



Veterinary



OVERVIEW

Veterinarians are animal doctors. Veterinarians in private clinical practice often work with many different types of species. These animals are pets which can include birds, fish, rabbits, ferrets, rodents, and reptiles in addition to the “traditional” dog and cat pets, as well as equestrian and farm animals. A veterinarian can choose to get advanced training and become board certified in a specialty area. There are more than 20 specialties for veterinarians, including surgery, dentistry, emergency and critical care, and internal medicine. Board certification involves several years of advanced training after veterinary school, as well as additional exams.

SKILLS

Many people view their pets as family members, so veterinarians need to show concern and empathy when working with clients and their animals. Skills need include:

- Analytical skills (unlike humans, animals cannot communicate what is bothering them.)
- Interpersonal skills
- Problem-solving
- Scientific aptitude
- Critical thinking
- Ability to follow safety procedures

Routes to qualification and professional accreditation

A veterinary medicine degree will provide the professional skills and experience to qualify as a veterinary surgeon. Entry is highly competitive and the courses are very demanding, so you will need to be very committed to apply.

Applicants can only apply to 4 Veterinary Medicine degree courses and usually use a fifth choice for another subject as a back-up such as Bio-Veterinary Science, Biochemistry or Biomedical Science. Some will go on to apply to Accelerated Graduate Entry degree programmes (4-year). Search for courses at [UCAS](#) or [The Uni Guide](#).

Entry Requirements to degree courses and degree apprenticeships

Veterinary science is a very competitive career area and you will need high grades in your GCSEs and predicted grades at A level (AAA-AAB in Biology and Chemistry for most courses, but check individual requirements [here](#)). For those without the required A Levels, there are [Gateway courses](#) and options to [explore](#), but these may have other specific conditions to meet, so again, check carefully.

For a successful application you should also demonstrate some knowledge of current issues and developments in veterinary science/medicine. Explore [RCVS New and Views](#) and [RVC Clinical podcast](#) and relevant topics in [The Very Short Introductory Book Series](#). Further research and reading can be conducted on our website – [please click here](#).

Work Experience

Work experience is essential and between 2 and 8 weeks split between small and large animal practices and husbandry will be useful. Consider spending a day at an Abattoir too. Some virtual work experience is offered by the University of Nottingham see: [Exploring the Veterinary Profession](#).

Vet schools in the UK have different academic and work experience requirements. Vet Schools Council has produced a [comprehensive guide on admissions processes and entry requirements across the schools](#), including funding opportunities and widening participation schemes.

Our [My Vet Future careers hub](#) also has some must-read articles covering everything you need to know about the process.

What can it lead to?

There are many different career paths that you can choose with a veterinary degree, and some veterinarians even choose multiple paths. The 6 main areas of veterinary medicine include: Private Practice, Teaching & Research, Regulatory Medicine, Public Health, Uniformed Services and Industry.

Useful websites

[My Vet Future](#)
[Veterinary Medicine Courses & Undergraduate Degree](#)
[Becoming a vet](#)

[RCVS](#)