with multiple structured assignments designed to develop application of knowledge and understanding and a broad range of intellectual, professional and transferable skills.

Students are required to have extensive prior experience of domestic and/or captive animal husbandry and training, and to seek out opportunities for further experience during the course of their study. Students will be encouraged to seek work experience where they have specific interests and opportunity, or may join local opportunities established with the programme.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/>

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

An upper second class honours degree from a UK university, or its overseas equivalent in an area of biological sciences or psychology.

Admissions policy/selection tools

Upon receipt of a completed application form, UK based applicants are invited to AFRD to attend an informal interview. Overseas applicants are not normally required to attend an interview, and instead may correspond with the Degree Programme Director by email, before a decision is reached. Offers of places are made to suitably qualified candidates following the interview/assessment of applicants and are conditional upon applicants achieving a minimum of an upper 2nd class honours degree or overseas equivalent (if they do not hold such a degree at the time of interview), and upon the provision of a satisfactory reference (if one has not already been provided).

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Applicants who hold non-standard qualifications, and/or have relevant experience, will be considered on an individual basis.

Additional Requirements

Applicants are expected to have extensive practical experience of domestic and/or captive animal husbandry and training. Evidence for this will be sought at interview and through references.

Level of English Language capability

IELTS 7.0 or equivalent

14 Support for Student Learning

The Student Services portal provides links to key services and other information and is available at: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/>

Induction

During the first week of the first semester students attend an induction programme. New students will be given a general introduction to University life and the University's principle support services and general information about the School and their programme, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. New and continuing students will be given detailed programme and learning support information. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students.

Study skills support

Students will be inducted in information literacy skills at the start of their studies and provided with on-going developmental support throughout. The specific intellectual, practical and professional skills being developed in each module will be highlighted for students at the start of each module and direction towards skill development resources provided. Module tutors provide subject knowledge and skills tutorial support by email and/or telephone during the distance-learning parts of the modules. Numeracy support is available through Maths Aid and help with academic writing is available from the Writing Centre (further information is available from the Robinson Library).

Academic support

The initial point of contact for a student is with the module leader, or their tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

Pastoral support

All students are assigned a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees. In addition the University offers a range of support services, including one-to-one counselling and guidance or group sessions / workshops on a range of topics, such as emotional issues e.g. stress and anxiety, student finance and budgeting, disability matters. There is specialist support available for students with dyslexia and mental health issues. Furthermore, the Union Society operates a Student Advice Centre, which can provide advocacy and support to students on a range of topics including housing, debt, and legal issues.

Support for students with disabilities

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies.

Learning resources

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports computing facilities.

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language Proficiency Test. This is administered by INTO Newcastle University Centre on behalf of Newcastle University. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The INTO Newcastle University Centre houses a range of resources which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchange.

15 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Module reviews

All modules are subject to review by questionnaires which are considered by the Board of Studies. Student opinion is also sought from student representatives at Staff-Student Committees and/or the Board of Studies held during one of the residential schools in each semester. Student representatives will be elected at the end of the first residential school per year. Changes to, or the introduction of new, modules are considered at the Board of Studies and/or the School Teaching and Learning Committee. New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Programme reviews

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. The FTLC takes an overview of all programmes within the Faculty and reports any Faculty or institutional issues to the University Teaching and Learning Committee.

External Examiner reports

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Staff-Student Committee.

Student evaluations

All modules, and the degree programme, are subject to review by student questionnaires. Informal student evaluation is also obtained at the Staff-Student Committee, and the Board of Studies. The results from student surveys are considered as part of the Annual Monitoring and Review of the programme and any arising actions are captured at programme and School / institutional level and reported to the appropriate body.

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback

Anonymous questionnaire at the end of each module or at the start of the following semester.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms

The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process. Every five years degree programmes in each subject area are subject to periodic review. This involves both the detailed consideration of a range of documentation, and a two-day review visit by a review team which includes an external subject specialist in addition to University and Faculty representatives. Following the review a report is produced, which forms the basis for a decision by University Teaching and Learning Committee on whether the programmes reviewed should be re-approved for a further five year period.

Accreditation reports

The programme is subject to annual monitoring by the ASAB Accreditation Committee of the outcomes of the University's quality assurance procedures, the students' experiences and the programme teams' quality maintenance and enhancement actions.

Additional mechanisms

The programme includes formal input from industry professionals, and students are encouraged to seek out industry experience, to ensure students and liaising academic staff are exposed to the professional developments in the field. Similarly, on-going research activity by lecturing staff ensures inclusion of up to date applied research findings in applied animal behaviour and welfare.

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark is 50%.

Course requirements

Progression is subject to the University's Masters Degree Progress Regulations, Taught and Research and Examination Conventions for Taught Masters Degrees. Limited compensation up to 40 credits of the taught element and down to a mark of 40% is possible and there are reassessment opportunities, with certain restrictions.

The University employs a common marking scheme, which is specified in the Taught Postgraduate Examination Conventions, namely:

Summary description applicable to postgraduate Masters programmes		Summary description applicable to postgraduate Diploma programmes	
<50	Fail	<50	Fail
50-59	Pass	50 or above	Pass
60-69	Pass with Merit		
70 or above	Pass with Distinction		

Role of the External Examiner

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, following recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:

- See and approve assessment papers
- Moderate examination and coursework marking
- Attend the Board of Examiners
- Report to the University on the standards of the programme

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/>

The School Brochure

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

The Degree Programme Handbook

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	B	C	D
Applied Ethology	Compulsory	1,2	1,2,3	1,2	1,3,4,6,7
Applied Learning Theory	Compulsory	1,2,3	1,2,3	1,2	1,3,4,6,7
Animal Welfare Science	Compulsory	1,2,3	1,2,3	1,2	1,3,4,6,7
Neuronal and endocrine mediation of behaviour	Compulsory	1,2,3	1,2,3	1,2	1,3,4,6,7
Animal Health & Behaviour	Compulsory	1,2	1,2,3	1,2	1,3,4,6,7
Animal Law & Ethics	Compulsory	2,3	1	1,2	1,3,4,6,7
Clinical Procedures	Compulsory	1,2,3	1,2,3,4	1,2	1,2,3,4,6,7
Literature Review	Compulsory for Diploma	4	2,3,4	2	1,3,4,5,6,7
Experimental Design for <i>in vivo</i> Research	Compulsory for Masters	4	2,3,4		1,3,4,5,6,7
ACE8095 Dissertation	Compulsory for Masters	4	2,3,4	3	1,3,4,5,6,7