

Animal Care

We provide an exciting range of courses to help you gain animal care skills including handling. You will come into contact with a variety of animals and birds, from dogs and cats to birds of prey. As well as enjoying a range of practical and theory tasks during the course, you will go on work placements in veterinary surgeries, rescue centres, pet shops or other animal centres.

We also arrange day trips to the Blue Reef Aquarium, Longleat Safari Park and Marwell Zoo, which are informative and great fun. You will see a variety of fascinating animals, such as birds, fish and other wildlife, and learn about their requirements and habitats.

We regularly invite guest speakers – together with their animals – from organisations including the RSPCA, PDSA and dog agility teams.

Apprenticeship in Animal Care

Earn a real wage while gaining the benefits of high-quality training. Apprenticeships are offered in this area for anyone aged over 16. See page 16 for more details.



Entry Level

Animal Care

NPTC Certificate in Skills for Working Life
1 year

➔ Is it for me?

Through this course you will find out about animals and the correct way to handle and feed them.

➔ What will I study?

You will learn about animal care, including parts of the body, checking animal health, grooming and showing people around an animal enterprise. You will also learn how to work safely, lift and handle equipment and improve your CV.

➔ Extra info

You will go on trips, get close to domestic pets and learn about exotic animals.

➔ Entry requirements

You will have completed secondary education and be able to show that you have a keen interest in animals when you attend your interview.

➔ Leads on to...

You could progress to a higher level qualification, such as the Level 1 Diploma in Animal Care.

Level 1

Animal Care

Diploma in Land Based Studies
1 year

➔ Is it for me?

This course is an introduction to handling and looking after animals.

➔ What will I study?

Units include animal handling, animal accommodation and working in an animal care environment.

➔ Extra info

There is a mix of practical and theoretical work, and you will go on trips and visits. You will also gain qualifications in First Aid and Health & Safety and complete a period of work experience.

➔ Entry requirements

You will need 4 GCSEs at grade A*-E, including English and Maths. Alternatively you may have a full entry level qualification with literacy and numeracy at an appropriate level.

➔ Leads on to...

You could move onto the Level 2 Diploma in Animal Care or go into employment.

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Level 2

Animal Care

Diploma in Animal Care
1 year

➔ Is it for me?

This is a good opportunity to gain more experience of working with animals.

➔ What will I study?

You will learn about animal health and wellbeing, feeding and watering of animals, animal housing and much more. About 40% of your time is spent on work placement. You will also get qualifications in First Aid and Health & Safety and retake your GCSE in English and Maths if necessary.

➔ Extra info

You will go on trips, get close to domestic pets and learn about exotic animals such as snakes and lizards.

➔ Entry requirements

You will need 4 GCSE grades A*-D, including English and Maths, and an interest in animals. Alternatively you may have a full Level 1 qualification at merit grade with literacy and numeracy at an appropriate level, or a full Level 1 NVQ with literacy and numeracy at an appropriate level.

➔ Leads on to...

You could progress to an advanced level qualification such as the Advanced Modern Apprenticeship.

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Level 3

Animal Management

Diploma and Extended Diploma in Animal Care
1 year

➔ Is it for me?

You will gain a higher level of experience in animal care.

➔ What will I study?

You will learn about animal science, advanced care and wellbeing, business operations and animal husbandry, and achieve qualifications in First Aid and Health & Safety. About 40% of your time is spent on a work placement.

➔ Extra info

You will go on trips, get close to domestic pets and learn about exotic animals such as snakes, lizards and llamas.

➔ Entry requirements

You will need 4 GCSE grades A*-C, including English, Maths and preferably Science. Alternatively you may have a full Level 2 qualification at merit grade with literacy and numeracy at an appropriate level or a full Level 2 NVQ with literacy and numeracy at an appropriate level.

➔ Leads on to...

You could progress to a higher level qualification or go into employment.

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Career options:

- zoo assistant
- veterinary nurse
- kennel assistant
- dog groomer
- animal behaviourist
- pet shop assistant
- veterinary care assistant