

Professional Skills
Portfolio Reflection

Completion of Portfolio (To be completed by student – click box if fully complete)

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| Inclusion of elements A-H (compulsory), J-L (optional) on Assignment Brief in the portfolio (5% of module mark) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Completion of feedback on 10 peer portfolios (and evidence on e-portfolio of comments left) (5% of module mark) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Clear structure and presentation of e-portfolio, with a logical order, artefacts clearly labelled, and a demonstration of creativity and flair in e-portfolio creation (10% of module mark) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Portfolio demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional development planning (PDP) - Acquisition of knowledge such as legislation, animal welfare, health and safety and running a business - Reflection of a range of skills relevant to equine / animal / veterinary physiotherapy (50% of module mark) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Artefact I – final module summary (completed below) (30% of module mark) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

My first year of university has ended and I have had the best time and learnt so much, I can't believe how quickly it has gone. The modules we have covered are anatomy and physiology, biomechanics, canine behaviour management, functional anatomy, canine therapy including first aid, nutrition and feeding and professional skills. Professional skills has allowed me to learn about legislations, scope of practice, animal welfare and further my knowledge on research and business skills as well as improving my time management and organisation. I have some basic knowledge on business from GCSE however I hadn't covered it for a long time so professional skills made me more aware of the different types and what you have to do. Research methods and statistics was something I had previously covered in Psychology and Geography A-level however I didn't like it back then and found it difficult to understand. Going through this again has been beneficial for me as I can now do stat tests. I had never thought about scope of practice, legislations, and laws before this module as I never needed to, but this was really intriguing because it is so important in the industry. Under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, only a licensed veterinary surgeon registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) can diagnose, or perform medial or surgical treatment (RCVS, 2017). Throughout this module, I have developed a good understanding of the rules and legislations that are important to know within my future career. Another law which must be followed is the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which states that an animal needs to be protected from pain and suffering (RSPCA, 2017). Also under UK law, acupuncture may only be administered by a qualified veterinary surgeon (Fitzpatrick Referrals, 2015) however acupressure can be done (Tallgrass Animal Acupressure Resources, n.d.). For your pet to have any physio, massage, laser, hydrotherapy, or any similar treatment, you must have a vet referral to ensure the treatment is safe and appropriate and the vet will also share all medical history of the animal (Vets4Pets, n.d.).

The lectures that benefitted me most were about business skills, referencing, research skills, legislations and the 3 guest speakers that came in talking about their job and the industry. It was intriguing to hear about the industries of pet behaviour, vet nursing and veterinary physiotherapy from professionals who work in the field. We heard about the positives and negatives of having your own company vs being employed along with the challenges faced during lockdown. It was interesting to hear how these industries have changed since starting up and how continuing CPD

helps keep professionals up to date. Learning how to correctly reference has been advantageous for me as I have never done it before as I didn't need to with GCSEs or A-levels. Practicing my reflective writing has been difficult as I find it hard to identify my strengths and weaknesses but doing this has helped my personal and academic growth. Reflecting helps develop my skills and review the effectiveness of what I'm doing so I can improve in the future, and I can try and find a more efficient way to study or do my assignments (The Open University, 2022).

For this module, we had to complete different artefacts to reflect on previous assignments and modules as well as a personal development plan and business case study. For my artefact A, I had to reflect on my canine handling skills before I started the course. This was a good opportunity for me to look back at my work experience to evaluate the skills I had gained and what I had learnt. I brought these with me to university and they have proved useful. For artefact C, I reflected on the module 'Introduction to Biomechanics', looking at the mistakes I made for the assignment was helpful for my future assignments. In artefact D, I reflected on the development of my reflective writing which was the hardest reflective artefact so far because I had to really think about what I had done to improve and what I could continue to do. I also reflected on the modules 'Nutrition and Feeding', 'Introduction to Canine Therapy' and 'Functional Anatomy' which was helpful to my academic growth. For one of my artefacts I had to research an animal welfare issue which I was passionate about, I chose puppy farming because this intrigued me due to having a rescue beagle from a puppy farm. This greatly improved my research skills as there was lots of different research, so I had to skim through them to find one suitable. For artefact J, I had to create a scientific poster on a piece of research which I then had to present. Not only did this improve my research skills as I had to pick out key pieces of information to not crowd my poster, but it also improved my presentation skills for which I got peer feedback for. Creating a personal development plan has allowed me to set targets for myself and do what I can to reach them. I also created a SWOT analysis where I identified my strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities, this is a useful technique to further develop my abilities, advance my career and achieve my personal goals (MindTools, 2022). My favourite artefact was completing a business case study because this will be most beneficial to my future career. My business study was on 121 Animal Therapy, which is founded by one person. I sent some questions to the owner to answer about legislations, and her business. This informed me about what it takes to be self-employed in a competitive business environment. By being a sole trader, it highlighted the advantages such as keeping all the rewards from the business and working your own hours however it also showed the disadvantages such as the pressure and amount of work it takes. Furthermore, if I want to work self-employed, I would need insurance for public liability as well as insurance made specially for pet physiotherapy or hydrotherapy (Cliverton, n.d.).

A Canine Therapist must be knowledgeable and professional, it is vital for them to know about legislations to ensure the safety of themselves and their clients. The regulations are in place to protect the animals and provide the owners security that their dogs are in safe hands. Throughout my university experience and my future career, I will continue updating myself about the laws to stay up to date and provide the best care for my patients. In conclusion, this module has equipped me with useful knowledge I will continue to use throughout my university course and life. Every module covered this year has given me the building blocks I need to become a successful Canine Therapist. I plan to look back on my personal development plan, adjust it, and progress the skills I have learnt.

Reference List Only

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Feedback will be given via Grademark (Turnitin). In text comments will also be provided where appropriate. Please engage fully with and reflect upon your feedback, it is important that you do so in order to learn and progress going forward.