



Change lives through learning

Open Awards Level 5 Diploma in

Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation (RQF)

Ofqual: 610/6226/1

Qualification Guide

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Version Control

v1.0	New qualification for September 2025

About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Level 5 Diploma in Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation (RQF)
Qualification Accreditation Number	610/6226/1
Sector	3 – Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
Level	Five (5)
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/07/2030

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

Total Qualification Time/Guided Learning	
Total Qualification Time (hours)	1200
Guided Learning (hours)	320

Age Range and Restrictions	
Pre -16	
16 – 18	
18+	✓
Any other restrictions specific to the qualification(s)	None

Overview

This is a vocationally related qualification, with the primary purpose of providing learners with a broad understanding of equine therapy and rehabilitation.

This qualification is designed to be the second of three qualifications in a suite leading to a Level 6 qualification in Equine Physiotherapy that will meet the needs of learners aiming to work in the field of equine physiotherapy. The qualification will provide the skills required to work as an equine healthcare paraprofessional and carry out non-invasive therapeutic techniques.

The secondary purpose is to provide trainee Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation workers with the relevant knowledge and skills required to evidence their ability to continue to work with *Equidae* in the field of therapy and rehabilitation.

This is a private qualification that can only be delivered by The Open College of Equine Studies. For more information, please contact them on +44 (0)1284 811 401 info@equinestudies.co.uk

Grading

This qualification is graded Fail/ Pass/ Merit/ Distinction. All assessment criteria must be met to achieve the qualification. For further information on the grading descriptors and aggregation of grades, please refer to the Provider Guidance document.

Any Specified Entry Requirements

It is anticipated that this qualification will, in most cases, be undertaken by a trainee Equine Massage Therapist progressing from the Open Awards Level 4 Diploma in Equine Health, Massage and Manual Therapy.

Learners will normally be aged 18 at the time of registration and will be required to meet the following entry requirements:

- Undertaking a suitable role (paid or voluntary) that gives access to the required hours of practice
- Open Awards Level 4 Diploma in Equine Health, Massage and Manual Therapy (RQF)

OR (Direct entry):

- A qualification in Equine Massage at level 4 or above, typically with a value of 120 credits or
- BSc or above in Equine Science or Veterinary Physiotherapy
- Non-native English speakers 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).

Direct entry students must also complete:

- Y/651/4939 The Legal, Professional, and Ethical Framework of Equine Health Care
- *J/651/4942 Equine Manual Therapies and Practice

**Not needed if applicant holds a Level 5 Equine Massage qualification, Level 6 Veterinary or Equine Physiotherapy qualification.*

Evidence of Accredited Prior Learning (APL) will be considered where relevant. However, Level 4 units will not be used as APL due to the level of demand being lower and not fulfilling the demands of this Level 5 qualification.

There is flexibility in the qualification entry requirements, and all potential learners will be considered individually on their academic and industrial experience. This may be particularly pertinent to adult learners who have significant industry experience but do not have formal qualifications. In these instances, TOCES must ensure that the learner is able to work at Level 5 and meet the requirements of the qualification as part of their information, advice and guidance processes.

Recommended Assessment Method Summary

Learners will be required to complete a portfolio of evidence set and marked by The Open College of Equine Studies 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.

Types of evidence could include:

- Written assignments (including tables and leaflets)
- Practical assessments
- Video Assessment

TOCES must adhere to the Assessment Setting Specifications in the Provider Guidance handbook.

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

For further information on assessments validated for this qualification, please refer to the Provider Guidance document.

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.

Practical study can include:

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

300 hours of practical work is completed within this Level 5 qualification.

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

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
H/651/7461	Applied Equine Therapy	30	Five
F/651/7460	Equine Biomechanics	20	Five
L/651/7464	Equine Exercise and Movement Therapy	30	Five
J/651/7462	Equine Orthopaedics and Neurology	20	Five
K/651/7463	Equine Thermal, Magnetic and Electro Therapies	20	Five

Delivering this Qualification

How to Deliver

This qualification is a private qualification and can only be delivered by The Open College of Equine Studies. For more information, please contact them on +44 (0)1284 811 401 and info@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 Providers will have occupationally competent staff with relevant subject knowledge and/or sector experience for their role in the delivery of the units/qualifications being offered.

For this qualification, tutors and internal quality assurers 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. In addition, assessors should hold a relevant D32/ D33/ A1/ AQA unit(s) (or equivalent), Level 3 Award in Education and Training and appropriate occupational competence. Internal quality assurers should hold the relevant D34/ V1/ IQA unit(s) (or equivalent), Level 3 Award in Education and Training.

Providers are 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 experience helps learners gain experience in a working environment. Learners will complete a minimum of two 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

Qualified physiotherapists 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.).

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.

Practical Assessments

All learners will complete practical hands-on training at the College's facilities, working under the supervision of the Therapy and Rehabilitation Manager and other practitioners, practising a range of therapeutic techniques.

Distance learning material will be supplemented with attendance at Study Weeks during which lectures will be delivered by subject experts. Learners will undertake 'hands-on' practical training whilst on Study Weeks.

Practical assessments are included in four of the five units of the Level 5 qualification. These practical assessments will take place during the scheduled study weeks which are comprised of:

- UK based learners have 14 x 4 full day study weeks
- International learners have 4 x 14 full-day study blocks whilst they are in England. Each block will take place over a three-week period.

International students complete the full breadth of the course spanning Level 4-6 over a four-year period. Within this time, learners will have a total of four study blocks. TOCES has designed the course to ensure that both UK and International students have an equal number of study days allocated to the completion of practical assessments.

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 <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 and Standardisation, 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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