

Module code: MOD010992	Version: 1 Date Amended: 05/Nov/2025
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1. Module Title
Equine Principles and Applications of Manual Interventions

2a. Module Leader
Aidan McAteer

2b. School
Writtle School of Agriculture, Animal and Environmental Sciences

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Science and Engineering

3a. Level
5

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
30

4b. Study Hours
300

5. Restrictions			
Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:	BSc Equine Therapy, rehabilitation and performance, BSc Animal Therapy, rehabilitation and performance, BSc Canine Therapy rehabilitation and performance. MVetphys Veterinary Physiotherapy, Canine and Equine.		

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

This module explores the fundamental principles and practical applications of manual interventions in equine physiotherapy. You'll build on the assessment skills learned in Principles and Application of Manual Intervention, by integrating and evaluating the essential stages of assessing horses for physiotherapy sessions, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the initial evaluation process and developing the foundations of appropriate interventions.

Key topics covered in this module include:

Anatomy and Dynamic Assessment:

- Identifying key anatomical landmarks in horses to guide the assessment process.
- Understanding movement patterns in different breeds and how they impact musculoskeletal health.
- Using objective and subjective methods of evaluation to enhance assessment techniques.

Physical Examination:

- Observing the horse's posture, gait, and overall appearance to identify abnormalities or asymmetries.
- Using hands-on techniques to assess the 4 T's: Temperature, Texture, Tenderness, and Tone.
- Evaluating joint flexibility, extensibility, and movement to identify restrictions or discomfort.
- Incorporating both objective and subjective evaluation methods.

Musculoskeletal Issues:

- Understanding common musculoskeletal problems in horses.
- Using tools such as goniometers to measure joint angles and determine range of motion.
- Recognising when to refer to a veterinarian for further diagnostics.

Functional Assessment:

- Assessing the horse's performance in walk, trot, or specific tasks to identify functional limitations.
- Observing the horse's behaviour during the assessment to gauge pain levels or discomfort.
- Applying objective and subjective evaluation techniques to refine assessments.

Documentation and Reporting:

- Maintaining detailed records of assessment findings, including diagrams and notes.
 - Effectively communicating results to owners, veterinarians, and other equine professionals, working within scope of practice.
- Developing appropriate terminology used to a variety of audiences.

These techniques ensure a thorough and systematic approach to assessing horses' physical condition, forming the foundation for effective physiotherapy interventions. You will work independently and as part of group work to enhance communication and professional consideration for others viewpoints, while developing autonomy in decision making skills.

By the end of this module, you will be equipped with the knowledge, time management, skills to effectively assess and apply manual interventions in equine physiotherapy sessions, enhancing horses' overall well-being and performance, while ensuring ethical practice.

6b. Outline Content

The course is structured into three distinct topics spread across the year, aiming to introduce the foundational principles students will utilise in their future careers as equine physiotherapists, enhancing interdisciplinary skills.

Evaluation and Analysis of Assessment Findings

This topic delves into the step-by-step fundamentals of statically and dynamically assessing horses. It covers what to look for during palpation, range of motion evaluations, and pain scale assessments. Each step includes discussions on the subjective and objective aspects of the task, ensuring students gain a comprehensive understanding necessary for success. Palpation skills will be developed further to enhance the feel and assessment of equine muscle groups. Once these skills are mastered, students will evaluate and analyse the case findings to formulate an overall picture of the horse's physical condition.

Introduction to Manual Interventions

This topic explores and introduces the principles of various manual interventions, including cellular and global mechanisms of effect, relevant to equine physiotherapy. The application of these interventions will be contextualised within equine care. Central to this topic is the discussion around these interventions, emphasising that there is no single correct approach. This is crucial for students to develop a nuanced understanding of treatment options for horses. Through practical sessions, students will be introduced to manual techniques such as massage, stretching, and passive range of motion (PROM) techniques commonly applied during equine physiotherapy sessions. Mastery of these skills and the ability to justify their inclusion in treatment plans will be developed in later years.

Additional manual therapies

This final topic introduces other manual interventions available to equine physiotherapists or as part of a multidisciplinary team approach. It aims to raise awareness of the different options and their potential patient benefits. Here students will explore complex ethical scenarios and how the effect of paraprofessionals can aid in improving overall animal welfare.

Each of these topics will be further expanded through a series of smaller subject lectures, providing the necessary depth and breadth of content specific to equine physiotherapy.

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

Horses/ Barn facility

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	Type	On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:
1	Knowledge and Understanding	Discuss the fundamentals of and evaluate a proficient assessment technique.
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Appraise a range of manual interventions, discussing their mechanisms of action within the correct context.
3	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Demonstrate proficiency in applying and utilising assessment techniques effectively.
4	Knowledge and Understanding	Evaluate the integration of complementary therapies into case management.
5	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Acquire proficiency in the application and execution of manual intervention technique.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2026/7	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	Hours	Learning Outcomes	Details of Duration, frequency and other comments
Lectures	48	1-5	2hr lectures 1x weekly
Other teacher managed learning	24	1-5	1hr practical's per species every other week
Student managed learning	228	1,2,4	Self directed study
TOTAL:	300		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence

The assessment for some modules includes a presentation (see below for details on how this particular module is assessed). We recognise that presenting, especially to a large group, can cause significant anxiety or distress for some students. If this may affect you, please contact your Module Leader or the Disability and Neurodiversity Service as early as possible. We will work with you to consider appropriate reasonable adjustments. Depending on your individual needs, these might include, for example, presenting to a smaller group or presenting only to a member of academic staff.

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	2,4	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)

Coursework: Magazine article to the Veterinary sector 1500 word

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
011	Practical	1,3,5	50 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)

Practical: Practical directional exam on manual techniques 20 mins

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:

- (a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above
- (b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]