

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

for the award of

FdSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare

Managed by the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

delivered by Solihull College & University Centre

Date approved:	29 November 2023
Applies to students commencing study in:	September 2025

RECORD OF UPDATES

Date amended*	Nature of amendment**	Reason for amendment**

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Solihull College & University Centre
Language of study:	English
Final award/s:	FdSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare
Programme title:	FdSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare
Interim exit awards and award titles available:	CertHE
Brookes course code:	FDSC-ABW
UCAS code:	C866
JACS code:	D300
HECoS code:	100523
Mode of delivery: (Mode of study is given in brackets)	Face to face/on-campus/online (full-time) Face to face/on-campus/online (part-time)
Duration of study:	2 years full time, 3-4 years part time
Subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:	Biosciences (2023) Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences (2016)
Professional accreditation attached to the programme:	Accredited with Royal Society of Biology
Apprenticeship Standard:	n/a
University Regulations:	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

The FdSc in Animal Behaviour and Welfare provides students with a learning experience, which promotes the understanding of the essential theoretical and practical aspects of husbandry; practical animal husbandry and industry experience linked to the professional and academic skills module in addition to a range of animal science-based subjects; animal biology and animal behaviour and welfare. The scope of the compulsory modules allows the student the opportunity to acquire knowledge of a broad range of topics aligned to the animal management industry.

A key feature of the programme is the emphasis on practical opportunities for work-based learning, which takes advantage of the College's close links to the industry, including Cotswold Farm Park, Cotswold Wildlife Park, The Blue Cross, West Midlands Safari Park, Twycross Zoo, Drayton Manor Zoo, Dudley Zoo, the RSPCA, and Guide Dogs Association the police. In addition, practical learning is facilitated through our excellent award-winning animal facilities (the Animal Care Centre), which holds a wide range of domestic, exotic and farm animal species and the proximity to a wide range of external animal-based establishments.

The FdSc will enable students to develop interpersonal skills and to be critically informed and resourceful individuals, aware of the wider impact of land-based activities on the environment, society and organisational stakeholders.

Staff teaching on the programme have a range of expertise, professional experience and academic qualifications. Most teaching staff hold post-graduate qualifications and teaching qualifications. Several are Fellows of the Higher Education Academy.

2.2 Aims of the programme

- to enhance the animal management industry by providing skilled graduates knowledgeable and industry competent in current practices in animal behaviour and welfare;
- to provide a broad range of studies directly relevant to animal behaviour and welfare careers;
- to provide flexibility, knowledge, skills and motivation as a basis for technical and management careers and progression to Level 6 undergraduate studies and beyond;
- to develop students' ability through effective use and combination of the knowledge and skills gained in different parts of the programme and in the workplace;
- to develop a range of independent study skills, creativity and innovation, personal qualities and attitudes essential for reflective learning and practice leading to successful performance

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

List relevant programme learning outcomes...

- a. Understand the main scientific principles of animal behaviour and welfare, applying theory to develop own practical methods of animal training, health and husbandry.
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of a range of scientific, business and animal-based disciplines.
- c. Express ideas using appropriate technical, practical and subject-specific nomenclature and terminology.
- d. Demonstrate practical competence at industry standards in the essential components of handling and caring for a variety of animals.
- e. Actively contribute and communicate ideas using accepted formats for oral and poster presentations, essays and reports.
- f. Critically evaluate zoological collections and their roles in conservation and welfare.
- g. Appraise the international trade in exotic and domesticated animals in the context of welfare issues.
- h. Analyse the importance of nutrition and its relationship to animal anatomy and physiology.
- i. Assess the importance of breeding control methods including genetic evaluation with specific reference to behaviour and welfare.
- j. Explain the principles of starting up a business within the sector to meet the demand of the animal-based industry.

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

List relevant programme learning outcomes...

- a. Develop research skills that enhance the student's contribution to the animal industry.
- b. Design and implement a guided relevant research project with a specific focus on monitoring and improving animal behaviour and welfare within the industry.
- c. Collect, present, analyse and interpret statistical data to provide evidence-based animal management strategies.

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

List relevant programme learning outcomes...

- a. Set goals, manage time and tasks, and reflect on feedback to ensure that industry standards are achieved.
- b. Apply team-working skills in order to work productively and effectively with colleagues, members of the public, staff and authority figures.
- c. Communicate ideas and findings, both verbally and in writing, with clarity for a range of professional and non-professional audiences.
- d. Manage themselves, their own professional practice, in accordance with the professional, ethical and legal framework, recognising their own abilities and limitations.

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

List relevant programme learning outcomes...

- a. Apply IT resources effectively, including the internet and library databases, to search for and retrieve reliable information.
- b. Demonstrate effective use of IT programmes to enhance business management through data presentation and graphing.
- c. Demonstrate an understanding of the current and rapidly changing technologies used within the animal-based industry to enhance animal welfare.
- d. Engage productively with relevant on-line communities.
- e. Explore alternative routes for the dissemination of knowledge.

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

List relevant programme learning outcomes...

- a. Explore alternative husbandry and management strategies in relation to different international contexts, demonstrating due regard for welfare of animals and staff.
- b. Appreciate the role graduates play in the future of the animal industry both nationally and internationally.
- c. Evaluate the importance of companion and non-companion animals amongst different cultures and sectors of society.
- d. Develop an appreciation of different cultural and ethical perspectives towards animal training and welfare.

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam* ratio
ANBW4001	Animal Anatomy and Physiology	15	4	Compulsory	50:50
ANBW4002	Principles of Animal Behaviour	15	4	Compulsory	60:40
ANBW4003	Animal Ethics	15	4	Compulsory	100:00
ANBW4004	Animal Welfare	15	4	Compulsory	100:00
ANBW4005	Animal Biology	15	4	Compulsory	50:50
ANBW4006	Business Skills for the Animal Sector	15	4	Compulsory	100:00

ANBW4007	Professional and Academic Skills	15	4	Compulsory	80:20
ANBW4008	Practical Animal Husbandry	15	4	Compulsory	100:00
ANBW5001	Animal Breeding and Genetics	15	5	Compulsory	40:60
ANBW5002	Animal Nutrition	15	5	Compulsory	60:40
ANBW5003	Exotic Animal Trade	15	5	Compulsory	50:50
ANBW5004	Research Methods for Industry	30	5	Compulsory	100:00
ANBW5005	Animal Health and Disease	15	5	Compulsory	60:40
ANBW5006	Zoo Practices and Conservation	15	5	Compulsory	100:00
ANBW5007	Applied Animal Behaviour	15	5	Compulsory	100:00

4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Indicate any specific requirements for progression and awards in respect of the modules that must be passed, including any requirements that must be met to qualify for interim exit awards:

Level 4 Exit Qualification: CertHE Animal Behaviour and Welfare

120 credits of which at least 90 credits must be at level 4

Progression Requirements;

Students can trail 30 credits when progressing to Level 5, (year 2)

Level 5 Qualification: FdSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare

Requires 120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5

Progression Requirements;

Requires 120 credits at Level 4 and 120 credits at Level 5 required to progress to BSc (top-up) AB27

4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

No professional requirements are attached to this course. The Foundation Degree in Animal Behaviour and Welfare at Solihull College & University Centre is currently accredited by The Royal Society for Biology.

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Completion of the FdSc in Animal Behaviour and Welfare requires full-time students to pass 16 modules: with eight in each year spread over two semesters. Most modules run over a single semester, though some are double modules that will normally run over a whole year. Part time students normally complete the programme over 3-4years.

Teaching methods are varied and informed by contemporary practice in science teaching in higher education. All modules use the College Virtual Learning Environment (typically for locating course and module resources, but also for discussion forums, collaborative information gathering, journal logs and coursework submissions and feedback). This allows for inclusive learning and digital inclusion. Most modules use lectures (on average 22 hours for a single credit module) to provide a framework for learning and to introduce more difficult concepts. Practical work and fieldwork (on average 12 hours for a single credit module) are key features of most modules, enhancing learning

and enabling development of skills needed for a successful career and building upon essential employability skills. Other teaching methods include seminar discussions or debates, one-to-one or small group tutorials and problem-solving workshops. Reflective learning is encouraged through use of self, peer and staff formative feedback on assignments, group work and project work, and reflective diaries. All these activities develop academic literacy, critical self-awareness and personal literacy.

The integration of contemporary technologies (digital inclusion) and practical facilities allow undergraduates to develop their academic and vocational skills to industry standards (employability learning). Academic sessions (will explore definitions of sustainability, economic viability and the impact on the environment as well as cultural and global challenges) are widely supported using the wide range of species and extensive practical animal facilities, including farm livestock, exotic and companion animals. In addition, sessions are delivered using state of the art laboratories where students have access to practical activities such as dissections and have the opportunity to develop advanced laboratory skills. Students are required to complete a minimum of 240 hours industry experience to appreciate the relationship between theory and industry practices.

Research literacy is widely taught and practised throughout the modules culminating in the Industry Based Project module where students will be able to undertake a guided project focused on monitoring and improving animal behaviour and welfare within the industry.

Development of active citizenship attributes will form a part of the core ethos of the programme and will be considered in detail in discussions and debates around ethical and welfare topics to do with animal management in national and global contexts and when case studies and work experiences are discussed and reviewed. In particular the following modules lend themselves to the development of active citizenship: Animal Welfare, Animal Ethics, Exotic Animal Trade, International Zoo Practices and Animal Breeding and Genetics.

Summative assessments for modules are vocationally contextualised (assessment for, as and of learning, employability learning, inclusive learning) and are either combined coursework and examination or coursework only. Coursework assignments are diverse and develop research literacy and digital and information literacy. Indicative assignments include essays, laboratory and field notebooks, work diaries, practical reports, video diaries, seminar and poster presentations and problem-solving exercises. Where assessments include examinations, these will be scheduled at the end of the module.

Within some assessments students are able to tailor their submission to their own vocational area of interest (sustainability mindset). Solihull College & University Centre is committed to providing students with clear assessment criteria, and useful and timely feedback on all of their work (inclusive learning).

Programmes are characterised by an appropriate breadth and depth of content that is informed by relevant benchmark statements, the requirements of accrediting bodies and the latest research (economic and global challenges). Periodic reviews and regular discussions amongst programme staff and examiners ensure that the programme moves with the times. The quality of academic provision for students is assessed regularly by programme teams, principally through annual student evaluation of each module, and through critical evaluation of the annual external examiner reports. Dissemination and encouragement of good practice is facilitated through staff development activities undertaken in industry, through peer lesson observations, regular staff team meetings, and support from the Teaching and Learning Coaches at Solihull College and the OCAED (Oxford Centre for Academic Enhancement and Development) at Oxford Brookes University.

Knowledge and understanding in many areas of animal management represented by this programme are rapidly advancing. Staff ensure that the content of their teaching remains up-to-date by integrating,

where appropriate, the latest research findings in their lectures. In addition staff undertake annual CPD within the industry in order to keep abreast with current and contemporary practices. Articles from primary research journals are featured in student reading lists and students are encouraged to use primary research journals in preparing assignments. Students also have the opportunity to attend research-focused seminars delivered by invited speakers. These activities ensure the development of Academic and Research literacy.

Research literacy is widely taught and practised, and students will be able to develop a research-orientation to their studies through the experimental design and analysis and research project modules at level 5. Projects with industry focus are encouraged.

Active citizenship is encouraged and nurtured in the programme in a number of ways: the use in teaching of international text books and journals that expose UK students to non-UK perspectives; guest speakers and conferences expose students to different cultural perspectives; the presence of international students on our programmes. The course is designed to expose students to different cultural perspectives with the presence of international students on our programmes; and the inclusion of a variety of modules that focus on international practices at level 4 and 5 that encourage students to think beyond their ethical and cultural perspectives. The course adopts a 'safe' space where students are able to openly discuss their opinions about the ever-changing world.

The programme handbook provides a further commentary for students on how the Graduate Attributes (Academic literacy, Research literacy, Critical self-awareness and personal literacy, Digital and information literacy, Active citizenship) are developed through the programme. In addition, students attend regular tutorials with their academic tutor, which will focus on identifying module content and activities leading to their acquisition of Graduate Attributes, and their experience of them.

Student Support and Guidance

Solihull College and University Centre operates a proactive approach to personal tutoring. It recognises that students need to make various adjustments as they move into higher education, whether from school or employment.

Firstly, an induction process is conducted where initial course expectations, rules and regulations (via handbooks), enrolment and team building activities are undertaken in the week prior to commencing the course. This helps students gain an understanding of what the course involves and allows them to interact with their peers. Late enrollers are given a shorter but none the less comprehensive induction.

Secondly, students receive tuition within the Level 4 module; Professional and Academic Skills, covering a wide range of subjects including transferable skills, research skills, understanding assessment criteria and making the most of coursework feedback are planned throughout the academic year. Tutors monitor student progress regularly in 1:1 tutorials to check that they are maximising their potential. If they experience academic difficulties we can arrange for them to receive academic mentoring support. Close links between specific learning difficulty (SpLD) co-ordinators and tutors is utilised on a regular basis for tracking students with additional learning needs. If students are faced with challenges that affect their ability to study, such as illness, bereavement, depression, financial difficulties or accommodation issues, we will work with them in finding a way forward.

Thirdly, careers advice (academic and employment) is provided through-out the course and within the programme which enables inclusivity as well as employability skills (CV building, application forms, interview techniques)

There are also a number of general support services both at Solihull College and University Centre and Oxford Brookes that the students will have access to, including learning and personal support

services. These range from programme liaison managers, advisers, support co-ordinators, mental health team to specialist subject librarians, career advisers and other learning support staff all designed to ensure that students get the best out of their studies.

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entrants to the programme should normally possess the following:

Either:

- A minimum of two years' relevant work experience and a current role in an appropriate workplace setting

Or:

- A minimum of 80 UCAS points which could arise from the following:
- A BTEC Subsidiary Diploma, Diploma, Extended Diploma or other equivalent qualifications, such as GNVQ/NVQ, T-level or other Level 3 vocational qualifications.
- A minimum of one pass at A-level or 6-unit Vocational A-level, plus three passes at GCSE (grades A–C), or O-level (grades A–C) normally including Mathematics, English Language and Science.

English Language Requirements

Applicants whose first language is not English must also demonstrate that their level of English is acceptable, by achieving a score in a recognised test such as:

- British Council IELTS: normally minimum level 6.0 overall with a minimum of 6.0 in the reading and writing components;

Dispensation

Exceptionally, applicants who can show that they have qualifications or experience or both that demonstrate that they have knowledge and capabilities equivalent to those possessed by holders of the qualifications listed above may be admitted with dispensation from the requirement to possess those qualifications.

Students who obtain sufficient CAT points at level 4 in appropriate modules from alternative institutions may be granted entry at Level 5.

6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

If applicable (please indicate if not applicable).

NA

6.3 JOB ROLE/EMPLOYER PROFILE (DEGREE AND HIGHER APPRENTICESHIPS)

If applicable (please indicate if not applicable).

NA

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

The skills and knowledge gained on this course are directly relevant to a number of careers in the area of animal behaviour and welfare. Ensuring our graduates are more successful in their chosen occupations. Many of our graduates will find employment within careers such as animal scientists,

rehoming organisations, retail managers, nutritionists, journalists, lecturers, facility managers and animal business advisers. Previous students have gained employment in areas of the animal industries outlined and in addition some have progressed to self-employment or been employed as research technicians. Some are now doing PhDs.

An animal behaviour and welfare foundation degree also offers an excellent general university education and can provide a gateway to careers in management or other graduate level positions.

Graduates will have the opportunity to enrol on to the BSc (Hons) Animal Behaviour and Welfare programme, validated by Oxford Brookes University or similar animal related Top-Up courses at other institutions (acceptance onto these courses is always subject to individual HE providers admissions and APL policies).

Solihull College & University Centre recognises and understands the importance and value of work-based learning in enhancing academic standards and the learning opportunities for students. Students also benefit from increased employability prospects, or if already in employment it equips them with and develops their professional skills. Work placement develops networking skills, as well as embedding the relevance of the curriculum to employment. The work based learning also enables the students to develop professionalism and confidence.

Within the FdSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare programme the Level 4 Professional and Academic Skills module incorporates a work based learning logbook delivered using a blended learning approach. The unit will require Foundation degree students to undertake a work placement period of 240 hours or equivalent, in a relevant industrial situation. The College provides support to students in securing and undertaking their placements. The expectations are made clear during the induction period as well as throughout the course.

The emphasis is for full-time and part-time students to complete work-based learning during the first year of academic study. Given the nature of the land-based sector, this also allows students to experience the type of seasonal variances that they might expect from working in the industry

Further guidance as to the appropriateness of the placement in terms of developing the students' knowledge and experience is also provided by their tutor who will help the students to set relevant targets and monitor these as they become more responsible for their own learning. A work experience log book is available to both the students and employers. Feedback from industry on graduate skills is gained from placement evaluations. Visiting speakers from relevant industries/professions also help create links with potential employers and are encouraged through-out all the modules. Day trips and study tours to a variety of organisations allows students to have the opportunity to interact with industry.

