

Canine Physiotherapy Practitioner Course

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 Canine Physiotherapy Practitioner.

You will learn all the hands-on therapy and rehabilitation techniques and the therapy process, together with relevant and detailed anatomy and physiology skills. This course is delivered over 700 hours of guided practical and home study work.

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 School has been approved as a Training Centre by AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group, who are a leading Awarding (AO) and End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), offering award winning qualifications and nominated end-point assessment services. AIM is regulated by the public regulator governing qualifications in England - Ofqual."

Both the your4legs school and the courses are approved by the BCMA (British Complementary Medical 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)

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 "canine" clearly indicates there is no intention to treat humans as a physiotherapist.

In conjunction with veterinary referral, canine physiotherapists can provide specialist treatments for canines 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 the 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 canine physiotherapist, with an in-depth knowledge of both therapy and rehabilitation techniques, together with the use of additional physiotherapeutic devices and exercise tools to compliment canine recovery and maintenance. You will learn a comprehensive range of 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.

You will learn a varied range of techniques encompassing –

- 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 ultrasound, red light, laser therapy and Deep Oscillation
- 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 dogs' 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 12 months by completing at least 8 hours of course work per week, although a more reasonable and less intense completion time would be 18 months, with a final course deadline of 24 months.

As well as practical days there is home study work and placement hours which may require more than 12 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 = £3990

If the total is paid at the time of booking, there is a 10% discount (£399). This reduces the course cost to £3,591.00

You can also pay by instalments –

- Pay an initial deposit* of = £332.50, then pay the remainder of £3,657.50 in 11 equal instalments of £332.50
- The pandemic was a challenging time for many people and we introduced an additional payment plan which we have decided to continue with, enabling students to reach their goals by spreading the cost of the course over a longer period with no additional fees - Pay an initial deposit* of £150, then pay the remaining £3,840 in 18 equal payments of £213.33.

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.*

The Course fee covers –

- 20 tutored practical days – dates chosen by the student to fit in with other commitments from the dates on the your4legs website
- All course material, including a 200+ page textbook and supporting workbook designed specifically for the course by your4legs
- Any external speakers and final assessment days
- 50% of the 1st years' insurance, if required
- Refreshments during the tutored days. (not including lunch.)

Entry Requirements

Students must be over 18 years of age.

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, as this will be taught during the practitioner course, but any massage or therapy experience will be a helpful head start.

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

- At least 2 years' experience of working in a professional canine industry – such as hydrotherapy, veterinary nursing, breeding and showing, agility, fitness training and behaviour work.
- Any canine related qualifications or details of short courses you have attended may also be relevant.

If you have a range of qualifications and canine experience but you are not sure you have the relevant qualifications to commence this course, please contact Stef Watts directly as each prospective student will be considered individually.

Student material

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

- A 200+ page course textbook containing all the theory modules and therapy techniques, together with a supporting course workbook
- A canine Anatomy textbook and a list of useful reading material
- A pack containing relevant case history sheets, treatment sheets and veterinary approval sheets (where relevant) and Your4legs stationery

Course Content

The course consists of home study, 20 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.
- The 20 practical 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 9am through to 5pm.

- As part of the 20 practical days there are compulsory lectures and practical subjects that need to be attended as part of the course. These include –
 - Gait and static assessment theory and practise X1 lecture
 - The canine musculoskeletal and nervous system structure and function X1 lecture
 - Illnesses, injuries and conditions. Veterinary diagnosis and rehabilitation X4 lectures
- 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 include subjects that are covered in the home study work.
- A project will need to be completed showing evidence of referencing. The project must be approximately 7000 words on a subject of your choice related to canine therapy. This must be completed before any certificate can be awarded but does not need to be submitted before the final practical / theory assessment. The completion deadline for the project is 24 months from the course start date.
- A set of case studies will be required, consisting of 6 dogs, each treated X3 times. A minimum of 3 case studies should be submitted before the final assessment weekend 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 – 24 months from the course start date.
- Students will need to complete 40 hours of work placement / experience. The chosen venue must bear a relevance to 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 - 24 months from the course start date.
- The final assessments consist of –
 - An online closed book theory exam.
 - A massage practical assessment, which will involve the student taking full case history notes, a static and gait assessment of the dog, 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 where the student will need to demonstrate their ability to plan a rehabilitation routine(s) for a specific veterinary referral scenario
- The practical assessments are marked by an external examiner appointed by the BCMA. 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.

Course venue and facilities

The course will be held at the NEW your4legs classroom -

Wellbet Equine
Wellbet Farm
Collingham Road
Swinderby
Lincoln
LN6 9JB



The lecture subjects and practical sessions will be held at the above venue

Wellbet Equine is a lovely facility encompassing recently refurbished American style barn stables and a new menage. The classroom is well furnished and has plenty of room, with access to kitchen and toilet facilities. It is also warm and comfortable for those cold winter practical days. There are plenty of anatomy props in the classroom to aid with learning.

The your4legs Therapy yard venue -



Canine course photographs and anatomy props -



The course hours (total 700 hours) encompass –

- 80 hours of home study work
- 160 hours of tutored practical work
- 40 hours of guided placement work
- It is envisaged that an additional –
 - 280 hours of work will be gained through students completing their project
 - 140 hours of work gained through completing their case studies

Subjects – Summary

13 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 **canine digestive system** and its potential influence on movement and behaviour.
- The **canine 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 **canine respiratory system**
- The structure and function of the **canine cardiovascular system**
- The structure and function of the **canine reproductive system**
- The structure and function of the **canine endocrine system**
- The structure and function of the **canine lymphatic system** and the potential effects of massage
- The structure and function of the **canine urinary system**
- Understanding the canine **senses including – touch (skin), eyes (sight), ears (hearing) and the nose / sense of smell.**

The Therapy Process

- Learning to make contact and obtain **Veterinary approval** under the Veterinary Act 1966 for continued maintenance and welfare
- 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**
- Learning key aspects of **canine behaviour** and how to handle the more nervous dog
- What are **contra-indications** and guidelines on when to refer a client's dog to the vet
- Learning a process of **canine gait assessment** – by the naked eye and using high speed video work and gait assessment software
- Learning a process of **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.**

Therapy Techniques and routines

You will learn a detailed range of techniques, treatment routines and rehabilitation exercises during the 20 practical days, encompassing –

Therapy Techniques -

- **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 and muscle rolling** (Designed by your4legs - Stef has adapted her own techniques during extensive practise and results over more than 10 years of therapy work)
- **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 Low Level Laser and ultrasound
- The use of **rehabilitation exercise tools** to improve muscle tone, balance and proprioception as part of rehabilitation and ongoing therapy management.

Therapy routines -

- **All over body massage** for maintenance and relaxation
- **A full physiotherapy rehabilitation routine** that can be adapted for the specific needs of each 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

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

Home study

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

- Projects and theory subjects - increases your canine knowledge so that you know what anatomical areas you are touching when you assess and work with a dog. 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 qualified Practitioner and ready to start your own therapy business
- Work placement / experience – gives you experience of clients and dogs in a welfare related canine working environment. This experience can also help you to decide how you would like to work – self-employed on your own or employed as part of another therapy related business. It can also help you to decide if you would like to further specialise in a particular aspect of canine therapy and rehabilitation.

Home study blocks -

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
 - The theory of gait assessment – using the naked eye and scientific equipment
 - Therapy explanation to the client
 - The theory of the initial hands-on evaluation
 - Filling in the therapy session sheets and aftercare advise
 - Managing the clients' expectations
- Understanding marketing and business management and the key things required for setting up a new business.

Block 2:

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

Block 3:

- Understanding common injuries, illnesses and conditions and how these can effect specific breeds / types.
- The veterinary assessment and diagnostic process and tools used
- Understanding the physiology of stress and the healing process
- Canine rehabilitation and its role in canine healing and maintenance.
- Building 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

Block 4:

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

Block 5

- Recap the canine musculoskeletal and nervous systems
- Understanding canine thermoregulation
- Understanding 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.



Stef Watts

BSc. Hons, MSc., ESMT Dipl.

Tel: 07715 498 872

Email: stef.watts@btinternet.com

www.your4legs.co.uk

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 canine diagnostic assessment or canine massage courses in any format without prior permission from your4legs.

- 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.
- Canine Physiotherapy is 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 dogs. (For example – comfortable clothing and 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.