

Module specification

When printed this becomes an uncontrolled document. Please access the Module Directory for the most up to date version by clicking on the following link: [Module directory](#)

Module Code	ANM521
Module Title	Canine Learning and Training
Level	5
Credit value	20
Faculty	Faculty of Social and Life Sciences
HECoS Code	100522
Cost Code	GAAN
Pre-requisite module	NA

Programmes in which module to be offered

Programme title	Core/Optional/Standalone
FdSc Canine Behaviour Training and Performance	Core

Breakdown of module hours

Learning and teaching hours	15 hrs
Placement tutor support hours	0 hrs
Supervised learning hours e.g. practical classes, workshops	15 hrs
Project supervision hours	0 hrs
Active learning and teaching hours total	30 hrs
Placement hours	0 hrs
Guided independent study hours	170 hrs
Module duration (Total hours)	200 hrs

Module aims

This module develops students' critical understanding of animal learning theory and its ethical application within canine training contexts. Students examine the scientific principles underpinning behaviour change, including associative and non-associative learning processes, and analyse how these inform effective, welfare-centred training approaches. Through practical application and reflective evaluation, students design, implement and review structured training plans, using training exercises as a framework to apply behavioural science and evidence-based behaviour modification strategies.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the end of this module, students will be able to:

1	Evaluate key principles of animal learning theory, including classical and operant conditioning, and their application to canine training contexts.
2	Demonstrate the application of learning theory through structured training exercises in simulated learning environments.
3	Design and implement structured training plans to achieve complex behavioural outcomes in dogs.
4	Record and evaluate behavioural performance and training progress using appropriate monitoring and reflective methods

Assessment

Indicative Assessment Tasks:

This section outlines the type of assessment task the student will be expected to complete as part of the module. More details will be made available in the relevant academic year module handbook.

Assessment 1: Practical: Students will demonstrate the application of learning theory through structured behavioural tasks using the Portable Operant Research and Teaching Lab (PORTL).

Assessment 2: Portfolio: Students will design, implement and evaluate a canine training plan, justifying their approach with reference to learning theory, behavioural science and welfare considerations.

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Duration/Word Count	Weighting (%)	Alternative assessment, if applicable
1	2	Practical	15 min	25%	N/A
2	1,3,4	Portfolio	2000	75%	N/A

Derogations

N/A

Learning and Teaching Strategies

This module is delivered through a blended approach incorporating lectures, workshops and practical sessions within an Active Learning Framework (ALF). The approach adopts a high

challenge, high support model, enabling students to engage actively with learning theory and its application to canine training.

Practical activities using the Portable Operant Research and Teaching Lab (PORTL) support the demonstration and application of key learning principles, progressing to the design and implementation of training plans with dogs. Teaching is informed by current research in animal behaviour and training science, and aligned with relevant professional standards and guidance, including those of the Animal Behaviour and Training Council (ABTC) and CCAB Certification Ltd, supporting the development of evidence-based, welfare-centred practice.

Welsh Elements

Welsh language and cultural elements will be embedded within the module where appropriate. Students will be encouraged to engage with Welsh terminology relevant to canine training and behaviour, particularly in professional communication with clients and stakeholders in Wales. Opportunities will be provided for students to submit assessments in Welsh in accordance with University policy. Where appropriate, examples and case studies will reflect the Welsh context, including animal welfare legislation, professional practice and the role of dogs within Welsh communities and working environments.

Students can present their work, access forms, resources, email correspondence, work placements and personal tutorials in Welsh.

Indicative Syllabus Outline

- Application of associative and non-associative learning processes, including classical and operant conditioning, reinforcement schedules, motivating operations, Premack's principle, and the ABC and four-term contingency models
- Concepts of stimulus control, including cues, modifier cues and poisoned cues
- Behaviour chains, match-to-sample learning, errorless learning and concept learning
- Factors influencing the development and maintenance of behaviour
- Application of training techniques, including shaping, prompting, luring, moulding, capturing, differential reinforcement and extinction
- Behaviour modification and preventative behavioural strategies
- Development and implementation of structured training plans across applied contexts, including assistance dogs, cooperative care, enrichment and rescue environments
- Trainer skills and professional practice, including training environment design, health and safety and risk assessment
- Ethical and welfare-centred training approaches, including Least Intrusive Minimally Aversive (LIMA) frameworks
- Contemporary behaviour analytic perspectives, including approaches emphasising learner agency, control, choice and environmental arrangement (LIFE approach)
- Critical evaluation of training paradigms and their welfare implications, including limitations of punishment-based approaches
- Methods for measuring and recording behaviour
- Maintenance of training records and use of reflective practice to evaluate progress and revise training plans

- Application of reflective practice to support effective behaviour change

Indicative Bibliography

Please note the essential reads and other indicative reading are subject to annual review and update.

Essential Reads

Rosales-Ruiz, J., Hunter, M., (2019), PORTL The Portable Operant Research and Teaching

Lab. USA: Behavior Explorer.

Chance, P. and Furlong, E., (2022) Learning and Behavior: Active Learning Edition (8th ed)
Boston MA: Cengage Learning, Inc

Administrative Information

For office use only	
Initial approval date	April 2026
With effect from date	September 2026
Date and details of revision	
Version number	1