





**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
**VETERINARY MEDICAL STUDENTS HANDBOOK**  
**VetST PARTS IA & IB**

CONTENTS	Page
<b>Introduction -</b>	
Veterinary Medical Education in Cambridge	1
Aims of the First Two Years of your Veterinary Education	2
<b>Duties -</b>	
Duties as a Student Vet	3
Code of Conduct	4-5
<b>Course -</b>	
Course Outline	6
Course in Detail	7-9
Course Organisers	10
Study Skills	11
Programme Outcomes	12
Attendance	13
Assessment and Exams (Overview and Break-Down)	14-16
Costs	17-18
Feedback and Representation	19
Cambridge Culture (Colleges, Societies)	20
<b>Support -</b>	
Academic Support	21
Non-Academic Support	22-23
Veterinary Student Register Form	24

## **Veterinary Medicine at Cambridge: The First Two Years**

*Welcome to Cambridge, and congratulations on gaining a place to study Veterinary Medicine. This is the beginning of an exciting and challenging time: going to university, perhaps leaving home for the first time and embarking on a demanding course which will lead you to a qualification in a highly respected profession.*

*This handbook provides a general introduction to the Cambridge veterinary course for students starting their course in October 2021 and covers mainly the first two years.*

*Dr Holly Canuto*

*Director of Education (MedST and VetST)*

# Introduction

## **Aims of the First Two Years of Your Veterinary Education**

Our ever-increasing knowledge of biology, physics and chemistry provides the fundamental underpinning to the practise of veterinary medicine. The first two years of your veterinary training are designed not only to give you a thorough knowledge of that science base, but also a level of understanding that allows you to apply this knowledge to problem solving in your career.

The clinical curriculum at Cambridge builds on the pre-clinical curriculum. You will need to draw on biochemical knowledge to understand the metabolic diseases of cattle and sheep, physiological knowledge as you monitor overnight a dog experiencing renal failure in the intensive care unit, and neurophysiological/anatomical knowledge when explaining the uncontrolled twitching in the hind leg of a thoroughbred horse.

In addition to technical skills, other skills including communication and animal handling are essential for a veterinarian. We expect you to practise and develop these skills through supervisions arranged by your College and through Extra-Mural Studies (EMS). Do make the most of supervisions - they are not just teaching sessions but active learning sessions, and learning requires self-expression.

Although most of the teaching that you receive during years one to three is under the supervision of the Faculty Board of Biology, working through the Director of Education for the Medical Sciences Tripos, MedST, and Veterinary Sciences Tripos, VetST, (Dr Holly Canuto), in the School of the Biological Sciences it is the Faculty Board of Veterinary Medicine, and the Director of Teaching at the Veterinary School (Prof Alun Williams) which is formally responsible for overseeing professional aspects of the veterinary curriculum. Holly and Alun work closely together to ensure co-ordination between the Tripos (science degree) and VetMB (professional degree) requirements. The overall six-year course is overseen by the Veterinary Education Committee whose membership includes representatives of both the above Faculties.

# Duties

## Duties as a Student Vet

### Fitness for Practice, Health and Conduct: Guidance for Veterinary Students

As members of the University, veterinary students are subject to the statutory provisions of University Discipline as set out in the *Statutes and Ordinances* (<https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/pdfs/2020/ordinance02.pdf>). In addition, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) and the University expect all veterinary students to behave in a manner appropriate to their future role as veterinarians.

The University has agreed a Code of Conduct for veterinary students to guide you during your studies. The Code of Conduct, which details the conduct expected of you, together with some guidance notes, is printed on the next page.

Veterinary students are required to confirm their acceptance of the University's Veterinary Student Code of Conduct and of the rules to be observed by veterinary students by signing the Veterinary Student Register form. A copy of this document is included at the back of this handbook, serving as a reminder of the standards you should follow. At the start of the course you will be issued a copy to sign and hand in. Please read this carefully before you sign it; the RCVS expects qualified veterinary surgeons, and veterinary students, to conduct themselves in full accordance with what they have signed.

It is important that you are aware that students whose health or conduct may lead them to be a risk to patients, clients or Extra-Mural Studies (EMS) placement providers, or who breach the Code of Conduct for other reasons, may be removed temporarily or permanently, from the Veterinary Student Register. They may not be permitted to enter VetMB examinations leading to the award of the VetMB degree and registration with the RCVS. The RCVS requires veterinary graduates to confirm that they have "no convictions, cautions or other adverse findings" at the point of registering with RCVS as a qualified veterinary surgeon.

All University and College staff, and fellow veterinary students, have a duty, in the public interest, to report matters that may affect a student's fitness to practise, to the Director of Teaching in the Department of Veterinary Medicine. Matters may be referred if they concern poor academic progression, serious conduct issues, or low-level conduct issues that continue over a long period. Health concerns will not normally require referral unless there are serious concerns over fitness to practise, but will be referred under other circumstances, where students have agreed to disclosure. Students are strongly encouraged to disclose health concerns to their College Tutor, Director of Studies and to the Director of Teaching at the vet school, so that support to aid learning can be provided.

# Duties

## Code of Conduct

<b>Veterinary Student Code of Conduct and Guidance</b>
<p><b>Respect others: clients, professionals, teachers and fellow students</b> <i>Treat others politely and considerately, respect their views and the animals under your care.</i></p> <p><b>Guidance note</b> In all your dealings with, or in relation to clients, teachers and colleagues, act without any discrimination, whether on grounds of age, colour, disability, gender, illness, marital status, national or ethnic origins, nationality, perceived economic worth, race, sexual orientation, social status, religious or philosophical belief.</p>
<p><b>Be an effective and considerate communicator</b> <i>Always make clear that you are a student and not a qualified vet; be aware of your limitations and do not exceed your ability when giving information to clients. Understand accept and agree to be bound by the principle of confidentiality of patient data and also of information concerning staff and students.</i> <i>Ensure that you can be easily contacted by University and Hospital Staff and always reply promptly to all communications. Do not use mobile electronic devices to store patient information. Do not post any images of clients' animals on outward-facing social media unless you have obtained, in writing, their explicit, informed consent and then only for the exact purposes to which they have agreed.</i></p> <p><b>Guidance note</b> Contribute to the review of teaching by completing feedback forms as requested by Course Organisers, and by reporting difficulties as they arise through the appropriate channels. Do not discuss clients or their animals with other students or professionals outside the clinical setting, except anonymously. When recording data or discussing cases outside the clinical setting, ensure that clients and patients cannot be identified by others. Do not use mobile electronic devices – cameras, mobiles, discs, data-sticks etc. to store patient images or other information. While using mobile phones to take pictures of patients/lesions to then download them to the patient file is permitted, these images should then be deleted from your phone. <b>Never</b> use E-mail, social networking sites, 'Blogs', 'Twitter', 'Facebook' etc. to share information about clients or patients with others – this is a disciplinary offence (see RCVS ruling; Vet Rec 2019; 184: 538).</p>
<p><b>Abide by rules and policies, follow procedures and guidelines</b> <i>You must be aware of and comply with the rules, policies (including health and safety), procedures and guidelines of the University, Colleges, Queen's Veterinary School Hospital and Extra-Mural Studies (EMS) placements.</i></p> <p><b>Guidance note</b> Comply with rules and procedures laid down by the Director of Education (Medical and Veterinary), in the Faculty of Biology, Director of Teaching in the Department of Veterinary Medicine, General Practitioner in extra mural studies, Head Nurse or their deputies. Be in attendance for the hours as directed by them and as required to gain experience of emergency situations. As veterinary surgeons you will have to make decisions not to go to places at the times you would like because of your clinical duties. You have a responsibility to yourself, your financial sponsors and your future patients to complete your rotations and EMS placements. Comply with appropriate current and any new health-testing requirements. Be aware of potential zoonotic infections and comply with control procedures.</p>
<p><b>Be open and honest</b> <i>Do not break the law. Never threaten violence, act violently towards others or act dishonestly.</i></p> <p><b>Guidance note</b> Just one criminal conviction could jeopardise your career prospects in veterinary medicine. Do not cheat in examinations: cheating, at any level, destroys trust and those who cheat may also lie and be unfit for veterinary practice.</p>

# Duties

Inform the Director of Teaching in the Department of Veterinary Medicine immediately if you are involved in any University or police investigation which may lead to charges being brought; concealment of involvement in a drunken brawl that may lead to prosecution may be viewed as an even greater offence than the incident itself.

## **Take care of your appearance**

*Your appearance, personal hygiene and demeanour should always be modest and reasonably conventional.*

### **Guidance note**

The appearance of a veterinary student or veterinary practitioner should not be such as to potentially affect a client's trust in that person's veterinary judgement or standing. Always wear an identification badge and show your face so that you can be recognised by clients, teachers and staff. Headdress routinely worn for religious observance must not cover the face: facial expression is an important part of communication and showing your face also makes it easier for clients with a hearing impairment to hear you and/or lip-read.

When examining patients in any clinical setting, observe the appropriate clinical dress code as laid down for the establishment or placement in which you are working.

## **Take action at an early stage when any problem arises**

*Inform the Director of Teaching at the Department of Veterinary Medicine or a College Tutor immediately if you become aware of any problem (personally or in others) that may put the health or wellbeing of clients or their animals at risk.*

### **Guidance note**

Veterinary Medicine is a demanding profession and, at times, all veterinary students are subject to stress and anxiety; emotional problems and psychiatric conditions such as depression and eating disorders are not uncommon; do not hesitate in seeking support (see Confidential Sources of Help & Advice) as the earlier a problem is addressed, the greater the likelihood of a successful outcome.

Seek advice if you think a veterinary surgeon or colleague has behaved in a way that suggests that he or she is not fit for practice. Examples of such behaviour include:

- making serious or repeated mistakes in diagnosing or treating a patient's condition
- not examining patients properly or responding to reasonable requests by owners for treatment for their animals
- misusing information about patients
- treating patients without properly obtaining the owner's consent
- posting pictures, information or comments about farmers, clients or their animals on social media sites
- behaving dishonestly in financial matters, or in dealing with clients, patients, or research
- making improper advances towards clients
- misusing alcohol or drugs

## **Do not abuse drugs and alcohol**

### **Guidance note**

Abuse of alcohol and other mind-altering substances may lead to behaviour that puts clients or patients at risk; problems associated with such abuse, eg: violent and aggressive behaviour, jeopardise your career. Never obtain or seek to obtain drugs that have not been properly prescribed, prescription or non-prescription, for yourself or others by any means.

# The Course

## Course Outline

Year of Study	What you will study	Subjects and Courses	Qualifications Obtained
Year 1 – VetST IA	Veterinary science knowledge	Veterinary relevant core scientific knowledge and skills	2nd VetMB, Tripos IA
Year 2 – VetST IB			2nd VetMB, Tripos IB
Year 3 - Part II	Part II course of specialised study	A wide range of courses and subjects (other Tripos courses are also available).	BA
Years 4 - 6	Clinical veterinary studies in Cambridge	Clinical veterinary medicine, leading to the development of skills and knowledge in a range of specialities and species	Final VetMB

### What Next?

At the end of the six years, students are awarded the degree of VetMB and thereby membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) – which entitles them to work as veterinary surgeons in the UK, EU, (Brexit terms allowing) South Africa, Australasia and other countries with which RCVS has a specific agreement. Many of our graduates go into clinical practice but many also go on to further specialist study, work within academia, the pharmaceutical industry, work for government departments such as DEFRA, or work for charities such as RSPCA or PDSA.

# The Course

## The Course in Detail

Years 1 & 2 provide you with the knowledge of the animal body that underpins clinical work. You are also introduced to the basis of Veterinary Medicine.

### First Year

Core Science modules:

- **Veterinary Anatomy and Physiology (VAP)** – layout and function of body structures
- **Molecules in Medical Science (MIMS)** – chemical and molecular mechanisms underlying the function of the body
- **Histology and Homeostasis (HOM)** – mechanisms underlying communication/maintenance of a stable internal environment within the body

Clinical and Professional Strand modules:

- **Foundations of Evidence Based Practice (FEBP)** – basic concepts of epidemiology and biostatistics as tools for critical assessment of the quality of scientific evidence and inferences drawn from scientific data.
- **Principles of Animal Management (PAM)** – introduction to animal husbandry and nutrition including practical animal training.

#### **Principles of Animal Management:**

This course is designed to provide basic animal health/handling/nutrition teaching and to ensure that students obtain maximum benefit from their pre-clinical Extra-Mural Studies (EMS). The aims of the course are to provide you with an understanding of UK agriculture and the roles of veterinary surgeons within that industry. The course consists of lectures, seminars, practicals and computer assisted learning (CAL) packages available from veterinary school's website to use at your own convenience. The course will highlight some of the risks of working with animals and on farms. The animal handling practicals will be held at the Department of Veterinary Medicine, the University Farm and at the Milton Campus of the University of West Anglia. Transport to the latter two will be provided.

**Attendance at a Health and Safety briefing given at the beginning of your first term and related to risks of working on farms is compulsory. Failure to attend will mean that you will not be permitted to undertake EMS.**

**Documentary evidence of satisfactory attendance at all the animal handling practical sessions in the first term must be provided before you can sit the Principles of Animal Management exam.**

**Following training, satisfactory evidence of animal handling practical skills must be demonstrated before you can undertake pre-clinical EMS**

### Second Year

Core Science modules:

- **Mechanisms of Drug Action (MoDA)** – mechanisms of drug action upon the body
- **Biology of Disease (BOD)** – processes underlying disease and their effects on cells, tissues and organs
- **Veterinary Reproductive Biology (VRB)** – the structure and function of the reproductive system
- **Neurobiology and Animal Behaviour (NAB)** – the structure and function of the sense organs and central nervous system and their role in determining animal behaviour
- **Comparative Vertebrate Biology (CVB)** – the anatomy and biology of non-mammalian vertebrates and "exotic" mammalian species.

# The Course

Clinical and Professional Strand module:

- **Preparing for the Veterinary Profession (PfVP)** – introduction to aspects of the veterinary profession, professional ethics, communication skills, and the role of the veterinary surgeon in protecting human health. This course aims to give you an introduction to ethical issues encountered in professional practice, communicating effectively with clients, and the social and professional responsibilities of the vet within society (nationally and internationally) as you transition from academic preparation to practising within the profession.

## Third Year – Tripos Part II

An advantage of Cambridge is this year of specialist study choosing one of a wide range of subjects outside the typical veterinary medicine curriculum. Options vary from more science-related subjects such as Zoology, Pathology, Physiology, to less-science related subjects such as History and Philosophy of Science or Management Studies. At the end of this year, you receive a BA (Hons) degree. Your Director of Studies and the "Subjects Fair" in March of your second year will help you make the decision about what to study. If you are an affiliated student (who came to us already holding a science degree), you skip this year but still receive a BA(Ord) degree.

## The Clinical Veterinary Curriculum

The clinical training in the fourth and fifth year is an integrated teaching programme based on a matrix of modules covering medicine, surgery and breeding in three species-based themes (equine, farm animal, small animal) body and subject disciplines (e.g. surgery), alongside small-group practical work. The practical work is done on a rotational basis and deals with aspects such as clinical methods, performing post-mortems, radiography, clinical pathology and animal breeding, obstetrics and gynaecology. These practical sessions are supported by a Clinical Skills Centre to which students have 24/7 access. Regular formal assessment takes the form of modular exams at the end of each term, the aim being to encourage steady work and personal development; students need to pass all these modular exams (Final Veterinary Examination Part I) to be eligible to progress into final year.

The final year of the clinical course is a lecture-free 40 weeks consisting of small group rotational work in the clinics of the Department of Veterinary Medicine. There is an increasing emphasis on students taking responsibility for their learning and development, with case and client management under supervision. During this period, some of the rotations will take place during University vacations and some periods of Extra-Mural Studies (EMS) will be during University term time. Continuous assessment forms an important part of this rotational work and students must achieve a satisfactory level of performance in all their final year rotations before they are eligible to sit the Final VetMB Examination Part III that completes the course at the end of the final year. On passing this exam, students can automatically register as members of the **Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)**.

There is a proportion of student-selected ("elective") work in the clinical course which is carried out during the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> years of the course; students conduct a clinically oriented VetMB Research Project in a chosen area of and a 4-week tracking period of more in-depth exploration of a subject area after the Part II examinations. The VetMB Research Project is assessed within the Final Veterinary Examination Part III.

## Extra-Mural Studies

The RCVS require all veterinary students in UK veterinary schools to complete periods of animal husbandry-related and clinically-focussed Extra-Mural Studies (EMS), a minimum of **twelve weeks pre-clinical** and **twenty-six weeks clinical** EMS.

## The Course

At the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> year, there is an introductory lecture on farm safety – attendance at this lecture is compulsory for **all** students. Each student will be allocated a Veterinary School Clinical Supervisor (VSCS) who will advise on EMS, both in pre-clinical and clinical parts of the course. If you have not been contacted by your VSCS before the end of the second week of term please contact Katheryn Ayres ([kma28@cam.ac.uk](mailto:kma28@cam.ac.uk)). Your VSCS should meet with you at least once per term.

You will submit a report on visits to each farm and certificates from all placements to demonstrate your attendance. The pre-clinical submission deadline is by the end of the first week of Easter Term of 3rd year (2nd year for Affiliated students).

# The Course

## Course Organisers

### VetST Part IA (2021-22)

<b>Name of Course</b>	<b>Organiser (and Department)</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Histology	Prof. N. Brown Dr R. White (Physiology, Development and Neuroscience - PDN)	nb117@cam.ac.uk rw108@cam.ac.uk	34128 33840
Homeostasis (HOM)	Prof. D.A. Giussani (PDN)	dag26@cam.ac.uk	33894
Foundations of Evidence Based Practice (FEBP)	Dr A. Swift (Public Health and Primary Care)	aks76@medschl.cam. ac.uk	36586
Molecules in Medical Science (MIMS)	Dr M. de la Roche	mad58@cam.ac.uk	46853
Principles of Animal Management (PAM)	Dr G. Pearce (Veterinary Medicine)	gpp28@cam.ac.uk	37678
Veterinary Anatomy and Physiology (VAP)	Dr D. Bainbridge (PDN)	db125@cam.ac.uk	33799

### VetST Part IB (2021-22)

<b>Name of Course</b>	<b>Organiser (and Department)</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Biology of Disease (BOD)	Dr A. Kelly (Pathology)	apk23@cam.ac.uk	33591
Comparative Vertebrate Biology (CVB)	Dr K. Franze (PDN)	kf284@cam.ac.uk	33761
Mechanisms of Drug Action (MODA)	Dr P. Miller (Pharmacology)	pm676@cam.ac.uk	61267
Neurobiology and Animal Behaviour (NAB)	Dr H. Matthews Dr S. Edgley (PDN)	hrm1@cam.ac.uk sae1000@cam.ac.uk	33803 33757
Preparing for the Veterinary Profession (PfVP)	Prof A. Williams (Veterinary Medicine)	aw510@cam.ac.uk	37640
Veterinary Reproductive Biology (VRB)	Dr D. Bainbridge (PDN)	db125@cam.ac.uk	33799

# The Course

## Study Skills

University is not like school. There are significant differences between the way you were taught at school and the way you will learn at University, and sometimes you may feel confused by the transition. In order to help you with this, you will be asked to attend a **Preparing for Lectures** session at the start of Michaelmas Term in your first year.

In place of relatively small school classes, information at University is delivered by means of lectures, which can be to groups of over 300 students. Most lecturers will issue hand-outs (some of which will be available online only, via the University's virtual learning environment, Moodle) and live recordings may become available for some lectures, but you will also need to develop your listening, concentration and note-taking skills to get the best out of the lecture experience. The material will be delivered quickly, and it is then up to you to understand and assimilate it; you are also expected to read further material on the subject matter. The information you are provided within lectures will be developed and set in context in practical classes. Although some practical classes may be large, you will work in small groups with demonstrators on hand to help and answer questions. These practical sessions are vital to your education and attendance is mandatory.

The College supervision system is there to complement the formal teaching and the onus is very much on you to make use of it, and to develop study and time management skills to help you assimilate, and master, the material. College supervisions will play a very important part in your education. Make them interactive and take full advantage of them to ask questions about any parts of the course you need help with.

You will need to use the internet to consult library catalogues, past examination papers, databases of scientific literature - and much, much more. The departments that deliver your teaching provide supplementary information on Moodle (a virtual learning environment), and the Faculty of Biology website (<https://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/VetST/Current>) also provides a lot of basic information. You need to be aware that the University takes plagiarism very seriously, and you can read more about this on the Faculty website (<https://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/exams/AllExams/plagiarism>).

# The Course

## Programme Outcomes

### **Preclinical Curriculum:**

#### **Knowledge and Understanding**

- Knowledge of the structure and function of healthy animals, which will allow students to recognise and understand abnormal and disease states of body systems;
- Sympathetic understanding of the handling, management and nutrition of domesticated animals and of their needs in health and disease;
- Knowledge of the principles and practice of preventive veterinary medicine and veterinary public health;
- Knowledge of reproductive physiology and genetics sufficient to understand breeding management in farm and companion animal species;
- Understanding of the principles underlying the pathogenesis, diagnosis, epidemiology and control of disease;
- Basic knowledge of the law, and of welfare and ethical codes affecting veterinary practice;
- Knowledge of the principles of surgical techniques;
- Basic knowledge and interpretation of diagnostic imaging (radiography and ultrasound), and basic introduction to advanced imaging techniques, e.g.: nuclear medicine, MRI;
- Basic clinical knowledge of veterinary pharmacology, pharmacy and toxicology;
- Basic knowledge of clinical pathology.

#### **Intellectual Skills**

- Basic skills in diagnostic problem solving, and in the formulation of treatment strategies.

#### **Practical Skills**

- Ability to handle and restrain animals safely.

#### **Transferable and Professional Skills**

- Understanding of scientific method, and an ability to apply basic scientific knowledge, sufficient to enable students to extend their knowledge of, and utilise future developments in, veterinary science;
- Basic communication skills.

### **Clinical Curriculum:**

#### **Intellectual Skills**

- Knowledge of techniques necessary to carry out under supervision common surgical procedures in domesticated animals, including anaesthesia of most species;
- Ability to employ clinical reasoning to draw up a rational list of differential diagnoses following investigation of disease;
- Ability to devise and carry out a treatment or management plan following clinical assessment of common medical problems.

#### **Practical Skills**

- Ability to take a clinical history from an owner;
- Ability to carry out a full clinical examination in all the main domestic species;
- Ability to dispense and administer drugs to animals;
- Ability to undertake basic clinical diagnostic problem solving;
- Ability to formulate disease treatment and prevention strategies.
- Ability to manage common obstetrical problems;
- Ability to perform intravenous catheterization and to take a blood sample;
- Ability to perform basic surgical techniques;
- Ability to perform basic diagnostic laboratory techniques.

#### **Transferable and Professional Skills**

- Capacity to communicate effectively with clients and with colleagues both in the veterinary profession and in other disciplines;
- Ability to work well as a member of a team;
- Capacity to undertake successfully an extended study of a topic and to communicate the results verbally and in writing.

# The Course

## Attendance

Diligent attendance is a requirement of the Faculty Board of Biology as you will need a record of diligent attendance to permit you to take the 2nd MB examinations. Attendance at practical classes and seminars (but not lectures) is recorded and, if your attendance at these classes falls below 80%, your progression in the course and professional future will be in jeopardy. The required attendance level for PAM included 100% attendance of animal handling classes and for PfVP, attendance at all seminars and practicals.

If there is a good reason why you are unable to attend a practical class then you must tell the appropriate Course Organiser and your Director of Studies or Tutor. In some cases it may be possible for you to do the practical at some other time. Organisers of practical classes will notify students and their Colleges if a student's attendance record is unsatisfactory.

As a student your timetable is likely to be very full. Most of the teaching in the first three years will be on the University's Downing Site with some lectures at the Babbage Lecture Theatre. If you haven't time to go to your College for lunch, undergraduates are welcome at the University Centre, which is at the end of Mill Lane.

Some lectures and seminars (e.g. some of the PfVP course) and practicals (e.g. PAM, PfVP) are delivered at the Veterinary School, a 10-12 minute cycle ride from the centre of Cambridge. There are a number of catering facilities adjacent to the veterinary school on the West Cambridge Site.

# The Course

## Assessment and Exams

Courses have been designed to allow students, wherever possible, to learn for themselves rather than being passive recipients of instruction. You will get far more out of your course, and are more likely to do well in your exams, if you regard university as an opportunity to study what interests you, rather than just learning a syllabus to pass an exam.

You will encounter two kinds of assessment:

**Formative** assessment is an informal, continuous review of progress. For example, you will receive extensive constructive feedback on your work in College supervisions.

**Summative** assessment is your formal end of year exams. The 2nd VetMB determines whether you are able to proceed to the clinical part of the course and the Tripos determines your class of BA qualification.

In each of the first and second year exams, there are three sections to the summative assessment. Section I involves one-hour theory exams based on the lecture material and consists of short notes or Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs). Section II involves one or two-hour practical exams based on practical material covered. In some subjects, these two sections are combined into a single exam. Sections I and II contribute to both the Tripos degree and the VetMB degree and because these 2nd VetMB exams constitute a professional qualification, you are expected to pass them by demonstrating a good knowledge and understanding of the full range of the subject material. Furthermore, you will be expected not merely to know this material but, more importantly, to understand it and apply that understanding to the solving of problems.

You must pass all 2nd VetMB courses to progress onto the clinical part of the course. If you do not pass one of the 2nd VetMB sections, you are allowed one further attempt in September. Students are permitted only these two attempts at 2nd VetMB examinations unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as illness or another good cause. If you require a further attempt, your College has to apply for this on your behalf to the Faculty Board of Veterinary Medicine.

In each subject exam, Section III involves two or three-hour exams consisting of essay questions from a wide range of topics. This last section only contributes (along with Section I and II marks) toward your Tripos qualification, not your professional VetMB. To do well in the Tripos, you will need to show a deeper understanding of the material, and to be able to marshal facts into coherent arguments. **You should remember you would be expected to know more than just enough to pass exams when working as an excellent professional veterinary surgeon!**

In addition to the main science courses, there are three courses: Principles of Animal Management, Introduction to the Scientific Basis of Medicine (both in 1<sup>st</sup> year) and Preparing for the Veterinary Profession (2<sup>nd</sup> year), which are only assessed for the 2nd VetMB and not Tripos.

Further details of these exams and how they relate to the course can be found in following examination summary tables and on the Faculty of Biology website: <https://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/exams/MedVetSTexams>

# The Course

## Year One Examination Summary

Course	Exam Paper Structure		Material Examined	Assessment		Exam format	Notes
Homeostasis (HOM)	Section I	1 h	Lecture material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	MCQs or Short Notes	Section I & III taken as a single 3 h paper
	Section II	2 h	Practical material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Practical questions (by MCQs)	
	Section III	2 h	Whole course		Tripes	Essay questions	
Molecules in Medical Sciences (MIMS)	Section I	1 h	Lecture material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	MCQs	Sections I & II taken as a single 3 h paper
	Section II	2 h	Practical material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Practical questions	
	Section III	2 h	Whole course		Tripes	Essay questions	
Veterinary Anatomy and Physiology (VAP)	Section I	1 h	Lecture material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	MCQs	Section I & III taken as a single 3 h paper
	Section II	2 h	Practical material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Practical questions (short notes and MCQs)	
	Section III	2 h	Whole course		Tripes	Essay questions	
Foundations of Evidence Based Practice (FEBP)	One paper	45 min		2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB		MCQs	
Principles of Animal Management (PAM)	One paper	1 h		2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB		MCQs	

**Note 1** Histology will be examined as part of the Homeostasis practical.

**Note 2** The regulations for VetST IA stipulate that each subject of the IA examination should carry the same marks.

# The Course

## Year Two Examination Summary

Course	Exam Paper Structure		Material Examined	Assessment		Exam format	Notes
Biology of Disease (BOD)	Section I	1 h	Lecture material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	MCQs	Section I & III taken as a single 3 h paper
	Section II	2 h	Practical material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Practical questions	
	Section III	2 h	Whole course		Tripes	Essay questions	
Mechanisms of Drug Action (MoDA)	Section I	1 ½ h	Lecture material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	MCQs	Sections I & III taken as a 3 ½ h paper
	Section II	2 h	Practical material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Practical questions	
	Section III	2 h	Whole course		Tripes	Essay questions	
Neurobiology and Animal Behaviour (NAB)	Section I	1 h	Lecture material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Short Answer Questions	Section I & III taken as a single 3 h paper
	Section II	1 h	Practical material	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Practical questions	
	Section III	2 h	Whole course		Tripes	Essay questions	
Veterinary Reproductive Biology (VRB)	Part I	1 ½ h	Whole course	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Steeple chase	
	Part II	1 ½ h			Tripes	Essay questions	
Comparative Vertebrate Biology (CVB)	Part I	1 ½ h	Whole course	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB	Tripes	Steeple chase	
	Part II	1 ½ h			Tripes	Essay questions	
Preparing for the Veterinary Profession (PfVP)	One paper	45 min	Whole course	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vet MB		MCQs and short answers	

**Note:** The regulations for VetST IB stipulate that the proportions in which marks achieved in each subject at IB contribute to the overall grade classification for that year's exams should be in the following proportions:

Biology of Disease 10

Comparative Vertebrate Biology 8

Neurobiology and Animal Behaviour 10

Veterinary Reproductive Biology 8

Mechanisms of Drug Action 10

# The Course

## Costs

In addition to standard living costs, vet students should expect to have to meet some extra costs. Estimated costs below are subject to change; **some costs may not apply this year, due to possible changes in how teaching will be delivered. Details and methods of payment for the below will be confirmed and announced in due course.**

- An announcement will be made in due course as to how to purchase the following items. If you do not manage to obtain a lab coat from the vet school, you must purchase one during the Molecules in Medical Science (MIMS) lab coat session.

Lab coat	£10.14
Wellington boots (with toe protector)	£13.27
Overalls (boiler suit)	£17.20
Waterproof trousers	£9.35
Dissection kit, gloves, safety glasses, loan of locker and key, loan of dog skeleton	£24.00
Veterinary Dissection Manual which includes course guides for Veterinary Anatomy and Physiology (1 <sup>st</sup> Year) and Neurobiology and Comparative Veterinary Biology (2 <sup>nd</sup> Year) - essentially to replace a text book of human or veterinary anatomy	£14.00

- The following items will be required later in the year:

University approved calculator (Casio FX991/FX115/FX570 or Texas Instruments BA II Plus / Texas Instruments BA II Professional)	£14.00
Electron micrographs (optional)	£2.00
EMS (preclinical) 12 weeks practical vacation experience with animals, particularly farm animals. BVA insurance cover at a cost of £39.00 per annum, will be met by the Veterinary School. You should enquire via your college's website, or your college tutor, about the availability of grants to support course-related travel and work experience.	Variable

### Additional Costs for Clinical Years

Fourth year students are expected to purchase the equipment items below from the Department's Stores Office for practical/clinical rotation work during term time and for EMS use in the vacations (please note that the Veterinary Department's Stores do not stock 'Yard Boots').

Locker padlock- (combination lock)	£7.52
Stethoscope (basic - many students purchase a higher quality one, and fob-watch for use in theatre, later in clinical course via Student Society)	£4.50
Digital thermometer	£5.40
6" scissors, curved on flat	£2.90
Spencer Wells forceps, 5"	£3.84
Pen torch	£1.58
Dog lead (red)	£1.43
Hoof pick	£0.69
Nail clippers, stainless steel (each)	£10.00
'Yard Boots' (steel toe-capped leather boots)	Purchase your own
EMS - 26 weeks required by RCVS - variable depending on chosen placements (Grants are available to assist with costs)	Variable
BVA insurance cover, at a cost of £42.00 per annum, will be met by the Veterinary School, for 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> year students	

In addition to the list above, students will be required to purchase white theatre shoes

# The Course

(~£22.68) and protective clothing to be worn in theatre (~£6.18) prior to starting their 6<sup>th</sup> year rotations.

Note: Printed handouts are not provided for lectures in some of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses, and are not provided by the vet school for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year course (unless students have a particular learning needs requirement for printed notes); materials for all lectures will be available on line. The Department of Veterinary Medicine has issued minimum specification guidelines for laptops that relates to the materials it provides: <https://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/VetST/Current/Freshers/studentdevicespec>

# The Course

## Feedback and Representation

### Student Feedback and Representation

Course Organisers will actively solicit opinions from you about the teaching you receive. We do change our teaching as a response to comments and suggestions made by previous students, and you owe it to those coming after you to respond to questionnaires, so that those responsible for organising the teaching know when something is right, and when something could be improved. When you complete a teaching questionnaire try to be honest, informative, and, if possible, helpful.

Course liaison committees have student representatives and it is at this level that most of the useful work is done in providing and contextualising feedback to those who teach from those who are learning.

The Faculty Board has student representatives, and we hope that some of you will wish to contribute through this means of discussion. The student elected to the Faculty Board from the medical and veterinary students also sits on the Veterinary Education Committee, which maintains an overview of Cambridge veterinary education from admission to qualification. There is also a Faculty Committee, the MVST Part I Committee, which oversees VetST IA and IB, and includes student representatives. Please feel free to take any thoughts you have about the course to any of your student representatives.

### Concerns about Other Students/Members of Staff

The Veterinary Student Code of Conduct requires students to 'take action at an early stage when any problem arises'. All veterinary students should seek advice from their College Tutor or Director of Studies if they think another veterinary student has behaved in such a way that suggests he or she is disrupting the studies of fellow students and/or whose attitudes, conduct or behaviour questions whether they are fit to practise as veterinary surgeons in a professional manner. Examples of such behaviour include:

- Behaviour, in whatever form, that adversely affects themselves or other students or staff;
- misusing information about clients;
- treating animals without properly obtaining consent;
- posting material about farmers, clients or their animals or other students' studies on social media sites without written permission;
- behaving dishonestly in financial matters, or in dealings with clients, or research;
- making sexual advances towards clients;
- misusing alcohol or drugs.

### Complaints about the Course

If you have problems with the organisation of a particular course, you should communicate this to the Course Organiser. You can also tell student representatives who sit on the management committee for the course to raise the problem on your behalf.

Problems with the teaching provided for you by your College should be raised with your Director of Studies, if that fails, with your Tutor or with the Senior Tutor.

### Complaints about Exams

Any complaints about the conduct or the results of examinations must be raised in the first instance with your College Tutor, not directly with the Examiners concerned. It is your Tutor's responsibility to advise on these matters. Cambridge exam rules and regulations make provision for cases of illness or other misfortune. If you encounter any such impediments to exam preparation, the sooner you inform your College Tutor the better. All liaison between a student and the central administration must be conducted through your College Tutor.

# The Course

## Cambridge Culture

### The Complementary Roles of the University and the Colleges

Cambridge is a collegiate university, and responsibility for your education is shared between the University and your College.

Within the University, the Faculty of Biology is responsible for organising your teaching for the first three years. You will undergo practicals and lectures from staff of six departments: Biochemistry; Genetics; Pathology; Pharmacology; Physiology, Development and Neuroscience (PDN) and Veterinary Medicine. Departments will provide course online handbooks for each of the courses you take, and these will include details of the arrangements for lectures and practical classes in that subject, and detailed guidance about the form and conduct of examinations. Much more information, especially on timetables, is available on the Faculty of Biology website and you should become accustomed to consulting this:

<https://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/VetST/Current>

This teaching will be augmented and enhanced by small-group teaching (Supervisions) organised by your College. These help with academic work, but also communication and writing skills. Your College Director of Studies will get to know you as an individual, and will organise the provision of Supervisions to support and enhance the formal teaching given by Departments. Your College Supervisors, Director of Studies and Tutor provide a unique pastoral network designed to support your studies at Cambridge.

### Student Societies

Within Cambridge there are societies organised by, and run for, veterinary students. Here are 'welcome' messages from two of them:

#### **Cambridge University Veterinary Society (CUVS):**

*CUVS is the Cambridge University Veterinary Society and we are the representative body of the vet students at Cambridge. We have a 17 strong committee composed entirely of students whose main role is to act as a platform for student opinion and a source of information, advice and entertainment.*

*Our many functions include: sitting on several committees around the vet school, arranging weekly talks on topics of veterinary interest, ordering vet school 'stash' and, most importantly, organising entertainments for you, the vet students! The committee will be introduced to you early on in your first term and one of you will even have the chance to become '1<sup>st</sup> year rep', so make sure you keep an eye out for emails and leaflets in your college pigeonholes to tell you more about it!*

#### **Cambridge University Veterinary Zoological Society (CUVZS):**

*Are you interested in working with exotic animals, zoo animals or wildlife? The Cambridge University Veterinary Zoological Society warmly welcomes all vet students to join our society and learn more about how to become an exotics vet. With fortnightly talks, weekend events and our annual symposium attended by vet students from all seven vet schools, CUVZS offers exciting opportunities to meet and learn from exotics, zoo and wildlife vets. Take a look at our website [www.cuvzs.com](http://www.cuvzs.com) for information on becoming a member and the latest events.*

# Support

## Academic Support

### Are you Having Difficulties Coping with the Demands of the Course?

Begin by asking your College Supervisor in the appropriate subject and your Director of Studies, but University lecturers can be approached if a problem remains unresolved and, in practical classes, demonstrators are on hand to deal with immediate queries. Problems with lectures and practical sessions can be raised with those who are lecturing or running a particular class.

### Are you on the Right Course?

If you start to have doubts about whether you still want to be a vet, talk to your Tutor and Director of Studies. Occasionally students realise, having embarked on a veterinary course, that it may not be right for them, but they have many options available. We will help you decide whether you should attempt to change courses, or whether it would be better for you to simply continue until you receive your Cambridge BA at the end of your third year – at that stage, you would have all the many career opportunities of any Cambridge science graduate.

Alternatively, some students decide that, even though they do not wish to enter clinical practice, completing the full six-year course will still be useful to them in their future career.

### The Medical and Veterinary Student Progress Panel

The College tutorial and pastoral system is supported by the Medical and Veterinary Student Progress Panel. The Panel maintains a general overview of medical and veterinary student progression throughout both the preclinical and clinical course at Cambridge and monitors the cases of students who, for one reason or another, may be having problems with the course. The Medical and Veterinary Student Progress Panel consists of senior members of the School of Biological Sciences, the School of Clinical Medicine and Department of Veterinary Medicine together with College tutorial representatives. **The committee is not a disciplinary body but is set up to provide support for students and Colleges.** Its basic remit is to ensure that students make timely and trouble-free progress through the course. See more at:

<https://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/exams/MedVetSTexams/monitor>

Prof. Alun Williams, Director of Teaching, Department of Veterinary Medicine

Tel: 01223 (3)37640

[aw510@cam.ac.uk](mailto:aw510@cam.ac.uk)

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

# Support

## Non-Academic Support

We understand that some members of the student body may encounter non-academic challenges – financial, health, emotional or family problems, for example – which can affect their progress on the course. There are a variety of sources of support for students within colleges, the wider university and externally.

### 1. Support within your College

Tutors, Director of Studies, Supervisors, Student Mentors, Nurse, Chaplains.

The central person in your pastoral support while at Cambridge is your Tutor, and they should usually be your first port of call with any problems you may have. This is partly because they will have training and experience in helping students, but also because they have a recognised role in the University. For example, if you have health problems which affect your performance in exams, it would be your Tutor who would be asked to write in your support. Similarly, if you wish to apply for additional funding for travel or hardship, that application would be made via your Tutor.

For all these reasons, even if you decide to seek help elsewhere (for example a self-referral to the University Counselling Service), you should inform your Tutor that you are doing so. Finally, if for some reason you do not feel happy discussing a particular issue with your allocated Tutor, you can speak to another Tutor at your college, or the Senior Tutor.

### 2. Support within the wider University

The University provides a wide range of support services, the main ones being:

- **Student wellbeing**

<https://www.studentwellbeing.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

- **Cambridge Nightline-Term time only (7pm-7am)**

Night-time listening support run by students for students

Tel: 01223 (7)44444

[email@cambridge.nightline.ac.uk](mailto:email@cambridge.nightline.ac.uk) / <http://cambridge.nightline.ac.uk/>

- **University Counselling Service**

Tel: 01223 (3)32865

[counsellingreception@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:counsellingreception@admin.cam.ac.uk) / <http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/>

- **Disability Resource Centre**

Tel: 01223 (3)32301

[disability@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:disability@admin.cam.ac.uk) / <http://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

- **Occupational Health Service**

Tel: 01223 (3)36594

[occhealth@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:occhealth@admin.cam.ac.uk) / <http://www.oh.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

- **CUSU Student Advice Service**

Tel: 01223 (7)46999

[advice@studentadvice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:advice@studentadvice.cam.ac.uk) / <https://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/support/advice/>

- **University Church Chaplain**

Tel: 01223 (7)41718

[chaplain@gsm.cam.ac.uk](mailto:chaplain@gsm.cam.ac.uk) / [www.cam.ac.uk/chaplaincies](http://www.cam.ac.uk/chaplaincies)

- **Breaking the silence – preventing harassment and sexual misconduct**

<https://www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk/>

# Support

## 3. Support outside the University

**For a comprehensive list of contacts and resources, see:**

<https://www.studentwellbeing.admin.cam.ac.uk/helpful-contacts-and-resources>

### **Free Help-lines**

#### **LifeCraft (7pm-11pm, 365 days a year)**

Confidential support service across  
Cambridgeshire

Tel: 0808 808 2121

<http://www.lifecraft.org.uk/lifeline>

#### **Samaritans (24/7, 365 days a year)**

Confidential help line

Tel: 116 123

[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Local branch-(10:30am-10:00pm)

Tel: 01223 364455

4 Emmanuel Road, Cambridge, CB1 1JW

## VETERINARY STUDENT REGISTER AGREEMENT JUNE 2021

If you have a difficulty with any element of this declaration, **please contact your College Senior Tutor** to discuss how this might be resolved.

- 1 I have read the following information:
  - The University's Veterinary Student Code of Conduct and explanatory notes<sup>i</sup>;
  - The University's Confidential Sources of Help and Advice<sup>ii</sup>.
- 2 I will comply with the rules and procedures laid down by the Faculty Boards of Biology and Veterinary Medicine;
- 3 I recognise that all information obtained about any patient or their owner during the course of my duties is strictly confidential, may not be divulged to anyone other than in a clinical context and may not be posted on any external social media without the explicit, written, informed consent of the owner;
- 4 I recognise that my conduct and dress when engaged in the care of patients and while undertaking Extra-Mural Studies will be appropriate to the status of a veterinary practitioner;
- 5 I will inform the Director Veterinary Teaching immediately if I am involved in any police investigation which may lead to charges being brought against me;
- 6 I will inform the Director of Veterinary Teaching immediately if I am no longer able to meet the requirements of this agreement or if I become aware of any change to my physical or mental health which may put at risk the health and well-being of patients or their owners;
- 7 I understand that the Fitness for Veterinary Practise Committee may share information about my registration with other bodies in the public interest and has the authority to remove my name, either temporarily or permanently, for failing to observe the Veterinary Student Code of Conduct or failing to progress academically;
- 8 I understand that I will remain on the Cambridge Veterinary Students' Register and observe the University's Veterinary Student Code of Conduct until I have:
  - completed the requirements of the clinical Veterinary course satisfactorily;
  - withdrawn from the veterinary course;
  - sat any Final Vet MB examination on three occasions without passing;
  - been suspended by the Fitness for Veterinary Practise Committee;
- 9 I understand that, if I fail to abide by this agreement and the Code of Conduct, I will be responsible for paying any reasonable costs arising from a review of my fitness for practice in the event that such review leads to me being found unfit for practice or fit for practice only on certain conditions;
- 10 I give my consent to the processing of my data by the University.

Student Name: ..... Witness Name: .....  
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Signature: ..... Signature: .....

Date: .....

*You will complete a copy of this form at your college. Please keep this copy for your records.*

<sup>i</sup> Available in your handbook and on the web at:  
[www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/VetST/Current/Handbook/Handbook](http://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/VetST/Current/Handbook/Handbook)

<sup>ii</sup> Available in your handbook and on the web at: [www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/VetST/Current/Handbook/Handbook](http://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/VetST/Current/Handbook/Handbook)