

# Top 10 careers by Yr. 11

## No.5 Veterinary Surgeon

The work of a vet includes:

- diagnosing and treating animal diseases and injuries with medicine and surgery
- advising on animal health and welfare, and on breeding
- carrying out research into scientific and medical problems affecting animals
- managing a business, if they run their own practice.

Most vets work in private practice; others work for the Government, research bodies, charities or in industry.

### Education and training

To be a registered vet, you must have a degree in veterinary science or veterinary medicine approved by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS). High-grade A levels in science subjects (usually including chemistry and biology) are required for entry. Some alternative qualifications may be considered. There are some preparatory courses for those without the normal entry requirements.

### What it takes

Vets need to be:

- unsentimental, but dedicated to the care and welfare of animals
- scientific, with particular knowledge of biology and chemistry
- self-confident and highly motivated
- prepared to work unsocial hours and to travel
- good at watching for different signs in animals' behaviour and alert to signs of abuse
- good at dealing with people and working in a team
- physically fit
- able to run a business.

### Prospects

Newly qualified graduates are required to complete the RCVS Professional Development Phase, and all practising vets are expected to undertake continuing professional development in order to keep their skills and knowledge up to date. Graduates of veterinary science/medicine can undertake further postgraduate studies. Holding relevant postgraduate qualifications and fulfilling various other criteria can lead to gaining RCVS advanced practitioner and RCVS specialist status.

### Pay

Most graduates can expect to have a sizeable student loan to pay back, once they are settled in paid employment. The starting salary for new vets varies from employer to

employer, but the average is approximately £30,000. Experienced vets can earn up to around £70,000. Benefits can include a car and perhaps accommodation.

### **For further information**

**Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)** - tel: 020 7222 2001. For careers information, see:

[www.rcvs.org.uk/education/i-want-to-be-a-vet](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/education/i-want-to-be-a-vet)

**VETNET LLN, the National Lifelong Learning Network for Veterinary and Allied Professionals** is an association aiming to create opportunities for students on vocational courses to enter higher education. The website has a link to the **Cave** (Courses in Animal and Veterinary Education) website that provides information on careers within the animal and veterinary sector, and a database of courses:

[www.vetnetlln.ac.uk](http://www.vetnetlln.ac.uk)

Lots of useful information and advice on becoming a vet can be found at:

[www.tobeavet.com](http://www.tobeavet.com)

*Getting into Veterinary School* - published by Trotman, part of Crimson Publishing, £14.99.