your 4 legs
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Animal Physiotherapy Practitioner Course – Equine and Canine

Course accreditation and approval

This course has been developed to deliver the highest quality of training to enable you to become a certified and insured Animal Physiotherapy Practitioner for both horses and dogs.

This course is delivered over 1,400 hours of guided practical and home study work. You will learn a comprehensive range of hands-on therapy techniques encompassing massage, joint mobilization, fascia and trigger point release and how to apply these appropriately to both the horse and the dog. You will also learn a detailed therapy process enabling you to deliver a professional approach with both clients and veterinarians.

As part of your physiotherapy training you will learn how to approach, build and deliver rehabilitation plans for a range of conditions relevant to both horses and dogs, including the use of a range of therapeutic exercises and physiotherapeutic equipment. This course also covers detailed relevant anatomy and physiology skills for both equines and canines.

This course is accredited by LANTRA as a customised provision provider. LANTRA is Recognised by Ofqual, the SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) and Qualification Wales.
The Your4legs Training School and it's courses have been approved by the BCMA (British Complementary Medicine Association.)

This course is also recognised by the IAAT (International Association of Animal Therapists) as acceptable for both student and practitioner association membership.

The your4legs courses and the training school are fully insured through Holistic Insurance Services.

The term Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy "can be defined as the treatment of pain, disease, or injury by physical means." It can also "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)

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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 and to stabilize body systems – such as neurological and musculoskeletal.

The term “Physiotherapist” is protected in the human field of therapy but is not protected in the animal sector. Using the prefix “equine” clearly indicates there is no intention to treat humans as a physiotherapist.

In conjunction with veterinary referral, equine and canine physiotherapists can provide specialist treatments for horses and dogs that help in reducing pain, increasing the range of movement in limbs and joints and helping to reduce the impact or effects of certain injuries and conditions, helping the recovery process and helping to maintain or improve a quality of life.

There is currently no official register for animal related physiotherapists. A therapist who has completed a physiotherapy course related to animals will be registered or regulated with their own association(s), which is similar for many animal therapy courses. Chartered physiotherapists are registered in their capacity as a human physiotherapist and not as an animal 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.

Course Description

This course can be **started at any time** to suit a students’ other commitments.
The course is part time, consisting of a mixture of home study, placement hours and tutored practical days, enabling students to complete the course around a busy lifestyle.
Students choose their practical days from the your4legs website to fit in with other commitments.
Practical groups are small (a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 6) enabling plenty of individual time with the tutor(s).

This course aims to give you the knowledge, confidence and clinical reasoning skills enabling you to become a safe, competent and professional Animal Physiotherapist, for both horses and dogs, with an in-depth knowledge of both therapy and rehabilitation techniques for both animals, together with the use of additional physiotherapeutic devices and exercise tools to compliment equine and canine recovery and maintenance. You will learn a comprehensive range of equine and canine illnesses and conditions, encompassing both orthopaedic and neurological and how to work confidently in conjunction with the veterinarian and the client for both rehabilitation referrals and ongoing maintenance therapy.

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You will learn a varied range of techniques and how to apply them appropriately to both horses and dogs. These techniques encompass –

- Both light and deep tissue massage
- Rehabilitation techniques including –
    - joint mobilization and increasing joint range of motion
    - Rehabilitation exercises and additional exercise tools to improve balance, muscle strength and proprioception
    - the use of additional physiotherapeutic devices including therapeutic ultrasound, red light, laser therapy, Deep Oscillation (Physiomed®) and PEMF
- Light touch techniques (LTR) and soft tissue rolling (developed by your4legs) related to trigger points and fascia release.
- Massage techniques adapted to warm up the animals' muscles in preparation for exercise and cool down the muscles after exercise.

Course Duration

It is possible to complete the course and final assessments within 18 months by completing at least 19 hours of course work per week, although a more reasonable and less intense completion time would be 24 months, with a final course deadline of 30 months.

As well as practical days there is home study work and placement hours which may require more than 18 months to complete, depending on the students' commitments outside the course. Course groups are small (a maximum of 6) enabling plenty of individual time with the tutor(s)

A Practitioner Certificate will be awarded once all home study work, practical days, placement hours and final assessments have been successfully completed and any remaining fees have been submitted.

Course Fee

Course cost = £8,700.00
If the total is paid at the time of booking, there is a 12% discount (£1,044.00). This reduces the course cost to £7,656.00
You can also pay by instalments –

- Pay an initial deposit* of = £362.50, then pay the remainder of £8,337.50 in 23 equal monthly payments of £362.50

At your4legs we love teaching and helping and will do our best to enable you to reach your goals. So please do contact Stef Watts directly if you wish to discuss an alternative payment option. We will endeavour to work with you as much as we can to enable you to join and complete the course.

***** *The deposit is non-refundable. Please refer to the Terms and Conditions for full details.*

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The Course fee covers –

- 44 tutored practical days – dates chosen by the student from the your4egs website to fit in with other commitments
- All course material, including a 500+ page Equine Physiotherapy course book and a 400+ page Canine Physiotherapy course book, and a supporting workbook designed specifically for this course by your4legs
- Any external speakers and final assessment days
- Refreshments during the tutored days. (not including lunch.)

Entry Requirements

Students must be a minimum of 18 years of age at the start of the course.
Students under 21 years should have achieved 4 GCSE's at grades A - C, or equivalent for their country of residence where they went to school.

Students do not need to have experience of massage or manipulation, as this will be taught during the practitioner course, but any massage or manipulation experience will be a helpful head start.

Students must be able to demonstrate practical experience of handling and caring for horses and dogs, gained through one or more of the following –

- At least 2 years' experience of working in a professional equine or canine industry – such as yard groom, training, dog walking or caring for dogs, rehabilitation or veterinary nursing.
- Any equine or canine related qualifications or details of short courses you have attended will also be relevant.

If you have a range of qualifications or certifications and equine and canine experience but you are not sure you have the relevant qualifications to commence this course, please contact Stef Watts directly. As a small private school we have the flexibility to consider each prospective student on an individual basis.

As part of your enrolment, we may ask you to complete some additional equine or canine related placement hours if it is felt that additional equine / canine experience would be beneficial for successful course completion.

Student material

At the start of the course, students will receive the following material -

- Separate equine and canine course books. In excess of 1000 pages of detailed information containing all the theory modules and therapy techniques, together with a supporting course home study workbook.
- 2 packs of A5 cards illustrating specific key muscles of both the horse and the dog as a revision aid.
- Separate equine and canine Anatomy textbooks and a list of useful reading material.
- A pack containing relevant equine and canine case history sheets, treatment sheets and veterinary approval sheets (where relevant) and some Your4legs stationery.

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Course Content

The course consists of home study, 44 tutored practical days, placement hours and final assessments.

- This course can be started at any time and students can choose their tutored practical days from the your4legs website to fit in with other commitments.
- Where reasonably possible during practical day activities and home study, the amount of duplication has been reduced to a minimum between the anatomy and the therapy processes relating to the horse and the dog.
- The 44 practical days are split as 22 equine and 22 canine days. These days need to be chosen and managed by the student from the dates listed on the your4legs website. Students must confirm the dates they have chosen to attend with their tutor, ideally within 10 days of the date. This flexibility enables the student to start the course when they wish to and to fit the course in with their busy lifestyle.
- Each practical day commences at 9.30am through to 4pm.
- As part of the 44 practical days there are compulsory equine and canine lectures and practical subjects that need to be attended as part of the course. The practical days include the following –

Subject	Equine days	Canine days
Gait and static lecture	1	1
Musculoskeletal and nervous system lecture	1	1
Illnesses, injuries and conditions. Veterinary diagnosis and an introduction to rehabilitation	1	1
The theory of rehabilitation, learning and practising building rehabilitation plans for a range of injuries and conditions.	4	5
Hoof balance and its importance to the overall health of the horse lecture	1	0
Equine dentistry and equine saddle fitting and their importance to overall equine health	1	0
Hands-on practical days, where all elements of the therapy process are practised, from case history notes, static and gait assessment, initial palpation / evaluation, the therapy hands-on session and filling in therapy session sheets and offering aftercare advise.	13	14
Total number of practical days	22	22

- A 90% attendance rate will be required to complete the course.
- There are X5 home study blocks. For each of these blocks there is a set of short answer and multiple-choice questions in a supporting workbook. These questions must be answered and submitted to the tutor. Workbooks will be marked as part of continuous assessment and will form a portion of the final mark for the theory section of the course. The compulsory lectures listed above support some of the home study blocks. The home study blocks must be completed before any certificate can be awarded but do not need to be submitted before the final practical / theory assessments. The completion deadline for the project is 30 months from the course start date.

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- A project will need to be completed showing evidence of referencing. The project must be approximately 6,500 words on a subject of your choice related to either equine or canine therapy, or a mixture of both animals. This must be completed before any certificate can be awarded but does not need to be submitted before the final practical / theory assessments. The completion deadline for the project is 30 months from the course start date.
- A set of case studies will be required, consisting of 3 horses each treated X3 times, and 3 dogs each treated X3 times. A minimum of 3 case studies should be submitted before the final practical assessment, so that students can receive feedback before continuing with the rest of their case studies. The remaining case studies must be submitted by the final course deadline – 30 months from the course start date.
- Students will need to complete 60 hours of work placement / experience. The chosen venue(s) must bear a relevance to equine and canine therapy / welfare and can be of the students own choosing. This does not need to be completed before the final assessments but must be completed by the course deadline - 30 months from the course start date.
- The final assessments consist of –
    - A live online closed book theory exam.
    - A massage practical assessment on both a horse and a dog, which will involve the student taking full case history notes, a static and gait assessment of each animal, an explanation to the client about what the treatment will involve, followed by the therapy session, a completed therapy session sheet and relevant aftercare advice.
    - A rehabilitation practical assessment for both the horse and the dog, where the student will need to demonstrate their ability to plan a rehabilitation routine for specific equine and canine veterinary referral scenarios.
- The practical assessments are marked by an external examiner. In addition, at any time the accrediting / approval associations can ask for copies of marked home study work. This external marking ensures consistency of quality.
- A completion certificate will be awarded once the course has been successfully completed and all course material and fees have been submitted and paid.

The total course hours (1,400 hours) encompass –

- 150 hours of home study work
- 352 hours of tutored practical work
- 60 hours of guided placement work
- It is envisaged that an additional 838 hours will be gained through students completing their project, case studies, revision preparation for their practical and theory assessments.
    - 438 hours of work through students completing their project and case studies
    - 400 hours of work through revision and practise to complete final assessments

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Course venue and facilities

The course will be held at the your4legs classroom -

Wellbet Equine
Wellbet Farm
Collingham Road
Swinderby
Lincoln
LN6 9JB

The lecture subjects and some of the course practical days will be held at the above venue. The classroom venue and a range of suitable local facilities are also used for practical days, to give students as much experience of real life situations as is safely and appropriately possible.

Wellbet Equine is a lovely facility encompassing recently refurbished American style barn stables and menage. We have 2 classrooms that are well furnished and have plenty of room, with access to kitchen and toilet facilities. The yard also has some lovely horses and dogs available to use on practical days, and the classroom has plenty of equine and canine anatomy props.

The your4legs Therapy yard venue -

Course photographs and anatomy props -

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Subjects – Summary for both equine and canine

13 equine and canine body systems

- **The musculo-skeletal system**, comprising of superficial muscles, medial muscles, deep muscles, key muscle insertions and origins, the skeleton, bones and joints, fascia, tendons and ligaments.
- Understanding the **digestive system** and its potential influence on movement and behaviour.
- The **nervous system**, with priority given to nerves required for movement including the Brachial Plexus and the Lumbo-sacral Plexus, together with the theory of muscle contraction.
- The structure and function of the **respiratory system**
- The structure and function of the **cardiovascular system**
- The structure and function of the **reproductive system**
- The structure and function of the **endocrine system**
- The structure and function of the **lymphatic system** and the potential effects of massage
- The structure and function of the **urinary system**
- Understanding the **senses including –**
    - **touch (skin),**
    - **eyes (sight), ears (hearing)**
    - **the nose / sense of smell.**

The Therapy Process – relevant to both equine and canine

- Learning to make contact and obtain **Veterinary approval** under the Veterinary Act 1966
- Learning to work with the vet regarding **veterinary referral for specific rehabilitation** needs
- Learning to work with the client and obtain **detailed case history notes**
- Understanding how to work safely around the horse and the dog during therapy
- What are **contra-indications** and guidelines on when to refer a client's animal to the vet
- Learning a process of equine and canine **gait assessment** – by the naked eye and the benefits of using high speed video work and gait assessment software
- Learning a process of equine and canine **static assessment**
- Learning how to fill in a **treatment sheet** and feedback to the client with **aftercare advise**
- Understanding **marketing and business management** and the key things required for **setting up a new business.**

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Therapy Techniques – relevant to both equine and canine

You will learn a detailed range of techniques, treatment routines and rehabilitation exercises during the practical days and how to use them appropriately on the horse and the dog.

Therapy techniques encompass -

- **Deep tissue massage**
- Adapting massage techniques to use as part of **rehabilitation therapy**
- 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
- **Fascia movement through soft tissue rolling, stretching and squeezing** (Designed by your4legs as part of the LTR (Light Touch Release) range of therapy techniques adapted by Stef during extensive practise and results over more than 10 years of therapy work)
- **Trigger point release through Light Touch Release** (LTR) Techniques (Designed by your4legs) and the **bladder meridian**
- **Joint mobilisation**, **stretching** and **Passive Range of Motion (PROM)** as part of rehabilitation
- The use of **physiotherapeutic devices** – including direct practise with Low Level Laser, long wave ultrasound, PEMF, Deep Oscillation© and Skenar.
- The use of **rehabilitation exercise tools** to improve muscle tone, balance and proprioception as part of rehabilitation and ongoing therapy management.

Therapy routines – relevant to both the horse and the dog

- **All over body massage** for maintenance and relaxation
- **A full physiotherapy rehabilitation routine** that can be adapted for the specific needs of each horse and dog
- **Warm up routine** for warming up the muscles and preparing them for activity
- **Cool down routine** for use after activity to relax muscles and help toxin removal

Injuries, illnesses, conditions, the healing process and rehabilitation – relevant to both the horse and the dog

- Equine and canine **injuries relating to key disciplines**
- Common **conditions and illnesses for a range of equine and canine breed types, encompassing orthopeadic and neurological**
- Potential routes of care and rehabilitation and the role of therapy
- Understanding the physiology of stress and the **healing process**

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Home study – for both the horse and the dog

This work is designed to give you practise on key aspects that you will use when you become a certified practitioner.

- Where reasonably possible with home study, the amount of duplication has been reduced to a minimum between the anatomy and the therapy related subjects relating to the horse and the dog.
- Project and home study theory subjects - increases your equine and canine knowledge so that you know what anatomical areas you are touching when you assess and work with each animal. This also trains you in the art of research when you need answers to important questions in the future
- Case studies – this is important practise of the entire therapy process ready for when you are a certified practitioner and ready to start your own therapy business
- Work placement / experience – gives you experience of clients and their horses and dogs in an environment related to both equine and canine therapy and rehabilitation, which can also help you decide if you would prefer to work on your own or employed as part of a rehabilitation business and whether you would like to specialise.

Home study blocks – relevant to both the horse and dog

Block 1:

- Course structure –
    - Home study blocks and practical days
    - Case studies and project
    - The final assessments
- The fundamentals of therapy –
    - Different types of complementary therapies
    - Why use complementary therapies and key benefits
    - Contraindications to therapy and when to refer a client back to the vet
    - The veterinary law
- Therapy process and paperwork –
    - Veterinary approval for maintenance therapy, physiotherapy and rehabilitation
    - The importance of taking a good case history
    - The theory of static assessment for both the horse and the dog
    - The theory of gait assessment for both the horse and the dog – using the naked eye and scientific equipment
    - Therapy explanation to the client
    - The theory of the initial hands-on evaluation for the horse and the dog
    - Filling in the therapy session sheets and aftercare advise for both the horse and dog
    - Managing the clients' expectations
- Understanding marketing and business management and the key things required for setting up a new business.

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Block 2:

- The structure and function of equine and canine skin
- The structure and function of the equine and canine musculoskeletal system, including muscles, tendons, ligaments, fascia, bones and the skeleton
- The structure and function of the equine and nervous system and muscle contraction

Block 3:

- Understanding common injuries, illnesses and conditions and how these can effect specific equine and canine breeds / types.
- The veterinary assessment, diagnostic process and tools used for the horse and dog
- Understanding the physiology of stress and the healing process for the horse and dog
- Rehabilitation and its role in equine and canine healing and maintenance
- Building equine and canine rehabilitation plans -
    - Exercises and exercise tools for specific muscle types
    - Exercises for improving balance and proprioception
    - Understanding and using physiotherapeutic tools
- The use of exercise and physiotherapeutic tools for horses and dogs

Block 4:

- The structure and function of the equine and canine digestive system and equine nutrition
- The structure and function of the equine and canine respiratory system
- The structure and function of the equine and canine cardiovascular system
- The structure and function of the equine and canine reproductive system
- The structure and function of the equine and canine endocrine and urinary systems
- The structure and function of the equine can canine lymphatic system

Block 5

- Recap the equine and canine musculoskeletal and nervous systems
- Understanding equine and canine thermoregulation
- Understanding equine and canine senses –
    - Touch
    - Sight
    - Hearing
    - Scent

New theory and practical topics may be added as the course evolves.

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.

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Course Terms and conditions

By returning your completed application form and your deposit / payment –

- You are agreeing to pay the balance of the course fees by one of the payment methods listed on this application form.
- You agree to the course portfolio relating to the work required to complete the course.
- You understand that the deposit is non-refundable. (Refer to the Your4legs Cancellations and Refunds Policy available on the website)
- You understand that there is a 30 days period following receipt of your application and payment submission, within which you may cancel your place on the course and be entitled to a refund for parts of the course not yet taken. (Refer to the Your4legs Cancellations and Refunds Policy available on the website)
- You understand that you need to inform your tutor of the practical dates you plan to attend within 10 days of the start date to ensure the date is available. (Refer to the Your4legs Cancellations and Refunds Policy available on the website)
- You understand that you need to ensure any practical dates you can no longer attend are cancelled prior to 3 days before the date of the practical day to avoid the risk of incurring any additional costs. (Refer to the Your4legs Cancellations and Refunds Policy available on the website)
- You understand that a completion certificate will be awarded on successful completion of the course once all relevant work and any remaining outstanding payments have been received.
- You agree that you will be 18 years or more at the start of the course.
- You will have no claim to use the content of the your4legs training material to recreate your own equine or canine diagnostic assessment, or equine or canine massage courses in any format without prior permission from your4legs.

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- You agree to the following data protection (GDPR) statement. (A full copy of the Your4legs Data Protection Policy is available on request) –
  Your4legs will hold your data for legitimate business reasons only, to ensure we can process your course application, manage your course assessments or manage ongoing contact if you are a therapy client. Your4legs will hold your data for the time you continue to be a client. Once you are no longer a client, your4legs will hold your data for 7 years after which point it will be securely shredded and/or electronically deleted. Data may be held electronically and in hard copy. Your4legs will not use your data for marketing or profiling purposes. Should you have any questions about your data, or wish to exercise your rights as a data subject, our Data Controller is Stef Watts who can be contacted on 07715498872

- A 90% attendance rate is required for successful completion of the course. If circumstances mean that you cannot attend a part of the course it is possible, with prior agreement from your4legs, to defer your final assessment to the next available date.

- You will need to provide your own lunch and organise your own overnight accommodation – a list of some suitable B&B and hotel accommodation will be provided as part of your welcome pack following completion of your application form and initial deposit / payment.

- You will need to provide your own Personal Accident Insurance Cover for the duration of the course. Your4legs can suggest student insurance cover from Holistic Insurance Services and membership of the IAAT (International Association of Animal Therapists). The aim will be for the student to be able to change to Practitioner Insurance Cover once they have successfully completed the practitioner course.

- Animal Physiotherapy – Equine and Canine can be quite a physical undertaking so you will need to look after yourself. Stef Watts will endeavour to ensure you learn the safest method to deliver the massage techniques, but all students must adhere to any procedures that are presented relating to safety at any venues visited outside of the normal classroom venue, including the wearing of appropriate and comfortable clothing when working around horses, or when working with dogs in an outdoor based environment. (For example – comfortable clothing and also a padded cushion if it is required to kneel on the floor when treating a dog.)

- Although the course venue is secure and the classroom is kept closed when no-one is in it, your4legs does not accept liability at any time for the loss or damage to student property, including vehicles and their contents.

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