

Open Awards Level 4 Diploma in

Equine Health, Massage and Manual Therapy (RQF)

Ofqual: 610/5344/2

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Version Control

v1.0	New qualification for March 2025.

About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards L4 Diploma in Equine Health, Massage and Manual Therapy (RQF)
Qualification Accreditation Number	610/5344/2
Sector	3 – Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
Level	Four (4)
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/08/2030

Purpose	B - Prepare for further learning or training and/or develop knowledge and/or skills in a subject area
Sub-Purpose	B2 - Prepare for further learning or training

Total Qualification Time/Guided Learning	
Total Qualification Time (hours)	1200
Guided Learning (hours)	290

Age Range and Restrictions	
Pre -16	x
16 – 18	x
18+	✓

Overview

The primary purpose of this qualification is to support learners to progress to the next level of learning. The secondary purpose is to provide trainee Equine Massage Therapists with the relevant knowledge and skills required to evidence their ability to continue to work with Equidae in this context.

It is designed to be the first stage of a 3-stage programme leading to a full Level 6 qualification (Open Awards Level 6 Diploma in Equine Physiotherapy (RQF)), that will meet the needs of learners aiming to work in the field of equine physiotherapy. It will provide the knowledge and skills required to progress onto a Level 5 in Therapy and Rehabilitation, then onto a Level 6 Diploma in Equine Physiotherapy.

This qualification is to only be delivered by The Open College of Equine Studies.

Grading

This qualification is graded Fail/ Pass/ Merit/ Distinction.

All assessment criteria in each of the units must be met to achieve a Pass.

Further information on the grading descriptors and grading arrangements is available in the Provider Guidance – Setting Specification and Grading booklet via the Open Awards portal.

Any Specified Entry Requirements

Learners are recommended to have the following entry requirements in order to be able to achieve the qualification.

- Be undertaking a suitable role (paid or voluntary) that gives access to the required hours of practice.
- Have a minimum of a Level 3 Diploma in Horse Management (grade MMP or above) or equivalent qualification.
- Have a minimum of five GCSEs at grade 9 to 4 or equivalent, to include English Language.
- Learners with English as a second language, or those who have not studied the final two years of school in English, must demonstrate capability in English at a standard commensurate with IELTS 5.5 or ESOL B2 Communicator (Pass).

Assessment Method Summary

Learners will be required to complete a portfolio of evidence set and marked by The Open College of Equine Studies (TOCES) and externally quality assured by Open Awards.

Learners must provide sufficient evidence that they have the required knowledge, skills and understanding of the assessment criteria and that it is their own work.

The assessment methods for this qualification are set out in the Provider Guidance document, in Section 4 Assessment Setting Specification and are summarised as:

- Written assignments (including literature reviews and information booklets)
- Practical assessments
- Video analysis
- Presentation (including posters)

TOCES **must** adhere to the Assessment Setting Specification when delivering this qualification.

Assessment practices must reflect the Equality and Diversity Policy of Open Awards.

Occupational Practical Study (Experience)

Over the full programme (Levels 4-6), learners must accrue and record a minimum of 1000 hours of practical study to gain RAMP accreditation. This Level 4 qualification includes 240 hours of practical study included within the Equine Manual Therapies and Practice unit.

Practical study can include:

- Practical assignment tasks
- Professional occupational experience
- Case studies
- Shadowing qualified equine physiotherapists
- Independent external work experience

Occupational experience helps learners gain experience in a working environment. Learners will complete several days of occupational experience which will consist of observing and shadowing a Veterinary Physiotherapist Practitioner.

Suitable practitioners must have:

- A minimum of 5 years' experience
- Qualifications at Level 6 or higher

Qualified Practitioners may be registered to varying associations/bodies (e.g. the Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners [RAMP], the Institute of Registered Veterinary & Animal Physiotherapists [IRVAP], the National Association of Veterinary Physiotherapists [NAVP], the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Animal Therapy [ACPAT] etc.).

Prior to starting the qualification, an assessment of the learner's real-life setting should be carried out by the Provider to ensure that all the above requirements are in place.

Qualification Structure

Rules of Combination

Credit Value of the Qualification:	120
Minimum Credits to be achieved at the Level of the Qualification:	120
Mandatory Units A:	120

Qualification Units

Mandatory Units (all units must be achieved to be awarded the qualification)

Unit Reference Number	Unit Name	Credits	Level
T/651/4938	Equine Anatomy and Physiology	30	Four (4)
K/651/4943	Equine Health Management	20	Four (4)
J/651/4942	Equine Manual Therapies and Practice	20	Four (4)
H/651/4941	Equine Veterinary Management	20	Four (4)
F/651/4940	Study and Research Skills in Higher Education	20	Four (4)
Y/651/4939	The Legal, Professional and Ethical Framework of Equine Health Care	10	Four (4)

Delivering this Qualification

How to Deliver

This qualification is delivered by The Open College of Equine Studies. For more information, please contact them at <https://www.equinestudies.co.uk>



Registering Learners

Learners must be registered within 60 working days of the course start date. Registrations are made via [the Portal](#).

Quality Assurance and Standardisation

Delivery of this qualification must be done so in accordance with Ofqual regulatory guidelines and in line with Open Awards' quality assurance processes. Please see our website for more information.

Provider Staff Requirements

It is expected that the Provider will have occupationally competent staff with relevant subject knowledge and/or sector experience for their role in the delivery of the units/qualification being offered. For this qualification, tutors should have recent relevant experience of the occupation or sector to at least occupational level 5 gained in the last 3 years or significant experience of the occupation or sector.

The Provider is responsible for ensuring that their staff are occupationally competent and have access to appropriate training and support. They are also responsible for notifying Open Awards of staff changes.

Occupational practical study is included in this qualification as it helps learners gain experience in a working environment. Learners will complete several days of occupational experience which will consist of observing and shadowing a therapeutic equine practitioner.

Suitable practitioners must have:

- A minimum of 5 years' experience
- Qualifications at Level 6 or higher

The Provider is responsible for ensuring that checks are carried out for therapeutic equine practitioners. They must ensure that they are qualified physiotherapists that are registered to associations/bodies such as:

- the Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners [RAMP],
- the Institute of Registered Veterinary & Animal Physiotherapists [IRVAP],
- the National Association of Veterinary Physiotherapists [NAVVP],
- the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Animal Therapy [ACPAT]

Assessment

This qualification has been designed around the principle that the learner will build evidence towards the achievement of the assessment criteria over a period of time. Each learner is required to build a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that all the assessment criteria associated with each unit has been met.

Tutors and assessors need to ensure that all evidence presented in a portfolio is:

Valid: it should clearly demonstrate the knowledge or skills that are set out in the assessment criteria. It should also clearly be the work of the learner.

Reliable: it will in general, produce the same range of responses from learners, as long as they are used in similar circumstances and with similar groups of learners.

Inclusive: so that no individual learner is excluded from the opportunity to show their achievement because of their individual background or experience.

Assessors are required to review and assess all learner evidence and must be satisfied that learners have achieved all learning outcomes and assessment criteria relating to the unit being assessed prior to deciding the learner has completed the unit. Assessors will also ensure that the evidence produced by the learner is their own work.

Assessors retain records (e.g. Feedback Sheets, Individual Progress Record, Group Progress Record) on behalf of the Provider which are made available and used by the Provider's Internal Quality Assurer and Open Awards' Quality Assurance Team.

Training and support

Open Awards offers a variety of training and support to Providers. Our online training and support is free of charge and can be accessed on the following link [ehttps://oalearn.org.uk/shop](https://oalearn.org.uk/shop). An everlasting coupon (PLUC code) will be issued to each Provider to gain free access to these resources.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

All Providers delivering Open Awards provision must operate rigorous internal quality assurance systems. A Provider must identify how they will internally quality assure and standardise their delivery and assessment before delivering a course.

External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Provider approval, compliance monitoring and external quality assurance is carried out by the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team/ External Quality Assurers who will confirm that the Provider is assessing to standard and ensure that there are robust internal quality assurance systems embedded. In addition, for this qualification the Provider must attend a Final Awarding Board that will assist in standardising the grading of learners' work.

Standardisation

There will be no need for external standardisation of this qualification as there is only one Provider offering this qualification. However, the maintenance of assessment standards will be monitored through quality assurance activity (e.g. compliance and EQA).

For further guidance on Quality Assurance processes, please refer to the [Provider Handbook](#).

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning is a method of assessment that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they may already possess. Evidence of learning must be sufficient, reliable and valid.

It is the responsibility of the Provider to inform Open Awards at registration of any exemptions and/or equivalences for which a claim may be made. These claims will be subject to external quality assurance by the Open Awards Quality Assurance Team.

For more information, please see our Recognition of Prior Learning Policy found on [the Portal](#).

Health and Safety

Due to the practical requirements of some of the units within this qualification, the Provider must ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place for both the activities and individual learners to ensure learner, equine and staff safety throughout the course. It is recommended that all learners complete a full induction, including relevant health and safety instruction.

Below is a suggested resource to support the Provider with appropriate guidelines for Health and Safety. This is not intended as an exhaustive list. It is important that centres follow their own internal health and safety and risk assessment processes and ensure they are following all relevant Health and Safety guidance.

- Health and Safety Executive – Waste <http://www.hse.gov.uk/waste>

Appendices and Links

The following documents can be viewed on the Open Awards [website](#):

1. Provider Handbook
2. Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy
3. Equality and Diversity Policy
4. Invoicing Policy
5. Privacy Policy

Further supporting information can be found on the Open Awards Portal.

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