

iPET Network

Level 3 Diploma in Canine Nutrition

Qualification Specification

Qualification Number:
603/7213/8



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About Us

iPET Network

LED BY INDUSTRY EXPERTS.

DRIVEN BY PASSION.

BOUND BY ANIMALS.

GUIDED BY CANDIDATES.

UNITED BY iPET NETWORK.

Our iValues

At iPET Network, our values are rooted in animal welfare, integrity, and innovation. We are committed to creating qualifications that are inclusive, practical, and industry-led, ensuring Learners gain real-world skills that make a difference. Collaboration, transparency, and continuous improvement guide everything we do, empowering people and protecting pets through education that sets new standards for excellence.



IPET Network
to be the leading
Awarding Organisation
for the Animal Care &
Veterinary Science
Sector.



Values
of inclusivity, diversity
and understanding in
every area of our
operation and conduct.



Authentic
in our approach, being
genuine, honest and
transparent ensuring
clear communication.



Leaders
in our field, facilitating
connections across
sectors to bring people
and ideas together.



United
commitment to create
qualifications that
positively impact the
lives of animals and
people.



Excellence
in everything our small
and mighty team do,
striving to improve and
grow.



Our Approved Centres

Our Approved Centres represent a nationwide community of schools, trainers, tutors, and industry mentors. Each centre delivers high-quality, Ofqual-regulated qualifications with animal welfare, education, and employability at their core. Together, they shape the next generation of animal care professionals with quality, compassion, and confidence leading every lesson. Our Approved Centres have exclusive access to our portfolio of qualifications, courses, learning materials and assessment strategies. We offer an inclusive opportunity to join a diverse network of forward-thinking professionals across the UK, Ireland, Europe and Internationally.

Our Mission - EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE, FOR PETS, FOR THE FUTURE

To be the Awarding Organisation of choice for Centres, Centres, Employers and Learners in the Animal Care and Veterinary Science Sector. We demand the highest standard of practice to ensure our suite of qualifications work: they work for animals who deserve the best care; they work for learners giving valuable skills, and they work for Centres and Centres with strong market appeal.

Leading the way in Qualifications

iPET Network is an Awarding Organisation regulated by Ofqual, CCEA Regulation and Qualifications Wales, specialising in qualifications in the Animal Care and Veterinary Science sector. iPET Network is a sector-specific Awarding Organisation and are constantly developing innovative animal care and veterinary science qualifications in the industry. We are unique in our approach to development, design and awarding of qualifications through the range of services and support we offer.

Supporting the Apprenticeship journey



iPET Network is also an End-point Assessment Awarding Organisation (EPAO) for English Apprenticeship standards regulated by Ofqual. Winning awards for our customer service and service excellence. Our approach has gained outstanding feedback from Apprentices, Employers and Centres with success gained through collaboration and positive communication.

We do the hard work for you – transparent, flexible and straightforward

We have developed robust systems at the forefront of technology that include extensive resources, quality learning materials and varied assessment methods. Our centralised platform makes it simple for Approved Centres and their teams to deliver, manage, mark and quality assure all in one place. We provide access to training and updates through standardisation to uphold modern best practice. Organisations of many different types, who want to deliver education, can join iPET Network, taking advantage of becoming an Approved Centre direct. With transparent fees and packages to suit every size of organisation from sole traders to limited companies, colleges and large employers.

An exciting and supportive community

We practice what we preach - the iPET Network team has extensive experience and knowledge of working in the Animal Care, Veterinary Science and Education sector. We provide support, advice and Continual Professional Development to help our Approved Centres offer the best standard of education and to inspire the future generation of the industry. We believe in removing learning barriers and working with Learners of all abilities to help them reach their full potential.

Contact Information



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Qualification Summary – Level 3 Diploma in Canine Nutrition

Key Information

Level	3
Guided Learning Hours	75
Total Qualification Time	380
Age Range	18+
Entry Requirements	Level 2 or Equivalent in Animal Care (or related) OR Demonstrate knowledge and experience within canine care and welfare for a minimum of 5 years
Permitted Delivery Types	Face-to-face, blended, remote
Subject Sector Area (SSA)	3.3 Animal care and veterinary science
Assessment Methods	Portfolio of Evidence
Overall Grading Type	Pass/Fail
Sampling Requirements	Interim and Summative
Registration Period	36 months
Regulated by	Ofqual, CCEA
Support Materials	Workbooks, Assessment Record, Candidate Resource Handbooks

1. About This Document

This **Qualification Specification** is intended for use by Learners, Tutors, Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers, Centre Managers and other staff within iPET Network Approved Centres, External Quality Assurers and other iPET Network personnel. It provides information about the structure, delivery and assessment of the Qualification. The **Qualification Specification** should be read in conjunction with the **Qualification Delivery Handbook** and **Approved Centre Manual**, which provides general guidance around operational considerations when delivering, and other relevant policy documents.

Qualification Specifications can be found on www.ipetnetwork.co.uk

This document reflects the most current information at the time of publication. However, as part of our commitment to continuous improvement, iPET Network may update its products and services from time to time. To ensure accuracy, Approved Centres must always refer to the most current version. Any updates will be documented in the version history/document control.

2. About This Qualification

The iPET Network Level 3 Diploma in Canine Nutrition is designed to explore the most up to date research and practice permeating the canine nutrition arena. It is aimed at Candidates who see and experience how nutrition affects the canine and subsequently want to develop their learning and understanding to inform their own development or professional practice. It is designed to be flexible to meet the real life needs of those who are currently working in the industry. Candidates must demonstrate knowledge of canine welfare and be committed to developing their personal and professional development.

Leading industry experts Lisa Hannaby, Jacqui Byrne and Caroline Griffith have helped write and review this qualification to ensure the outcome is appropriate for the Canine Nutrition industry and the continued growth and development of the sector.

This qualification is regulated by Ofqual and CCEA.

2.1. Objectives of the Qualification

This qualification has been designed to enable Candidates to:

- Access flexible, distance learning
- Work within in the pet food, canine health, and welfare industry to a professional standard
- Understand the principles of canine nutrition and changes at different life stages
- Gain knowledge and understanding of canine anatomy and physiology and the impact of canine evolution
- Carry out research and compile a literature review of their findings
- Understand the history and development of the pet food industry
- Understand the importance of the microbiome and behaviour

Depending on the needs of the Candidate, the qualification can:

- Prepare individuals to progress to another qualification in the same subject area, studying at a higher level or a qualification requiring more specific knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Improve employability skills.
- Encourage engagement in learning.

2.2. Progression Routes

Suggested progression routes and other qualifications that may be of interest following completion of the qualification:

- higher qualification in similar subject area
- gain employment within pet food/nutrition industry
- gain employment within the animal care industry

It is a requirement that assessment of this qualification is conducted in English.

2.3. Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

Guided Learning Hours (GLH) are defined by the [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act, 2009](#) as the number of hours the Candidate spends:

- Being taught or given instruction by a lecturer, tutor, supervisor or other appropriate provider of education or training, or
- Otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of such a person.

GLH does not include time spent on unsupervised preparation or study, whether at home or otherwise.

iPET Network has calculated the GLH for this qualification representing an estimate of the amount of actual guided learning which could reasonably be expected to be required to achieve the standard required to obtain the qualification.

Estimated GLH will be stated for each unit which should be used by Centres as a guide for devising teaching and learning plans.

2.4. Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total qualification time is defined as the number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) **plus** the time taken by the Candidate for independent, unsupervised study. Individual Learners' requirements and individual teaching styles mean there will be variation in the actual time taken to complete a qualification. Values for Total Qualification Time are estimates as some Candidates will be able to achieve units and qualifications within a shorter time than indicated. Others, for example those with additional support requirements, may need longer.

Guided Learning Hours and Total Qualification Time are as follows:

Qualification	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Total Qualification Time (TQT)
iPET Network Level 3 Diploma in Canine Nutrition	750	380

2.5. Qualification Delivery Requirements

The Summative Formal Assessment may take place either remotely or in-person and may be pre-recorded.

The remainder of the qualification may be delivered as the Approved Centre feels appropriate, ensuring that Guided Learning Hours requirements are met. As part of the application to deliver, Approved Centres must be able to evidence how they intend to deliver the qualification, including the methods by which they will achieve the estimated GLH.

3. Requirements to Offer This Qualification

Centres wishing to deliver this qualification must apply by submitting an iPET Network **Qualification Approval Form** which can be downloaded from the website. The centre must provide supporting information and documents to demonstrate their ability to deliver this qualification and adhere to quality assurance and assessment regulations.

Applications can be made via email eqa@ipetnetwork.co.uk or if there are any queries call the iPET Network team on 0800 433 4700.

Centres wishing to offer this qualification must refer to the requirements stipulated in Section 3.5.

3.1. Head of Centre

Each centre should identify a Head of Centre who has overall responsibility for ensuring the Approved Centre remains compliant with iPET Network's approval criteria and policies.

The Head of Centre must ensure all procedures relating to the delivery of the qualification operate effectively in the centre.

The Head of Centre contact is responsible for ensuring all relevant iPET Network documentation is distributed as required within the Centre and that the security requirements for external assessment are adhered to, where applicable.

The Head of Centre will be the main point of contact should iPET Network need to contact the Approved Centre regarding concerns of maladministration or malpractice.

Additional contacts can be agreed with the Approved Centre.

3.2. Tutors

To offer this qualification, centres must ensure that Tutors involved in delivery are professionally competent to do so. This means centres must ensure that Tutors meet the requirements in the Requirements for Centre Roles section.

Evidence of qualifications and experience must be provided in the form of original certificates, detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV)/pro forma and employer references. iPET Network reserves the right to request additional information in support of Centre/Tutor applications e.g., client reviews.

The exception to these requirements is where Guest Lecturers are utilised. A guest lecturer is an individual invited by an Approved Centre to give occasional lectures in their specific area of expertise or interest. They are usually not permanent staff members, although they might be permanent staff from a different department. Guest lecturers focus solely on teaching a particular subject and do not have the authority to make assessment decisions. According to iPET Network, “occasional” is defined as delivering no more than 10 hours of lecturing per academic year, or pro rata for shorter courses. This is not permitted for qualifications with less than 10 Guided Learning Hours.

3.3. Assessors

To offer this qualification, Centres must ensure that Assessors involved in assessment meet the requirements in the Requirements for Centre Roles section and are familiar with the assessment requirements of the qualification for which they are assessing. The same

individual can fulfil the role of Tutor and Assessor, especially regarding marking of theoretical assessments in workbooks or e-portfolios. The Centre can utilise different Assessors for different Units and may prefer to use an assessor who hasn't previously assessed the Learner's work for the Formal Practical Assessment.

Evidence of qualifications and experience must be provided in the form of original certificates, detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV)/pro forma and employer references. iPET Network reserves the right to request additional information in support of Centre/Assessor applications.

3.4. Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs)

Centres must also ensure that they have in place an Internal Quality Assurer who meets the requirements detailed in Requirements for Centre Roles section and is familiar with the assessment requirements of the qualification for which they are the Internal Quality Assurer

Or,

Utilise iPET Network's Internal Quality Assurance service via Gold package registrations.

(Refer to Centre Fees)

Use of Unqualified Internal Quality Assurers

Where an Approved Centre has an unqualified Internal Quality Assurer, they must be registered on a relevant regulated IQA qualification (see Requirements for Centre Roles section) and actively working towards its completion. Until the qualification is fully achieved and certificated, the working-towards IQA must have their decisions checked by a qualified and approved IQA, who will provide feedback and ensure reports are only released to Assessors when the IQA decisions are valid and reliable. The qualified IQA will countersign all decisions to confirm the checks have taken place and the decision and feedback was satisfactory.

Centres must either:

- Appoint or employ a qualified IQA who has been approved by iPET Network to act as a countersignatory and provide appropriate support.

Or,

- Engage iPET Network to provide a qualified and approved countersignatory IQA for the duration of the support period, with all associated costs to be paid for by the centre.

Please refer to the ***Approved Centre Manual*** for more information on countersigning requirements.

3.5. Requirements for Centre Roles

Centres are responsible for ensuring that Tutors, Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers are occupationally competent, suitably qualified and stay current with industry developments and best practices.

Role	Subject-specific knowledge	Vocationally relevant experience	Currency of knowledge	Role specific requirements
Tutor	<p>Must hold one of the following recognised professional qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Level 3 or above Qualification involving Canine Nutrition (examples detailed below); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ iPET Network Level 3 Diploma in Canine Nutrition ○ City and Guilds Level 3 Diploma in Animal Care and Welfare (where Canine Nutrition has been covered) ○ SEG Awards Certa Level 4 Certificate in Canine and Feline Veterinary Health Nutrition • Or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a CV / career profile of skills, knowledge, experience and achievements. This will be accepted at the discretion of the Awarding Organisation. • Other combinations of qualification and experience may be accepted by iPET Network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have completed 15 hours of Continuous Professional Improvement over the previous year. • CPD relevant to the industry • Types of CPD completed should be varied. For example, a range of webinars, journal reading, shadowing/industry days, workshops and reflective practice. 	<p>A teaching qualification at Level 3 or above, such as one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ iPET Network Level 3 Award in Education and Training for Animal and Veterinary Professionals (The previous version of this qualification: iPET Network Level 3 Award for Educators in the Canine and Feline Sector, will also be accepted as the skills are transferable) ○ Level 3 Award in Education and Training ○ Level 4 or above Certificate in Education (CertEd/PGCERTEd) ○ Level 3 Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS)

Role	Subject-specific knowledge	Vocationally relevant experience	Currency of knowledge	Role specific requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other qualifications that may be considered along with a CV demonstrating knowledge, skills and experience in canine nutrition are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level 3 or equivalent in Biochemistry ○ A Levels to include Biology ○ BTEC Applied Science ○ Undergraduate Science Based Degree • Or – see vocationally relevant experience • Other combinations of qualification and experience may be accepted by iPET Network. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS) ○ Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) ○ Level 7 Veterinary Education <p>Where no formal teaching qualification is held, it will be a requirement that a teaching qualification is achieved within 12 months of Centre Approval. The Tutor will require mentoring during this period.</p>
Assessor	See Tutor requirements	See Tutor requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have completed 50 hours of Continuous Professional Improvement over previous 2 years • CPD relevant to the industry • Types of CPD completed should be varied. For example, a range of webinars, journal reading, shadowing/industry days, 	<p>A qualification in vocational assessment at Level 3 or above, such as one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (CAVA) ○ D32/33 ○ A1

Role	Subject-specific knowledge	Vocationally relevant experience	Currency of knowledge	Role specific requirements
			workshops and reflective practice.	<p>Where the Assessor is also the Tutor a teaching qualification as outlined above for Tutors will be accepted in lieu of a vocational assessment qualification, where the content of the Teaching qualification included assessment.</p> <p>Where no formal teaching or assessor qualification is held, it will be a requirement that one is achieved within 12 months of Centre Approval. In many instances the role of Tutor and Assessor may be completed by the same individual. If the Assessor is not also the Tutor, it is recommended that they achieve a vocational assessment qualification rather than a teaching qualification. The Assessor will require mentoring during any period of working towards their qualification and the reliability of their assessment decisions checked and countersigned. The counter</p>

Role	Subject-specific knowledge	Vocationally relevant experience	Currency of knowledge	Role specific requirements
				signatory should not also be the IQA.
Internal Quality Assurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has substantial experience of working in or assessing qualifications in Animal Care Is familiar with the assessment requirements of the qualification for which they are the Internal Quality Assurer 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have completed 50 hours of Continuous Professional Improvement over previous 2 years CPD relevant to the industry. Types of CPD completed should be varied. For example, a range of webinars, journal reading, shadowing/industry days, workshops and reflective practice. 	<p>A qualification in Internal Quality Assurance, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D34 V1 Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice <p>(Level 4 Award in <i>Understanding the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practices</i> will not be accepted unless accompanied by evidence of extensive IQA practice)</p>

3.6. Standardisation

Standardisation of assessors and quality assurance personnel promotes consistency in the understanding and application of standards.

Assessors and quality assurance personnel will have their practise standardised through feedback and standardisation exercises and events. Centres should ensure that their internal teams are standardised and personnel are able to attend iPET Network standardisation events and complete standardisation exercises and training as required.

It is a requirement of the Centre approval process that each Centre offering units from iPET Network qualifications provides assessment materials for standardisation must provide assessment materials and Learner evidence for standardisation if requested.

Common errors, good practice and recommendations arising from standardisation will be disseminated to Approved Centres by iPET Network.

3.7. Support for Centres

iPET Network provides all Centres with on-going support, including:

- The requirements for assessment.
- Standardisation for Assessors and IQAs
- Training for centre admin staff on our IT systems and processes
- Centre policies

4. Learner Requirements

4.1. Entry Requirements

All Learners must meet the following criteria:

1. Minimum Age and Requirements	AND	2. Subject-specific Qualifications	OR	3. Relevant Experience
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Candidates must possess all of the following:		Candidates must possess the following:		Candidates must possess the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum age of 18 years • Be capable of working at a Level 3 or above 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 2 or Equivalent in Animal Care (or related) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge and experience within canine care and welfare for a minimum of 5 years

Approved Centres must recruit Learners with integrity: ensuring they have appropriate experience and ability to achieve the Qualification requirements, work consistently at the required level and demonstrate professional behaviours. All Learners must be screened via robust admission processes to ensure their suitability for the registration on the qualification. Whilst the above criteria form the basis of eligibility, Approved Centres may apply further requirements at their discretion. The admission screening may consist of:

- English and Maths Initial Assessments, such as, BKSB
- Skills scan
- Entry assessment/test
- Interview
- Curriculum vitae, to include previous experience, qualifications and achievements
- Academic or employer references

Admissions processes will form part of External Quality Assurance audits.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

Assessment within this qualification is designed to be accessible and inclusive. iPET Network is an inclusive organisation and operates in line with legislation set out in the Equality Act, 2010. It should be noted that any Learner registering for an iPET Network qualification, must

be able to meet the assessment criteria, with appropriate reasonable adjustment where required, in order to be certificated.

Those Learners with additional educational or physical needs, should discuss their support requirements with their centre. Centres should refer to the ***Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy*** which gives clear guidance on the reasonable adjustments and arrangements that take account of disability or learning difficulty without compromising the achievement of the assessment criteria.

Further guidance and support can be accessed by contacting iPET Network on info@ipetnetwork.co.uk

6. Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement

Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement will be considered for this qualification. Depending on the prior learning or attainment a Learner may be exempted from some teaching sessions or even exempted from an assessment or unit.

Centres wishing to obtain further details regarding the process of recognising prior learning and achievement should refer to the iPET Network ***Recognition of Prior Learning and Achievement Policy*** and contact their EQA for further guidance.

7. Induction

At the induction of each Learner, the Centre should identify if the Learner has any specific learning or training needs.

Each Centre must carry out an induction so that Learners fully understand the requirements of the qualification, their responsibilities as a Learner, and the responsibilities of the Centre. Centres should manage expectations by outlining their timeframes for responding to communications from Learners, accepted platforms for communication and timeframes for marking. This information will need to be recorded e.g., within a contract.

During the induction, Learners must be made aware of academic malpractice and the consequences of committing malpractice such as plagiarism or cheating. Please see iPET Network’s ***Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure (including sanctions)*** for details of indicative sanctions that iPET Network could take against Learners and Centres.

8. Achieving the Qualification

8.1. Duration of Registration

Qualification	Duration of Registration (months)
Level 3 Diploma in Canine Nutrition	36

All Learners will be registered with iPET Network for a maximum period as outlined in the table above. Centres should refer to the ***Approved Centre Manual*** and their ***iPET Network Terms and Conditions*** for further guidance about re-registration or requesting an extension due to extenuating circumstances.

iPET Network sets a registration period for each qualification. However, the time period for delivery and completion of the qualification is agreed upon between the Approved Centre and the Learner and must not exceed the registration period set by iPET Network. This is a separate contractual agreement which iPET Network is not responsible for, including any associated costs.

8.2. Unit Registration

Standalone unit registration is not accepted for this qualification.

8.3. Unit Achievement

All assessment criteria in each unit must be met before the unit is deemed to be achieved. The unit achievement is not graded: units are either achieved or not achieved.

8.4. Recording Achievement

Centres must record the Learner's achievement of the unit on an appropriate form(s) or electronic system. Centres should record the Learner's achievement against the specific unit assessment criteria evidenced by the task. Further information can be found in the Assessment Strategy.

8.5. Credits

To be awarded this qualification, Learners must achieve 38 credits.

9. Qualification Structure

9.1. Units

The structure of the qualification is as follows:

iPET Network Reference No.	Title	Level	Credit	GLH	TQT	Unit Reference number
410	Principles of Canine Nutrition	4	8	30	80	K/618/6582
320	Canine Digestive Anatomy and Physiology	3	3	10	30	M/618/6583
321	Life Stage Canine Nutrition	3	3	5	30	T/618/6584
322	Canine Evolution	3	3	5	30	A/618/6585
323	Pet Food	3	7	10	70	F/618/6586
411	Canine Microbiome, Immunity and Behaviour	4	7	10	70	J/618/6587
412	Research in Canine Nutrition	4	7	5	70	L/618/6588
TOTALS			38	75	380	

9.2. Level Descriptor

Level	Knowledge Descriptor (the holder...)	Skills Descriptor (the holder can...)
Level 3	<p>Has factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Use appropriate investigation to inform actions.</p> <p>Review how effective methods and actions have been.</p>
Level 4	<p>Has practical, theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined.</p> <p>Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.</p>

(Source: Ofqual, Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition, 2023)

10. Assessment

10.1. Assessment Process Overview

The iPET Network assessment process is as follows:

1. Assessments are developed by iPET Network and provided to the centre or, where permitted, devised by the Approved Centre and approved by iPET Network in advance (See Centre-Devised Assessments Section 11.5 in the ***Qualification Delivery Handbook***).
2. The assessment is then delivered and implemented by the relevant iPET Network Approved Centre.
3. All Assessors involved in the assessment process must have been approved by iPET Network, on an individual basis, in advance of any assessments being carried out.
4. Compiled portfolios of assessed evidence are internally quality assured by an iPET Network approved Internal Quality Assurer (IQA).
5. Completed portfolios of assessed evidence are then quality assured by an External Quality Assurer (EQA) approved by iPET Network.

10.2. General Assessment Principles

Assessments must be designed to ensure the following principles are met:

- Valid – the assessment/ work is relevant to the assessment criteria and set at the correct level.
- Authentic – the work is the Learner's own
- Reliable – the Learner can perform tasks or recall knowledge consistently over time. The Learner has completed the tasks as confirmed.
- Current - the work has been completed and assessed in a timely manner
- Sufficient – the assessment/ work covers all the assessment criteria of all the Units

10.3. Assessment Method and Strategy

It is a requirement that assessment of this qualification is conducted in English.

When delivering iPET Network Qualifications and the units contained, Approved Centres must provide evidence that their Learners have met the assessment criteria and should include the following assessment method(s):

The core assessment methods for this qualification, in line with the regulator's defined categories, are a **Portfolio of Evidence**.

The Portfolio of Evidence is a structured collection of a Learner's work that demonstrates the learner has met all required learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

10.4. Specimen Assessment Materials

Specimen assessment materials are not applicable to this qualification and therefore are not provided.

Please refer to the remainder of the assessment section in the **Qualification Delivery Handbook** for details of the assessment materials supplied by iPET Network.

10.5. Centre-Devised Assessments

Approved Centres that wish to develop their own assessments, instead of using those provided by iPET Network, are permitted to do so for this qualification, subject to the following requirements:

- The final Summative Assessment must be completed as prescribed.

Where Centres develop their own assessments, all assessment materials must be subjected to pre-release moderation. Pre-release moderation ensures assessment materials are fit for purpose, consistent across Centres, and free from error before they are used with Learners. The process includes checking accuracy, clarity, validity, reliability, fairness, accessibility and alignment to the qualification's learning outcomes and assessment requirements.

Pre-release moderation must ensure that assessments meet the criteria, level and standard required. The Centre will need to provide evidence that pre-release moderation checks have taken place and that actions identified by the moderator have been acted upon. The Approved Centre will also need to demonstrate, via a mapping document, that all assessment criteria will be assessed at some point during the qualification via the devised assessments. Pre-release moderation should ideally be completed by the Centre's Internal Quality Assurer where the Approved Centre employ their own. Alternatively, an individual who meets the Assessor requirements for the qualification can complete pre-release moderation of the assessment materials and checking of the mapping exercise, as long as they have experience in assessment moderation or have had additional training. iPET Network can provide pre-release moderation and mapping documentation templates. If an Approved Centre is unable to appoint a moderator, then the Approved Centre must discuss alternative arrangements and associated fees with iPET Network's Lead IQA or EQA team.

Approved Centres must make pre-release moderation and mapping records available for quality assurance when requested.

10.6. Marking

Please refer to ***iPET Network Artificial Intelligence and Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications Policy*** which governs the use of artificial intelligence in assessing any Learner's work.

Please note re-assessments are permitted.

10.1. Qualification Grading

This qualification is graded pass or fail.

10.2. Appeals

To ensure a fair assessment procedure is carried out, the Learner must be fully briefed on the assessment requirements and given instructions on their right to appeal an assessment decision. All Approved Centres must have an up-to-date appeals procedure.

10.3. What Constitutes a Fail?

It is at the Assessor's professional discretion if they confirm achievement or deny achievement to the Learner.

Examples of what may constitute a fail (theory)(list is not exhaustive):

- Plagiarism
- Irrelevant content
- Incomplete knowledge
- Incomplete coverage of an assessment criterion

Examples of what may constitute a fail (practical) (list is not exhaustive):

- Failure to address one or more of the assessment criteria
- Unsafe practice or behaviour
- Practice of behaviour that compromises animal welfare
- Failure to address key safety points and measures
- Poor standard of delivery
- Learner did not select appropriate equipment
- Assessment criteria were not achieved in the time allowed

When making an assessment decision it is important that all evidence and feedback is documented to support the assessment decision regardless of the decision

11. Qualification Unit Breakdown

Unit 410: Principles of Canine Nutrition

IPN Code	410	Unit aim	The aim of this unit is to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding the characteristics of nutrients essential to canine health including; the characteristics of macro and micronutrients.
Reg Code	K/618/6582		
Level	4		
GLH	30		
TQT	80		

Unit 410: Principles of Canine Nutrition

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The Learner will:	The Learner can:
1. Understand concepts of nutritional health and characteristics of macronutrients	1.1. Differentiate between essential and non-essential nutrients
	1.2. Identify all macronutrients and their purpose
	1.3. Evaluate the dog's dietary use of carbohydrates
	1.4. Evaluate the dog's dietary use of protein
	1.5. Understand factors affecting macronutrient quality and intake
	1.6. Identify a range of fats utilised by the dog and their composition
	1.7. Explain the function of fat in canine health
	1.8. Outline concepts of nutritional health in relation to specific macronutrients
	1.9. Outline the importance of water in canine health
2. Understand concepts of nutritional	2.1. Evaluate mineral and vitamin requirements of the dog
	2.2. Discuss the role and function of relevant minerals in canine health

Unit 410: Principles of Canine Nutrition

health and characteristics of micronutrients	2.3. Discuss the role and function of relevant vitamins in canine health
	2.4. Outline the 5 characteristics of a vitamin
	2.5. Identify sources of vitamins and minerals
	2.6. Understand factors affecting intake, digestion, and absorption
	2.7. Outline symptoms of toxicity of a range of vitamins and minerals

Unit 320: Canine Digestive Anatomy and Physiology

IPN Code 320

Unit aim

The aim of this unit is to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding of how food is digested and utilised in the canine. To include; the main stages of food processing and understanding health conditions associated with digestion.

Reg Code M/618/6583

Level 3

GLH 10

TQT 30

Unit 320: Canine Digestive Anatomy and Physiology

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The Learner will:	The Learner can:
1. Understand the main stages of food processing	1.1. Identify the main stages of food processing
	1.2. Identify the functions of the different teeth found in the dog
	1.3. Discuss the differences between carnivore and herbivore saliva
	1.4. Describe peristalsis
	1.5. Describe the role of digestive enzymes
	1.6. Describe the physiology of the digestive system
2. Understand features of health conditions relating specifically to the digestive system in the dog	2.1. Report on the condition megaesophagus
	2.2. Identify the structure and function of the anal glands
	2.3. Discuss the role of nutrition in impacted or infected anal glands

Unit 321: Life Stage Canine Nutrition

IPN Code 321

Unit aim

The aim of this unit is to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding of how nutritional needs change over the life of the canine. Being able to recognise the nutritional requirements for stages of pregnancy and weaning, nutritional needs for puppies to support growth and the aging dog understanding typical challenges that are related.

Reg Code T/618/6584

Level 3

GLH 5

TQT 30

Unit 321: Life Stage Canine Nutrition

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The Learner will:	The Learner can:
1. Understand the nutritional requirements of a pregnant bitch	1.1. Create a feeding plan for a pregnant dog, to accommodate from the start of pregnancy to weaning
2. Understand the nutritional needs of a puppy	2.1. Evaluate the nutritional composition of a range of foods for puppies
3. Know the purpose and use of a body condition score	3.1. Explain the accuracy of a body condition score in assessing weight
4. Understand the role of antioxidants for the aging dog	4.1. Describe and identify a range of antioxidants for the dog
5. Understand the role of	5.1. Describe nutritional support for dogs suffering with canine cognitive dysfunction

Unit 321: Life Stage Canine Nutrition

<p>nutrition in the aging dog</p>	
<p>6. Be able to identify factors which suggest a dietary change is warranted for an adult dog</p>	<p>6.1. Identify dietary shortfalls for a specific dog</p>
	<p>6.2. Discuss appropriate changes to meet their nutritional needs</p>

Unit 322: Canine Evolution

IPN Code 322

Unit aim

The aim of this unit is to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding how the evolution of the dog can inform their nutritional requirements.

Reg Code A/618/6585

Level 3

GLH 5

TQT 30

Unit 322: Canine Evolution

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The Learner will:	The Learner can:
1. Understand the nutritional needs of the canine ancestors	1.1. Describe the eating patterns observed in grey-wolf ancestors
	1.2. Describe a carnivore
	1.3. Describe an omnivore
	1.4. Describe the role of amylase in digestive processes
	1.5. Describe the anatomy of the wolf jaw and mouth
2. Understand the domestication of the dog	2.1. Explain the process of domestication
	2.2. Discuss why dogs became domesticated
	2.3. Identify the benefits to the dog, and also the shortfalls of domestication
3. Apply lessons learned from the evolution of the dog for optimal canine health	3.1. Discuss the difference in fatty acid composition between a wolf's diet and commercially fed dog
	3.2. Describe the eating patterns of feral and free-ranging domestic dogs
	3.3. Describe the purpose of self-selection and the eating patterns of those dogs allowed to do so

Unit 323: Pet Food

IPN Code 323

Unit aim

The aim of this unit is to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding the history of the pet food industry and identify a range of pet foods on the market.

Reg Code F/618/6586

Level 3

GLH 10

TQT 70

Unit 323: Pet Food

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The Learner will:	The Learner can:
1. Understand the history of the pet food industry	1.1. Identify relevant legislation in the pet food industry
	1.2. Describe the origin of the very first commercial pet food
2. Understand how wet and dry dog food is processed	2.1. Describe the food processes undertaken in the manufacturing of both commercial wet and dry dog food
3. Understand the benefits and pitfalls of diets available to the dog	3.1. Research and describe raw feeding
	3.2. Outline the differences between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry • Cold pressed • Wet • Raw • Cooked • Dehydrated • Freeze-dried foods
	3.3. Outline where home-made diets may be beneficial
	3.4. Identify risks in all presently available pet foods

Unit 323: Pet Food

4. Know and understand the requirements of manufacturers guidelines and why they are important

4.1. Identify and explain different manufacturers guidelines for a range of pet food

4.2. Explain why manufacturers guidelines are important and why they should be adhered to

Unit 411: Canine Microbiome, Immunity and Behaviour

IPN Code 411

Unit aim

The aim of this unit is to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding the relationship between the microbiome and behaviour. This will cover; Composition of the microbiome and how the microbiome influences behaviour.

Reg Code J/618/6587

Level 4

GLH 10

TQT 70

Unit 411: Canine Microbiome, Immunity and Behaviour

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The Learner will:	The Learner can:
1. Understand factors affecting microbiome composition	1.1. Define the canine microbiome
	1.2. Evaluate the role of the skin microbiome in skin issues in the canine
	1.3. Identify and explain factors which affect microbiome diversity
2. Understand how the microbiome influences behaviour	2.1. Describe how the microbiome influences immune function, leading to behaviour changes
	2.2. Evaluate the role of the vagus nerve in behaviour
	2.3. Outline the behaviour manipulation hypothesis
	2.4. Define the role of neurotransmitters in behaviour
	2.5. Analyse and interpret how low diversity of microbes affect behaviour
	2.6. Explain ways to promote microbiome diversity in the dog

Unit 412: Research in Canine Nutrition

IPN Code 412

Unit aim

The aim of this unit is to provide the knowledge, skills and understanding the purpose of research in canine nutrition and the implications and ethical issues relating to this research.

Reg Code L/618/6588

Level 4

GLH 5

TQT 70

Unit 412: Research in Canine Nutrition

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The Learner will:	The Learner can:
1. Understand the function of research in canine nutrition	1.1. Analyse the function and purpose of research
2. Understand the ethical issues relating to research	2.1. Analyse the ethical principles that apply when conducting research
	2.2. Identify the relevant legislation when conducting research in the canine nutrition industry
3. Understand research methodologies relevant to canine nutrition	3.1. Describe qualitative and quantitative research methodologies
	3.2. Identify primary and secondary data sources
4. Be able to conduct a literature review	4.1. Identify appropriate secondary data sources
	4.2. Collate data into a literature review of a chosen topic
	5.1. Demonstrate abstracts and conclusions

Unit 412: Research in Canine Nutrition

5. Be able to interpret research findings	5.2. Explain the limitations of studies
	5.3. Analyse researcher bias.
	5.4. Suggest ways in which the data found could apply to their own practice

Assessment information

All Assessment Criteria must be evidenced. For guidance on assessment, including principles of assessment and methods which may be used, Centres should consult the ‘Assessment’ section of the iPET Network Qualification Handbook and relevant policies.

Sector Subject Area (SSA)	Date from which qualification will be available for learners
3.3	08/03/2021

12. Suggested Learning Resources

A range of textbooks, journals, digital resources, professional bodies, and practical tools may support Learners in achieving this qualification. These resources are recommended only and are correct at the time of publication.

Educators are encouraged to select resources appropriate to Learners' prior knowledge and learning contexts, and Learners should engage with a combination of materials to fully develop the competencies outlined in this qualification. Centres and Learners should verify currency, editions, and relevance to ensure alignment with current best practice and industry standards.

Literature

Canine and Feline Nutrition – Case, Daristotle, Hayek, Raasch ISBN-13 : 978-032306619

Dr. Conor Brady – Feeding Dogs ISBN: 9781916234000

Small Animal Clinical Nutrition – Hand, Thatcher, Remillard, Roudebush ISBN-13: 978-0945837053

The Best Dog Diet Ever – Caroline Griffith ISBN 0957168306, 9780957168305

The Complete Book of Cat and Dog Health – Lise Hansen ISBN 1787114155

The Domestic Dog – James Serpell ISBN: 978-0521425377

Missing Microbes – Martin Blaser ISBN: 978-1250069276

Spoon Fed – Tim Spector ISBN 978-1787332294

Psychobiotic Revolution – Scott Anderson, John F Cryan ISBN: 978-1426219641

10% Human – Alanna Collen ISBN: 978-0007584055

The Gut Stuff – Lisa and Alana Macfarlane ISBN: 978-1911663478

Immunity: The Science of Staying Well – Dr Jenna Macciochi 978-0008370268

Bad Pharma – Ben Goldacre ISBN 000749808X

How to Write Your Literature Review Bryan Greetham ISBN: 978-1352011043

Websites

<https://veterinary-practice.com/>

<https://www.cliniciansbrief.com/>

<https://www.bellaandduke.com/podcast-category/podcasts/page/5/>

www.pfma.org.uk

www.rfvs.info

<https://fediaf.org/self-regulation/nutrition.html#guidelines>

<https://fediaf.org/prepared-pet-foods/recipes-and-processing.html>

<https://fediaf.org/self-regulation/legislation.html>

<https://fediaf.org/-%22/68-dcs-nutrition-fact-sheets%22>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>

<https://academic.oup.com/jn>

13. Supporting Documents

The following documents contain essential information for Approved Centres delivering iPET Network qualifications. They should be referred to in conjunction with this handbook. To download the documents and to find other useful documents, go to www.ipetnetwork.co.uk, the web portal or SharePoint.

- iPET Network Approved Centre Manual
- iPET Network's quality assurance requirements

- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure (including Sanctions)

14. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Portfolio of Evidence	This is a structured collection of a Learner's work that demonstrates the Learner has met all required learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
Assignment	A formal piece of work set by the awarding organisation or centre, requiring the Learner to apply knowledge and understanding to meet specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Assignments are usually written.
Reflective Log	The reflective log/journal is a work where Learners reflect on their actions, experiences, or learning, considering their implications to identify key areas for future development, learning, or practice.
Practical Demonstration	A practical demonstration is an assessment method where the Learner performs a task or series of tasks in a controlled or real-world environment to show their ability to apply skills, techniques, or procedures in line with specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria. The demonstration provides observable evidence of competence and may be accompanied by commentary or explanation of the actions taken.
Assessment and Delivery Guidance	Also referred to as indicative content, assessment and delivery guidance provides additional explanation to support the interpretation and delivery of learning outcomes and assessment criteria within a qualification. It outlines the scope, depth, and key areas of knowledge, skills, and understanding that may be taught and that Learners are expected to demonstrate. The guidance helps give Centres support in planning and delivering learning and gives a clearer understanding of what is expected. It also supports Assessors in making consistent and fair assessment decisions. It is not intended to be exhaustive or restrictive, or to prescribe specific answers or teaching, but rather to illustrate the range and level of evidence that would meet the requirements of the assessment criteria.

Version Control

Date of Amendment	Version Number	Amendments
	1.0	First release of document
31/03/2021	2.0	Assessment guidance wording
12/05/2021	3.0	Marking guidance wording

03/10/2022	4.0	Updated mission statement, added duration of registration. Opening hours updated.
13/06/2023	5.0	Change of document name from 'Qualification Guide' to 'Qualification Specification' and amendment to assessment section
08/01/2024	6.0	Specimen assessment materials clarified, qualification review section updated and formatting updates.
20/05/2026	7.0	Document updated to new design. Duration of registration clarified. Unit 320 AC1.3 removed. Review date removed.
04/06/2026	7.1	Regulators confirmed and Qualifications Wales removed
18/06/2026	7.2	iValues added.