

Module specification

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Module Code	VEN503
Module Title	Emergency, Critical Care and Specialised Nursing
Level	5
Credit value	20
Faculty	FSLS
HECoS Code	100532
Cost Code	GAAN
Pre-requisite module	N/A

Programmes in which module to be offered

Programme title	Core/Optional/Standalone
FdSc Veterinary Nursing	Core

Breakdown of module hours

Learning and teaching hours	30 hrs
Placement tutor support hours	0 hrs
Supervised learning hours e.g. practical classes, workshops	0 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

The diverse nature of veterinary practices offers veterinary nurses exciting opportunities in the field of emergency, critical care and specialised nursing. This module aims to develop the student's critical thinking process, knowledge and understanding, which is required for delivering a high level of nursing care for patients with complex needs. This module builds on the knowledge and understanding that students have acquired and developed from other modules, as well as the experiences they have gained from being in a work-based learning placement.

** Range of species in addition to cats and dogs - holders of veterinary nursing degrees should be competent in providing nursing care to animals that are commonly kept as pets in the UK. This will include rabbits, small mammals and appropriate species of reptiles and birds. In addition to the above animals, a level of basic knowledge and competence in the husbandry and nursing care of horses, endemic UK wildlife and exotic species not commonly seen in the UK*
<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmarkstatement-veterinary-nursing>

Module Learning Outcomes

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

1	Evaluate the critical thinking process for the multidisciplinary team.
2	Assess and triage patients in emergency and critical care situations.
3	Evaluate the monitoring process for animals in high dependency and Intensive care units.
4	Review nursing interventions and strategies for a range of patients with complex needs

RCVS Standards	Day One Competences (DOC)	Day One Skills (DOS)
Learning outcomes for this module are mapped to the following RCVS day one competences (DOC) and day one skills (DOS)	8, 12, 14, 18, 20, 27, 34	2.9, 2.10, 2.12, 4.11, 4.13, 4.16

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: Students will select a case from placement involving a critical care patient and evaluate the nursing care strategies implemented. This will include consideration of patient assessment, monitoring, and interventions used to support patient stability and recovery, with reference to evidence-based practice.

Assessment 2: In-class test (unseen, 2 hours, MCQs and short and long problem-based questions)

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Duration/Word Count	Weighting (%)	Alternative assessment, if applicable
1	4	Written Assignment	2000	50	N/A
2	1, 2, 3	In-class test	120 minutes	50	N/A

Derogations

Students are required to pass all assessment elements with a minimum mark of 40% for all modules.

Learning and Teaching Strategies

Learning and teaching on this module will be underpinned by the University's Active Learning Framework (ALF) and will adopt a student-centred, practice-focused approach that supports the development of placement readiness, professional judgement and evidence-based veterinary nursing practice.

A range of learning and teaching methods will be utilised, including:

- Interactive lectures
- Seminars and workshops
- Scenario-based learning activities
- Guided communication activities and role-play,
- Directed academic skills sessions

Opportunities for formative learning and feedback will be embedded throughout the module to support skill development and prepare students for summative assessment and placement expectations, including communication role play / risk assessment activity / study skill activities (literature searches, peer review writing tasks). A range of modalities will be used by the tutor to provide feedback to students.

Learning and teaching will take place in classroom and simulated clinical environments where appropriate, enabling students to make clear connections between theory, professional behaviour and practice.

Welsh Elements

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

Indicative Syllabus Outline

Learning Outcome 1

- Critical thinking, clinical reasoning and use of mental models
- Evidence-based nursing for problem solving and evaluation
- Effective communication and collaboration within the multidisciplinary team
- Client communication in complex situations, including poor outcomes
- Emotional intelligence, empathy and professional resilience
- Compassion fatigue and wellbeing in veterinary practice

Learning Outcome 2

- Triage and initial patient assessment
- Primary and secondary survey
- Rule of 20
- ICU and HDU principles
- Accurate recording and communication with clients

Learning Outcome 3

- Patient monitoring (physical, device-based and clinical pathology)
- Monitoring equipment and integration of monitoring data
- Accurate recording and documentation
- Recognition and management of complications
- Nutritional support (WSAVA guidelines)
- Blood transfusions
- Pain assessment and scoring systems

Learning Outcome 4

- Patient care from admission through to recovery
- Pain management (pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches)
- Introduction to pharmacology and pharmacodynamics
- Multidisciplinary team involvement
- Nursing strategies for emergency and critical care conditions (e.g. trauma, cardiovascular, respiratory, metabolic, endocrine, urological, neurological, toxicology, oncology, neonatal)
- Cardiopulmonary arrest (CPA), CPR and crash kit use
- Adverse drug reactions (VMD)
- Nursing care planning, care bundles and effective handovers

Indicative Bibliography

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

Essential reading:

Kirby, R. and Linklater, A. (eds.) (2017) *Monitoring and intervention for the critically ill small animal*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Martini-Johnson, L. (2020) *Applied pharmacology for veterinary technicians*. 6th edn. Philadelphia: Elsevier.

Steele, A.M. (2025) *Battaglia & Steele's small animal emergency and critical care for veterinary technicians*. 5th edn. Philadelphia: Saunders.

Other indicative reading:

Aspinall, V. (2019) *Clinical procedures in veterinary nursing*. 4th edn. Edinburgh: Elsevier.

Cooper, B., Turner, L. and Mullineaux, E. (2020) *BSAVA textbook of veterinary nursing*. 6th edn. Gloucester: British Small Animal Veterinary Association.

King, L.G. and Boag, L. (eds.) (2018) *BSAVA manual of canine and feline emergency and critical care*. Gloucester: British Small Animal Veterinary Association.

Administrative Information

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