

NATURAL
Animal
CENTRE

knowledge

action

compassion

equinebehaviourqualification

stage 1 - accelerated learning



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The Natural Animal Centre (NAC) was founded by Ross and Heather Simpson in 1997, the centre has grown from its original base in Sussex, England to two beautiful centres in Wales as well as 2 game reserves abroad.

NAC 1 (our main centre) is home to our courses and the Natural Animal Veterinary Centre, while accomodation and longer term rehabilitation facilities are provided at NAC 2 - a 10 minute drive away.

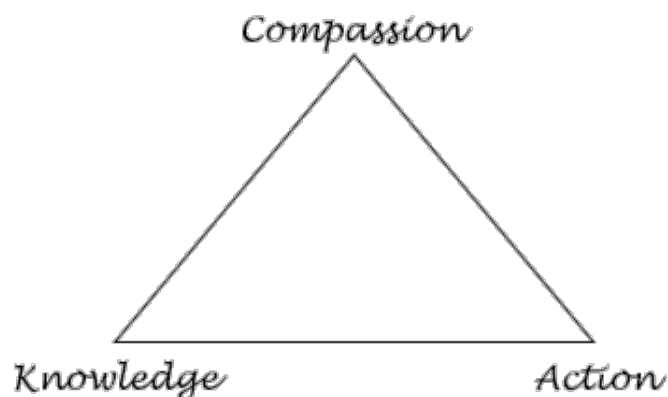
The NAC has expanded internationally and we have 2 reserves in southern africa and we are currently working on a reserve for the future in the Himalayas, India for more information on these reserves and the work of the Wild Equid Protection Trust visit www.W-E-P-T.org

Compassion through science and ethical action.....

Our mission statement:

positively influencing the well-being of animals worldwide

Compassionate understanding of animals is always our main goal and we help people develop this awareness through gaining a sound base of scientific knowledge which creates opportunities for positive choices to be made regarding actions to be taken with their animals



Here at the NAC we act as a role model by showing compassionate alternatives available in management such as our Barn Management System for horses and pigs and the manmade rabbit warren.

Philosophy

The NAC is a living embodiment of the philosophies we promote. A visit here will reveal dogs and rabbits, horses and pigs which mix peacefully. Positive reinforcement and successfully applied scientific animal behaviour principles means you can achieve your dreams with your animals.



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Preamble

Despite the popularity of horse ownership, horse owners and trainers know surprisingly little about the science of equine behaviour. Furthermore, this lack of information often results in poor understanding of the horse and where unwanted behaviours occur, these are almost universally dealt with through the use of aversive therapy and force.

The Natural Animal Centre, concerned with this state of affairs, offers education to prospective Equine Behaviourists so that they can offer clients a service based on both scientifically and practically proven principles. Knowledge dispels the need for aversive therapy and force, replacing them with logic and practical techniques.

Currently it is possible to gain degrees in animal behavioural science at a number of universities in this country but few offer practical, hands-on behavioural study of horses and also, many of them do not offer positions to students whose background is not of an academic nature.

The Natural Animal Centre aims to bridge the gap between the academic institutions and the horse trainers by offering a quality, scientifically and practically based qualification for those seeking to help horses from a behavioural perspective.

Objectives of the Equine Behaviour Qualification (EBQ)

- give the horse owning public and equine welfare organizations a choice in hiring qualified equine behaviourists with a recognizable, trustworthy qualification;*
- provide veterinary surgeons with the choice and security of referring equine behavioural problems to appropriately qualified equine behavioural professionals;*
- provide prospective equine behaviourists with a credible, valuable, scientifically-based accreditation which would give them the knowledge and practical experience to offer professional behavioural advice to a paying client;*
- provide a structure for on-going CPD (Continuing Professional Development) to maintain the integrity of the EBQ in the market.*

The complete course comprises 9 modules (28 days of lectures, assessments and practical study) held at the Natural Animal Centre as well as a section of assessments to be undertaken at home. Students are expected to supplement their study at the Natural Animal Centre with Required Reading over the course.



Format of the EBQ

The accelerated learning option allows you to combine modules to reduce your visits to the NAC and complete the EBQ in a reduced time. For the duration of the accelerated learning course we run 4 modules back to back with one day off in the middle so you will come and do module 1 - 4 in a visit and module 5 - 8 in another visit. Module 9 including assessments are then completed separately.

Module 1 Aim: Introduction to horse behaviour and needs (Three Days)

- evolution of horses
- herd behaviour and social structure
- hierarchies of needs in horses
- introduction to the Selfish Gene theory

Module 2 Aim: Introduction to learning and play in horses (Three Days)

- introduction to animal intelligence
- instrumental learning in horses
- dominance and submission in horses
- introduction to play behaviour

Module 3 Aim: More learning theory (Three Days)

- classical conditioning in horses
- other types of learning
- learn how to analyse other training methods; video analysis of the 'true' science behind popular methods
- using clicker training as part of behaviour modification

Module 4 Aim: Introduction to physiology of horse behaviour (Three Days)

- introduction to physiology and neurology of behaviour
- introduction to stress in horses (behavioural and physiological indicators)
- the theory of sleep and sleep/wake cycles in horses
- introduction to reproductive behaviours in horses

Module 5 Aim: Introduction to equine welfare (Three Days)

- welfare problems related to stallions
- stereotypies and other abnormal behaviours in horses
- developmental behaviour in foals; attachment theory (and implications for artificial weaning practices)
- understanding conditioned suppression

Module 6 Aim: Introduction to fear and abnormal behaviours in horses (Three Days)

- fears, anxieties and phobias in horses (including epidemiology and aetiology)
- behaviour of horses in stabled environments

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Module 7 Aim: Introduction to consulting and professional conduct (Three Days)

- structuring and running a consultation
- ethics of working with vets
- solutions for behaviour problems – pulling it all together
- live practice at running a consultation

Module 8 Aim: Modifying aggression in horses (Three Days)

- physiological model of aggression
- modifying aggression in dogs (more advanced cases)

Module 9a Aim: Formal Assessment (Four Days)

The emphasis in this module is mainly on assessment although the first two days mainly comprises additional teaching. Assessment comprises three parts:

- Formal assessment of consultation with a client
- Written analysis of behaviour presented in the form of a short video
- Written examinations (in 3 parts)

Module 9b Aim: Prepared Case Studies

Students submit answers to four written case studies within three months.

Module 9c Aim: Field Case Study

Students will submit the results of a field case study based on advice given to a real client. The equine behaviour problem needs to be a level of seriousness that a progression towards a successful outcome would require approximately three month's work. It is a requirement that the initial consultation with the client is submitted on video for assessment.

Time limit for Completion of the EBQ

Whilst the Natural Animal Centre seeks to help students spread the expenditure of the cost of the EBQ (See Payment Terms overleaf), there is a time limit of two years in which to complete the EBQ. Most modules will be offered at least once per year so students can plan their study. Typically, a dedicated student could expect to complete the EBQ in approximately 15 months.



Accommodation

Our accelerated learning option includes accomodation at NAC 2. Enjoy a private african themed room with en-suite bathroom, a communal lounge and kitchen for self catering all set in a beautiful welsh valley at NAC 2.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Retention of this qualification requires annual renewal that takes the form of attendance of a CPD course at least once per year at the Natural Animal Centre (either in Wales or in Africa) where graduates of the EBQ will be given the latest up-to-date research on equines and other relevant animals. In this way, the Natural Animal Centre will ensure the integrity and quality of the EBQ remains intact. Currently, CPD is offered twice a year in spring and autumn.

Registration and Supervision

Students who graduate with high academic results and who have shown on-going dedication to equine welfare throughout their time of study at the Natural Animal Centre, may be invited to work in the field as an NAC registered equine behaviourist

Registered graduates will benefit from having cases referred to them by the NAC but by offering them supervision doing the early stages of their behavioural career, the NAC will ensure a high standard of excellence is offered to prospective clients.

A fee of £100 per annum is required to cover the Supervisor's costs. Initially the Supervisor will be Heather Simpson but in time we expect that EBQ graduates of more advanced EBQ stages (see below) would be interested in becoming supervisors as well.

Advanced Qualifications – the Equine Behaviour Qualification (Stages 2, 3 and 4)

The Natural Animal Centre aims to be the first educational facility offering a professional qualification in equine behaviour with the emphasis being on teaching students how to offer scientifically-based but practical, hands-on solutions for clients with animals that have behavioural problems.

To this end, we offer a serious career path to those wishing to progress their scientific equine behavioural knowledge even further in the form of more advanced study. By building on work undertaken in Stage 1, further stages of the EBQ give students the opportunity to pursue in-depth equine behavioural study over four years, giving graduates a currently unsurpassed professional horse behavioural qualification.

Payment Terms and Required Reading

Taking part in the accelerated learning course allows you to benefit from a discounted price, The NAC offers help in spreading the cost of the course over 3 or 4 payments and the discounted price is dependant on you meeting those payment dates.

The Required Reading list for the course is sent to the student on registration at their first payment. Books are for the account of the student.

Join us for the NAC Spring School 2010

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| <i>Mod 1 - 2</i> | <i>19th - 24th Jan</i> |
| <i>Mod 3 - 4</i> | <i>26th - 31st Jan</i> |
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| <i>Mod 5 - 6</i> | <i>23rd - 28th Feb</i> |
| <i>Mod 7 - 8</i> | <i>2nd - 7th Mar</i> |
| | |
| <i>Mod 9</i> | <i>29th Apr - 2nd May</i> |

Call & book your place now 01267 236434

