



Otago Polytechnic

Te Kura Oraka Kararehe | School of Animal Health

NZ Certificate in Animal Management (level 4) Pet Grooming strand

Frequently Asked Questions

Kia ora and thank you for your interest in studying the NZ Certificate in Animal Management - Pet Grooming with Otago Polytechnic.

This document contains the most commonly asked questions about the Pet Grooming programme. We look forward to your application to enrol and are happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Mā te wā,

Wendy Jarnet
Senior Lecturer and Programme Coordinator
NZ Certificate in Animal Management – Pet Grooming Strand

1. What does the programme consist of? What courses are included?

The NZ Certificate in Animal Management (Level 4), Pet Grooming strand, is made up of **eight 15-credit courses**, six of which are theory-based and two practical.

Theory-based Courses:

- ANML4602 Introduction to Professional Skills and Competencies in a Pet Grooming Facility
- ANML4603 Animal Behaviour and Welfare
- ANML4604 Pet Grooming Hygiene, Bathing and Drying
- ANML4605 Grooming Equipment and Procedures
- ANML4606 Integrated Grooming

Practical Courses:

- ANML4607 Pet Grooming Practicum 1
- ANML4608 Pet Grooming Practicum 2

Theory courses are **criterion-based**, meaning they are graded (e.g. A+, A, A-, B+). To pass, you must achieve a minimum grade of C- (50%). Most theory courses have a single summative assessment.

Practicum courses are **competency-based**, meaning you will be graded as either passed or not passed.

2. How is the practical component assessed?

There are **14 practical skills** you must demonstrate, including animal handling, restraint, bathing, drying, and eventually performing full grooms independently. You are also required to complete a **minimum of 240 hours** in a grooming salon placement.

Your practical competency is assessed through logged hours, skill demonstrations, and feedback from your placement provider.

3. Do I need to organise my own grooming salon placement?

No. Otago Polytechnic will organise your salon placement for you. Please **do not contact salons directly**. If there's a salon you'd love to work with, let us know—we'll contact them directly to make sure they meet programme and safety standards.

You will begin your placement shortly after attending your first block course at the start of the programme.

4. What block courses do I need to attend? Where are they held?

There are **two compulsory block courses**, each lasting **4 days**. These are held at **Otago Polytechnic, Dunedin Campus**.

All ākonga | students must attend both block courses, the first one is scheduled early in the programme to ensure you are prepared before entering salon placements.

5. What does full-time study look like compared to part-time?

- **Full-time:** Approximately **35–40 hours per week**, over **1 year**
- **Part-time:** Approximately **17–20 hours per week**, over **2 years**

While the full-time option can seem appealing, it is **intense** and best suited to those with minimal external commitments. If you have a job, children, sports, or other obligations, we strongly recommend enrolling part-time.

Note: Grooming salons generally **do not offer placements on weekends**, so availability during weekday business hours is essential.

6. What if I start full-time and can't keep up?

We understand that life can change. If you're struggling, we can discuss options like:

- Withdrawing from specific courses
- Transferring to part-time study
- Extending your study duration

However, your options decrease the further into the year you go. After certain dates, you may also be ineligible for **fee refunds**.

7. Can I be cross credited for previous experience or other qualifications?

We look at this on a **case-by-case basis**. The most common scenario is where assessment reduction can be applied with appropriate evidence from you. Ākonga | students may come with extensive vet nursing or similar backgrounds. We may look at alternate forms of evidence for some of the skills in the workbook.

For example:

- Ākonga | students who have studied the **Vet Nursing Assistant strand** or hold a **NZ Diploma in Veterinary Nursing** may have already met some requirements.
 - Ākonga | students with significant professional pet grooming experience may need to look at enrolling through the **APL (Assessment of Prior Learning)** pathway.
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8. What computer equipment do I need and how will I access course content?

As this is a highly blended course, good computer skills are imperative.

You will need:

- A **reliable internet connection**
- A **laptop or desktop computer**
- A **mobile phone with camera and data access**

Course content is delivered online through **Moodle**. We also use:

- **Microsoft Teams** (for live lectures and communication)
- **InPlace** (for placement management)

You'll have full access to the **Robertson Library**, and as a student, you'll receive **free Microsoft Office** (Word, PowerPoint, Teams, etc.).

9. I'm not sure if I can learn by distance – what support is available?

Our programme is **highly blended** – not just self-study! We offer:

- Weekly guidance and updates
- Live online lectures via Microsoft Teams
- Access to friendly, responsive lecturers
- A dedicated **Ākonga Success Success team** for learning support and peer tutors.

You're never expected to study in isolation. We pride ourselves on strong pastoral care for distance learners.

10. What are my job prospects after completing this programme?

If you work hard and develop your skills, your prospects are strong. Many learners are offered part-time or full-time roles during their studies. Job opportunities vary across regions, so we encourage you to speak to local salons.

Graduates may also start their own grooming business or work as a contractor (e.g., rent-a-table).

11. I don't meet the academic entry requirements. Can I still enrol?

Yes. We welcome applications from people who don't meet formal academic requirements, particularly if you are aged **25 or older**.

You may be asked to complete an online **Literacy and Numeracy assessment** (Step 4 or higher required). If needed, we may recommend beginning with the **Level 3 Animal Care** programme first.

12. Do I need a uniform? How do I order a name badge?

There is **no compulsory uniform**, but it is highly recommended you wear branded clothing during placement for professionalism. You can view options and order your **name badge** online. Details are provided upon enrolment.

13. Are there compulsory textbooks or items I need to buy?

There are no compulsory textbooks, but we **strongly recommend** the book *Notes from the Grooming Table* (2nd Edition) by Melissa Verplank. Often referred to as the “grooming bible”, this text is widely used in the industry. We have multiple copies available to borrow for free through the Robertson Library, which ships books out at no cost to off-campus students. Your library membership is automatic once you enrol.

Items you must purchase:

- A name badge (for use during placement)
- A pair of earmuffs for hearing protection
- A waterproof grooming apron

Recommended grooming equipment:

- Textbook; *Notes from the Grooming Table 2nd Edition* by Melissa Verplank
- Grooming Scissors (8 or 8.5 inch): 1x straight pair, 1x curved pair, 1x thinning pair — especially important if you are left-handed. Most salons will only have right-handed scissors.
- 1x metal 50/50 (sometimes called a Greyhound) Comb
- 1x pair of (cordless or corded) clippers (e.g. Wahl KM2/Heiniger/Andis etc) with detachable blades (#10, #8.5, #4)
- A set of metal guard combs

Details about specific equipment suppliers and uniform options are provided at the start of the programme.

14. Where to now?

You can apply online here:

<https://www.op.ac.nz/programmes/nzqa/new-zealand-certificateanimal-management-pet-grooming/>

For further questions, email us at: animalhealth@op.ac.nz