

1. Module Facts and Details

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| Module Title: | Fur and feathers and scales, oh my! A closer look at the 'domestic' diverse species |
| Module Synopsis: | This module will introduce students to the fascinating diversity of some of the more unusual domesticated species. Across six interactive sessions, students will explore the unique anatomy, physiology and husbandry requirements of rodents, rabbits, birds and reptiles. The module aims to equip students with the knowledge to recognise species specific requirements and apply these to promote optimal welfare in a range of domestic contexts. |
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| Academic Year: | 25/26 |
| Faculty: | Health and Life Sciences |
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| Module Coordinator: | Module Leader: Rosie MacDiarmid Staff who will deliver sessions on the module: Rosie MacDiarmid. Also potentially Mel Chapman, Joe McQuade (EXTERNAL – reptile handling) |
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| Module Overview: | Attendance Recorded: Yes The summer school programme consists of standardised module formats whereby students attend 6 x 2 hr sessions over a 3-week period. |
| Notes: | This module is due to commence in June 2026 . There are no resource implications for consideration at final approval. |
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The table below is automatically completed from programme data held in Curriculum Manager; during 2019 it is likely to have no data or incomplete data until all programme records are in Curriculum Manager.

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| In Programmes: | Module Status: |
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2. Aims and Content

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| Module Aims: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide students with an understanding of the anatomical and physiological diversity of selected domestic species including rodents, rabbits, reptiles and birds To foster critical thinking and practical skills through activities that involve application of species-specific biology to inform and critique husbandry practices To provide problem-based learning skills through recognising and addressing common husbandry related health and welfare issues |
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- To introduce students to practical techniques commonly used in the veterinary treatment of domestic exotic species

Outline Syllabus:

Please outline the syllabus here. Generally, there will be 6 x 2 hour sessions so you might want to add a bullet point for each session. Please find an example list below:

Session 1 – Introduction & Small Mammals (Rodents)

- Overview of domestic exotic species covered in the module
- Identification of domestic rodent species (myomorphs vs hystricomorphs)
- Comparative anatomy and dentition
- Species specific considerations
- Overview of husbandry requirements
- ?Practical element – anatomical specimens

Session 2 – Rabbits

- Anatomical features
- Dental and digestive anatomy and physiology
- Common breeds and their anatomical peculiarities Husbandry considerations
- ?Practical element– anatomical specimens

Session 2 – Birds

- Skeletal adaptations for flight
- Respiratory system and air sac function
- Nutritional and environmental needs
- Housing and enrichment

Session 3 – Reptile Biology & Husbandry

- Ectothermy and thermoregulation
- Shedding cycles and skin health
- UV lighting, temperature gradients, and hydration
- Common reptile husbandry errors



- Case study: metabolic bone disease

****Session 4 – Practical 1: Reptile Handling & Basic Health Checks**

- Safe handling techniques for snakes and lizards
- Assessing health and recognising stress signs
- Demonstration of weighing, restraint, and basic examination
- Hands-on practice with live animals (where permitted)
- Reptile pots for anatomical structures

****Session 5 – Practical 2: Exotic Animal Techniques (Small Mammals & Birds)**

- Safe handling and restraint of small mammals and birds (models/BSU?)
- Crop tubing of birds
- Rabbit dental examination
- Species identification
- Anatomy pots/specimens?

Session 6 – Comparative Care & Integration

- Applying anatomy and physiology knowledge to real-world care
- Problem-solving scenarios based on case studies
- Mini-presentations: students present husbandry case study?
- Course wrap-up and Q&A

Reading List:

3. Module Outcomes (learning outcomes, skills and other attributes)

| Ref No. | Learning Outcome / Skill: | Category: |
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| LO1 | Identify the key anatomical and physiological features of rodents, rabbits, birds, and reptiles. | Learning Outcomes |
| LO3 | Explain how species-specific anatomy and physiology influences husbandry requirements | Learning Outcomes |
| LO3 | Outline common husbandry-related health issues and propose preventive measures | Learning Outcomes |
| S1 | <i>Teamwork</i> | Skills |
| S2 | <i>Communication skills</i> | Skills |
| S3 | <i>Critical analysis and problem solving</i> | Skills |
| S4 | <i>Manual practical skills</i> | Skills |
| S5 | | Skills |

4. Assessments – please choose assessment option 1, 2 or 3 (delete as appropriate)

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| Assessment Strategy: | <p><i>Assessment options available for ISS modules</i></p> <p>Assessment option 2 2x 10-question multi choice/short answer questions, one paper to be taken during week 2 and one during week 3 of each 3-week module - 50% of final grade and 15-minute group presentation 50% of final mark</p> |
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5. Learning and Teaching Methods - please add how skills listed in 3. above are developed

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| <p>Summary of Learning and Teaching Methods:</p> | <p>Teaching Method: Taught sessions, practical activity and presentations</p> <p>Description: Each week students will attend 2 x 2 hr sessions. These will consist of short lecture style sessions interspersed with practical activities and group discussion. The final session will involve group presentation of husbandry requirements for a chosen species, relating these to knowledge of anatomy and physiological peculiarities</p> <p>For each skill listed in 3. Module Outcomes (learning outcomes, skills and other attributes), please add here how the skills will be developed</p> <p>Skill/Other attribute 1: Teamwork How this is developed: Group discussions, activities and research into case presentation</p> <p>Skill/Other attribute 2: Communication skills How this is developed: Orally in class and practical discussions, via completion of case presentation assignment.</p> <p>Skill/Other attribute 3: <i>Critical analysis and evaluation</i> How this is developed: Students will be given the opportunity to apply knowledge of anatomy and physiology to husbandry needs – this will be developed further through small group discussion, case presentation, and practical sessions</p> <p>Skill/Other attribute 4: Manual practical skills</p> |
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How this is developed:
During practical sessions (handling/techniques)

The following table must be completed for module approval, accounting for all hours associated with the credit value of the module, e.g. 15 credits there should be 150 hours of learning and teaching activity, including independent learning.

| Learning and Teaching Method: | Length (Minutes): | Times per Week (if applicable): | Number of Weeks (if applicable): | Calculated Hours (if applicable): | Hours: |
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| Self-Directed Learning | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 38 |
| Seminar | 120 | 2 | 3 | N/A | 12 |

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