

Application, Entry Requirements and Assessment Policy

June 2024

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Entry Requirements

We update our entry requirements on an annual basis in response to changing academic requirements. Inevitably this means that sometimes our requirements do not reflect the information published in the hard copy of our Prospectus (which is usually produced annually). We therefore recommend that applicants look at the information in the course listings on our website (www.rvc.ac.uk) as the source of the most up-to-date information. Our undergraduate academic entry requirements are also published on the UCAS website www.ucas.co.uk.

Entry requirements and available courses for the forthcoming undergraduate admissions cycle will be published on our website from May onwards for undergraduate courses and September onwards for postgraduate courses. In publishing entry requirements at such an early stage there may be need for further changes prior to the start of the application cycle in response to changes that come to light during the examination results period. Changes to our entry requirements will be finalised by the start of the application cycle (by 31st August for undergraduate, 31st October for postgraduate) and will not be changed once the application cycle has begun. Where a course has a non-September start date, it will be subject to different dates and deadlines, but the principles of this policy will still apply.

The RVC considers a wide range of qualifications for entry on to its programmes, taking advice and guidance from sector-wide products and publications such as UK Ecctis, The British Council and UCAS publications, particularly in considering the suitability of international qualifications. Entry requirements are determined based on the academic standard that is needed to successfully complete the course and have been compiled based on our experience of the qualification(s) and the success of students who have previously undertaken the course. Applicants will normally be expected to have completed relevant qualifications for entry within the five years prior to the start of the course, unless they have been working in a relevant field, to ensure that their knowledge and study skills are sufficiently relevant and current to enable success on the course.

Applications from candidates without the normal, formal qualifications will be considered on an individual basis and all aspects of the application will be considered when making a decision. All such applications will be considered additionally by the Course Director responsible for the course. Where applications are based on prior experience, the following will apply:

- Any previous study or experience must be cognate with the course the applicant is applying for.
- an applicant's prior learning will be assessed for entry to any programme at whatever level by the relevant Course Director.
- responsibility lies with the applicant in identifying, demonstrating, and providing evidence of any claim of experience or prior learning.
- where it is proposed to allow entry with credit, this will need to be assessed and approved in accordance with the http://www.rvc.ac.uk/Media/Default/About/Academic/Quality_Regulations_and_Procedures/General/Admissions_APL.pdf RVC's Assessment of Prior (Experiential) Learning Policy

However, for courses where there are professional body requirements in place, it may not be possible to consider applications without formal qualifications. Applications will not normally be considered from applicants to our Veterinary Medicine degree who do not have the formal qualifications required to meet our entry criteria.

The RVC does not place any restrictions on applicants resitting qualifications and applying to any of our other courses.

Undergraduate specific requirements

As a minimum, applicants for full-time undergraduate programmes will normally be expected to have been educated to General Certificate of Education Advanced level (GCE A level) or an equivalent qualification in either the UK or internationally that is deemed acceptable by the RVC.

All applicants for undergraduate programmes are normally required to demonstrate a good standard of general education, normally equivalent to 5 GCSE passes at grades 4 or above (grade A* - C for those candidates with graded GCSEs). This includes acceptable levels of literacy and numeracy, normally equivalent to at least Grade 4 (Grade C) at GCSE in English and Mathematics. Individual programmes may have additional requirements (which may be higher than the RVC minimum), and these are outlined in each programme entry in the Undergraduate Prospectus and on our website.

Where an applicant has not achieved the required GCSE or equivalent grades but has subsequently taken Level 3 qualifications (A-levels or equivalent) which meet our published entry requirements in full and include Biology and Chemistry as discrete subjects with awarded grades, this will be deemed to fulfil the GCSE requirement.

Where a course has additional requirements, such as work experience, these will be published on our website and, for undergraduate courses, the UCAS website. Our website will also detail how to provide evidence of having met the additional requirements to the RVC and any deadline to submit these details. Applicants will be expected to adhere to these deadlines.

All applicants who apply via UCAS to our Veterinary Medicine degrees will be required to submit a form, in addition to their UCAS application. This form will be available to complete via our Applicant Portal. Further details, including the deadline for receipt, will be sent to all applicants once their application has been received and processed into the RVC's system. All applicants to our Gateway course are required, in addition to their UCAS application, to complete a Gateway Supplementary form and submit it to the RVC by a published date, which will normally be seven days after the UCAS deadline.

The RVC will normally only consider two applications to our Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine degree and two applications to our Accelerated Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine per applicant. Applicants who have made two applications to our Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine but have subsequently undertaken a degree in a relevant biological science subject, which would allow entry to our Accelerated Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, will be permitted to make a third application to the course. In the event an applicant submits an application which exceeds the permitted number, the RVC reserves the right to reject the application(s) without any consideration.

The RVC welcomes applications to our Veterinary Medicine degrees from applicants who are resitting whole or parts of their qualifications. In such instances, the RVC sets minimum standards that must have been achieved in the first sitting of the qualification(s) and would normally only permit the qualifications to have been retaken once. These minimum standards will be published on our website.

Postgraduate specific requirements

The minimum entry requirements for admission to a Postgraduate Taught degree at the RVC is normally a UK first or second class honours degree or a recognised international equivalent. Applicants with other qualifications and/or experience will be considered on an individual basis, in accordance with the [http://www.rvc.ac.uk/Media/Default/About/Academic Quality, Regulations and Procedures/General/Admissions_APL.pdf](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/Media/Default/About/Academic%20Quality,%20Regulations%20and%20Procedures/General/Admissions_APL.pdf) RVC's Assessment of Prior (Experiential) Learning Policy. Entry requirements for each course will be published on the RVC's website.

English Language requirements

All applicants are expected to demonstrate a suitable standard of English Language proficiency prior to enrolling at the RVC. This is GCSE Grade 4/C in English or achievement in an alternative qualification that the RVC deems equivalent. Full details of the alternative qualifications and tests which are acceptable can be found on our website. Applicants who have not achieved the required standard at the point of application may be made an offer that is conditional upon achieving it.

Admissions Tests

The RVC do not require any supplementary admissions tests for entry to any of its undergraduate courses.

Application Processes

All applications to the RVC's undergraduate courses should be made via UCAS, unless the applicant is applying as a graduate from a North American College or University in which case their application should be made via VMCAS. All applications to the RVC's postgraduate courses should be made via the RVC's website.

The RVC adheres to the 'on-time' deadlines provided by UCAS and VMCAS for our courses. Application deadlines may be imposed for postgraduate courses, at the RVC's discretion. In such cases the deadline will be published on the course pages of our website at the beginning of the admissions cycle. Applicants, who submit a full and complete application by the deadline set out for the course they've applied for, will receive full and equal consideration. Applications will only be considered as 'on-time' if they are completed in full by the deadline provided. This includes provision of a personal statement, references and qualification information required to undertake an assessment of the application. Late applications will not normally be considered for our Veterinary Medicine or veterinary nursing courses. Late applications for all other courses will be considered on an individual basis if there are still places available on the relevant programme.

Applications for transfers from other universities will be subject to the RVC's APL procedures. Applications for transfers into our Veterinary Medicine courses from other courses are not permitted. Applications for year 1 entry from those who have already commenced a Veterinary degree elsewhere will only be considered in the event of significant mitigating circumstances.

Applicants who have previously registered on and failed a course will not normally be reconsidered for admission to the same course. Applications will not be accepted from anyone who has previously been a student at the RVC and has had their registration as a student of the RVC terminated for academic/non-academic disciplinary offences. Any such applications that are received will be rejected without consideration.

An applicant who has already obtained an award will only be admitted to a programme at the same level which the RVC has judged to be sufficiently different from that already completed.

Applying with incomplete qualifications

We appreciate that most applicants will want to apply to the RVC whilst in their final year of study and welcome applications with pending qualifications. All incomplete qualifications (including those that do not impact our entry requirements) must be completed and awarded by 31 August in that Admissions cycle, even if the application is for deferred entry. If an applicant cannot fulfil this requirement, then their application will be unsuccessful, and they will be required to reapply in the year in which they will complete their studies.

Where a qualification is in progress this should be listed on the appropriate application form. Where an applicant is taking Level 3 qualifications (A-level and equivalent), the RVC will normally require a predicted grade to be submitted by an appropriate teacher or tutor. Where an applicant is studying at degree level or above, we will normally request a recent transcript to determine an applicant's progress towards meeting our entry requirements.

If an applicant has started a qualification but has not completed it and does not intend to complete it, this should still be listed on their application, with a clear indication that it will not

be completed. Other than transfer applications, as outlined above, we would not normally consider an application from an applicant who is partway through another degree, except in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the applicant should clearly explain, either as a part of their application or by separate email to the Admissions Office, why they have not or do not intend to complete their course.

Deferred Entry

The RVC welcomes applications from students to taught programmes who wish to undertake a 'gap year' and therefore wish to apply for entry in the following year.

Applicants who apply for deferred entry will be considered using the same criteria as applicants for the current year. The applicant (unless applying through the RVC Early Acceptance Scheme – see below) will be expected to adhere to the relevant application and decision deadlines during the admissions cycle in which they apply. Requests for deferral once an application has been submitted must be made in writing and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Offers of a deferred place will not normally be made in Clearing unless the applicant meets the standard published entry requirements for the course.

Applicants who apply for deferred entry will be contacted in the Spring prior to their entry and will be expected to reconfirm their wish to accept a place, otherwise their application may be withdrawn and offered to another candidate.

Applicants will normally only be permitted to defer for one year. If an applicant wishes to defer for a second year, they will normally be required submit a new application.

Deferred Entry via the RVC Early Acceptance Scheme

The RVC collaborates with a small number of institutions (see below) to facilitate an early acceptance scheme for entry to our Veterinary Medicine degrees.

Where an applicant fulfils the academic and work experience requirements agreed with the partner institution, they will be invited to interview during their penultimate year of study. Applicants under this scheme will be considered using the same interview threshold as applicants for the current year. If, based on their interview, an applicant is eligible for an offer, they will receive an offer for deferred entry, subject to fulfilling our entry requirements on completion of their study. In such cases the applicant will be unable to fulfil the offer in the current admissions cycle and therefore will be permitted to carry their offer over to the following cycle.

Applicants through this scheme will normally only be permitted to hold the deferred offer for one year and will not normally be considered for entry deferred to the year after the completion of their studies. If the applicant is unable to complete their studies in time or wishes to start in subsequent years, they will normally be required to submit a new application.

The Early Acceptance Scheme is only available to applicants studying at an institution with which the RVC holds an agreed partnership. These institutions can be found listed below:

California State Polytechnic, Pomona
Western Kentucky University

Selection Processes

The RVC welcomes applications from students who hold a wide range of qualifications, both traditional and non-traditional. Applications are considered on a holistic basis with the entire application being considered when deciding whether to offer an applicant a place.

All applications will be considered in line with the RVC's Equal Opportunities Policy and all decisions will be made in accordance with this Policy.

Communication from/with the RVC

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they complete any requested documents and/or provide any relevant information by any deadlines requested. Failure to fulfil any such requests may result in the application being unsuccessful.

The RVC uses email as the primary method for contacting applicants about their application. Emails may be sent from either admissions@rvc.ac.uk or myapplication@rvc.ac.uk and applicants are strongly encouraged to take the necessary steps to ensure emails from these addresses do not end up in spam or junk inboxes, as the RVC cannot accept responsibility for any applications that are unsuccessful as a result of missed information or deadlines.

Undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees

All applications will be considered on an equal basis, against criteria which will be determined at the beginning of the admissions year. When assessing the academic suitability and potential of applicants to undergraduate and postgraduate taught (excluding internships and residencies) courses, we will consider the following information, as provided on the application form and supplementary work experience form, where applicable:

- Achievement in awarded qualifications.
- Predicted achievement in qualifications which are currently being studied.
- Work experience completed (where applicable).
- Personal/supporting statement(s).
- Reference(s).

Contextual data on school attended and HE participation (POLAR4) is used as a part of the selection process for our undergraduate courses. Due to the nature of the course, additional selection methods are used for the Gateway course to ensure that applicants meet the required widening participation criteria.

Where a course requires applicants to attend for interview, this will be published on our website and, for undergraduate courses, the UCAS website.

Internships (PGDip VCP) and Residencies (MVetMed)

When assessing the academic suitability and potential of post graduate clinical training programme applicants, we will consider the following information, as provided on the application form and at interview, where applicable:

- Eligibility for membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
- Personal/supporting statement.
- Reference(s).
- Relevant clinical experience.
- Knowledge of the subject area (MVetMed).
- Discipline-specific technical skills (MVetMed).
- Research experience (MVetMed).
- Completion of a rotating internship programme or equivalent experience (MVetMed).

Postgraduate Research degrees

The policy relating to the admissions of postgraduate research degree candidates can be found within the Code of Practice for Research Degrees located on the Academic Quality, Regulations & Procedures pages of the RVC website under 'Code of Practice' via the following link:

<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/about/the-rvc/academic-quality-regulations-procedures#panel-doctoral-programmes-research-degrees>

The Code of Practice should be read as well as this Policy.

Offers

Offers made to applicants will normally be in line with the standard published offer for that course and may not vary significantly from this. Varying levels of offer may be made to take account of individual circumstances, where an applicant is unable to achieve the standard published offer.

All applicants who are successful in gaining an offer of a place at the RVC will be notified of this, in writing (by either email or letter). This represents the formal offering of a place, and a legal contract is formed between the applicant and the RVC on the basis of the terms and conditions of the offer. Applicants who are made an offer of a place will be given a deadline by which to meet the conditions of offer. In the event the applicant does not meet their conditions by the date stated it may not be possible to hold their offer of a place open.

All offers are made subject to Occupational Health (OH) clearance and applicants will not be permitted to enrol with the RVC if they have not completed the OH process and been cleared as fit to study. Applicants will be sent a questionnaire, from the RVC's OH provider, during the admissions process, once they have firmly accepted an offer of a place.

If the RVC is unable to make an applicant an offer of a place on their chosen course, it may be possible to make an offer on a similar alternative course. This may happen at both the initial offer stage and at 'Confirmation' once results are known. If this is the case a change

of course offer will be made, and the applicant will be notified of this.

Applicants who fail to meet their conditions of offer by a small margin may be considered at 'Confirmation' subject to available space on the course, once those who have met their offer have been accepted. Applicants who fail to achieve the RVC's minimum entry requirements will not normally be accepted (see entry requirements).

The RVC may consider undergraduate applicants with qualifications that are lower than the published standard entry requirements at 'Clearing', should a course still have vacancies. Applicants who fail to meet the RVC's minimum entry requirements will not normally be accepted at 'Clearing' (see entry requirements).

Interviews

Where a course requires an interview as a part of the selection process this will be detailed on our website and the UCAS website (if applicable) at the start of the admissions cycle for that given year.

Where an interview is required for the course, arrangements will be made for international students and those students who are not currently resident in the UK. Interviews for the Veterinary Medicine courses will normally be held in North America and Asia, in addition to the UK, and applicants resident in these locations will normally be expected to attend in person. Where an applicant has mitigating circumstances which mean they are unable to attend in person, interviews will be conducted either online or by telephone, where appropriate. In some cases, legal or regulatory requirements may mean this option is not available. All applicants to a course will be interviewed in the same format, irrespective of when and where they are interviewed.

Where an interview is required to determine suitability for a course, the following will be adhered to:

- The interviewer(s) will have received appropriate training on conducting fair and effective recruitment and selection processes and the objectives and aims of the RVC's interview processes.
- The interview will be conducted in accordance with the RVC's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- All applicants will be assessed against a standard set of criteria and assessment forms will be completed for each candidate.

The RVC will provide applicants with an indication of likely interview dates via our website at the beginning of each admissions cycle, although such dates are subject to change.

Applicants will normally be given at least two weeks' notice of their interview date although there are occasions where this may not be possible. If an applicant is unable to attend on the date provided, reasonable steps will be taken to rearrange the interview and where this will not be possible (e.g., if they are invited to attend the final interview date for the year), this will be made clear to the applicant. Due to the competitive nature of the courses, it will not normally be possible to rearrange an interview more than once.

Where an applicant has applied to more than one of our Veterinary Medicine degrees (Gateway to Veterinary Medicine, BVetMed, BVetMed with Intercolated Year or Accelerated Veterinary Medicine), they will only be called to interview once. Interviews for these courses are skills and attributes based and therefore are the same across all courses. Where an applicant has applied to more than one course, their interview score will be allocated to each course application. Each application will be considered independently and against the scores of other interviewees for that course, except for the BVetMed and BVetMed with Intercolated Year. The BVetMed and BVetMed with Intercolated Year are admitted to the same cohort and therefore applications to both courses are considered within the same applicant pool.

Where an applicant has applied to both veterinary nursing degrees they will only be called to interview once. In such instances the applicant's interview performance will be considered against both courses and in comparison to the other applicants to each course.

If an applicant fails to respond to an invitation to interview, their application will normally be withdrawn. In the event an applicant fails to attend their interview they will not normally be offered a second date, unless they provide evidence of mitigating circumstances that

prevented them from attending.

If an applicant is invited to the final interview date of the year and is prevented from attending due to circumstances outside of their control (for example, unexpected hospitalisation), an alternative interview will be offered, where possible. If this is not possible or the applicant is unable to attend the alternative, they will be offered the opportunity to reapply in the following year without penalty. On receipt of the application, they will be offered a guaranteed interview, subject to meeting the published entry criteria. Such provision will only apply where the applicant had committed to attending but was prevented from doing so and evidence to support this will be required. Holidays, attendance at other interview days or similar circumstances will not be accepted.

Where an applicant requires any adjustments or special arrangements at interview, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the Admissions Office, upon receipt of an invitation to interview, to discuss these further. Arrangements and/or adjustments can only be made following discussions with the applicant and, where applicable, the RVC's Disability Officer and cannot be made solely on the basis of information provided during the application stage. The RVC reserves the right to request additional documentation in support of an adjustment request, such as a Special Educational Needs (SEN) assessment. Where the interviewing course is a professional course, applicants should be aware that there may be limitations to adjustments that can be made.

The RVC does not routinely refund the costs applicants may incur when travelling to an interview. If refunds are available this will be made clear when applicants are invited to an interview.

The RVC reserves the right, in the case of highly qualified international applicants, to waive the requirement of an interview where it is logistically problematic to conduct.

Arrangements for Applicants who are under 18

The majority of students at RVC are 18 or above, and the academic life and social environment of the RVC reflects this. However, we recognise that some individuals who have already met the entry requirements for the programme are in a position to commence their university studies at a younger age.

The RVC strongly recommends that applicants who will be under 17 years of age on entry consider carefully whether they would be able to benefit fully from the educational and social opportunities which are on offer.

Applicants who will be under 18 years of age on the published start date of the programme, and their parents and guardians, must complete an Under 18 Agreement as a condition of offer which confirms:

- that they understand the nature of the RVC and the programme, the circumstances in which the individual would be studying and living, and the limitations of the RVC's supervisory role.
- that the contractual arrangements for the individual to study at the RVC are underwritten by a qualified person of adult status.
- that arrangements would be in place to support the individual in an emergency, including the existence of a qualified person in the UK willing to act as guardian.
- that the individual will obey the restrictions that English law places on minors.

Applicants with Criminal Convictions

Our Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Nursing degrees both lead to qualification in professions which fall under the Notifiable Occupations Scheme. All veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses must disclose any caution or conviction, including absolute and conditional discharges or adverse findings, whether in the UK or overseas (except for minor offences excluded from disclosure) to the RCVS upon registration and any new convictions annually. Veterinary surgeons must also disclose any spent convictions.

In line with RCVS protocols, a part of the admissions process, all applicants to the Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Nursing courses will be required to declare any relevant criminal convictions to the RVC. Relevant criminal convictions are defined as: those convictions for offences against the person, whether of a violent or sexual nature, and convictions for offences involving unlawfully supplying controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking. Applicants to Veterinary Medicine must also disclose any spent convictions.

Applicants will be required to provide this information as a condition of their offer. They will not be required to provide this before receiving an offer although may contact us, should they wish to discuss their situation prior to application.

Any applicant who declares a criminal conviction as a part of the admissions process will be asked to provide further information about the offence(s). The declaration will then be assessed by a panel relevant to the course they have applied to, which will be convened by the Head of Admissions. The panel will consider whether the applicant will be able to practise in the profession upon successful completion of the course and guidance may be sought from the RCVS.

Applicants to our other courses will not be required to provide information about any criminal convictions they may have for the purpose of admission to that course.

Fraudulent and Misleading Applications

The RVC reserves the right to cancel any application found to contain fraudulent or misleading information. In the event that an offer of a place has been made, the offer will be withdrawn. Should an applicant omit any relevant information from their application, the RVC reserves the right to treat this as a fraudulent application and thus cancel the application and withdraw any offer of a place.

Where the RVC is notified that an applicant has been highlighted under the UCAS similarity detection service, their application will continue to be assessed under the standard assessment process. Such applicants will be contacted and advised of the serious nature of plagiarism and a note will remain on file, but no further action will be taken.

Applications from postgraduate students that are found to be plagiarised will be treated as fraudulent. Such applications will be cancelled, and any offer of a place withdrawn.

Applicants will normally be asked to provide evidence of their qualifications, as stated on their application form, at either interview or enrolment. This requirement will be waived if their qualifications have been previously verified by either UCAS or VMCAS. Any applicant who is unable to produce evidence of their qualifications when requested will not be

permitted to enrol.

If a student is subsequently found to have gained their place at the RVC on the basis of fraudulent information their registration will be declared void and they may be subject to the RVC's disciplinary processes.

Subsequent applications from anyone previously found to have submitted fraudulent information to the RVC will not be accepted, and such applications will be rejected.

Use of AI in Personal, Supplementary and Supporting Statements

The RVC recognises that AI tools can be useful to applicants when writing personal and supplementary statements and can be beneficial in providing a starting base and structure. We do, however, expect all elements of an application to be the applicant's own work and applicants are required to confirm this as a part of their declaration when they submit their application. As such, any personal or supplementary statement that is largely or completely generated using AI software would be considered as plagiarised and we reserve the right to treat this as a fraudulent application and thus cancel the application and withdraw any offer of a place.

