Purpose Statement

SEG Awards Level 3 Certificate in Small Animal Hydrotherapy – 610/4655/3

Overview

The SEG Awards Level 3 Certificate in Small Animal Hydrotherapy has been designed for learners who already have experience of working with small animals in an employed or voluntary capacity, in roles such as animal care assistant or veterinary nurse.

It is aimed at those who wish to build on their existing knowledge and skills to understand the benefits that hydrotherapy can have for canines and other small animals, with a number of conditions, and learn how to administer hydrotherapy to them.

Who is this qualification for?

The SEG Awards Level 3 Certificate in Small Animal Hydrotherapy is designed for those learners who are aged 18+. This is considered to be an appropriate age as the qualification is designed for learners who already have experience of working with small animals / canines in an employed or voluntary capacity.

Skills and Education Group Awards expects approved centres to recruit with integrity on the basis of a learner's ability to contribute to and successfully complete all the requirements of a unit(s) or the full qualification.

What does the qualification cover?

The SEG Awards Level 3 Certificate in Small Animal Hydrotherapy will update and continue professional competence when working with small animals in a hydrotherapy setting. The qualification will allow learners to gain the required skills, knowledge and behaviours to work professionally in small animal hydrotherapy alongside formalising the capability of those already working in the field.

The qualification meets legislation requirements ensuring that practitioners meet industry standards and conduct hydrotherapy in line with regulatory guidelines.

The qualification covers:

- **Introduction to Small Animal Hydrotherapy** - This unit provides Learners with an overview of small animal hydrotherapy. By understanding and managing risks, the Learner will explore the different elements essential in providing safe practice.

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The unit is not intended to provide Learners with the level of skill and competence required to administer hydrotherapy treatments and Learners should not engage in any manipulation techniques unless qualified to do so. It is always imperative that learners act within their area of professional competence and personal limitations.

This unit is a knowledge-based unit, with no physical requirements.

- **Small Animal Anatomy and Physiology – Skeletal and Muscular** - In this unit, Learners will explore the major elements of small animal structural anatomy essential for the hydrotherapist.

  To administer hydrotherapy treatment, it is vital that the hydrotherapist has a sound understanding of small animal structural anatomy and how the bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments work together to be able to link this to the individual treatment plan and effectively improve their knowledge of land-based movement and function.

  This unit is a knowledge-based unit, with no physical requirements.

- **Small Animal Anatomy and Physiology – Body Systems and Function** - In this unit, Learners will explore the major elements of small animal body systems which are essential for the hydrotherapist.

  To administer hydrotherapy treatment, it is vital that the hydrotherapist has a sound understanding of small animal systems to be able to take account of any clinical precautions in the plan for an individual and to be able to understand how the body systems function and enable movement.

  This unit is a knowledge-based unit, with no practical requirements.

- **Common Small Animal Conditions** - In this unit, Learners will explore how common small animal conditions and problems may impact on devising an individual hydrotherapy treatment programme. They will learn how to identify common conditions and problems and understand the considerations and management of small animal with specific challenges.

  The unit is not intended to provide Learners with the level of skill and competence required to diagnose conditions. It is imperative that at all times Learners act within their area of professional competence and personal limitations, seeking veterinary advice as appropriate.

  This unit is a knowledge-based unit, with no practical requirements.

- **Small Animal Health Status and First Aid** - In this unit, Learners will understand the importance of maintaining the health and welfare for each small animal patient in their care.

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Learners will be able to undertake health checks essential for safe practice.

Learners will be able to recognise and manage a variety of small animal first aid emergencies.

It is always imperative that learners act within their area of professional competence and personal limitations.

This is a knowledge and skill-based unit, requiring some physical demonstrations on dummy/live animals.

- **Small Animal Assessment Processes** - It is a legal requirement for hydrotherapists to have a current referral for each dog from a registered veterinary surgeon (RVS).

  Hydrotherapists need to be able to assess risk effectively, to include evaluating the small animal patient's suitability for hydrotherapy.

  This requires an assessment process to evaluate and provide a safe and a beneficial treatment plan using relevant risk assessment skills.

  This unit will enable the learner to understand the assessment process for safe practice. It is always imperative that learners act within their area of professional competence and personal limitations.

  This is a knowledge and skill-based unit, requiring some physical demonstrations.

- **Practical Administration of Small Animal Hydrotherapy Treatment in the Pool** - In this unit, learners are required to prepare the environment and small animal patients for hydrotherapy. Learners will need to demonstrate how to manage a small animal during a hydrotherapy session in the pool to include effective administration of treatment techniques, monitoring and therapeutic interaction for each small animal as appropriate.

  Learners will consider the importance of appropriate aftercare in relation to advice to the owner, completion of appropriate documentation and record keeping appropriate for each case in the pool.

  It is imperative that learners act within their professional scope of practice. Learners should not engage in any manipulation techniques unless qualified to do so.

  This is a knowledge and skill-based unit, requiring some physical demonstrations and 20 hours external practical hours to be completed.

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- **Small Animal Behaviour for Clinical Practice** - In this unit, Learners will explore the importance of understanding small animal behaviours in context of the hydrotherapy setting. By developing effective communication skills with the small animal in a therapeutic setting, the hydrotherapist will develop skills to address the mismatch of communication skill differences between humans and small animals and offer a safer environment to deliver the hydrotherapy treatment.

  This unit will enable the learner to understand the behaviours seen in a therapeutic setting essential for safe practice. It is always imperative that learners act within their area of professional competence and personal limitations by working within their scope of practice and this does not mean they are behaviourists.

  This unit is a knowledge-based unit, with no physical requirements.

- **Introduction to Aquatic Treadmill Practice** - In this unit, Learners will understand how to safely use an aquatic treadmill for small animal hydrotherapy. Learners will use the basics of small animal gait analysis before, during and after a hydrotherapy session.

  This unit will also include the learner administering treatment techniques, monitoring, evaluation, and therapeutic interaction for each small animal as appropriate. Learners will also consider the importance of appropriate aftercare in relation to advice to the owner. It is always imperative that learners act within their professional scope of practice. Learners should not engage in any manipulation techniques unless qualified to do so.

  Note: Preparation and after care of the small animal for a hydrotherapy treatment session is assessed in the pool unit.

  This unit is a knowledge and skill-based unit, requiring some physical demonstrations and 10 hours external practical hours to be completed.

- **Water Management** - In this unit, Learners will understand the importance of safe and effective water management for small animal hydrotherapy. Learners will explore the functions of the various pieces of plant and equipment, water chemistry, the relationship of the various chemicals used and management processes essential for safe practice.

  It is always imperative that learners act within current health and safety legislation and work within their professional scope of practice and understand their limitations.

  It is expected that learners will undertake the practical elements of this unit under the supervision of an appropriately qualified professional.

  This is a knowledge and skill-based unit, requiring some physical demonstrations and 5 hours external practical hours to be completed.

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- **Professional and Ethical Practice** - In this unit, Learners will explore the importance of professional, ethical and legal responsibilities for their hydrotherapy practice. An effective multidisciplinary team approach to optimise safe hydrotherapy practice is a part of this commitment.

  Learners are also required to commit to their own continuing professional development as part of their career journey.

  This unit is a knowledge and skill-based unit, requiring some physical demonstrations.

Optional Units

- **Introduction to Hydrotherapy for Felines** - The purpose of this unit is to be an introduction to hydrotherapy with felines. Learners should acquire the basic knowledge and understanding of felines to be able to prepare and undertake safe hydrotherapy sessions with felines; along with an insight into feline behaviour which allows for the safe treatment of felines.

  This optional unit is knowledge and skill-based unit, requiring some physical demonstrations.

- **Understanding Small Animal Massage** - In this unit, Learners will explore the advantages of performing massage on small animals, along with the techniques involved in the process. Learners will gain an insight into the positive effects of massage on typical injuries in small animals.

  Additionally, students will acquire knowledge about the diverse approaches to small animal massage.

  This optional unit is a knowledge-based unit, with no physical requirements.

Practical Hours Requirement

It is required for learners to complete 35 hours of practical training to obtain the skills required in the Level 3 Certificate in Small Animal Hydrotherapy. Learners will gain the required skills, knowledge and behaviours to work professionally in canine management alongside formalising the capability of those already working in the field.

The below units require practical training hours to be completed:

- Practical Administration of Small Animal Hydrotherapy Treatment in the Pool - 20 hours
- Introduction to Aquatic Treadmill Practice - 10 hours
- Water Management - 5 hours

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Skills and Education Group Awards have provided a Practical Training Log template for Learners to use to professionally log these hours however, use of this log is not mandatory.

Assessments

This qualification is to be completed by portfolio submission including physical demonstration on live animals throughout units, with clear evidencing linked to the relevant Assessment Criteria.

Unless stated otherwise, Skills and Education Group Awards require a minimum of three examples when learners are asked to demonstrate various methods or techniques. This requirement ensures that the learner shows a clear understanding of the assessment criteria.

Where physical demonstration is required, this needs to be observed and recorded by the tutor to support the overall qualification submission.

As detailed above, there is also a 35 hour requirement of practical hours, which need to be logged and submitted as part of the overall qualification submission.

What could this qualification lead to?

By obtaining this qualification, learners will have the necessary skills and knowledge to allow them the opportunity to potentially progress into employment within animal hydrotherapy.

This qualification goes hand in hand with a variety of Skills and Education Group Awards regulated qualifications within the Animal Care sector, supporting learners' knowledge and experience in animal hydrotherapy, which will support learners progress on to the following qualifications/areas:

- SEG Awards Level 4 Diploma in Canine Hydrotherapy

This qualification is a component of the membership requirements for professional bodies within the sector. Please see the 'Canine Hydrotherapy Trade Associations' section below.

Centres should be aware that Reasonable Adjustments, which may be permitted for assessment, may in some instances limit a learner's progression into the sector. Centres must, therefore, inform learners of any limits their learning difficulty may impose on future progression.

Further Information

Further information on the qualification can be found on the Skills and Education Group Awards website.