



A CAREER AS A VET?

There is an incredible diversity of career opportunities for veterinary graduates. This university degree caters for people with passions for helping animals – domestic, wild, exotic; helping people; improving the viability of rural industries; innovation and research; and business. Australian veterinary graduates are employed all over the world in a large variety of roles. The veterinary degree gives participants a unique approach to problem solving which remains with them irrespective of their employment.

In particular, it is exciting, challenging and rewarding for veterinarians working in rural practice which requires the young graduate to develop and hone a range of skills, from treating family pets and working dogs to the physical demanding role of cattle and horse reproductive work. Rural practice provides young graduates with a unique opportunity to become a respected member of a rural community, develop strong friendships with clients and colleagues and make a significant contribution to the clients livelihood and income.

If you appreciate working outdoors, and working with

practical and friendly clients, with whom you can develop an honest and open relationship then you should consider rural veterinary practice as a career. The emphasis is often more on the herd or the client than the individual animal, but farm animals are rewarding patients and often respond well and dramatically to treatment. There is nothing more clinically satisfying than “rescuing” a cow with milk fever or down with dystocia, sorting the situation out and enabling her to walk away “fixed”.

Travel and ‘after hours’ commitments are some of the less attractive components of rural practice. However, travel between farm visits does also have its benefits - it certainly gives you “space” between clients as well as time to plan how you are going to approach the case on the farm you are about to visit.

Being a rural vet is not always glamorous! It is inevitable that at some stage you will get cow manure both in your gumboots and in your hair! At some stage you will probably have to lie down in 6 inches of mud to maneuver a dead, rotten and smelly calf from a cow, in fact there are

many occasions where a poor sense of smell and a strong stomach is beneficial!

With communication systems, such as two way radios, CDMA and satellite phones, constantly improving, even in rural Australia, it is always possible to consult a senior veterinarian in the practice regarding difficult cases.

Graduates that have a passion for the rural industry but need to be based in a city for family or other reasons can pursue career opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry; government departments; industry bodies such as Meat and Livestock Australia or Dairy Australia; agriculture consultancy firms; Universities; laboratories; or large pastoral companies.

There are seven Veterinary Schools at Universities throughout Australia. Admission requirements generally include English, Maths, Chemistry with some Universities asking for Physics and Biology. These admission requirements can be achieved in the final year of high school or during completion of one year full-time study of a university degree. Credit towards the veterinary degree

may be allowed, based on previous studies. The standard of results required for entry to the veterinary science degree varies between States, and students interested in studying veterinary science are encouraged to contact the Universities regarding specific requirements. Most Universities also have a limited number of places for international and national full fee paying students. These students still have to meet the entry prerequisites.

Some University veterinary schools, for example James Cook University in Townsville, Qld, also take into account where a prospective student has undertaken their schooling, why they wish to pursue a career in veterinary science and what steps they have taken to demonstrate an interest in this field. Similarly, at Charles Sturt University, students are selected on the basis of their commitment to production animals and rural Australia – characteristics which they are required to demonstrate first in a written application then, for those with the best written applications, in an interview. Applicants are ranked by their interview performance and the best are offered places provided their most recent academic grades exceed a prescribed level.



CAMPUSES AND COURSES

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY (JCU) TOWNSVILLE, QLD

The veterinary science degree at JCU is a broad-based program of study encompassing all aspects of veterinary science and clinical veterinary practice, with a focus on tropical veterinary science and rural/regional veterinary practice, including tropical animal production and aquaculture

www.jcu.edu.au/courses-and-study/study-areas/veterinary-and-medical-sciences

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND (UQ) BRISBANE AND GATTON, QLD

The UQ veterinary science program is concerned with the promotion of the health and welfare of vertebrate animals of special importance to society. This involves the care of healthy and sick animals and the prevention, recognition, control and treatment of their diseases, and the welfare and productivity of livestock.

First year courses provide a foundation knowledge of animal structure and function, chemical principles, and animal husbandry. The structure and function of the normal animal, and its nutrition, breeding, and management, are studied in greater depth in second and third years. Fourth and fifth year students develop knowledge and skills in the prevention, diagnoses, treatment and control of diseases in domestic animals and birds. All years of the program contain a large component of practical work.

Students may also be permitted to study an additional year, between third and fourth years, towards the extra degree of Bachelor of Veterinary Biology. Honours is also available as an extra year of study in several fields of veterinary science.

www.uq.edu.au/vetschool

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY (MU) PERTH, WA

Facilities and Training

The School provides excellent training across small and large animal species.

There is an on-campus farm which provides invaluable handling experience in large animal species for students across the five years of the course. The school maintains a very strong emphasis on production animal research and its staff are actively involved with 9 Centres for Cooperative Research (CRCs) and 4 WA state centres of excellence.

Professional Recognition

Graduates are eligible to practice as veterinarian in Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand, Malaysia, South Africa, Singapore and Hong Kong. The MU veterinary degree is recognized by the American Veterinary Medical Association which allows graduates to practice in the US and Canada after passing appropriate National or State licensing examinations.

www.murdoch.edu.au/Courses/Veterinary-Science

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY, SYDNEY AND CAMDEN, NSW

Facilities and Training

The Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney is dedicated to producing high quality veterinary practitioners who are competent and confident to treat all routine domestic species.

The curriculum has been recently revised and now includes increased exposure to animal handling and acquisition of basic clinical skills in earlier years as well as a lecture free final year which focuses on the transition to veterinary practice. In this final year students work with internal production animal veterinarians, who run an active ruminant clinical program providing clinical

services to local dairy, beef, sheep and goat producers and consultancy services to state and national industry groups.

In addition, there are opportunities for students to undertake advanced studies (electives) focusing on production animals including Advanced Bovine Health and Production, and Advanced Reproductive Technologies. Finally, year 5 students may work with specialist production animal and equine veterinarians in Australia and overseas through the extramural rotation program.

Professional Recognition

University of Sydney veterinary school is currently accredited with the Australian, United Kingdom and North American Veterinary Boards, and therefore graduates are able to work throughout the world once they have completed their degree.

www.sydney.edu.au/vetscience

www.sydney.edu.au/future_students

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY (CSU)

WAGGA WAGGA, NSW

Veterinary Science at Charles Sturt University arose from a recognised need for more veterinarians to live and work in regional Australia. From this beginning, the CSU mission developed to include all aspects of veterinary service to the livestock industries; services which can include research, diagnostics, international veterinary work, biosecurity and education.

To fulfil this objective, the veterinary program at CSU has instituted a number of distinguishing features, as below: Firstly, it is a six year program – at least one year longer than other veterinary courses in Australia. While the course will provide the high standard of training in veterinary science of horses and small animals (as is typical of all Australasian veterinary schools), the additional year will provide opportunities for expanded training in production animal health management, epidemiology and other disciplines relevant to the food and fibre animal industries.

Secondly, a large part of the course will be taught in practice (problem)-based learning (PBL) format. CSU



Charles Sturt University (CSU), Wagga Wagga NSW

believes that this offers advantages to student learning, particularly in their ability to graduate as competent rural veterinarians.

One of the founding aims for veterinary science at CSU was to address the difficulties experienced by many rural practitioners in attracting and, more significantly, retaining young veterinarians in their practices. The reasons for poor retention rates are undoubtedly complex and some of the contributing factors relate to issues beyond the control or influence of Universities.

CSU believes that they are doing three things which can make a difference:

- First – by selecting students who have prior experience of, and interest in, farm animals and rural Australia;
- Second – by training them in rural Australia in the heart of a vibrant agricultural environment;
- Third – by graduating veterinarians who have particularly well developed skills and knowledge for working with farm animals, their owners and the industry structures which support them.

CSU is not intending to build or operate its own teaching hospitals but, instead, students will receive their structured clinical training in some selected privately owned and operated commercial veterinary hospitals. These hospitals will be resourced appropriately by CSU – with staff, equipment or facilities as necessary – to ensure that the desired learning outcomes are achieved and that the practices can continue to operate as an effective and profitable business.

www.csu.edu.au/vet

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE AND WERRIBEE, VIC

The Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program at the University of Melbourne is a four year post graduate degree. The first two years are spent at the Preclinical Sciences Centre in Parkville, and the final two years are spent at the Veterinary Clinical Centre at Werribee.

One of the advantages of the veterinary school at the University of Melbourne is the access to a broad range of animal industries. The School has a large companion animal hospital located at Werribee, servicing both primary and referral cases from throughout Victoria. There are also active links to the beef, sheep, dairy and poultry industries, as well as other smaller agricultural industries.

Practical Experience

In the first two years of the course, students are given practical instruction in handling and restraint of animals.

They also have to undertake 8 weeks work experience on animal enterprises during vacations. Students may be able to meet this requirement in their own country or in other overseas locations.

In the final two years students are rostered in the University's Veterinary Clinic and Hospital; they attend the nearby thoroughbred horse breeding studs, pig and poultry research centres; and they experience dairy cattle practice at the Rural Veterinary Centre at Maffra in eastern Victoria. Students are also exposed to The Veterinary School's sheep consultancy practice, the Mackinnon Project, which provides unique opportunities to learn the principles of food and fibre animal production investigations during on-farm visits throughout the state. Leading veterinarians in private practice are appointed as Academic Associates to extend the clinical experience for students during 12 weeks of extramural work in a clinical practice environment.

Professional Recognition

The school is currently accredited with the Australian, United Kingdom and North American Veterinary Boards, and graduates are able to work throughout the world once they have completed their degree.

www.fvas.unimelb.edu.au

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE ADELAIDE, SA

Veterinary Science at the University of Adelaide has a unique focus on Australian livestock production, equine health, aquaculture and biosecurity and involves input from a range of partner institutions, government agencies and industry.

This Bachelor program forms the first part of the veterinary science program. It is followed by a three-year postgraduate coursework Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program that focuses on the clinical skills required for veterinary practice. Students satisfactorily completing the undergraduate degree and 12 weeks of Extra Mural Studies placements will gain direct entry into the postgraduate program.

The University will make reasonable adjustments to the requirements of the veterinary programs to cater for students with disabilities but without compromising the academic integrity of the programs or imposing unjustifiable hardship on the University.

www.adelaide.edu.au/vetsci

CONTACT DETAILS OF THE ORGANISATIONS

| Organisation | Location | Contact Details | Website |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| Australian Cattle Veterinarians | Brisbane QLD | p. 07 3422 5300 e. acv@ava.com.au | www.ava.com.au/cattle |
| James Cook University | Townsville QLD | p. 07 4781 4278 | www.jcu.edu.au/courses-and-study/study-areas/veterinary-and-medical-sciences |
| University of Queensland | Gatton QLD | p. 07 5460 1834 e. vetenquiries@uq.edu.au | www.uq.edu.au/vetschool |
| University of Sydney | Sydney NSW | p. 1800 793 864 p. 02 9351 2441 e. vet.science@sydney.edu.au | www.sydney.edu.au/vet-science www.sydney.edu.au/future-students |
| Charles Sturt University | Wagga Wagga NSW | p. 02 6933 4479 e. savs@csu.edu.au | www.csu.edu.au/vet |
| University of Melbourne | Melbourne VIC | p. 13 63 52 p. 03 9035 5511 | www.fvas.unimelb.edu.au |
| University of Adelaide | Adelaide SA | p. 08 8313 7987 e. animalvetsci@adelaide.edu.au | www.adelaide.edu.au/vetsci |
| Murdoch University | Perth WA | p. 1300 687 3624 e. VetAdmission@murdoch.edu.au | www.murdoch.edu.au/Courses/Veterinary-Science |

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References: Some information obtained from websites of Australian universities listed above.