

Canine Physiotherapy Practitioner Course



At a glance...

Modular customised provision

Duration Notes: 18 to 24 months

The course can be started at any time, with practical days chosen from the your4legs website

Delivery Method: Classroom and practical observation and assessment

Recognised by: Accredited AIM Assessments & Qualifications (who are regulated by Ofqual). Recognised by the IAAT (International Association of Animal Therapies) as acceptable for student / practitioner membership of the IAAT

Prerequisites:

- Students must be over 18 years of age at the start of the course.
- Students under 21 years should have achieved 4 GCSE's at grades A - C., including English Language. (Or provide proof of an equivalent educational standard)
- Students do not need to have experience of massage, but any experience will be a helpful head start.
- Students must be able to demonstrate an understanding and practical experience of handling and caring for dogs, gained through one or more of the following –
 - 3 years' experience of owning and / or working with your own dog or working in a professional canine industry – such as showing, kennels or agility for example.
 - Any canine related qualifications or details of short courses you have attended may also be relevant.

Introduction



This course will give you the knowledge, confidence and clinical reasoning skills to become a safe, competent and professional canine physiotherapist. It has a flexible start date and range of practical days so that you can complete your course around a busy lifestyle.



Overview in brief

The course is delivered through a mixture of home study and practical days, which is continually assessed. Students also have to complete a range of case studies, together with a project and work placement directly related to canine therapy.

As well as hands-on massage and joint mobilisation skills, students will learn to provide specialist treatments for canines that can help to reduce pain, increase the range of movement in limbs and joints and help to reduce the impact or effects of certain injuries and conditions, with the aim of helping the recovery process and helping to improve the quality of life.

Physiotherapy can “be defined as the profession concerned with promotion of health, with prevention of physical disabilities, with evaluation and rehabilitation of persons disabled by pain, disease, or injury, and with treatment by physical therapeutic measures as opposed to medical, surgical, or radiologic measures.” (Farlex Partner Medical Dictionary © Farlex 2012) A key purpose of physiotherapy is to help restore mobility, function and quality of life to patients through stimulation of the healing process to restore injured tissues and improve strength and balance, which may have been affected by musculoskeletal and neurological conditions or injuries. The term “Physiotherapist” is protected in the human field of therapy but is not protected in the animal sector. Using the prefix “canine” clearly indicates there is no intention to treat humans as a physiotherapist.

All animal physiotherapy is carried out under veterinary referral and your4legs will happily provide evidence of the detailed training a physiotherapy student must undertake if requested by a veterinary practise. Your4legs will also continue to add and amend courses to ensure that all training is maintained to the highest possible standard.

[At your4legs our key aim is to enable as many animals as possible to feel the benefits of good therapy work. Therefore, the key objectives of this course are to ensure that students gain the necessary theory knowledge and practical skills to become competent and professional canine physiotherapists, enabling students to turn their passion into a career.](#)

During the course the following key areas will be covered:

- X13 canine anatomy and physiology systems
- The physiotherapy process – from veterinary referral through to aftercare advise.
- Gait and static assessment and understanding lameness
- Key illnesses, injuries and conditions specific to breed type and activity
- Adapting massage techniques to warm up and activate muscles prior to activity





- Adapting massage techniques to cool down muscles and help remove toxins after activity
- Building a rehabilitation therapy routine using hands-on techniques
- Building rehabilitation plans to aid in recovery and ongoing maintenance
- Deep tissue massage techniques
- Soft tissue rolling (Designed by your4legs during extensive practise and results over more than 10 years of therapy work)
- Light Touch Release (LTR) Techniques (Designed by your4legs)
- Working the bladder meridian
- Limb stretches and range of motion related to canine rehabilitation
- Joint mobilisation techniques
- The use of physiotherapeutic devices and therapy exercise tools
- Health and safety around dogs and correct technique application to look after yourself as a therapist for the long term
- Understanding and establishing trust with the dog
- Legal practice - complying with the Veterinary Act 1966 and Exemptions Order 2015
- Support with Veterinary report writing
- Managing the clients' expectations and Communication with the veterinary community
- Developing a new business

Through the home study blocks students will learn key aspects including canine anatomy and physiology systems, the fundamentals of complementary therapies and the theory of the physiotherapy process, including rehabilitation plans and the use of physiotherapeutic devices and therapy exercise tools. Students will also learn relevant business development skills.

During the hands-on practical days students will learn over 30 individual hands-on therapy techniques including Light Touch Release (LTR) and soft tissue rolling developed specifically for the your4legs courses. Students will also learn the use of physiotherapeutic devices and therapy exercise tools and there will be a range of lectures to enhance what is learnt through the home study work.

The finer details

The course includes 6 home study blocks and 20 intense hands-on practical days.

The course pack includes a comprehensive textbook designed specifically for the course by the your4legs team, together with a workbook which contains questions related to each home study block. The questions need to be completed by the student as part of their home study and marks will count towards their final theory mark.



Students need to complete the following additional work to ensure they gain the necessary skills and experience to become canine physiotherapists –



- Case studies
- A project on a subject of their choice that is related to canine therapy
- 40 hours of work placement in a canine therapy related discipline.

There is a final written exam and 2 practical assessments. The practicals are marked by an external assessor to ensure consistency of quality.

The home study blocks are designed to give students the necessary understanding of 13 key anatomy systems including the musculoskeletal system, the fundamentals of therapy and the theory of the physiotherapy process – from veterinary referral through static and gait assessment to the physiotherapy session and building rehabilitation plans. Students will learn key illnesses, injuries and conditions related to body shape, activity and breed type and will learn the use of a range of physiotherapeutic devices and exercise tools. Students will also learn the key aspects of building their own business.

The 20 practical days encompass learning and practicing over 30 hands-on therapy techniques as well as the physiotherapy process – from veterinary referral to building rehabilitation plans and the use of physiotherapeutic devices and exercise tools, including a visit to a hydrotherapy centre. There will also be a range of lectures to enhance the learning from the home study blocks, including gait and static assessments, the musculoskeletal and nervous systems, the veterinary diagnostic process and the role of physiotherapy during rehabilitation.

Who should attend?

- Those who are already qualified as therapists and wish to learn additional therapy skills
- Adults looking for a career change
- Veterinary professionals – vets and vet nurses
- Those already working within the canine industry and wishing to broaden their skills and add to their passion – for example behaviourists, trainers, dog groomers and breeders.

What will be covered?



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Other areas of interest

NOTE:

Under the Veterinary Surgeons Act of 1966, it is imperative that ONLY qualified therapists should complete therapy sessions on other people's animals and that ALL qualified Therapists should seek confirmation from the relevant veterinary surgeon prior to



performing therapy on an animal. In addition, Therapists should not legally make a diagnosis, but can give a professional opinion.



The Veterinary Act of 1966 was put in place to regulate the treatment of animals. Under its provisions, it is only Veterinary Surgeons who may legally diagnose, prescribe and advise on the basis of a diagnosis and perform surgery on animals.

