Draft framework curriculum

of the International Society for Animal Assisted Therapy (ISAAT) for the

Continuing education specialist for animal-assisted interventions

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Preliminary remarks

The framework curriculum is a syllabus for continuing education to become an animal-assisted intervention specialist that describes the competencies sought.

The framework curriculum provides the basic topics for the specific content of the ISAAT-accredited further training courses for specialists in animal-assisted interventions. As a basic framework for the implementation of further training according to the ISAAT criteria, it h a s a binding effect on the curricula and the curricula of the further training providers.

The framework curriculum is structured according to learning fields and can be adapted to the needs of the individual further education institutes. This is done by implementing and adapting the framework curriculum into their own curricula. The learning fields IV to VI can be given equal priority or one of the three learning fields can be selected as a focus. All learning fields must be covered as part of the continuing education program.

The framework curriculum does not contain any methodological specifications for teaching. Since the participants have different experiences and backgrounds, the framework curriculum must be quite open. It only "provides the framework".

The further training to become a specialist for animal-assisted interventions is primarily intended to enable graduates to independently plan, implement and evaluate animal-assisted interventions (hereinafter referred to as AAI), to work as a specialist within an interdisciplinary project team or to lead such a team. This takes place in the relationship triangle between specialist, animal and client in an individual or group setting. At the same time, animal ethical considerations, the goal-oriented interventions for the client, and the abilities and skills of the specialist, on the background of their basic profession, as well as team-specific communication and organizational concerns must be taken into account.

With this it is also said that

1. in the goal-oriented intervention on and with the client, the animal is included in this work as a subject with special consideration of its needs;
2. it is not the use of animals alone that makes a difference, but it is a team effort;
3. the planned, monitored and quality-assured intervention of a AAI specialist together with animals leads to success.

Within the framework of continuing education, the focus is therefore on the ability to act in the relationship triangle. In this context, it is not the learning content or curricula that are decisive (they merely serve to organize a continuing education program and to select the specialist lecturers), but rather the learning outcomes achieved by the graduates and verified in a comprehensible manner through performance assessments. Therefore, all points of the framework curriculum are described as learning outcomes in an action-oriented manner. The basis for describing the learning outcomes are the descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF): knowledge, skills and competences[1] .

The concept of competence is constitutive of action competence, here in the sense of action competence TGI and is described in this way:

> *In contrast to other constructs such as skills, knowledge, qualifications, etc., definitions of competencies bring the self-organizing abilities of the concrete individual, which exist as dispositions, into the concept. [...] Competences can include experiences, skills, will components, knowledge and values – but they cannot be reduced to these, but include them in dispositional and action-relevant relations. Competencies are founded by knowledge, constituted by values, disposed as abilities, consolidated by experiences,*

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[1] European Commission (ed.): The European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg 2008.

realized due to will. Self-organized ability to act is the goal of every competence development.[2]

The aim of all further training courses for AAI specialists should therefore be to develop the competencies of graduates in order for them to acquire the ability to act professionally. The description and organization of the learning content, the used forms of teaching and learning and the forms of performance assessment must all be subject to this objective. The latter should not only test knowledge, but also the practical ability to act in complex TGI. In the further training, references should always be made to the participants' own current or planned fields of action/work. Written examinations should always be related to action. Practical examinations (also final theses) always have action-situational parts, in which the acting person presents his performance while mastering this situation. The performance shown is the observable and assessable expression of the respective action competence.

The framework curriculum is designed to provide high-quality, comprehensive continuing education, a n d t h e following aspects are essential to this end:

- Animal-assisted work is based on the definitions of the International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations (IAHAIO).
- The encounter of animals and people with whom work is done is carried out with respect a n d esteem; the orientation of animal-assisted work is carried out according to the ethical principles of the respective profession for the benefit of people and animals.
- An intensive, cooperative and sustainable relationship with the vertebrates used.
- Knowing the individual preferences and needs of the animals.
- In the event of stress or discomfort in the animal-assisted work, immediate action is taken to ensure the animal's well-being.
- Each animal used and/or kept is kept and cared for in a manner appropriate to the species. The IAHAIO's "Definitions for Animal Assisted Interventions and Guidelines for the Welfare of the Animals Involved" and equivalent country-specific guidelines for the respective animal species (such as, in Germany, the "Recommendations of the Veterinary Association for Animal Welfare (TVT)") are the basis of the work.
- In animal-assisted work, the quality criteria of the guideline "Quality development and quality assurance in the practice of animal-assisted interventions" by Dr. Rainer Wohlfarth and Prof. (em.) Dr. Erhard Olbrich must be observed.

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[2] ERPENBECK, JOHN / VON ROSENSTIEL, LUTZ: Handbuch Kompetenzmessung. Recognizing, Understanding and Evaluating Competencies in Operational, Educational and Psychological Practice, Stuttgart 2003, 365f.

Learning outcomes, knowledge, skills, competencies

I. Animal Assisted Interventions Specialty

1. Basics of the human-animal relationship
   1.1 Models of the human-animal relationship
   1.2 Ethics of the human-animal relationship

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to reflect the current state of relevant research on the development of t h e relationship between humans and animals. They can describe the ethological, anthropological as well as social and religious factors and influences on the human-animal relationship that are essential for animal-assisted interventions. They can name prerequisites for successful human-animal or animal-human communication and apply them practically in dealing with animals. They can reflect and present their personal relationship to animals against the background of the current discussion on animal welfare and the ethics of the human-animal relationship.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	Graduates will be able to: - Comprehend common phylogenetic developmental history o f vertebrates (social biological and anthropological theories of human-animal relationships) - as relevant to animal-assisted interventions. - Discuss aspects of the human-animal relationship relevant to animal-assisted interventions based on culture, religion, and society. - Differentiate forms of animal use then and now - Reflect on ethics and morality in the relationship between humans and animals. - explain the basics of human-animal communication - present the history of animal welfare - Knowledge of the respective animal protection legislation of the countries in which AAI is practiced as well as regulations and recommendations that go beyond it
Skills:	/.

Competencies:	Graduates form and reflect on their own basic ethical stance in dealing with and using intervention companion animals as well as on the human-animal relationship in general. They base the use of animals in AAI on ethical and legal principles.

2. animal assisted interventionsBasics AAI

    2.1.1   Explanatory models AAI

    2.1.2   Definition AAI

    2.1.3   Methods AAI

    2.1.4   Relationship and process design in AAI (intervention triangle)

    2.1.5   Scientific studies on the effectiveness of AAI

    2.1.6   Planning and organization in the AAI environment (organizational and project management, intervention planning)

  2.2 Fields of application of AAI

    2.2.1   Educational, psychological, rehabilitative and socially integrative services with animals for children, adolescents, adults or elderly people with cognitive, social-emotional and physical disabilities, behavioral disorders, general remedial focus and competence enhancement.

    2.2.2   Best practice examples AAI from Germany and abroad

  2.3 Law

    2.3.1   Legal requirements and aspects for AAI

    2.3.2   Hygiene Management

    2.3.3   Risk Management

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to explain the explanatory models of AAI and describe them using examples. They can define AAI as an umbrella term and differentiate the various forms of AAI on the basis of the definition (e.g. ESAAT, IAHAIO). They are able to select suitable animals for a specific target group. They are able to plan, implement and evaluate measure, offer or facility concepts AAI on the basis of their basic profession, taking into account legal requirements, and continuously apply measures for quality assurance as well as hygiene and risk management. They make use of external support in the form of professional or collegial supervision as required and use self-regulatory measures. You will understand their importance for quality assurance. They know and take into account the necessary legal requirements.
EQF dimensions	

Knowledge:	Graduates will be able to: - Name methods of AAI - Characterize and distinguish between fields of application of the AAI - Describe application examples for AAI - Name hypotheses and results scientific studies on the explanation and effectiveness AAI - Forms AAI distinguish - the animal protection legislation of the respective country as well as regulations and recommendations that go beyond it - designate

Skills:	- Distinguish and critically evaluate explanatory models of AAI, - Apply methods of AAI adequately - Reflect and consider the specifics of the intervention triangle. - Understanding the quality dimensions in the AAI as a continuous process - Plan, implement and evaluate measures for the evaluation of AAI - Draw up a hygiene plan and coordinate it with the responsible persons and agencies, if necessary.
Competencies:	The graduates can - develop structured concepts for measures, services or facilities as a basis for targeted animal-assisted interventions. In doing so, they can name the added value that arises from the use of the animal beyond their professional actions in the respective basic profession and thus justify the use of an animal. - They can implement AAI in practice according to their concepts. In doing so, they take into account legal requirements as well as basic principles of hygiene when dealing with different animal species. They observe ethical principles in the use of animals, as well as the safety of humans and animals in the course of an intervention. They carry out a risk assessment during the planning stage and take precautions to minimize risks in the animal-assisted setting. They recognize the need for external support and select appropriate forms of professional or peer support and use self-regulatory measures. - If no adequate basic profession is available, they can implement the described competencies with the support of the respective specialist personnel.

3. Animal husbandry and preparation for animal-assisted use
   2.1 Professional animal husbandry for animals in AAI
   2.2 Training of animals for use in AAI

Learning Outcome:	Graduates are able to plan and sustainably implement animal husbandry/housing in a facility, taking into account the necessary legal regulations and principles of species-appropriate animal husbandry, animal welfare and ethics. They can prepare trained animals and their owners non-violently and according to their dispositions for their use in AAI.
EQR d i m e n si o n s	
Knowledge:	The graduates can - Reproduce important legal and ethical principles concerning animal welfare and husbandry. - name spatial, temporal, personnel as well as requirements for the expertise of selected specialists
Skills:	Graduates are able to apply concepts of animal-specific needs (e.g. the hedonic budget) to different animal species. They prepare the trained a n i m a l a n d its owner for animal-assisted use according to the breed-specific, species-specific and individual requirements of the animal as well as in relation to specific client groups and subsequently reflect on these and change or adapt them if necessary.
Competencies:	In their approach, graduates take into account species- and breed-specific as well as individual needs and abilities of animals or incorporate these into the concept of TGI. They apply the necessary measures for disease prevention and health promotion in animals as the situation requires. In doing so, they take into account t h e legal framework conditions in their work. Participants are able to prepare trained animals with adequate training methods for animal-assisted use or to train and guide their owners for animal-assisted settings.

II. Department of Ethology and Veterinary Medicine

1. Ethological basics

Learning Outcome:	Graduates can derive AAI from the domestication of domestic animals. They can name areas of application of animals for TGI and justify their use with regard to their specific abilities and dispositions as well as their position in our society.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	Pet ethology: - Position of the animal in society; ethical aspects - Domestication, natural species behavior (hedonic budget). - Learning behavior, skills and stress signs of animals suitable for TGI.
Skills:	/
Competencies:	Graduates consider species- and breed-specific as well as individual animal needs and abilities in their approach.

2. Animal learning behavior

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to name and apply the basic learning theories in animals. They can apply them when preparing trained animals and their owners for animal-assisted use.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	- Learning theories: Conditioning, reinforcement, model learning, social learning, and others. - Learning behavior of the animal and signs of stress - Suitability of animals in terms of their learning behavior for animal-assisted interventions - Knowledge about the individual preparation of animals for animal-assisted use, taking into account the human-animal-team concept.

Skills:	/
Competencies:	The graduates show a sense of responsibility already during the planning of AAI with regard to the "therapy" companion animal. They are able to select suitable animals for a specific target group and prepare the human-animal team with adequate methods for the animal-assisted intervention.

3. Relationship design

Learning Outcome:	Graduates are able to shape relationships in such a way that they are beneficial for humans and animals. In doing so, they are able to use their scientifically sound and use integrated knowledge, about the development, education and socialization of humans and animals, and draw on their perceptual skills and knowledge of different forms of communication in animals.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	- models and expressions of communication in humans and different animal species - Factors influencing successful communication - developmentally beneficial forms of relationship building
Skills:	Ability to communicate purposefully with animals used in AAI or understand their signals.
Competencies:	The graduates - can recognize the non-verbal signals of the animals used and make themselves understood to them - can perceive their own role as being in the creation of beneficial relationships, reflect on this and develop consequences for self-directed action from this - reflect on their own verbal and non-verbal communication in terms of its effect on humans and animals and develop this further in a sustainable manner - react to disturbances in the relationship adequately, early, individualized and flexible

4. Animal Health/First Aid for Animals

Learning Outcome:	Graduates assess the state of health of the animal in general and especially in relation to animal-assisted use and intervene adequately in the event of restrictions, injuries and hazards. They can recognize and classify signs of stress and illness in various animal species at an early stage. They prevent overload situations.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	Animal Health - Animal health: vaccination, parasite treatment; feeding, care, husbandry, etc. - Zoonoses - Dangers from animals from southern countries used for animal-assisted interventions (leishmaniasis, babesiosis, ...) Assessment of the fitness of animals f o r use - Assessment of the situation - Stress, pain and aggression in animals - Signs of disease; age
Skills:	First aid - Assessment of vital signs: Respiratory rate, heart rate, mucous membranes, body temperature. - Application of bandages using the example of a dog - Immediate life-saving measures: Mouth-to-snout ventilation, heat stroke therapy, etc. - Medicine chest / emergency kit
Competencies:	Graduates are able to assess the state of health of the "therapy" companion animal, recognizing signs of physical and psychological overload of the animal in complex and crisis situations. You can initiate measures to keep the animal healthy, provide first aid and assess when veterinary assistance is needed. They demonstrate a sense of responsibility, problem-solving skills and stress resistance in such situations.

III. Other specialties and topics

1. Basics of scientific work
2. Presentation and communication forms

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to read scientific papers and critically evaluate them with regard to research design and results. They can use the knowledge gained from this for their own work. They can theoretically justify, document, evaluate and critically reflect on their own AAI within the framework of a written thesis. They can present work results with the help of various moderation and presentation techniques, forms and -present methods appropriately and in a manner appropriate to the audience.
Knowledge:	Graduates will know: - various presentation techniques, forms and methods - Guidelines for scientific work when citing used literature and other sources - Basic knowledge of copyright and data protection law
Skills:	Graduates will be able to design and create presentations using various methods. They have mastered the hardware and software necessary for a creation or a presentation. You are further able to support or implement in the work team in all communicative, organizational and project-related matters.
Competencies:	Graduates will be able to select, read and critically evaluate literature relevant to the design of a AAI. They can present AAI in written or oral form. They are aware of the importance of primary sources and mark used quotations as such. They label and document used technical literature and other sources according to the current guidelines of scientific work - according to the specifications of their basic subject area. They observe the requirements of copyright and data protection law. They choose appropriate presentation techniques according to the goal and addressees of a presentation, -and methods and can apply them in front of an audience.

IV. Psychology specialty

1. Psychological foundations AAI

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to describe fields of application of AAI in the area of mental disorders and distinguish them from other specialist areas.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	Graduates will be familiar with the ways in which animal-assisted interventions can influence the mental health of people of different ages.
Skills:	/
Competencies:	Graduates are able to conduct AAI according to relevant psychological criteria. They recognize psychological stress situations in clients and react appropriately to the situation.

2. Basics psychopathology

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to fundamentally assess the influence of AAI on selected psychopathological disorders/illnesses in childhood and adulthood as a primary illness and as a comorbidity disorder. For the planning and implementation of AAI, they can coordinate with the responsible therapists and physicians. You can assess which animals are suitable for different fields of application in mental disorders/illnesses. You can carry out a risk assessment for humans and animals.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	Knowledge of the potential uses of AAI in adult, adolescent, and childhood mental/psychiatric disorders.
Skills:	/

Competencies:	Graduates are able to make a professional and responsible assessment of the appropriateness of a AAI corresponding to a mental disorder. They grasp the necessity of close cooperation and coordination with the treating therapists and physicians. They can make a preliminary assessment of ensuring the protection and physical and psychological integrity of the client and animal.

3. Resource oriented models

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to explain models of resource orientation and describe them using examples. The principles of these models are given special consideration in the planning and practical implementation in the context of data collection and target setting as well as the selection of specific animals and methods for AAI.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	The graduates: - can describe models of resource orientation - - can name possible salutogenetic effects in AAI
Skills:	Structuring of the anamnesis interview to record resource-oriented factors
Competencies:	Graduates are able to theoretically link models of resource orientation and AAI and are able to plan and practically implement AAI with regard to resource-oriented effects.

4. Mental hygiene for the helping professions

Learning Outcome:	The graduates can name possibilities and offers for t h e i r own psychohygiene against the background of their own professional field. They can critically assess these offers with regard t o their work.
EQF dimensions	

Knowledge:	Graduates know the possibilities of mental hygiene: - Supervision
	   - Intervision
	   - collegial support
	   - self-regulatory measures
	
	Graduates will know the importance of self-reflection, mood regulation, and dealing with anger and adversity in animal-assisted work.

Skills:	Graduates will be able to reflect on their inner attitudes, use methods of self-care, mindfulness and relaxation specifically for themselves.
Competencies:	Graduates are able to take care of their own mental hygiene. They can critically assess the various possibilities for this and use t h e m accordingly as required. In doing so, they take into account the special situation of the TGI.

V. Pedagogy specialty

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to describe fields of application of AAI in the field of pedagogy and special education and distinguish them from other specialist areas. They can assess which animals are suitable for different pedagogical fields of application. They can carry out a risk assessment for humans and animals.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	Pedagogical foundations and models: - Development orientation - Resource orientation - Solution orientation Dealing with mental, cognitive and physical impairments
Skills:	/
Competencies:	Graduates will be able to understand the different fields of application and limitations of animal-assisted pedagogy. describe and reflect. They can plan, implement and evaluate appropriate AAI to achieve pedagogical goals.

VI. Medicine specialty

1. Fundamentals of gerontology and geriatrics

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to describe fields of application of animal-assisted intervention in the field of geriatrics and distinguish them from other specialist fields. They can assess which animals are suitable for geriatric fields of application and specific clinical pictures. They can carry out a risk assessment for humans and animals for this field.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	- Overview of specific geriatric medical conditions, such as dementia; Parkinson's disease; apoplexy, immobility, visual impairment, hearing loss. - Opportunities AAI (activities), such as animal visitation service, station animal - targeted approaches of AAI for the elderly
Skills:	Graduates will be able to plan AAI to maintain existing abilities and/or release potential resources for mental and/or physical changes in aging.
Competencies:	Graduates can carry out a professional and responsible assessment of the appropriateness of the use of animals i n t h e context of the elderly. They can make an assessment of the dangers of the use of animals in the geriatric field for humans and animals and act accordingly.

2. Basics of chronic and acute diseases

Learning Outcome:	Graduates will be able to describe fields of application of animal-assisted intervention in the area of chronic and/or acute somatic illnesses and distinguish them from other specialist areas. They can assess which animals are s u i t a b l e f o r fields of application in specific somatic disease patterns. They can carry out a risk assessment for humans and animals in interdisciplinary coordination for this field.
EQF dimensions	

Knowledge:	- Overview of specific somatic disease patterns, such as multiple sclerosis, diabetes, cancer, Parkinson's disease; apoplexy, rheumatic diseases, chronic pain, and others. - Possibilities of animal assisted use for example animal visiting services, ward animals, AAI in physical rehabilitation; pain management, anxiety reduction and coping.
Skills:	Graduates will be able to plan AAI to maintain existing skills and/or release potential resources as well as individual processes to change disease progression and coping.
Competencies:	Graduates will be able to make a professional and responsible assessment of the appropriateness of the use of animals in the context of somatic diseases. They can make an assessment of the dangers of the use of animals in the field for humans and animals and act accordingly. They act under the primacy of the interdisciplinary approach.

3. Human first aid

Learning Outcome:	In the event of an accident, graduates initiate immediate life-saving measures to avert imminent danger or health disorders until professional help arrives. They take precautions and observe self-protection measures. Graduates observe and take into account the special features of accidents involving and/or caused by animals.
EQF dimensions	
Knowledge:	Initial actions: - General - Self-protection - The rescue chain - First aid for external injuries, wound dressings - Life-saving immediate measures - Behavior in case of injuries caused by animals (e.g. bites, scratches, blows, falls) - Special features when securing accident scenes with animal involvement - Self-protection in case of accidents with/by animals
Skills:	Initiation of immediate life-saving measures and triggering of the rescue chain
Competencies:	Graduates are able to provide first aid. They demonstrate adequate action in complex and crisis situations.