



Change lives through learning

Open Awards Level 6 Diploma in

Equine Physiotherapy (RQF)

Ofqual: 610/6891/3

Qualification Guide

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Version Control

v1.0	New qualification for January 2026
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About the Qualification

Title	Open Awards Level 6 Diploma in Equine Physiotherapy (RQF)
Qualification Accreditation Number	610/6891/3
Sector	3 – Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
Level	Six (6)
Funding	Please click here for more information
Pricing Information	Please click here for more information
Review Date	31/08/2030

Purpose	D – Confirm occupational competence and/or “license to practice”
Sub-Purpose	D1 – Confirm competence in an occupational role to the standards required

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 Level 6 qualification is an occupational related qualification designed to meet the needs of learners aiming to work in the field of equine physiotherapy, providing the skills required to work as an equine healthcare paraprofessional and carry out non-invasive therapeutic techniques.

This is a private qualification delivered exclusively by The Open College of Equine Studies. For more information, please contact them on +44 (0)1284 811 401 or 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 for the grading methodology and setting specification.

Referrals, Resubmissions and Resits

If the learner is referred on an assessment on their first attempt, they will be given one further opportunity to resubmit the assessment

Assessment criteria (AC) should not be graded individually. If the learner fails to meet all AC then it should be returned with indication of what AC have been achieved without an idea of overall grade (resubmission). The learner resubmits with additional evidence and then is assessed again against the grade descriptors.

The rationale for allowing a resubmission is to prevent disadvantaging the learner for minor oversights if they could still achieve a merit or distinction grade based on the quality of work in first submission. Therefore, a learner who resubmits specific assessment criteria may still be awarded a higher grade for the unit as a whole based on the overall grade quality of their work.

A resit can be offered if all assessment criteria (AC) are not met after resubmission. The assignment **must** be substantially different to the original and should address only the AC not met in the original submission.

Resit marks are capped to a 'pass' for both ungraded and graded assessment criteria. This is to prevent assessments being retaken to increase the learner grade.

Recommended Assessment Method Summary

The qualification is assessed by a portfolio of evidence and will include a final 8000-word dissertation thesis. As this is a competence-based qualification, learners will be acquiring the knowledge and skills through either real-life experience. The use of simulated experience is not permitted for this qualification. Therefore, learners should be in either paid or voluntary work where they can gain the necessary skills and minimum of 460 practice hours.

Types of evidence could include:

- Learner workbooks
- Case Studies workbook
- Literature review
- Designing and carrying out an equine rehabilitation programme
- Final Practical Assessments (observations)
- Online discussion
- Presentation
- Research proposal
- Dissertation Thesis

Any Specified Entry Requirements

The minimum age for entry to this qualification is 19 at the point of registration.

Learners are required to meet the following entry requirements:

Open Awards Level 5 Diploma in Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation (RQF)

OR (Direct entry):

- A qualification in Equine Massage at level 5 or above, typically with a value of 120 credits or
- BSc or above in Veterinary Medicine, or Veterinary Physiotherapy
- 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).

Direct entry learners must also complete the following as a condition of entry. The units can be completed with TOCES before entry onto the Level 6 as a regulated unit delivery course, accredited through Open Awards. An Open Awards course certificate will be required as evidence of meeting entry requirements for the Level 6 qualification.

Veterinary Medicine	Veterinary Physiotherapy
Unit 4.6 Manual Therapies	K/651/7463 Thermal, Magnetic and Electro Therapies
K/651/7463 Thermal, Magnetic and Electro Therapies	

Evidence of Accredited Prior Learning (APL) will be considered where relevant.

Dissertation Thesis

The final unit (Independent Research Project) will be assessed by the completion of a dissertation thesis.

All learners will be required to submit a research project proposal which must be approved prior to the learner commencing any primary research. The research project proposal will have an upper word limit of 2000 words.

Once the research project proposal is approved, the learner will begin their dissertation research project and will be expected to work closely with their project supervisor on a needs-led basis.

All learners will have the opportunity to submit a draft version of their dissertation one month prior to the final submission date. Feed-forward guidance will be provided by the project supervisor, and learners will be able to make any required changes prior to the final submission deadline.

The dissertation thesis word count will be 8000 words excluding appendices.

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

Practice Hours (Experience)

Over the full programme (Levels 4-6), learners must accrue and record a minimum of 1000 hours of practical study/ practice hours to gain RAMP accreditation.

Practical study can include:

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

A minimum of 460 hours of practical work will be completed in fulfilment of the Level 6 qualification.

Progression Opportunities

Progression opportunities include working as an Equine Physiotherapist or as an equine healthcare paraprofessional carrying out non-invasive therapeutic techniques. As the qualification is open to UK and international learners, progression opportunities are expected to be into self-employed roles within the learners' own country.

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
A/651/9006	Applied Equine Physiotherapy	30	6
H/651/9009	Contemporary Issues in Equine Health and Welfare	20	6
Y/651/9005	Further Applied Equine Therapy and Rehabilitation	30	6
R/651/9012	Independent Research Project	30	6
K/651/9000	Research Methods	10	6

The Contemporary Issues in Equine Health and Welfare unit has Mandatory Content. For this unit the mandatory content **must** be taught as part of the curriculum. This is because it underpins the assessment criteria and fill any gaps in knowledge. It will not be summatively assessed, nor will it form part of the assessment criteria or grading decisions. It may, however, be assessed formatively by TOCES or implicitly where it underpins a specific assessment criterion. This content is outlined in the unit specification. Evidence of this is not required for the achievement of the qualification

Delivering this Qualification

How to Deliver

This qualification is delivered by The Open College of Equine Studies. For more information, please contact them on +44 (0)1284 811 401
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. For best practice, 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.

Suitable practitioners must have:

- A minimum of 5 years' experience
- Qualifications at Level 6 or higher in a relevant subject area

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

Open Awards units and qualifications have 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. In addition, for this qualification the Provider must attend a Final Awarding Board that will assist in standardising the grading of learners' work.

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.

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, Final Awarding Boards and EQA).

For further guidance on these matters, please refer to the [Provider Handbook](#).

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement (RPL)

RPL 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, Providers must ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place for both the activities and individual learners to ensure learner 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/>

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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