

28415 - Scientific English for Veterinary Science

Syllabus Information

Academic Year: 2020/21

Subject: 28415 - Scientific English for Veterinary Science

Faculty / School: 105 - Facultad de Veterinaria

Degree: 451 - Degree in Veterinary Science

ECTS: 6.0

Year: 2

Semester: First semester

Subject Type: Optional

Module: ---

1.General information

1.1.Aims of the course

The expected results of the course respond to the following general aims:

The general aim of this course is to enable the students to:

- communicate in English at a reasonable level of accuracy, adapting the message to the audience and the communicative purpose of the discourse, in different academic and professional contexts related with the veterinary Sciences .
- develop strategies and techniques for written and oral communication in English, aiming to building, processing, interpreting and presenting scientific data and information.
- make use of bibliographical resources and veterinary websites published in English.

1.2.Context and importance of this course in the degree

Since English is the language internationally used in scientific communication, most bibliographical resources and online learning material used by students of this degree are published in English. Therefore, apart from providing students with the necessary skills to use English in academic and professional veterinary contexts, it will also contribute to developing their proficiency in reading and understanding texts necessary to reach the objectives set for the degree.

1.3.Recommendations to take this course

To be successful, the student is highly recommended **to start with at least the level** of general English (written and oral) acquired in *Bachillerato*, which is equivalent to **B1** of the Common European Framework, whose achievement requires the following skills:

- understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
- understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language.
- receive and give orders and instructions in both written and oral English
- deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
- enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).
- briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
- narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe his/her reactions.
- write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.
- write personal letters describing experiences and impressions

The course will be entirely delivered in English and communication in the classroom takes place only in this language. The student is also advised to work on it steadily, which implies attending both lessons and practice sessions on a regular basis. Regular completion of individual assignments is also recommended.

2.Learning goals

2.1.Competences

After completing the course, the student will be competent in the following skills:

- 1: understand, analyze, evaluate and produce short scientific texts related to those subjects composing his/her degree course, making use of an adequate linguistic approach.
- 2: find specific information within a wider text as a result of both his/her knowledge of specialized terminology and of being familiar with the rhetorical structure of scientific discourse.
- 3: participate in conversations and debates on veterinary topics applying communicative strategies in an academic context.
- 4: apply useful strategies in searching information online in English, through the use of keywords and linguistic tools such as specialized dictionaries, data bases, veterinary websites, university libraries, veterinary podcasts...

2.2.Learning goals

The student, in order to pass the course, will have to show his/her competence in the following skills:

- 1: Make use of specialized terminology commonly used in the academic and professional contexts related to veterinary practice.
- 2: Understand and correctly interpret specialized texts written in English about topics related to the veterinary studies and related jobs, so that they can make everyday use of the bibliographical resources needed in the course of his/her degree studies.
- 3: Identify and make use of the adequate register used in the different spheres where scientific communication occurs.
- 4: Produce short texts about topics related with his/her academic activities using the rhetorical functions adequate for the corresponding communicative act.
- 5: Identify and understand the main points in a lecture or speech in English on topics related to his/her areas of study and future professional activity.
- 6: Participate in conversations and debates on topics pertinent to their academic activities.
- 7: Detect the differences between the language used for general purposes (General English) and the use of English in academic scientific contexts.

2.3.Importance of learning goals

The skills acquired will provide the students with communicative competences that are essential in post-graduate studies and that are currently crucial to access scientific knowledge. These competences will undoubtedly enhance their employability in a globalized labour market where a proficient command of English for professional purposes is highly valued.

3.Assessment (1st and 2nd call)

3.1.Assessment tasks (description of tasks, marking system and assessment criteria)

Assessment tasks

The student will prove that he/she has achieved the expected learning results by means of the following assessment tasks:

1: Global Examination: All students of this module are evaluated at the end of the semester by means of a global evaluation of the command of English. A model exam will be provided in advance so that students are aware of the level required to pass the test, and the tasks to be completed.

Assessment will cover all the material that has been used and studied in the course and what students are expected to have acquired as independent learners. The examination will be based on the completion of tasks similar to those carried out throughout the course. These will include:

- the use of specialized terminology and the ability to deduce the meaning of words through the context (25%).
- paragraph building on veterinary topics using scientific information and applying the morphosyntactic, semantic and lexical structures that define scientific language (30%).
- rephrasing the information given by applying knowledge of synonyms, antonyms, use of connectors, abbreviations and other linguistic features necessary to express the functions which characterize biomedical scientific language (description, classification, definition, comparison, instructions...) (15%).
- understanding authentic (not linguistically adapted) veterinary texts, applying meaning-deduction techniques, understanding complex noun compounds, demonstrating knowledge of word-formation (prefixes, roots, suffixes), and identifying textual structure depending on the communicative function of the selected text (20%).
- using keywords in online information search (10%).

2: Oral Examination: Those students that cannot demonstrate to have obtained this skill during the practice sessions will **INEXCUSABLY** have to pass an oral exam consisting of a 10-15 minute conversation in English on topics related to those learnt and discussed throughout the course.

Assessment of students not attending classes and second call exams.

As indicated above, **all students** of this module are evaluated at the end of the semester by means of a global evaluation of the command of English. Structure of the exam and assessment percentages are also detailed in the paragraph above.

Students not attending classes are offered the possibility of completing tasks with materials available in the *Moodle* platform. Completion of these tasks will be taken into account in the final marks. These students will have to pass an oral exam.

Assessment criteria

Accuracy in the use of the English language and appropriateness of style (formal register and specific veterinary vocabulary); coherent organization of the information adjusting to the respective discourse structure of the different scientific genres.

More detailed evaluation criteria have already been specified in the description of the different assessment tasks.

Remember that, in order to successfully complete the course, the student will have to obtain **at least 60%** of the total available marks.

Academic marks system:

0-4,9: F (fail)

5,0-6,9: C and D levels

7,0-8,9: B level

9,0-10: A and A+ level

Marks will be expressed numerically according to the regulations included in article 5 of the Royal decree 1125/2003 published in the *Official State Gazette (Boletín Oficial del Estado -BOE)* where the European Credits System and the grading system for university studies are established.

4.Methodology, learning tasks, syllabus and resources

4.1.Methodological overview

The learning process that has been designed for this course is based on the following activities:

This is a basically practical course, and consequently, although part of every class session is likely to involve direct teaching, the emphasis is on student participation in English. They will be expected to take part actively in discussion and in tasks such as small group and pair work where the concepts and knowledge acquired will be applied.

With this aim, and before each session, the students will be provided with a summary of the main points of the lesson (through the *Moodle* platform), to optimize the performance of the available contact hours.

Each theoretical session will last 50 hours. Part of this time will be devoted to explaining and exemplifying the main points of the corresponding unit, working with authentic (not adapted) oral and written texts relating to a great variety of veterinary topics. Students will then be required to actively participate in problem-solving activities for which they will be provided with further explanations when required. Thus, despite being referred to as 'theoretical?', these sessions entail active participation of the students in all cases.

These sessions will be complemented with a series of purely practical 50 minute classes where students will be able to put into practice the knowledge acquired by completing tasks which require the use of scientific language.

The student will also be expected to spend time studying outside the class using extra facilities and materials to help them develop their expertise as independent language learners. The completion of a series of exercise and tasks will also be required.

There is no set textbook. The supporting printed learning materials for the course will be available from the reprography service of the faculty. To help students to develop an autonomous learning programme, extra supporting materials to consolidate English grammar and pronunciation as well as extra practice materials for veterinary related topics will be provided in the Digital Platform <https://moodle2.unizar.es/>.

Authentic print and multimedia material covering a variety of styles, registers and genres will be used too.

4.2.Learning tasks

The programme offered to the students to help them achieve the desired results and outcomes includes the following activities:

1: **Lectures:** with the main objective of conveying the fundamental concepts of the module, so that goals set by the teacher are achieved. The lecture is expected to be participatory and to encourage debate and clarify issues and questions based on the learning materials.

2: **Practice sessions:** individual and group tasks on veterinary related texts interpretation, discussions, team work and group interaction.

3:**Tutorials and evaluation** that allow a more direct and personal support to students in order to monitor tasks, answer questions and guide them in the study. These tutorials may be individual or in a group.

4.3.Syllabus

Course syllabus

Contents are divided into 20 units that are distributed as follows:

1. Describing qualifications in Higher Education. Identifying and defining the different sciences and subjects composing the veterinary degree. Naming and describing activities and jobs related to the veterinary profession. Assignment: essay on veterinary studies and profession based on reading available texts. Lexical exercises. Translation sentences.
2. Describing physical features. External characteristics of animals. Rhetorical functions: physical description and classifying techniques. Linguistic content: degrees of generalization, comparative structures, shortened relative clauses. Assignment: reading comprehension and vocabulary exercises. Practice with relative clauses.
3. Naming statements. Identifying and recognizing common terms used for animals. Defining common terms used to denote sex and age of animals. Defining common terms used to denote birthing and grouping of animals. Primary data in clinical histories. Rhetorical functions: definition. Assignment: lexical exercises.
4. Describing shapes, properties, size, dimension and colour. Assignment: translation exercise. Using prefixes, suffixes and roots in deducing meaning.
5. Describing animal morphology. Expressing similarities and differences. Rhetorical functions: describing and defining. Linguistic content: comparison and contrast. Introducing physical examination, surgical wear and basic clinical material terminology. Assignment: Comparison and contrast exercises. Summarizing texts.
6. Formal vs Informal definitions. Basic components of a formal definition. Common suffixes in medical contexts. Assignment: defining exercises. Practice with medical suffixes.
7. Learning anatomical terminology: general directional terms, directional terms for limbs. Planes of section. Rhetorical functions: definition and description. Linguistic content: basic anatomical terminology, adjectives and nouns. Locative statements. Use of prefixes, suffixes and roots in anatomical terminology. Assignment: Exercises applying formal anatomical terminology.
8. Describing structures (1). Verbs associated with structures: composition, location and direction. Relationship between elements. Assignment: using verbs in descriptions of anatomical structures and location. Translation exercises.
9. Describing structures (2) The musculoskeletal system terminology. Describing bone anatomy terms. Common diseases and disorders affecting the musculoskeletal system. Frequent traumatological problems. Assignment: Lexical and translation exercises.
10. Describing function. Describing anatomical and physiological functions. Different types of digestive systems: components and function description. Assignment: reading comprehension exercise. Common verbs and adjectives used in function description. Assignment: lexical exercises. Description of organ functions.
11. Describing process. Sequencing the steps in the process description. Internal anatomy and physiology: The heart cycle and the digestion process. Linguistic content: Markers of time sequence. Time clauses. Causality and result. Assignment: Description of process: life cycle.
12. Practicing physical, function and process description. The respiratory and nervous system components, location and function. Common signs of respiratory and neurological disease. Irregular plurals. Common acronyms and abbreviations. Assignment: reading comprehension exercises based on Case studies.
13. Applying previous knowledge and context in text comprehension. The urinary and reproductive systems in mammals. Assignment: reading comprehension exercises based on Case studies.
14. Deducing the meaning of words through context. Feeding farm animals. The constituents of foods. Food requirements. Linguistic content: Passive sentences. Use of defective verbs (may, might, should). Assignment: Understanding authentic written material. Paragraph writing. Oral summary of written texts.
15. Describing symptoms. The causes of ill health. Linguistic contents: common abbreviations, prefixes, suffixes and roots used in clinical contexts. Common terms used in signs and symptoms description. Assignment: understanding and summarizing written texts. Translation exercise.
16. Describing pests and diseases. Rhetorical functions: Classification. Instructions. Linguistic content: Statements of frequency. Statements of probability and tendency. Causality and result relationships. Assignment: matching causes and effects. Using text information in answering questions.
17. Understanding and describing Veterinary Case Studies. The use of acronyms and abbreviations. Technical vs semi-technical medical vocabulary in the veterinary profession. Assignment: Understanding written texts. Lexical exercise on veterinary clinical material and techniques. Vid. Annex 1.
18. Presenting Veterinary Case Studies. Review of formal clinical terminology. Formal/informal synonyms. Assignment: Understanding written texts. Recognizing and defining terms associated with laboratory analysis, radiographic and imaging procedures. Lexical exercise on laboratory material. Vid. Annex 2.
19. Practicing with common acronyms and abbreviations used in the veterinary profession. Linguistic content: Making deductions. General review of basic surgical and medical material used by veterinary practitioners. Describing terms and equipment for the basic physical examination. Recognizing and defining terms associated with pharmacology and drugs used in various treatments, with pathological procedures and processes, and with different types of surgery and the instrumental used. Vid Annex 3.
20. ANNEXES 1, 2 and 3 Review exercises.

4.4. Course planning and calendar

Classroom sessions calendar and submission dates of individual or group work

Dates and times of all the course sessions will be announced on the website of the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences. Any other activities as well as the deadlines for the submission of works will be communicated by the lecturer at the beginning of the module.

The activities and key dates will be communicated at the presentation of the module for each group and during the semester in due time.

The official hours and dates of the final exams can be found on the web pages of the Veterinary Sciences Faculty (<http://veterinaria.unizar.es/>)

Note that it is the responsibility of students to ensure that they have read and understood this document and all the information about the course, and have checked lessons timetable and exam dates in advance, so as to be able to plan their work schedule. If you are in any doubt, talk to the teacher in good time.

At the end of the teaching period students will be evaluated by means of a global examination (*vid.* Evaluation section in the present guide).

4.5. Bibliography and recommended resources

<http://psfunizar7.unizar.es/br13/egAsignaturas.php?id=7497&p=1>