



ASDAN ANIMAL CARE SHORT COURSE

LEARNER HANDBOOK &
CHALLENGE GUIDE

Module Overview, Challenges & Assessment Guide



Welcome to the ASDAN Animal Care Short Course.

You will be able to explore this subject by doing a range of practical challenges that should help you develop several important transferable skills along the way.

This course may differ from others you have done before because it is designed to be very flexible.

You only need to select a fraction of the challenges on offer to complete the course, and you can do them in any order.

Each one is designed so that you can approach it in a variety of different ways, with flexibility around how you show you have completed the challenges.

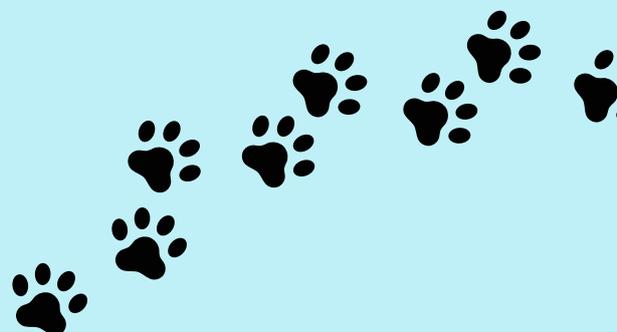
The journey in doing the challenges – including how you plan them and how you reflect on what you learned afterwards – is just as important as what you create.

Completing challenges

All the ASDAN challenges are based around the core concept that there are three stages to any project: *Plan, Do and Review*.

For most challenges, you only need to make brief notes about planning what you will do and reflecting on how well the challenge went, what you learned and what you might do differently another time.

For some challenges you should complete Skills sheet.
I will let you know when you need to complete these.





Module: Animal Investigation

Complete at least three challenges over approximately 10 hours to achieve 1 credit

The Animal Investigation module is designed to help learners explore the world of animals

Learners will investigate how animals are cared for, why humans keep animals, and what responsibilities come with ownership or working alongside them.

There are supported challenges (with resources and videos provided), but learners can also choose alternative challenges to suit their interests.

✓ Core Supported Challenges

(Resources and supporting videos are provided for these)

The challenge number corresponds to that on the ASDAN E Portfolio

Challenge 1 – Visiting a Pet Shop

Visit a pet shop or pet store.

Make notes about the types of pets for sale and how much they cost.

Speak to a staff member and find out what equipment would be needed to care for the pet.

Research the cost of this equipment.

Create a table showing the total costs involved.

This challenge helps learners understand the real-life responsibilities and financial commitment of pet ownership.

Challenge 4 – Visiting a Farm

Visit a farm or city farm, investigate the animals you see.

Report back on which animals are kept there and why they are kept.

This encourages learners to think about farming, food production, animal roles and welfare.

Challenge 10 – Comparing Pets

*Select three different types of pets.
Create a comparison table outlining their needs.
Consider your own home, time and circumstances.
Decide which pet would be most suitable for you and explain why.*

This task builds decision-making skills and responsibility.

Additional Challenge Options

Learners are welcome to choose from the following if they better suit their interests or circumstances:

Challenge 2 – Where to Get a Pet

Choose a pet you would like to own.

Research all the places you could get that pet from.

List the advantages and disadvantages of each option (e.g. breeder, rescue centre, pet shop).

Challenge 3 – Animal Care Presentation

Create a PowerPoint presentation about one domestic animal and what it needs to be happy and healthy.

You could include:

Living space

Safe accommodation

Food

Time commitment

Challenge 5 – Zoo or Wildlife Visit

Visit a zoo, farm or wildlife centre. You could:

Take photos and record audio about at least three animals.

Create a presentation to share your findings.

Compare a bird and a mammal found in a zoo (habitat, food, lifespan).

Take part in an animal handling session.

Write a diary entry about your experience.

Challenge 8 – Keeper or Behaviourist Talk

Attend a talk by a zoo keeper or animal behaviourist.

Take part in a group discussion.

Find out how animals' physical and emotional needs are met

Challenge 9 – Working Animals

Invite or visit someone who works with animals (e.g. farmer, dog handler, falconer, mounted police).

Learn about the jobs animals do.

Find out how they are trained.

Challenge 11 – Animals Around the World

Investigate how animals are used for work in different countries (e.g. elephants, camels, oxen).

Annotate a world map to show where animals are used and for what purpose.

Challenge 12 – Pet Popularity Survey

Conduct a survey with family and friends about the most popular pets.

Display your results in a chart.

Compare your findings with at least two other countries.

Challenge 13 – Other Agreed Challenge

Have your own idea?

Learners can design an “Other Agreed Challenge” that links to animal investigation. This could include unique, hands-on experiences such as caring for animals at home, hatching chicks, volunteering, or researching a specific area of interest.

We simply agree the focus together and ensure it meets the module criteria.



Module 2: Safety Around Animals

Complete at least three challenges over approximately
10 hours to achieve 1 credit

Understanding how to stay safe around animals is an essential part of responsible animal care.

In this module, learners explore the potential risks involved when interacting with animals and develop practical knowledge about keeping both themselves and animals safe.

As always, the module allows flexibility, including an “Other Agreed Challenge”

✔ Core Challenges

Challenge 5 – Dangers (and Benefits) to Humans

Create an information sheet explaining both the dangers and any benefits to humans in relation to:

Bee stings

Leeches

Snake bites

Tapeworms

Scorpion stings

This challenge encourages learners to think critically about risk while also recognising that some animals and organisms have important ecological or medical roles.

Challenge 6 – Demonstrating Safe Behaviour

Demonstrate appropriate behaviour around an animal of your choice.

Show how you interact safely and responsibly.

Collect a witness testimony to confirm that you

behaved appropriately and kept yourself safe

.For this challenge , learners must also submit a Plan and Review to show how they organised their work and reflected on what they learned.

Challenge 9 – Other Agreed Challenge

Example focus: What dangers can sea creatures cause, and how can we stay safe?

Learners can research at least one sea creature

(e.g. shark, jellyfish, stingray, coral) and:

Identify the risks posed to swimmers, divers or sailors.

Create a presentation explaining how to minimise these risks.

Offer clear advice about staying safe in the water.

Alternative Challenge Options

Learners may choose from the following to suit their interests:

Challenge 1- Interview a Professional

Interview someone who works with animals regularly (e.g. farm worker, veterinary nurse, dog trainer, zoo keeper).

Create a leaflet explaining the health and safety procedures they follow.

Challenge 2 – Parasites

Research which pets or working animals carry parasites (e.g. fleas, ticks, worms).

Identify which parasites can transfer to humans.

Explain how they can affect human health.

Challenge 3 – Transport Safety

Create a table explaining how the following animals can be kept safe during transport:

- snake
- dog
- rabbit
- horse
- bird
- sheep

Make a table that shows how to transport each animal safely.

Challenge 4 – Safety Equipment

Produce a leaflet showing equipment used to keep pets safe and secure (e.g. leads, collars, coats, rugs, head collars).

Research and include the cost of each item.

Challenge 7 – Hazards and Prevention

Choose an animal and:

List potential hazards when interacting with it.

Explain how to stay safe.

Create a PowerPoint outlining the dos and don'ts.

Challenge 8 – Protective Clothing

Research two examples where protective clothing is necessary when working with animals.

Explain what is worn.

Describe why it is needed.

This introduces learners to professional standards and responsible practice.



Module 3: Looking After Animals – Section B (Projects)

This exciting module allows learners to step into the world of real animal care professionals.

Through practical, creative projects, students explore what it means to care for animals responsibly — including clinical checks, recognising illness, and understanding first aid. This section is project-based and encourages independent thinking, creativity and real-world application

Main Project Pathway

Learners complete the following themed veterinary-style project over a minimum of 10 hours

All About Dogs

Create a leaflet for a vet student explaining how to examine dogs and check for common illnesses.

This might include:

Checking eyes, ears and teeth

Monitoring temperature and pulse

Looking for signs of illness or discomfort

Observing behaviour changes

The aim is to build understanding of routine health checks and early detection.

All About Horses

Design a poster or presentation explaining how to examine horses for illness.

This could include:

Checking hooves and legs

Observing posture and movement

Monitoring eating habits

Recognising signs of colic or lameness

Learners gain insight into the specific needs of larger animals.

First Aid in Animals

Create a flyer explaining three first aid situations for an animal of your choice.

Examples might include:

Cuts and wounds

Heatstroke

Choking

Poisoning

Sprains

For this section, learners must also submit a Plan and Review to show how they organised their work and reflected on what they learned.

Alternative 10-Hour Project Options

Learners may choose to complete one of the following extended projects (min 10 hours):

Challenge 1 – Caring for an Animal

Look after an animal for an agreed period of time.

Keep a diary or blog of your experiences.

Create an annual budget including:

Food

Housing

Health care (vaccinations, grooming, worming, shoeing)

Insurance

Bedding

Toys

Training

Equipment

Challenge 2 – Animal Training

Create a training video demonstrating how to train an animal.

Produce a leaflet outlining the dos and don'ts of training.

This develops communication skills and understanding of positive reinforcement.

Challenge 3 - Animal First Aid

Research animal first aid.

Demonstrate emergency procedures using a model (e.g. bandaging, treating heatstroke, removing a tick).

Give a short talk on first aid or common diseases.

Challenge 4 - Educational Game Design

Work as a group to design a board game or online game for young children about caring for an animal.

Include:

Risk factors (e.g. extreme weather, parasites, harmful substances)

Tips for keeping animals happy and healthy

Clear instructions

Present or teach the game to another group.



Module 4: Animals in Trouble

Complete at least three challenges over approximately 10 hours to achieve 1 credit

This module encourages learners to think deeply about animal welfare, ethics and conservation.

Students explore the challenges animals may face — whether through selective breeding, neglect, cruelty, or environmental threats — and consider what responsible action looks like.

Core Challenges

Challenge 4 – Designer Pets

Research so-called “designer” pets, such as:

Micro pigs

Dumbo rats

Tumbler pigeons

Munchkin cats

Teacup dogs

Learners will:

Investigate why there is demand for these animals.

Explore the possible consequences of selective breeding on animal health and welfare.

Take part in a discussion considering the pros and cons of this type of breeding.

This challenge encourages thoughtful debate and ethical awareness.

Challenge 6 – Helping Animals in Trouble

Create an information leaflet explaining

what people should do if they come across an animal in difficulty, such as:

An animal that has been treated cruelly or neglected

A stray dog

An injured wild animal

An abandoned baby bird

Learners consider appropriate, safe and responsible actions, including when to contact professionals.

Challenge 8 – Endangered Species

Choose an endangered animal and prepare a presentation explaining:

Why the species is at risk

The main threats it faces

What is being done to protect it

How individuals can help reduce the threat

This challenge builds understanding of conservation and global responsibility.

Alternative Challenges

Module 4: Animals in Trouble

In addition to the core challenges, learners may choose from the following alternatives. .

Challenge 1 – Visit an Animal Rescue Centre

Visit an animal rescue centre and create a:

Short film

Poster

Leaflet

Explain the work of the centre, the types of animals they help, and why their work is important.

Challenge 2 – Animals in Trouble (Media Study)

Watch a TV programme or film about animals that have been:

Neglected or mistreated

Injured

Endangered in the wild

Create a storyboard showing the journey of a specific animal or species. Include:

Why the animal was in trouble

The treatment or help it received

The final outcome

Challenge 3 – Animal Charities

Research two animal charities — one national and one international.

Prepare a short report including:

Key facts and statistics

The type of work they do

Similarities and differences between them

Challenge 5 – Public Opinion

Create a questionnaire exploring people's views on how animals are treated in the UK today.

Collect responses

Display your results in a chart of your choice

Challenge 7 – Why Animals Become Endangered

Design a leaflet explaining the reasons wild animals may become endangered.

This could include:

Habitat loss

Climate change

Pollution

Hunting or poaching

Illegal wildlife trade

Challenge 9 – Conservation Organisations

Research an organisation involved in animal conservation, such as:

World Wildlife Fund

Animals Asia Foundation

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Save Our Seas

Give a short talk explaining:

What the organisation does

Which animals they support

How people can help

Challenge 10 – Other Agreed Challenge

Learners may design their own agreed challenge linked to animal welfare or conservation



Module: Animals in the Media

This module explores how animals are represented in television, film, advertising, news and social media. Learners will examine how media portrayals influence public opinion, behaviour and animal welfare.

Core Challenges

Challenge 8: Learning About Celebrities Who Support Animals

Research a celebrity (eg actor, musician, influencer, or YouTuber) who supports animals.

Write a profile explaining:

Who they are

What they do to help animals

How their work supports animal rights or conservation

Why you think they choose to support animals

How their influence can make a difference

Challenge 9 Watching a Documentary About Working Animals

Watch a documentary that shows working animals.

Take notes on:

The different jobs they do

What their lives are like

Write a short review explaining:

What jobs these animals do

How their lives compare to non-working animals

How they help people

Other Agreed Challenge

Design a game where players match people with their pets.

Explain how your game works and what it teaches about animals and their owners.

Alternative Challenges

Creating a Scrapbook of Animal Stories in the News

Collect animal stories from newspapers, magazines or online news.

Create a scrapbook including:

Why each story interests you

How the animal is shown (eg positive, negative)

Why you think it was reported that way (eg public interest, dramatic effect, bias)

Include stories from:

Your local area

The UK

Other countries

Group Discussion: A High-Profile Animal Issue

Take part in a group discussion about an animal issue (eg cruelty, endangered species, dangerous pets, animals in entertainment).

Prepare by:

Researching the issue

Writing key points

During the discussion:

Listen carefully

Share your thoughts respectfully

Producing a Poster on Animal Advertising

Collect examples of companies using animals in advertising.

Create a poster, infographic or slides explaining:

Why advertisers chose those animals

How animals are used to influence customers

Reviewing an Animal Documentary

Watch a documentary about animals.

Write a review explaining:

The key points raised

How it changed how you think or feel about the animals

Comparing Film Portrayals with Real Life

Watch a film featuring an animal character.

Create a storyboard showing what happens to the animal.

Write a short explanation comparing:

How the animal behaves in the film

How that animal behaves in real life



Module 5: Animals and the Law

Complete at least three challenges over approximately 10 hours to achieve 1 credit

This thought-provoking module helps learners explore how animals are protected by law and why legal frameworks are important for welfare.

Core Challenges

Challenge 4 – Animals in Vehicles

Produce a poster to raise awareness about the dangers of leaving animals in vehicles.

Learners may include:

The risks of heatstroke

How quickly temperatures can rise

What to do if you see an animal in distress

Challenge 7 – Animals in Circuses

Should it be against the law to use animals in circuses?

Take part in a discussion about this issue.

Prepare notes to justify your argument.

Challenge 8 – If Animals Made the Laws

If animals could write laws for humans, what do you think they would create?

List and explain your ideas.

Alternative Challenge Options

Learners may also choose from the following:

Challenge 1 – Animal Welfare Laws

Research at least three laws relating to keeping, transporting or protecting animals.

Present your findings in a clear table.

Challenge 2 – The Five Freedoms

In a group, create a presentation suitable for primary-aged children explaining the Five Freedoms of animal welfare.

Challenge 3 – Legal Responsibilities of Pet Owners

Create a leaflet for a new pet owner explaining their legal responsibilities towards their pet.

Challenge 5 – Rescue Centres and the Law

Visit a local animal rescue centre.

Find out how they help enforce animal welfare laws.

Gather statistics about their work.

Present the information in a table or graph.

Challenge 6 – Police and Animal Welfare

Invite a police officer or liaison officer to speak about animals and the law.

Make notes on their views and experiences.

Challenge 9 – Animal Cruelty and the Law

Watch a TV programme about animal cruelty.

Identify which laws are being broken.

Explain how those laws protect animals.

Challenge 10 – Other Agreed Challenge

Learners may design their own agreed challenge linked to animals and the law, ensuring it meets the module's learning aims.



Module 6: Careers in Working with Animals

Complete at least three challenges over approximately 10 hours to achieve 1 credit

This final module helps learners explore the exciting and varied career opportunities available in the animal sector.

It encourages realistic career research, self-reflection and forward planning — helping students begin to think about pathways, qualifications and personal strengths.

✔ Core Challenges

📊 Challenge 1 – Exploring Animal Careers

Research jobs that involve working with animals.

Choose five different roles and create a table outlining:

Required qualifications

Daily duties

Key tasks

Potential salary

This helps learners understand the diversity of careers within the animal industry.

For this challenge , learners must also submit a Plan and Review to show how they organised their work and reflected on what they learned.

🌟 Challenge 2 – Is This Job Right for Me?

Select one animal-based job you would like to do.

Identify the skills and qualities needed.

Compare these with your own skills and strengths.

Decide whether this career feels suitable for you at this stage.

🏠 Challenge 7 – Routes Into the Career

Choose a specific animal-related job and investigate different routes into the profession, such as:

College courses

Apprenticeships

University study

Voluntary work

Work experience

Present your findings in a format of your choice (poster, presentation, leaflet, report).

🌟 **Alternative Challenge Options**

Learners may also choose from the following:

😊📅 **Challenge 3 – Shadowing Experience**

Shadow someone who works with animals (e.g. vet, groom, stable hand, farm worker) for at least one day.

Keep a diary of your experiences.

Reflect on what you learned.

🎤 **Challenge 4 – Guest Speaker**

Invite someone who works with animals to speak to your group.

Find out how they entered the profession.

Ask what they enjoy and what they find challenging.

Make notes and discuss key points afterwards.

📝 **Challenge 5 – Create a Job Advert**

Design a job advertisement for an animal-related role.

Include:

Required skills

Qualities

Qualifications

Key responsibilities

🏠 **Challenge 6 – Visit Two Workplaces**

Visit two different animal care settings (e.g. farm, zoo, rescue centre, stables).

Create a table showing the range of job roles available in each location.

🌟 **Challenge 8 – Other Agreed Challenge**

Learners may design their own agreed challenge linked to careers in working with animals.

This could include developing a small business idea,

creating a career pathway plan, or researching an emerging role in animal science or conservation.



🌟 Final Steps

As learners come to the end of their short course, they complete a Summary of Achievement and a Personal Statement.

There are supportive videos and resources available to guide learners through this section, making it clear, manageable and confidence-building.



Summary of Achievement

Learners complete a short form giving specific named examples of challenges where they have demonstrated the following skills:



Working with Others

For example:

Group discussions (e.g. Animals in Circuses debate)

Visiting a farm or rescue centres



Improving Own Learning and Performance

For example:

Acting on feedback to improve a presentation

Developing research skills across modules



Problem Solving

For example:

Deciding on the most suitable pet

Creating safety advice for sea creatures



Optional: Additional Skills

Learners may also include evidence of:



Communication

Presentations, posters, interviews, discussions, leaflets.



Use of Maths

Budget planning, cost comparisons, survey charts, data tables.



ICT

PowerPoints, digital posters, research tasks, recorded presentations.

Personal Statement

Learners also complete a short reflective statement covering:

Achievements (Things I Am Good At)

This is a chance to celebrate strengths — practical skills, research ability, creativity, teamwork, empathy or responsibility.

Things I Need to Improve

A gentle reflection on areas for growth — such as confidence speaking in front of others, organisation, time management or written detail.

Future Plans

This might include:

Volunteering with animals

Exploring college courses

Gaining work experience

Considering a specific animal-related career