

**ROYAL VETERINARY
COLLEGE**



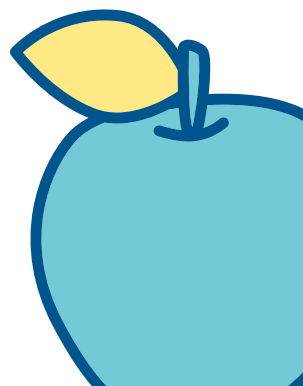
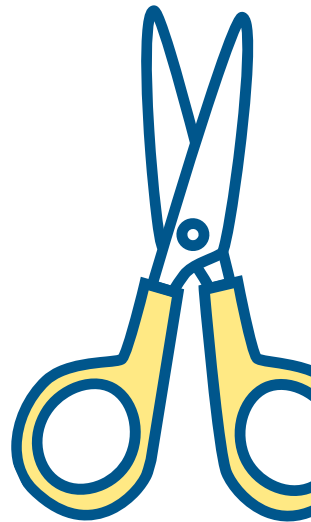
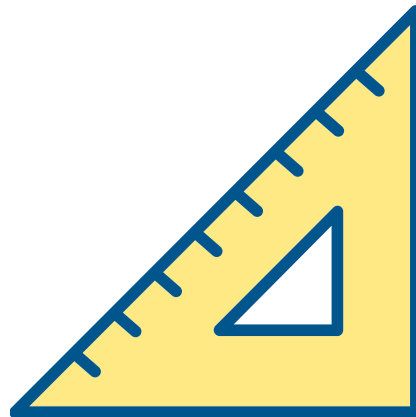
Student Booklet



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INTRODUCTION

So you want to work with animals? Good choice! There are hundreds of different career and study options, so now it's just a case of finding what works for you.

This booklet is a handy guide to give advice on your journey. It has been made for you by current students at the Royal Veterinary College to provide advice about how to achieve your goals to work with animals.

Remember to also use resources provided to you at school or college and ask friends and family for advice too - hard decisions are often made easier when you talk them through!

MEET THE TEAM



Emily:
BVetMed 2



Emmanuel:
BVetMed
(Gateway)



Heather:
BVetMed 2



Stephanie:
BVetMed 3



Stephanie:
BVetMed 3



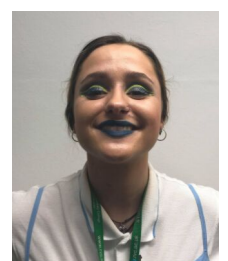
Lavinia:
BVetMed 3
(Intercalated)



Kyle:
BVetMed 3



Francesca:
BVetMed 2



Elarna:
BVetMed 1

VISITING UNIVERSITIES

The best way to get to know more about a university or college is to visit them! All Universities (and some colleges) will have open days and taster courses which will give you the chance to explore what it's like to be a university student. These are great if you are still struggling to decide what you want to study and will give you an opportunity to meet current students who were in the same position as you only a few years ago.

OPPORTUNITIES AT THE RVC

At the RVC we offer lots of different activities for students while still at school. This gives students like you, the opportunity to experience what life could be like at university prior to applying. Such opportunities also aim to inspire young people to consider a career in science and to meet current students at the RVC. Below is a list of some of the events we offer at the RVC:

1. Teen Vet Club – Students aged 13-18 can sign up on our website for free and receive email newsletters three times a year, during each half-term. These include details of up and coming events, biology and chemistry tips, interviews with people who work with animals as well as anatomy themed quizzes to test your knowledge and competitions.

<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/rvc-for-all/teen-vet-club>

2. Year 10 Easter School – This is a 2 day non-residential visit during school holidays aimed at year 10 students. You will meet other aspiring vets and scientists, take part in fun practicals and get guidance on how to achieve your goals. Deadline for applications is often in February.

<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/rvc-for-all/rvc-on-tour#panel-easter-school-year-10>

3. Year 11 Summer School – This is a 3 day non-residential Summer School for year 11 students where you will have the opportunity to attend mini-lectures, speak to vets and scientists about their career paths, and take part in fun practical sessions. Deadline for applications is often in June.
<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/rvc-for-all/rvc-on-tour#panel-summer-school-year-11>

4. Sutton Trust Summer School – This is a 5 day residential Summer School for year 12 students. Students will get to experience a taster of university life while living at our Hawkshead campus in Hertfordshire. Students take part in lectures, and fun evening activities as well as a veterinary themed science fair. During the week there are opportunities to visit our farm, animal hospital, equine facilities and meet professionals and students who work in a range of animal careers. Deadline for applications for this event is often in February. <https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/rvc-for-all/rvc-on-tour#panel-sutton-trust-summer-school>

5. Taster Courses – Offered to year 12's for our veterinary medicine, nursing and biosciences courses. Veterinary medicine taster courses include a two day non residential visit, while nursing and biosciences tasters are one day. Sessions consist of several elements designed to give an overview of study at the RVC including lectures, hands on anatomy, dissections, farm and facility visits and the opportunity to speak with current RVC students about their experiences. Deadline for applications is often in February.
<https://london.ac.uk/veterinary-medicine-rv8837>

6. Night at the Vet College - A themed event that runs in the evening at our Camden Town, London campus. This is an opportunity to see the fascinating research being carried out by bioscientists, nurses and vets at the RVC, including some hands on learning experiences. Previous themes have included 'Rhythm of Light and Dark' and 'Dinosaur locomotion'.
<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/rvc-for-all/night-at-the-vet-college>

7. Student Shadowing - We offer students in Year 12 and 13 the opportunity to come into the RVC for one day during the academic year to shadow a current university student. You will attend the student's classes and lectures, take part in their practical work and get the opportunity to ask them questions about their course and university experiences. We offer this experience for all of our biosciences, veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing courses.

<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/rvc-for-all/schools-outreach#panel-student-shadowing>

8. Open Days – We offer open days at both our Camden and Hawkshead campuses where prospective students can find out more about the courses we offer and the facilities we have at the RVC. <https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/rvc-for-all/visit-us>

For further information about dates and bookings for upcoming events at the RVC please visit our website: www.rvc.ac.uk/rvc-for-all



UCAS TOP TIPS

1. Know when the deadlines are - put them in your phone calendar and set a reminder!

- 15 October deadline for Veterinary Medicine (6pm UK time)
- 15 January deadline for other Animal Science courses

2. Do your research

- Over 37,000 courses to pick from so filter out the ones for you by using comparison websites
- Look for courses that are going to suit your working style or best appeal to you

3. Make the most of your 5 university applications

- For veterinary medicine you can only apply to 4 vet schools + 1 non-veterinary course (this can also be at a vet school)
- For other degrees all applications can be for the same course at different universities, or you can apply for different courses at different universities
- Remember it is likely that your personal statement will be tailored towards a particular subject so make sure your course choices reflect that!

4. Personal statements - let your personality shine

- This is the most important part of the application besides predicted grades and will be what the universities will read to decide whether to offer you an interview/place on the course
- Show off, blow your own horn - explain why you are the ideal candidate, talk about extracurricular activities you have done (volunteering, working, etc) that will benefit you as a university student - e.g. I worked part-time during school. this demonstrated my ability of good time management and my capacity to balance school work and life.
- It's a good idea to try to get lots of different people to have a read before you submit your application - teachers, friends, family and people you have met on placement will all have great ideas about what to include

5. Check (and then check again) to ensure you have fulfilled all the university's requirements

- If applying for RVC veterinary medicine remember to fill out the work experience form which is separate to the UCAS form and found on the RVC website
- Different universities will have variations of this too, so be sure to double check!

All offers are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check – which is a legal requirement as the course involves regular access to children and/or vulnerable adults.

You will also be required to complete a confidential occupational health assessment, when accepting a place at RVC.

Other things to include in your UCAS application:

- All qualifications - even if you haven't received a grade yet
- Details of part time work
- Details of attendance on previous courses
- Details of music/ dance/ public speaking grades
- Details of Duke of Edinburgh Award / Princess Trust / Youth Connections NCS / etc
- Extracurricular activities / volunteering
- Hobbies



WORK EXPERIENCE

For veterinary medicine and nursing, work experience before you apply is compulsory but it is also a great idea to try to gain work experience for other courses too. This will help you make an informed decision and will also look great on your personal statement! Here are some tips on how to book and make the most of your placements.

FINDING PLACEMENTS

- Do an internet search for places in your local area e.g. "Vets in Camden"
- 'RCVS : find a practice' website is a great way to find all your local vet practices by typing in your postcode:
<https://findavet.rcvs.org.uk/find-a-vet-practice/>
- If you have a pet, then the next time your pet goes for an appointment, try to go along to so you can ask the vet
- Ask friends and family with pets which vets they use
- Looking for farm work experience? City farms are a great option for getting experience with farm animals and also give back to your local community. It's a win win!
- For horse experience, riding schools are a great place to learn as the horses tend to be easier to handle and there will be plenty of opportunities to learn basic equine care



APPLYING FOR PLACEMENTS

- Email the practice/farm/laboratory directly
- Use a sensible email address - your school email address is good for this
- Be flexible with dates
- Give a brief overview of previous experience or specific qualifications
- State why you want to work with them
- Get an adult to check over your email before you send it
- If you don't get a reply to your email after two weeks, follow up with a polite phone call
- Be sure to reply to emails as soon as possible

Try to find out the name of the practice manager/head vet but if not, you can address to the team e.g. Dear Animal Vets Team

If you have a CV, attach it to your email. This is a great way to demonstrate that you have committed to other responsibilities. Be sure to update your CV after each placement!

The screenshot shows an email draft in a web browser. The 'To' field is filled with 'vet@animalaspirations.co.uk'. The 'Subject' field is 'Student Work Experience Enquiry'. The body of the email starts with 'Dear Dr X,'. The first paragraph says: 'I am a year 10 student at Aspirations school and am looking to apply to study Veterinary Medicine/Veterinary Nursing/pursue a career with animals. I am interested in this because... I would like to do work experience because...'. The second paragraph says: 'If you are happy to take me on, I would be looking for a placement during the following dates/on Saturday mornings'. The third paragraph says: 'I have attached my CV which includes my past experience and contact details'. The fourth paragraph says: 'Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions. I look forward to hearing from you.' The email ends with 'Kind regards, Annie Aspirations'.

Use the first paragraph to introduce yourself. This is a good way to show that you are keen and will take the placement seriously

If you already know the dates you would like the placement to be in then include this here. The more flexible you can be with dates, the more likely you are to find a placement. Alternatively you could see if they offer weekly shadowing which will still count towards your application requirements

This is just an example to help you get started, you can add in or take out as much as you would like!

If it comes down to a phone call don't be nervous, who ever you speak to will do their best to help you. An example follow up phone call:

"Hello my name is Annie Aspirations, I am a year 10 student from Aspirations school and recently emailed to ask about the possibility of a work experience placement with you. I was wondering who would be the best person to speak to in order to book a work experience placement at your practice."

FINALISING PLACEMENTS

- Put the dates in your calendar and set a reminder
- You may want to call the placement a week before you are due to arrive just to confirm you will still be coming and ask any questions you have e.g. What is the dress code? What time should I arrive? Should I bring a pack lunch?

WHAT TO WEAR

This will vary from placement to placement, but as a general rule wear smart casual clothes for veterinary practice / lab placements and casual but warm clothes (season dependent) for farm and equine placements. If you are not sure, then be sure to ask before you are due to start the placement.



Don't worry about buying any branded clothing for farm or equine placements - there are loads of discount sportswear shops that will sell everything you need to suit your budget!

TOP 10 WORK EXPERIENCE TIPS

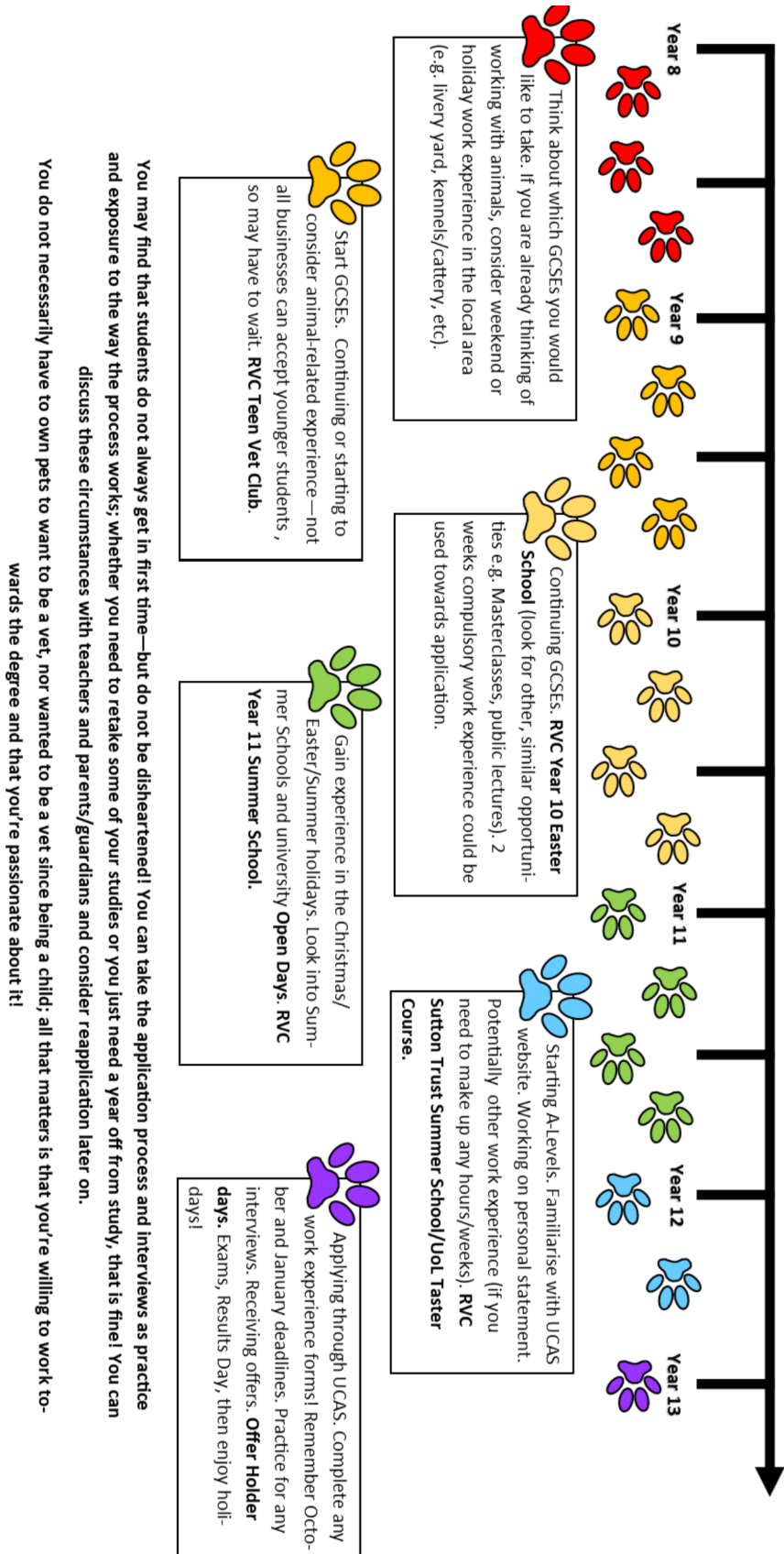
1. Organise placements well in advance - as soon as they are booked, put it in your calendar and set a reminder!
2. Bring a change of clothes with you - just in case!
3. Don't be late - make sure you have thought about how you will get to and from the placement when you book it and again the day before you are due to start
4. Be flexible with start and finish times - you may not leave at 5pm on the dot every day
5. Be friendly (even if you are nervous) - start every day with a big smile and treat all staff and clients with respect
6. Show enthusiasm and motivation - ask lots of questions
7. Look interested - remember the importance of body language
8. Do not discuss named clients, patients, vets or practices outside of the placement or on social media
9. Feeling unsure about what to do? Ask if there is anything you can do to help
10. Only use your phone during coffee/lunch breaks



MILESTONES

It can sometimes feel like there is so much to remember to do when it comes to looking at and applying to universities. That's why we have made this easy to follow timeline to help you map out your route to achieving your career goals.

So, you want to be a vet? This is an idea of the sort of things prospective students may get up to during their years of secondary education in preparing for a veterinary application to ultimately end up attending vet school!



VETERINARY MEDICINE D100

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There are currently 8 vet schools in the UK and each of them have slightly different entry requirements. Below is each one laid out to help you see what everyone is looking for but remember, this information may change by the time you apply so be sure to check each university's website.

University	Work Experience inc. veterinary practice & animal husbandry	A Levels inc. Biology, Chemistry not General Studies or Critical Thinking	GCSEs inc. Biology, Chemistry, Maths, English	Level 3 Diploma & Further Certificates	Assessment e.g. interviews
RVC	10 full days each*	AAA	Five A/7	D*D*D*	MMI
Bristol	1 week each **	AAA	C/4 or above	DDD & grade A ALevel Chemistry	Not routinely interviewed
Cambridge	2 weeks	A*AA	No min requirements	Contact Admissions Office	NSA assessment Panel College set written assessment
Edinburgh	No minimum requirement & WES form	AAA	No min requirements		MMI
Glasgow	6 weeks total minimum	A*AA	No min requirements	DDD	2x 15 min panel interview & computer-based exercise
Liverpool	3 weeks of animal husbandry; 2 weeks vet practice	AAA	Three A/ 7 & four B/6	DDD & AS Level grade B in Chemistry	MMI
Nottingham	4 weeks min	AAB	Five A/7	DDD	Online questionnaire Panel interview approx. 20mins
Surrey	4 weeks**	AAB	Five A/7	DDD	Online questionnaire MMI

In general, you need to fulfil three things in order to be a strong applicant for veterinary medicine:

- 1. Good grades** - this is dependent on what university you apply to and what route you have chosen. Don't be put off if you haven't got straight A's!
- 2. Work experience** - this is often essential. However you can make yourself stand out by doing interesting placements if you have extra time e.g. laboratory placement
- 3. Extracurriculars** - these are a great thing to put on your personal statement as they often show you have other skill sets and interests. Type of extracurriculars you might want to mention include: part-time job, sport, musical instrument, societies etc.

VET CAREER PATHWAYS

So you may be wondering what you will do once you become a vet. There are hundreds of career options out there, we have listed a few to give you an idea of where you could end up in the future.

Specialist Vet - postgraduate course required

- Pathology
- Cardiology
- Neurology
- Soft tissue
- Oncology

Government

- Legislation

Veterinary Research

- Laboratory
- Field Work

General Practice

- Large animals
- Small animals
- Equine
- Zoo and exotics



ALTERNATIVE ROUTES INTO VETERINARY MEDICINE

Veterinary Gateway – D190

- Must meet widening participation criteria
- Must complete supplementary Gateway Form
- Follows **January 15 deadline** NOT October 15

Entry Requirements

- Work experience: not required but strongly encouraged
- GCSE: five at grade C/4 including Science & Additional Science or Biology, Chemistry and Physics, English Language and Maths
- A Level: CCC, biology, chemistry and other subject (not General Studies)
- IB: 444 Higher Level in Biology, Chemistry and one other subject
- Level 3 Diploma – DDM

BVetMed Accelerated Programme – D102

Entry Requirements

- At least 2:1 honours in an appropriate biological science including but not limited to:

- Anatomical Sciences
- Animal Science
- Biochemistry
- Biological Sciences
- Biology
- Biomedical Sciences
- Bioveterinary Sciences
- Physiology
- Zoology



- GCSE: C/4 or above in English Language and Maths
- A levels: RVC has no specific requirements
- Work experience: 10 full days in clinic (practice) and in non-clinical environment (e.g. farm)

Other Vet schools will also offer alternative routes into veterinary medicine, so be sure to look online or in their prospectuses to see what's available!

BIOSCIENCE DEGREES

The RVC also offers amazing biosciences courses. A bioscience is a wide field of study and research which includes zoology (the study of animals), genetics, microbiology and biochemistry. That means you will learn about the details of the cells that make up our bodies, all the way to how the brain works to control animal behaviour or how researchers are working to find treatments for diseases such as cancer. You will also have the opportunity to carry out your own research to answer questions that there is currently no answer to!

Below are the specifics for the courses offered at the RVC but there are lots of courses at other universities in the UK, which you can find more information about online.

Bsc Biological Sciences - C100

Entry Requirements

- GCSE: at least B/6 in Science & Additional Science or two individual sciences, English Language and Maths
- A Level: ABB including Biology / Chemistry at Grade A OR BBB including Biology / Chemistry / Physics / Maths
- IB: 655 at Higher Level including Biology / Chemistry at grade 6 OR 555 including Biology or Chemistry or Physics or Maths
- Level 3 Diploma and Further Certificates: DDD

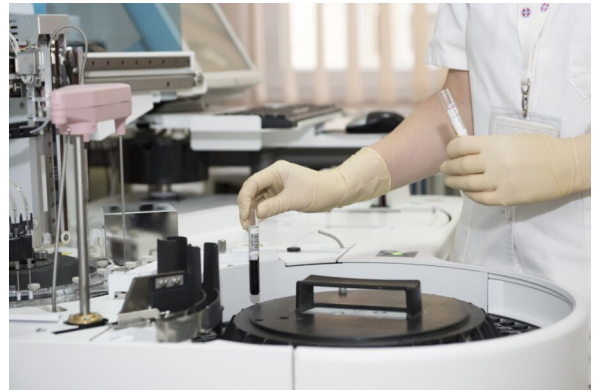
BSc Bioveterinary Sciences - D300

Entry Requirements

- GCSE: at least grade B/6 in Science & Additional Science or two individual sciences, English Language and Maths
- A Level: ABB including Biology or Chemistry at Grade A OR BBB including Biology or Chemistry or Physics or Maths
- IB: 655 at Higher Level including Biology or Chemistry at grade 6 OR 555 including Biology or Chemistry or Physics or Maths
- Level 3 Diploma and Further Certificates: DDD

Once you graduate university with a Bioscience degree, there is a wide range of careers you can go into. If you are interested in working with animals, your options may include:

- Animal behaviourist
- Animal nutritionist
- Animal technician
- Animal physiotherapist
- Researcher
- Nature conservation officer
- Science writer/journalist



There is also the option to move onto studying Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary Nursing.

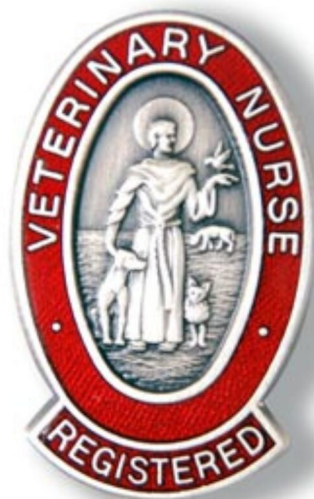
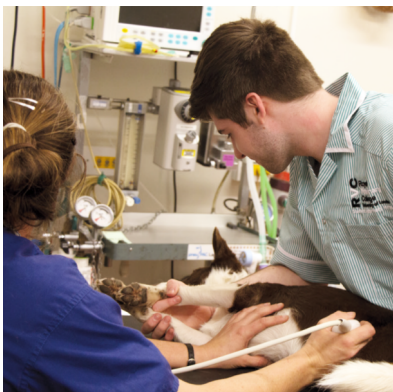
VETERINARY NURSING

Veterinary Nurses are key to delivering medical care to animals and work alongside veterinary surgeons to promote animal health and welfare.

Role of Veterinary Nurses includes:

- Providing supportive care
- Performing minor surgical procedures
- Represent a member of veterinary team
- Educate owners on pet health and welfare
- Administering medication
- Diagnostic testing

To work as a veterinary nurse you must have a qualification accredited by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS). The RVC offers several nursing courses but other universities will offer similar courses too, so have a browse online to see what's out there!



FdSc Veterinary Nursing - D310

Entry Requirements

- Work experience: 10 full days in clinic (practice) and in non-clinical environment (e.g. farm / laboratory)
- GCSE: five at grade C/4 including English Language, Science/ Additional Science/ single Science
- A Level: CC in two A Levels including Biology or CDD in three A Level subjects including Biology at grade C
- IB: 443 including HL Biology at grade 4
- Level 3 Diploma: MMM

BSc Veterinary Nursing D313

Entry Requirements

- Work experience: 10 full days in clinic (practice) and in non-clinical environment (e.g. farm / laboratory)
- GCSE: five at grade C/4 including maths and at least grade B/6 in English Language and Science/Additional Science/single science
- A Level: BCC including Biology at grade B
- IB: 544 including HL Biology at grade 5
- Level 3 Diploma: DDM

One of the great things about veterinary nursing is that there are many ways to become a veterinary nurse. Some people choose to go to university, but if you think you would be better suited to work based training, there are options for that too.

Veterinary Nursing Work Based Training

- 1 day/week in college, rest of the week working in a veterinary practice
- Accredited by RCVS and work opportunities once qualified will be the same as a nurse that studied at university

We have made a list of colleges that offer veterinary nurse training in Greater London, but there are loads all over the UK for you to research.

- College of Animal Welfare
- Goddard Veterinary Group College
- Medivet Training College
- Chichester College

OTHER ANIMAL RELATED COURSES

Vets and nurses aren't the only people that work with animals so don't be deterred if you think those areas aren't for you. The list is almost endless, so we have brought together just a few of the options available to you. Start by researching some of these and see where your search takes you!

- Equine and Veterinary Bioscience Bsc Hons
- Ecology and Conservation FdSc
- Marine Ecology Conservation BSc Hons
- Veterinary Physiotherapy
- Veterinary Nursing and Bioveterinary Science BSc Hons
- Veterinary Nursing and Companion Animal Behaviour Bsc Hons
- Veterinary Nursing with Small Animal Rehabilitation
- Applied Zoology
- Zoology BSc
- Equine Veterinary Nursing Science
- Foundation to Health and Veterinary Studies
- Applied Equine Behaviour and Welfare FdSc
- Animal Management (HND)
- Animal Management and Applied Science Bsc Hons
- Agriculture DipHE
- Animal Therapy Bsc Hons
- Animal Studies level 4 CertHE
- Business Management and Leadership with Equine
- Canine Studies DipHE/CertHE
- Equine Behavioural Science BSc Hons/ DipHE
- Equine Performance and Business Management BSc
- Equine Performance Science BSc
- Equine Sports Therapy and Rehabilitation DipHE/BSc Hons
- Equine Studies CertHE
- Thoroughbred Stud Operations CertHE
- Wild Animal Biology
- Animal Science BSc

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

It's OK to be worried about money when you're thinking about applying for university or further education, but there are loads of options for funding both the course and associated living costs. Have a look at these websites for more information, and talk to your careers adviser or teachers if you can.

UK Government Tuition Fee Loan

- Money lent to you by the government which is paid directly to your university for your tuition fees

<https://www.gov.uk/get-undergraduate-student-loan>

UK Government Maintenance Loan

- Money lent to you by the government to pay for living costs such as accommodation
- Government loans are repayable in April after graduation
- You pay back 9% of your income per month but ONLY once you start earning £25,000 or more per year

<https://www.gov.uk/get-undergraduate-student-loan>

Household income dependent Bursary Schemes - University specific

- Extra money given to you by your university if you meet certain criteria. Bursaries are different to loans and do not need to be paid back

Scholarships - University and course specific

- Money given to you to support your education based on academic or other achievements

SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL INCOME

Many university students also work part-time. There are loads of work opportunities both in and around university including:

- Student ambassador
- Working in the student bar
- Working for the Student Union
- Flexible part time jobs e.g. waitressing, retail, etc

ADDITIONAL COSTS

If you study Veterinary medicine or nursing, work experience placements during your spring, summer and winter breaks will be a compulsory component of any UK veterinary curriculum. For these you may need to pay for transport and accommodation. Many universities however, will offer grants (which you do not have to pay back) to help cover the costs

Different courses also require different equipment. For veterinary medicine and nursing you will need things such as a stethoscope and protective clothing.

TOP TIP

Do not spend your money on any equipment until you start the course. The university will provide you with a list of essentials and there will be many students selling on secondhand items at a fraction of their original costs.

The same goes for books - your university library will have all the books you need for the course. If you find a book you use a lot, then look into buying one secondhand from an older student.

RVC STUDENT TIPS

"Make sure to check you've filled in everything for ALL universities you apply for as they do differ in dates and forms"

"Get involved and go to as many events as possible! Try to meet and speak to different people."

"Don't feel as though you're not wanted by a placement - try and try again to get their attention and be positive! Express your willingness to learn."

"Applying to veterinary medicine can be very daunting because of how much is involved to get in. Breaking it down into small steps and focusing on one at a time makes it a lot less overwhelming."

"If you think of a question but it is not the right time to ask (e.g. the vet is talking to a client), write it down in your notepad and ask later during a quiet moment or at lunch time"

"No question is a silly question. Don't be afraid to ask!"

"Don't worry about how long the journey takes, just focus on the destination!"

"Take a notepad on your placements it will help with reflecting for your personal statement and preparing for your interviews"

"If you're nervous about going on work placements alone, take a friend."