

The Royal Agricultural University

Programme Specification:

BSc (Hons) Equine Health and Welfare (Top-Up)

2025/26

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/26]

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each module can be found in the Module descriptors.

Section 1 – Material Programme Information

	The Royal Agricultural University			
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	Agricultural Science and Practice (ASP)			
	BSc (Hons) Equine Health and Welfare (Top-Up)			
	BSc (Hons) Equine Health and Welfare			
	Equine Health and Welfare			
	Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester			
	Full time	1 Year	Part-time	2 Years
	English			
	September			
	2020 - 2026			
	Not Applicable			
	Not Applicable			
	Not Applicable			
	FdSc or HND Pass in cognate discipline such as Equine Science / Equine Business. Students with other degrees studied to level 5, such as Animal Science, Natural Sciences, Zoology or Agriculture will be considered based on transcript alignment and / or relevant experience			
	D455			
	100519 - Equine Studies			
	Agriculture, Rural Environmental Sciences, Animal Studies, Consumer Science, Forestry, Food, Horticulture and Human Nutrition (April 2024).			
	Level 6			
	May 2020			

Section 2 – Programme structure

The structure of all University awards complies with the University's [Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#) which includes information about the:

- Rules for progression between the stages of a programme;
- Consequences of failure for referrals, compensation and exist awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards.

This programme is in teach out and the following modules will be taught on Level 6 in 2025/26.

BSc (Hons) Equine Health and Welfare (top up) (Full time)

The accumulation of credits to include a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6 through the assessment of taught modules as detailed below.

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Level 6					
3058	Equine Behaviour and Welfare	6	15	Core	1
3332	Specialist Study	6	15	Core	1
3200	Equine Health	6	15	Core	2
3300	Research Project / Dissertation	6	30	Core	1+2
Any 3 of the following elective modules					
3041	Corporate Finance	6	15	Elective	1
3078	Equine Performance Nutrition	6	15	Elective	1
3217	Advances in Training the Equine Athlete	6	15	Elective	1
3325	Rural Entrepreneurship	6	15	Elective	1
3317	International Marketing	6	15	Elective	1
3206	Equine Breeding Management	6	15	Elective	2
3242	Negotiation in Business	6	15	Elective	2
	Total credits: BSc (Hons) Equine Health and Welfare		120		

BSc (Hons) Equine Health and Welfare (top up) (Part time)

The accumulation of credits to include a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6 through the assessment of taught modules as detailed below over two years of study.

Module code	Module title	Level	Credit value	Core/ Elective	Semester
Year 1					
3058	Equine Behaviour and Welfare	6	15	Core	1
3200	Equine Health	6	15	Core	2
	Elective 1	6	15	Elective	1
	Elective 2	6	15	Elective	2
	Total credits Year 1		60		
Year 2					
3332	Specialist Study	6	15	Core	1
3300	Research Project / Dissertation	6	30	Core	1+2
	Elective 3	6	15	Elective	2
Any 3 of the following elective modules					
3041	Corporate Finance	6	15	Elective	1
3078	Equine Performance Nutrition	6	15	Elective	1

3217	Advances in Training the Equine Athlete	6	15	Elective	1
3325	Rural Entrepreneurship	6	15	Elective	1
3317	International Marketing	6	15	Elective	1
3206	Equine Breeding Management	6	15	Elective	2
3242	Negotiation in Business	6	15	Elective	2
	Total credits: BSc (Hons) Equine Health and Welfare		120		

Section 3 – Programme overview and Programme Aims

The aims and objectives of the course are:

- To offer a flexible programme which enables students to select a study diet to suit interests and career aspirations. This flexibility is achieved on one hand through the selection of a relevant dissertation topic, and on the other via offering 45 credits of elective choice from a wide range of modules.
- To enable students to develop intellectual, professional and transferable skills through the medium of equine studies.
- Provide knowledge and skills necessary to enhance employability prospects at management level in a range of equine establishments.
- To develop students with a reflective outlook where the sustainability and longevity of the domestic horse is concerned, examined from 1) a health and welfare standpoint and 2) through the ocular of public opinion with reference to social licensing of equestrian activities.

Sustainability

Through a process of lectures visits and debates, students are encouraged to develop a reflective outlook where the sustainability and longevity of the domestic horse is concerned, examined from 1) a health and welfare standpoint and 2) through the ocular of public opinion with reference to social licensing of equestrian activities. In addition, the programme is informed by a Strategic Advisory Council chaired by Tim Hadaway (Director of Games and Championships for the FEI). A primary focus of this independent council is to ensure that key concepts such as sustainability are included in the programme. For example, the core module 3058 Equine Health and Welfare, contains learning experiences which focus upon sustainability of the domestic horse, both as a leisure animal but also as a provider of commodities such as meat and horse derived pharmaceutical products. On the other hand, module 3200 (Equine Health) explores key sustainability concepts linked to biosecurity. Finally, students may also choose elective modules which deal with broader sustainability applications with relevance to the horse including conservation grazing.

Section 4 – Programme intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Knowledge and Understanding

LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Recognition and management of disease/ injury causing agents in the horse	3200, 3241
2.	Equine production within relevant welfare guidelines and codes of practice	3058, 3200, 3241
3.	The brain as a mediator of behavioural output	3058, 3241
4.	Ethology and psychology as applied to feral and domestic equids	3058, 3200
5.	Diagnostic techniques with equine relevance	3200
6.	Legislation surrounding communicable diseases of domestic equids	3058, 3241
7.	Welfare assessment with reference to social licensing considerations	3058, 3200
Intellectual, Professional, Key skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Critically evaluate subject-specific theories, concepts and principles.	3058, 3200, 3241
2.	Reference appropriate sources.	3200, 3300, 3241
3.	Evaluate information from a wide range of sources, forming well supported original conclusions.	3200, 3300
4.	Synthesise information from a number of sources in order to obtain a coherent understanding.	3058, 3200, 3300, 3241
5.	Demonstrate advanced problem- solving skills.	3058, 3300
6.	Demonstrate skills for data handling, transformation and analysis.	3058, 3300
7.	Postulate and critically appraise arguments and theoretical constructs.	3058, 3300
Programme specific skills		
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	Module Code/s
1.	Assess and respond to equine communicable disease and biosecurity challenges across the equestrian sector	3200, 3300
2.	Apply recent scientific findings to the promotion of global equine health and wellbeing	3200, 3300, 3241
3.	Apply up to date industry / market intelligence to a range of business-based challenges in the equestrian sector	3300, 3241
4.	Assess and respond to welfare related issues in UK and international equid populations	3058, 3300

5.	Evaluate recent advances in equine behavioural science and apply these to strategies aimed at optimal performance and welfare status	3058, 3300
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Section 5 – Learning and Teaching Approach

Teaching and learning is achieved by:

Lectures

One of the methods of delivery of learning during the University-based phases of the programme will be by lectures. Lecturers aim to:

- Provide information
- Encourage students to pursue additional information on subjects covered
- Provide various views on subjects
- Explain difficult ideas and issues relating to particular areas
- Demonstrate ways in which students can widen and increase their depth of knowledge.

Seminars/ Tutorials

These will provide opportunities for dialogues between students themselves as well as lecturers. Exchanges of information and ideas can be achieved under the direction of tutors in seminars/tutorials. Through these meetings students should be able to:

- Express and share their views
- Develop their ability to participate in group activities.

Visiting Speakers

This course benefits from the diverse network of industry contacts at the RAU. Both research workers and key industry figures will be delivering sessions to students on this programme. Furthermore, there will be networking opportunities with all of the invited guests.

Visits

Visits to a range of local equestrian businesses will take place as part of the programme. These will aid the reinforcement and application of information learned through more formal study.

Practical activities & Enquiry-based Learning

The amount of hands on practical activity will depend largely on 1) the diet of electives selected by individuals and 2) the dissertation topic chosen. For example, there will be opportunity to become involved in the manipulation of DNA in the RAU labs as part of 3059E Equine Genetics. From a dissertation standpoint there are desk based study options and also opportunities to engage in cognitive testing, laboratory based nutrition, genetics or microbial analysis.

Academic Support Tutor

To guide students on the journey to becoming independent learners, each individual is assigned an Academic Support Tutor (AST). Meetings will be scheduled in each semester for you to meet with your AST.

Section 6 – Assessment Approach

A wide range of assessment techniques will be applied throughout the programme to test learning outcomes. These will include:

- Formal (time constrained) examinations
- Academic research reports
- Professional reports (depending upon elective choice)
- Case studies
- Group work exercises (depending upon elective choice)
- Essays
- Oral presentations

With reference to assessment load, the majority of core modules include a single point of summative assessment including one of the above. This enables in-depth study of a single area commensurate with level 6. Modules with a single point assessment are supported with formative exercises (formal and informal) which provide an opportunity for students to receive developmental feedback from the module leader prior to the completion of the module assessment.

	Level 6
Coursework	95 %
Exam	5%
Practical	0 %

Section 7 - Course work grading and Feedback

Assessment is an integral part of the learning experience of students. All University programmes are assessed by a range of assessment activities, each developed to provide the most appropriate means of demonstrating the student's achievement of a specified learning outcome. An assessment may assess more than one learning outcome.

The University operates standard pass criteria which can be found in the RAU Academic Regulations; (paragraphs 137 – 153).

The normal basis for awards will be the overall average score in the final assessment, graded as follows:

First Class Honours	70% and above
Second Class Honours upper division	60% - 69%
Second Class Honours lower division	50% - 59%
Third Class Honours	40% - 49%
Fail	0% - 39%

In addition to assigning a percentage mark to the work, the tutor adds comments; usually about the strengths and weaknesses of the piece as well as advice about improving the work. All assessment decisions are subject to internal moderation and external scrutiny by

the programme's External Examiners. Students must ensure they retain all coursework in case the External Examiner(s) wishes to see it.

Section 8 – Employability

General Factors Relating to Employability

This programme has been developed in conjunction with the School of Equine Management and Science Industry Advisory Council. The advisory council is comprised of industry leaders and experienced academics who oversee the design and ongoing development of equine courses. They have recommended a blend of science and industry based topics specifically tailored to produce employable graduates. Moreover, the programme features either a 15 or 35 week placement, providing real-life experience of the working environment, which further boosts employability. Finally, we are ideally situated to provide an excellent range of visits locations such as Cheltenham Racecourse, and top local trainers such as Fergal O'Brien. Together these provide essential career networking opportunities to our students.

Career Prospects

- Nutritionist working for a horse feed company
- A variety of roles within welfare focussed organisations such as the Horse Trust and World Horse Welfare
- Lecturer in equine science (with equine health, behaviour and welfare as specialist areas)
- Welfare focussed roles in equestrian sport governing bodies such as the British Horseracing Authority or FEI (Federation Equestrienne Internationale)
- Roles linked into Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT)
- Companies offering equine science services (i.e. Plusvital-Equinome)

Further Study Options

- Masters by Research (such as the MScR programme offered at RAU)
- Doctoral studies
- Taught Masters programmes

Section 9 – Graduate Framework

At the RAU we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known for. We aim for our graduates to be:

Collaborative

We believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.

Open-minded

We are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.

Resourceful

We adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.

Responsible

Individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.

Inclusive

We acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.



Section 10 – Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching

The programme is subject to the University’s rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 6 years. This process ensures that the programme engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

All programmes are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:

- External Examiner’s Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Course Representatives
- Annual Programme Monitoring