

MSc Applied Animal Behaviour and Training



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Subject	Level	Study Mode	Duration	Start Date
Animal Sciences	Master's Degree (Level 7)	Full-Time	1 year full-time/2 years part-time	September 2025

The Course

Do you want to stand out as an exceptional animal trainer or behaviour advisor? Do you want to develop your knowledge of animal behaviour and training to an outstanding level? Do you want a comprehensive and critical understanding of the ethical, legal and welfare issues related to animal management? Then our unique Masters programme will equip you with the knowledge and skills to stand out in an increasingly populated field.

Course Aims

- > Give you analytical and comprehensive understanding of animal behaviour research, > learning theories and the complex ethics surrounding these.
- > Allow you to select and apply appropriate and humane techniques for the training and > behaviour modification of animals, which is underpinned by current theory > and accurate mechanical skills.
- > Enable you to be independent thinking and able to communicate confidently > and effectively within a professional and research context.
- > Develop your analytical and systematic thought processes, as appropriate for working > and researching within the animal and related industries.

What You Will Study

Year 1

- > FULL TIME (credits):
- > Research Methods (20)
- > Animal Behaviour Theories (20)
- > Health, Welfare and Ethics (20)
- > Learning Theories and Training Methods (20)
- > Animal Behaviour Consulting (20)
- > Human-Animal Interactions and Psychology (20)
- > Independent Research Project (60)
- > PART TIME YEAR 1 (credits):
- > Research Methods (20)
- > Animal Behaviour Theories (20)
- > Health, Welfare and Ethics (20)
- > Learning Theories and Training Methods (20)

Year 2

- > PART TIME YEAR 2 (credits):
- > Animal Behaviour Consulting (20)
- > Human-Animal Interactions and Psychology (20)
- > Independent Research Project (60)

Entry Requirements

You will need:

A minimum of a 2.2 honours degree, ideally in biological science subjects or equivalent, but work experience can be taken into account if an unrelated qualification is held.

An appropriate academic reference

Life and/or experience of non-traditional students will be taken into account when considering applications. The successful completion of an entry task may be required when considering applications without the required formal entry qualifications.

If your first language is not English, or a Tier 4 student visa to study is required and GCSE English at grade 4/C or equivalent is not held, you will need to evidence your English language proficiency level, such as International English Language Testing System (IELTS) 6.0 overall (with a minimum 5.5 in each skill).

Teaching and Learning Approach

This programme is delivered with a variety of learning and teaching approaches to include all students' learning preferences. For all modules, theory lectures are delivered that aim to deliver the core content and provide the underpinning knowledge. Using the webinar software, staff are able to monitor engagement to ensure participations. To complement all theory lectures, you will have asynchronous seminars that are used to reinforce concepts delivered theoretically. Online webinars focus on facilitating a student-centred approach to enhance the independent learning that takes place outside of the webinar lecture sessions.

Time Required on Campus

2025-26 ENTRY Full-Time: You will study four modules in the first semester (two evenings, 3 hours teaching between 6-9pm) and two in the second semester (one evening, 6-9pm), alongside completion of the Independent Research Project. This represents approximately six hours of live webinars per week plus a similar amount of time dedicated to directed tasks and tutorials. Additional to this you will book individual tutorials with your Programme Leader. You will have four individual tutorials in an academic year. Attendance is required at three block sessions throughout the year. For two of these, attendance is encouraged onsite at University Centre Bishop Burton. However alternative provision will be offered if you are unable to attend. One session will be online only. These dates for the 2025/26 academic year are as follows: - Thursday 18 - Saturday 20 September 2025 onsite - Saturday 11 & Sunday 12 October 2025 online attendance only - Saturday 28 February & Sunday 1 March 2026 - onsite Students must also be available during the week of 25 May 2026 (Tuesday Friday) to deliver their Independent Research Project presentations online. You are expected to complete a significant amount of private study in addition to class time and directed study (approximately 20 - 40 hours per week). **Part-Time:** You will study two modules per semester except during the final semester when the focus is on completion of the Independent Research Project. This represents approximately three hours of live webinars per week plus a similar amount of time dedicated to directed tasks and tutorials. Webinars run one night per week. In the first year, attendance is required at two block sessions throughout the year. In person attendance is encouraged onsite at University Centre Bishop Burton. However alternative provision will be offered if you are unable to attend. These dates for the 2025/26 academic year are as follows: - Thursday 18 - Saturday 20 September 2025 onsite - Saturday 28 February & Sunday 1 March 2026 - onsite There will be one online block session in the second year plus one week where students need to be available to deliver their Independent Research Project presentation. Dates will be confirmed towards the end of your first year but are likely to be around October 2026 (online weekend) and May 2027 (online week). You are expected to complete a significant amount of private study in addition to class time (approximately 10 - 20 hours per week).

Work Experience

Relevant extra-curricular activity and/or work experience is encouraged to enhance your learning.

How You're Assessed

The programme incorporates a variety of assessment methods across each academic year. The mix of assessments will seek to challenge and evaluate your knowledge, understanding and skills. Assessments for this programme include written assignments, webinar presentations, oral presentations, practical reports and demonstrations, evaluations and role-plays. Tutors provide support for assessments in class. There will also be opportunity for formative assessment and feedback during the delivery of each module to monitor learning, and to support and prepare you for the summative assessments which make up the module. Feedback on your summative assessments will be given which will allow you to guide efforts and activities in subsequent modules. Staff aim to return assessed work within a 20 working day timeframe (not including holidays) so that you can most benefit from the feedback.

Clothing, Equipment and Additional Costs

- > Regular access to a computer with a reliable broadband internet connection in order to participate in webinars, download learning materials, watch recorded webinars and submit assignments.
- > A headset with microphone will be required for participation in webinars and on-line tutorials.
- > Appropriate software is required: Microsoft Office and OpenOffice (freeware) are the only office suites supported.
- > Sturdy footwear suitable for practical sessions.
- > The college has a strict policy of not allowing work boots inside college buildings you will need to have alternative footwear (shoes or trainers) to attend lectures and tutorials.
- > Training equipment will be required (i.e. clicker and target stick) for the training related modules and you will need to have regular (several times per week) access to an animal for training for the practical training assessment.
- > A wide range of resources are available for use both on and offsite for dissertation projects but it may not be possible to purchase/service all requests, therefore students need to be aware that they may need to self-fund some elements.
- > Students will need to fund their own travel, accommodation and food.

- > Dogs are not required to attend the college for the programme and therefore are not permitted on the college campus. However, if you do need to bring your dog to the block sessions, the College has a commercial boarding kennels. To book, call 01964 553138 or email kennels@bishopburton.ac.uk. Payment for the boarding kennels is required if you decide to bring your dog to the block sessions.
- > For any student that requires the use of an assistance dog, prior arrangements must be made with the Programme Leader to ensure suitable facilities and provision is made. Appropriate insurance must be held and evidenced before your dog is permitted onsite.
- > On successful completion of the programme, you will have the opportunity to graduate at a ceremony wearing formal dress. The hire of the formal dress is an additional cost.

Progression

Those who wish to continue their studies can do so by taking a PhD.

Careers

Upon graduating from this programme you could seek management positions in animal training, zoo keeping and education, environmental enrichment co-ordinator, education and lecturing, behaviour advisor/consultant, companion animal trainer, training animals for commercial work, animal rescue and rehabilitation, and assistance dog trainer.