ISVPS | International School
of Veterinary
Postgraduate
Studies

Nurse/ Veterinary Technician/ Veterinary Paraprofessional Certificate in Animal Behaviour

NCert (AnBeh)

Syllabus and Learning Objectives

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR –
NCert / VTCert / VPPCert (AnBeh)

Syllabus

This syllabus is intended to guide the delegate to the key areas they are expected to understand. The learning objectives provide an insight into the emphasis of each module.

Please note, examination questions may cover any area of the syllabus. As not all areas of the syllabus are covered to the same extent within the modular training programme, examination candidates are advised to read around the syllabus to develop a critical awareness of best practice, current issues and new insights.

(S1) An introduction to animal behaviour

- Domestication in the dog and cats
- Normal behaviour of the dog and cat
- Behavioural development of puppies and kittens

(LO1) Key learning objectives for S1:

1.1 Describe the domestication of the dog and cat
1.2 Describe the normal behaviour of the dog and cat
1.3 Recognise the behavioural development of puppies and kittens as it relates to their role as companion animals

(S2) Clinical causes of behaviour problems

- Emotional health in dogs and cats
- Emotional and physical health
- Influence of health conditions and environment on behaviour
- The behavioural history

(LO2) Key learning objectives for S2:

2.1 Recognise the concept of emotional health in dogs and cats
2.2 Describe the interplay between emotional and physical health
2.3 Recognise the distinction between clinical and social/environmental causes of behavioural presentations
2.4 Demonstrate how to take a behavioural history and recognise the relevance of the components of that history
2.5 Recognise how events in the animal's life relate to their emotional health and behavioural responses

(S3) Confrontational and repulsion responses in companion animals I

- Aggression in dogs and cats
- Behavioural responses to negative emotional motivations
- Safety and legal aspects of "aggression" problems

(LO3) Key learning objectives for S3:

3.1 Differentiate between the motivational causes of so called "aggression" in dogs and cats

3.2 Identify the importance of other behavioural responses to negative emotional motivations and explain how these relate to the responses of repulsion and confrontation

3.3 Recognise the safety and legal aspects of "aggression" problems

(S4) Confrontational and repulsion responses in companion animals II

- Motivations for and potential prevention of confrontational and repulsion behaviour in companion animals
- Predatory behaviour vs aggression
- Species-specific ethology of confrontation and repulsion

(LO4) Key learning objectives for S4:

4.1 Describe the motivations for and potential prevention of commonly presented forms of confrontational and repulsion behaviour in companion animals

4.2 Recognise the difference between predatory behaviour and "aggression"

4.3 Describe the influence of species-specific ethology on behavioural presentations of confrontation and repulsion

4.4 Describe general and specific approaches to cases where repulsion or confrontational behaviours are being demonstrated toward owners, familiar and unfamiliar dogs or cats and unfamiliar people

(S5) Fear-anxiety related behavioural responses in companion animals I

- Fear-anxiety system
- Genetic and environmental causes of fear-anxiety
- Differential diagnoses of fear-anxiety and other emotional motivations in dogs

(LO5) Key learning objectives for S5:

5.1 Recognise the role of the fear-anxiety system in common presentations of behavioural signs in companion animals
5.2 Recognise the multifactorial influences on the development of fear-anxiety motivated behaviours including genetics, early rearing and past and current social and physical environments
5.3 Differentiate between fear-anxiety and other potential emotional motivations for similar behavioural signs in dogs

(S6) Fear-anxiety related behavioural responses in companion animals II

- Differential diagnoses of fear-anxiety and other emotional motivations in cats
- Fear-anxiety and pain

(LO6) Key learning objectives for S6:

6.1 Differentiate between fear-anxiety and other potential emotional motivations for similar behavioural signs in cats
6.2 Describe the relationship between fear-anxiety and pain emotional motivations and the influence of pain on companion animal behaviour

(S7) Tools available in behavioural medicine work

- Influence of nutrition on behaviour
- Influence of medication on behaviour
- Pheromones and behaviour
- Multi-factorial approach to behavioural cases

(LO7) Key learning objectives for S7:

7.1 Describe the potential influence of feeding and gastrointestinal function on behaviour
7.2 Recognise the potential role of medication in behavioural cases
7.3 Explain the potential role of pheromone therapy in behavioural cases
7.4 Explain the potential for nutritional input to influence behaviour in cases of cognitive decline and negative emotional bias
7.5 Recognise the need for a multi-factorial approach to behavioural cases

(S8) Behavioural medicine in general veterinary practice

- Behavioural medicine in the veterinary practice
- Implementation of a stress audit

(LO8) Key learning objectives for S8:

8.1   Recognise the important role of behavioural medicine in general veterinary practice

8.2   Explain the application of behavioural knowledge in order to make veterinary visits as positive as possible for patients, caregivers and practice staff.

8.3   Construct and implement a stress audit in general veterinary practice

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