VOICES FROM THE FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION

SURVEY OF VET STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

July 2015

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) have joined forces to consider the big issues facing the veterinary professions today, and into the future

Through a programme of research, engagement with the profession and the public, and a consideration of strategic issues already having an impact, the aim is to develop a plan for action that will help deliver the best – for animal health and welfare, the public and everyone with a role within the veterinary professions

This report presents the findings from an online survey of current veterinary students, and people who have graduated at some point over the last eight years – in other words, those who represent the future of the profession

The survey was conducted in May and June 2015. Students were approached via the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS). Graduates were selected from the RCVS register
KEY FINDINGS – VET STUDENT ASPIRATIONS

Almost three-quarters of veterinary students (73%) intend to work as a vet in the UK. Most aspire to work in small animal/exotic or mixed practice – although our findings suggest that 1 in 10 is, as yet, undecided.

Most students (60%) aspire to be employed in a medium-sized practice (4-10 vets), and 45% want to become a practice owner or partner.

The three factors that have greatest influence on the choice of career path for students and graduates alike are: intellectual satisfaction; location; a supportive environment.

Students in the first three years of their degree – and especially women – are the most optimistic group about the future of the UK veterinary profession.

Students are more likely than graduates to feel that their degree is preparing them for the work they want to do – although, even then, only 34% felt ‘very’ well prepared.
KEY FINDINGS –
REALITY BITES AS VETS START WORK

The reality for graduates often does not match their expectations. While 37% of graduates report that their working life has lived up to expectations – and 13% report it has exceeded them – half say that their working life has not met all the expectations they had when they first entered the profession.

Once vets start work their career ambitions appear to shift away from clinical practice:
- Only 38% of graduates see themselves working in a medium-sized practice, compared with 60% of students.
- While 45% of students say they want to become a practice owner or partner, this aspiration drops to 25% among graduates.
- The proportion of graduates wanting to work outside of clinical practice – 18% – is double the proportion of students who say they hope to do this (9%).

More than half of graduates (55%) report that they are looking for a change in work:
- 23% want another job in the same field.
- 13% plan to find work in a different veterinary field.
- 10% are considering leaving the profession entirely.
- 9% would like to work overseas.
KEY FINDINGS –
FIVE YEARS IN MARKS A CHANGE

🌟 Vets who have been qualified for five or more years are the least optimistic about the future. These vets also rate opportunities for career progression less positively than more recent graduates. And they are least likely to feel that their veterinary degree has prepared them for their current work.

🌟 There is also a noticeable shift away from the main types of clinical practice among graduates of five or more years’ standing:

- These vets are less likely to be working in small animal/exotic practice (59%), or mixed practice (11%) than vets 1-4 years after graduation (64% and 19%, respectively).
- These more experienced vets are increasingly likely to be working for a referral practice/consultancy, in academia, research, industry, or for a charity.

🌟 Vets working in farm production or outside clinical practice rate their opportunities for career progression more positively than their colleagues in practice:

- 48% of those in areas outside clinical practice (research/academia/government work), and 41% of those in farm production, regarded their prospects as excellent or good – this compares with 36% of those in small animal/exotic/mixed/equine practice.
- Vets working in equine practice were most likely to rate their career opportunities as uncertain or poor (27% said this).

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KEY FINDINGS – REFOCUSING EDUCATION

🌟 The findings from this survey point to an urgent need to refocus some aspects of veterinary education:

- Overall, only 23% of students and graduates think their vet degree is preparing/has prepared them ‘very well’ for the work they hope to do
- Only 17% of vets five years or more after graduating think their degree had prepared them very well

🌟 The most popular suggestions for improvement were:

- Compulsory modules on managing stress, personal development and work-life balance
- More teaching of business and finance skills
- Increasing EMS placements in a wider range of settings, like industry

🌟 While most opposed the idea of specialisation during a degree course – meaning, they would have qualified with a limited license to practise on certain species only – still, 44% of graduates support the idea

- However, students were less likely to support this: 64% said they were unsure or plumped for a definite ‘no’. This probably reflects their lack of certainty, at this stage, about future direction – more than half (56%) who plan to work as a vet in the UK, indicated current interest in more than one area
- Significantly, too, among graduates, fewer than half (49%) had gone on to follow their path they’d anticipated at vet school

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KEY FINDINGS – TOP PRIORITIES FOR 2030, PLUS NEW TECHNOLOGY

The top goals for 2030 for students and graduates alike are:

- ‘Better veterinary lives (wellbeing)’ – 80% said this
- ‘Ensuring vets are a driving force in animal welfare’ – 70% said this
- ‘Safeguarding the authority and expertise of vets in the food chain’ – 47% considered this to be an important goal

We also looked, for the first time in detail, at attitudes towards new technology:

- More than half of all students and graduates perceive the profession to be embracing digital technology well, although 42% are unsure or think it’s not doing this as well as it might
- Our findings suggest that practices are using a range of digital technology – and particularly social media – for promoting, educating, building a client base and garnering feedback. Some are using webinars for learning and selling over the internet
- Greatest potential for technology in the future is seen to lie in: animal risk assessment (60% highlighted this); observing real-time procedures via web-link (59%); and using social media to send appointment reminders (44%)
- Students and graduates alike seem wary of relying on technology for diagnosis and treatment purposes, or to replace consultations, but 37% thought there was potential in developing apps to aid them in making diagnoses
IMPLICATIONS FOR VET FUTURES

🌟 The number of vets seeking a change in direction – and even to leave the profession entirely – just five to eight years after qualifying, has to be a concern for the profession.

🌟 This survey points to a need to review the extent to which veterinary education currently prepares students for the workplace, including for the stresses and strains of clinical practice, and the breadth of careers available outside of clinical practice. The point of transition from student to graduate is highlighted by some as needing particular attention.

🌟 The Vet Futures project has already identified the need to provide better support to those working in the profession as a priority. These findings reinforce that message. There is clearly a very real need not only to equip tomorrow’s vets with the tools to manage stress in the workplace, but also for employers to prioritise extending that support across the whole team.

🌟 The decline in appetite to become a practice owner or partner once vets enter the workplace has significant implications for the sustainability of existing models of independent practice. A better understanding is needed of the reasons why aspirations for ownership decline so sharply once vets enter the workplace. The fact that 51% would like to see more teaching at vet school on business and finance skills suggest a lack of confidence in running a business.
1. Research approach
2. Career intentions
3. Career realities
4. Veterinary education
5. Ambitions for 2030
6. Profile of respondents
1. RESEARCH APPROACH

An online survey was informed by interviews and focus groups with the profession and stakeholders, a literature review, six veterinary regional meetings, and workshops of the Vet Futures Group (comprised of key stakeholders).

The survey was sent to:
- Around 4,500 veterinary students – via the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS)
- 6,864 vets who graduated over the last eight years – via the RCVS register

The survey was in the field between 21 May and 15 June 2015. A total of 2,865 responses were received – 1,973 from graduates (29% response rate) and 892 students (20% response rate).

The survey was hosted by market research company Critical Research. Analysis was carried out by Bernice Hardie and Sally Williams, part of the Vet Futures team.
2. CAREER INTENTIONS
73% OF STUDENTS INTEND TO WORK AS A VET IN THE UK

Base: 832 (students)

What are your plans following qualification?

- Work as a vet in the UK: 73%
- Work as a vet overseas: 13%
- Unsure: 11%
- Don't plan to work as a vet/have other plans: 3%

The type of work those who do not wish to work as a vet in the UK are considering include:
- Academic research
- Working for global health organisations
- Undertaking exotic and conservation work
- Doing a Master’s degree overseas
- Working on welfare issues abroad
- Public health
- Journalism

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SMALL ANIMAL/EXOTIC AND MIXED PRACTICE ARE MOST POPULAR

Base: 652 (students who want to work as vets in the UK)

What area of veterinary work do you hope to go into?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Year 1-3 Students</th>
<th>Year 4-6 Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed practice</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small animal/exotic practice</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm/production animal practice</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral practice/consultancy</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equine practice</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charities/trusts</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academia/education</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other first opinion practice</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce/industry</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than half of students who want to work as vets in the UK (56%) indicated aspirations for more than one area of work, suggesting that a good many were still undecided on their career plan.
STIMULATING WORK IN A SUPPORTIVE PRACTICE IS KEY

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

Which three factors have greatest influence on your choice of career options?

- Intellectual satisfaction: 45%
- Location: 42%
- Organisation is good at supporting vets: 41%
- Salary/benefits: 38%
- Structured career/opportunities: 34%
- Career longevity: 23%
- Place where innovative ideas are nurtured: 22%
- Clinical autonomy: 19%
- Flexible working: 18%
- Having a portfolio career: 11%
- Career advice from vet school: 2%

The career advice provided by vet schools has little impact on the choice of career path.
3. CAREER REALITIES
45% are working as they hoped to 5 years after graduation

Base: 1,912 (graduates)

Which statement best describes how your current work compares with your intentions at vet school?

- I am following the career path I hoped to: 52% (Year 1-4), 45% (Year 5-8)
  - 68% for equine and farm vets

- I started out working in the area I hoped to but I have/am considering changing: 17% (Year 1-4), 21% (Year 5-8)
  - More likely for those in mixed practice (26%)

- I never anticipated practising in the area that I am now: 7% (Year 1-4), 17% (Year 5-8)
  - 29% for those working outside of clinical practice

- I am trying out different types of veterinary work before I decide: 4% (Year 1-4), 11% (Year 5-8)
  - 15% for vets in mixed practice

- I had no clear career intentions: 7% (Year 1-4), 5% (Year 5-8)

- I have not been able to get work in the area that I hoped to, but would still like to: 6% (Year 1-4), 8% (Year 5-8)

After four years, 17% of graduates are working in areas that they never anticipated.

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For half of graduates, work expectations do not match reality

Base: 1,973 (graduates)

To what extent has your working life so far matched the expectations you had when you first entered the profession?

- Much better than expected – 3%
- Slightly better than expected – 10%
- More likely to be graduates working outside of clinical practice (15%)
- Lived up to expectations – 37%
- This echoed the findings of the survey of BVA members
- Only met some expectations – 45%
- This is higher than the survey of BVA members
- Not met any expectations – 5%

* Vet Futures Report of the survey of the BVA ‘Voice of the profession’ panel, June 2015
63% GRADUATES RATE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES ‘FAIR’ OR ‘POOR’

How would you rate the career progression opportunities that you currently see for yourself?

36% rate opportunities as excellent/very good

Opportunities are rated more strongly in:
- Areas outside clinical practice – research, academia or government work (48% rate this as excellent/very good)
- Farm production (41%)
- Corporate/charity groups (39%)

41% rate opportunities as fair

This view is most prevalent in:
- Small animal practice (45%)

22% rate opportunities as uncertain/poor

Opportunities are rated more weakly in:
- Equine practice (27%)

Base: 1,973 (graduates)

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How would you rate the career progression opportunities that you currently see for yourself?

- **Excellent**: 7%
  - Years 1-4: 7%
  - Years 5-8: 7%

- **Very good**: 25%
  - Years 1-4: 33%
  - Years 5-8: 42%

- **Fair**: 16%
  - Years 1-4: 41%
  - Years 5-8: 42%

- **Uncertain**: 21%
  - Years 1-4: 16%
  - Years 5-8: 21%

- **Poor**: 6%
  - Years 1-4: 3%
  - Years 5-8: 6%
MORE THAN HALF OF GRADUATES ARE LOOKING FOR A CHANGE IN WORK

Base: 1,973 (graduates) * data subject to rounding

Do you have any plans to change what you are doing in any of the following ways?

- 44% have no plans to change
- 23% plan to find another job in the same field
- 13% plan to find work in a different veterinary field
- 10% are considering leaving the profession completely
- 9% would like to work overseas

Least likely to change:
- Those working in farm production (53%)
- Those 5+ years into their career (47%)
- Female vets (46%)

16% of those in equine practice are considering leaving the profession
CAREER AMBITIONS SHIFT FROM CLINICAL PRACTICE ONCE VETS START WORK

Base: 2, 865 (students and graduates)

Where do you see yourself working in the future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed in a medium sized practice (4-10 vets)</td>
<td>Employed in a medium sized practice (4-10 vets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to become a practice owner or partner</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in a team alongside allied professionals</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed as part of a large team of vets (10+)</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to be working outside of clinical practice</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in a small practice team (up to 3 vets)</td>
<td>18%* academic/research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to be working independently as a locum</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to be working as a sole principal</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*0% mention academia/research

*5% mention academia/research
VETS SHIFT AWAY FROM CLINICAL PRACTICE 5 YEARS AFTER GRADUATING

Base: 1,973 (graduates)

If you are currently employed, what area(s) of work are you involved in?

More men than women work in referral practice/consultancy and also in government.

Involvement in more than one area increases over time:
• 18% of vets 5-8 years after graduating
• 12% of vets 1-4 years after graduating

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4. VETERINARY EDUCATION
ONLY 18% OF GRADUATES FEEL THEIR DEGREE PREPARED THEM ‘VERY WELL’

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

How well is your veterinary degree preparing you for the area of work that you hope to do/your current role?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite well</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very well</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most likely to feel unprepared by their degree:
- Graduates in small animal and independent practices
- European educated students/graduates

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GRADUATES FEEL LESS LIKE THEIR DEGREE PREPARED THEM WELL OVER TIME

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

How well is your veterinary degree preparing you for the area of work that you hope to do/your current role? (% responding ‘very well’)

- Years 1-3 students: 34%
- Year 4-6 students: 33%
- Year 1-4 graduates: 19%
- Year 5-8 graduates: 17%

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NOTTINGHAM STUDENTS/ALUMNI ARE MOST POSITIVE ABOUT THEIR DEGREE

How well is your veterinary degree preparing you for the area of work that you hope to do/your current role?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Veterinary College London</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studied in Europe</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

143 respondents were students or graduates from Nottingham; although this was the second smallest cohort, it is a statistically valid base size.

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)
FOCUS SOUGHT ON MANAGING STRESS AND BUSINESS/FINANCE SKILLS

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following suggestions?

% rating 7-10 on a 10 point agreement scale

- Compulsory modules on managing stress, personal development and work-life balance: 59%
- More teaching business/finance skills: 51%
- Increasing EMS placements in a wider range of settings (e.g. industry): 42%
- Recruit students from more diverse backgrounds: 38%
- Final 2 yrs of vet degrees more specialist/focused on areas intend to work in: 45% *
- Give more attention to careers outside clinical practice: 30%
- Opportunities to design veterinary education apps: 24%
- Reducing number of EMS placement weeks: 11%

* Suggestions are shown in order of their mean score out of 10. Those with % higher than their ranked position generated more polarised views.
MOST OPPOSED, YET 44% OF GRADUATES SUPPORT SPECIALISATION

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates) * data subject to rounding

If you had been given the option to specialise as part of your degree and qualify with a limited license to practise (i.e. certain species only), would you have choose/have chosen this?

- Yes, definitely: Students 10%, Graduates 21%
- Yes, maybe: Students 25%, Graduates 23%
- Not sure: Students 16%, Graduates 16%
- No: Students 48%, Graduates 40%

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5. AMBITIONS FOR 2030
MOST (64%) ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE

How optimistic are you overall about the future of the UK veterinary profession?

- 64% see the glass half full – i.e. feel optimistic – when it comes to thinking about the future
- 21% are unsure how they feel about the future
- Students – particularly women – in the first three years of their degree are the most optimistic (80%)
- Graduates working in independent chains are significantly more likely to be optimistic about the future (66%) compared to those working as part of a national corporate chain or charity group (59%)
OPTIMISM (INEVITABLY?) DISSIPATES OVER TIME

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

How optimistic are you overall about the future of the UK veterinary profession?

% saying they are very/quite optimistic

- Years 1-3 students: 80%
- Year 4-6 students: 67%
- Year 1-4 graduates: 64%
- Year 5-8 graduates: 55%

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TOP GOALS ARE TO IMPROVE VETS’ LIVES AND TO DRIVE ANIMAL WELFARE

How important are the following goals for 2030?

% scoring 9 or 10 on a 10 point importance scale

- Better veterinary lives (wellbeing): 80%
- Ensuring vets are a driving force in animal welfare: 70%
- Safeguarding the authority and expertise of vets in the food chain: 47%
- Structured and diverse veterinary career paths: 38%
- Developing sustainable business models: 34%
- Finding new ways to add value for clients: 27%
- Speaking with one voice (leadership): 24%

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

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When asked for suggestions about the future, students and graduates voiced concerns about stress, working conditions and salary levels. A number of responses reflected anxiety about growing numbers of vet students and the impact of this on their own prospects.

- ‘Better preventative measures for depression, compassion fatigue and work-related stress’
- ‘I feel new graduates should have mentors and tutorials in their first year...and possibly develop a couple of structured years (similar to medics)’
- ‘[There is] very little training of undergraduates in the range of jobs you can do with a vet degree (research, industry etc)’
- ‘Changing [practice] ownership models may be sensible...how about a conglomerate of salaried doctors incorporating vets, nurses and admin staff?’
- ‘We need to liaise much more with the human medical profession and they need to involve our profession more re antibiotic use and other general medical concepts’
How important are the following key goals for the profession for 2030?

**Women are more likely than men to agree about the importance of work-life balance and professional influence as future goals**

- 82% of women rated ‘Better veterinary lives, work-life balance etc’ as important, compared with 73% of men
- 71% of women rated ‘Ensuring vets are a driving force in animal welfare’ as important, compared with 68% of men
- Views tended to be more diverse among men (i.e. they were more likely to disagree over the importance of key goals)

**Vets 5+ years post graduation give greater weight to the importance of work-life balance, safeguarding the profession, and career paths**

- 85% of year 5-8 graduates rated ‘Better veterinary lives’ as important – compared with 80% of year 1-4 graduates, and 76% of undergraduates
- 50% of year 5-8 graduates rated ‘Safeguarding the authority and expertise of vets in the food chain’ as important – compared with 45% of year 1-4 graduates
- 40% of year 5-8 graduates rated ‘Structured and diverse veterinary career paths’ as important – compared with 35% of year 1-4 graduates

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OVER HALF PERCEIVE VETS TO BE EMBRACING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

How well is the veterinary profession embracing the opportunities offered by digital technology?

58% Think the veterinary profession is embracing digital technology quite or very well

26% Are unsure

16% Think the veterinary profession is not embracing digital technology well

A significant 42% are either unsure here or think the profession is not embracing technology well

Graduates are more likely to think the profession is not embracing technology well – 19% said this – compared with 10% of students

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How well is the veterinary profession embracing the opportunities offered by digital technology?

% who rated ‘seen in use’

Social media to advertise vet services
- Students: 89%
- Graduates: 85%

Social media to educate the public
- Students: 77%
- Graduates: 74%

Social media to build loyal client base
- Students: 73%
- Graduates: 75%

Social media to gather customer feedback
- Students: 52%
- Graduates: 80%

Learning new techniques by watching webinars
- Students: 65%
- Graduates: 61%

Selling animal health products over the internet
- Students: 60%
- Graduates: 65%

Observing real time procedures by web-links
- Students: 30%
- Graduates: 40%

Social media for appointment reminders
- Students: 25%
- Graduates: 43%

Smartphone/tablet apps to assist in making a diagnosis
- Students: 18%
- Graduates: 25%

Technology for risk assessing patient groups
- Students: 12%
- Graduates: 25%

Applications such as Skype to provide advice and consultations
- Students: 4%
- Graduates: 4%

Applications such as Skype to prescribe treatments
- Students: 1%
- Graduates: 3%

Graduates are more likely to have seen technology in use – particularly for promoting and supporting services, and selling products over the internet.
MOST POTENTIAL FOR TECHNOLOGY: RISK ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

How well is the veterinary profession embracing the opportunities offered by digital technology?

% who rated ‘would be good to do’

Technology for risk assessing patient groups: 60%
Observing real time procedures by web-links: 59%
Social media for appointment reminders: 44%
Smartphone/tablet apps to assist in making a diagnosis: 37%
Learning new techniques by watching webinars: 31%
Social media to gather customer feedback: 24%
Social media to educate the public: 23%
Applications such as Skype to provide advice and consultations: 22%
Social media to build loyal client base: 20%
Social media to advertise vet services: 12%
Selling animal health products over the internet: 11%
Applications such as Skype to prescribe treatments: 9%
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IDEAS FROM STUDENTS/GRADUATES

‘Grassroots training in digital technology for all students would encourage innovation in this area’

‘Practice management software should make it easy to look at how the practice works e.g. when are most appointments or visits made, what services are most popular, what things maximise treatment and follow-up compliance?’

‘Microchip links to patient records. Animal microchips are powerful tools and are being used on farms for animal management…this could be extended to pets too’

‘An app for clients that would tell them when repeat prescriptions and check-ups, and routine vaccines/flea/worm are due’

‘I would love to have the rules changed so that we could provide a Skype service. OOH providers could offer it for clients who aren’t sure they want to come down for a reduced OOH fee’

‘Have accredited advice websites (e.g. by RCVS) to ensure clients are reading reliable information on the internet’
How well is the veterinary profession embracing the opportunities offered by digital technology?

% who rated ‘unlikely to be helpful’

- Applications such as Skype to prescribe treatments: 88%
- Applications such as Skype to provide advice and consultations: 70%
- Smartphone/tablet apps to assist in making a diagnosis: 40%
- Selling animal health products over the internet: 26%
- Technology for risk assessing patient groups: 25%
- Social media for appointment reminders: 18%
- Social media to gather customer feedback: 8%
- Social media to build a loyal client base: 6%
- Observing real time procedures by web-links: 4%
- Learning new techniques by watching webinars: 3%
- Social media to educate the public (e.g. on responsible pet ownership): 2%
- Social media to advertise veterinary services: 2%
6. PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS
PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Base: 2865 (students and graduates)

Which of the following best describes you?

- First year vet school: 22%
- Second year vet school: 22%
- Third year vet school: 19%
- Fourth year vet school: 14%
- Fifth year vet school: 20%
- Sixth year vet school: 3%
- First year post graduation: 15%
- Second year post graduation: 15%
- Third year post graduation: 13%
- Fourth year post graduation: 15%
- Fifth year post graduation: 13%
- Sixth year post graduation: 11%
- Seventh year post graduation: 10%
- Eighth year post graduation: 8%
87% OF GRADUATES ARE WORKING AS A SALARIED VET

Base: 1,973 (graduates)

Which of the following best describes your current working status?

- Salaried
- Self-employed
- Owner/partner
- Not currently working

Of the salaried vets:
- 52% work for a sole practice/independent partnership
- 22% work for independent chains
- 20% work for a corporate/charity group practice
- 3% work outside of clinical practice
- 3% are unsure how to classify the type of practice they work in
MOST WORKING GRADUATES (62%) ARE EMPLOYED IN SMALL ANIMAL PRACTICE

Base: 1912 (graduates in work)

If you are currently employed, what area of veterinary work are you involved in?

- Small animal/exotic practice: 62%
- Mixed practice: 16%
- Equine practice: 9%
- Farm/production animal: 8%
- Referral practice/consultancy: 5%
- Academia/education: 5%
- Government: 4%
- Charities/trusts: 4%
- Research: 3%
- Commerce/industry: 2%
- Other first opinion practice: 1%
80% OF GRADUATES EARN £40K OR LESS A YEAR

Base: 1912 (graduates in work)

Please indicate on the scale below your approximate gross income (before tax), including benefits

- Average annual income in years 1-4 post-graduation = £25k
- Average annual income in years 5-8 post-graduation = £34k
- Significantly more men (19%) earn over £41k a year than women (14%)
8% OF WORKING GRADUATES ARE PART-TIME

Base: 1912 (graduates in work)

Are you currently working full or part time?

- Part-time working is more likely among women (9%) than men (4%)
- 13% of graduates 5+ years into their working career are in part-time roles, compared with 4% of newer graduates (those 1-4 years post graduation)
- 14% of those considering leaving the profession are working part-time
78% OF RESPONDENTS ARE WOMEN

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)

- The average age of graduates responding to this survey was 30

- Female students responding to the survey were younger – 80% were under 24 – than the men (71% under 24)

1% of students did not give an answer
Which veterinary school do you/did you attend?

- Royal Veterinary College London: 24%
- Liverpool: 12%
- Bristol: 11%
- Edinburgh: 9%
- Cambridge: 9%
- Glasgow: 7%
- Nottingham: 5%
- Surrey: 1%
- Europe: 19%
- Australia/New Zealand: 1%
- South Africa: 1%
- Elsewhere in the world: 1%

Base: 2,865 (students and graduates)
GEOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

Base: 1912 (graduates in work)

Where is your work based?

- England: 81%
- Scotland: 9%
- N. Ireland: 2%
- Wales: 5%
- Overseas: 2%

1% did not give an answer