

# Veterinary school admissions in the United Kingdom: attracting students to veterinary careers to meet the expanding needs of the profession and of global society

F.M. Andrews

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2AF, United Kingdom

## Summary

Attracting students into a career in global veterinary medicine will be an uphill task if effort is focused only on students already at veterinary school. Most existing students will have made their career choice at a young age, probably based on a perception of the profession as it may have existed decades ago. The challenge for veterinary schools in the United Kingdom is to attract a broader range of applicants to the veterinary degree courses: applicants who have made a positive choice to become veterinarians because of the opportunities a veterinary qualification can offer for work in areas such as public health, food safety, conservation and global disease control and prevention in an era of climate change. This requires proactive recruitment, with careers materials aimed at students who may not traditionally have been attracted to the profession. This article describes the work that is being undertaken to develop such materials and widen access to the profession.

## Keywords

Diversity – Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons – Student admissions – Student recruitment – Veterinary careers – Veterinary school.

## Veterinary school applications: reversing declining numbers and a lack of diversity

As the statutory regulator for the veterinary profession in the United Kingdom (UK), the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) does not have a direct responsibility for the admission of veterinary students to universities, but in the public interest must ensure that universities admit students with the right aptitude and motivation to meet long-term needs. Under current UK legislation, once a student graduates with a veterinary degree approved by RCVS, s/he is entitled to register and practise in the UK. University admissions staff are therefore the initial

gatekeepers for the profession, and their decisions on whom and how they select have a long-term effect on the future composition of the profession, not only in terms of demographics, but also in terms of students' motivation to work in different areas. It is critical to recognise this 'Gatekeeper' role of the universities – there is no alternate route into the profession. If we are to influence the end point and ensure that there are veterinarians working in a range of different areas, we must influence the starting point in terms of who applies for veterinary school in the first place.

There is a popular myth in the UK that many thousands of students apply to veterinary school each year and that competition for places on the veterinary degree course is so fierce that it is hardly worth many students applying unless

they are academically exceptionally able. This myth is, unfortunately, promulgated not only by careers advisers, but also by some members of the profession. However, although it is true that admission to veterinary school does require good secondary school grades, there has been a suspicion that this myth has deterred some otherwise strong students from applying. The myth appears to have spread so widely through the British secondary school system that some students have been told by their teachers to consider other careers rather than risk rejection.

Unlike some other disciplines in the universities, veterinary schools have not needed to market themselves heavily in the past to attract applicants. Each individual veterinary school will typically receive around 1,000 good applications for about 100 places, so the picture appears bleak for the 900 applicants that they turn down, and the word has spread that the veterinary faculty is the most difficult to enter. What these individual perspectives have often overlooked is the fact that, seen at the national level, the ratio of applications to admissions in the UK is less healthy. Students can apply for up to four degree courses through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), the UK's central clearing house for university applications and, in any one year, it is mostly the same set of applicants who are applying to each university. There has therefore been some concern at the low ratio of applications to admissions nationally (there are just over 800 places available across 7 veterinary schools) and concern at the narrow demographic profile from which applicants tend to be drawn.

As far as the demographics are concerned, data from UCAS covering all veterinary science and agriculture-related courses, show a very limited profile in terms of ethnicity, with 96% of applications coming from white students (94% of the students admitted are white). This compares to 60% and 67% respectively for medicine and dentistry degrees. Twenty-six per cent of applications to medicine and dentistry degrees in 2007 were from students of Asian backgrounds (and Asian students accounted for 23% of admissions), compared to 0.6% (applications and admissions) for veterinary and related agricultural courses (Table I). Furthermore, most veterinary students currently come from professional and managerial family backgrounds.

Although the number of UK veterinary degree places available has increased (855 admitted in 2007 compared to 536 admitted in 1997), the number of boys applying and gaining places has remained fairly stable, with the additional places being taken up by girls. With more university places available, the question needs to be asked: why are boys not applying in similar numbers to girls, when roughly equal numbers are gaining the appropriate secondary school qualifications to apply? For entry to the degree programme, universities typically require two grade

**Table I**  
**Ethnic origin of students applying to veterinary science, agriculture, medicine and dentistry courses in the United Kingdom, 2007**

<b>(a) Applications and admissions to veterinary science, agriculture and related courses in the United Kingdom, 2007</b>				
<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>No. of applicants</b>		<b>No. of applicants accepted</b>	
Asian	27	(0.6%)	24	(0.6%)
Black	26	(0.6%)	24	(0.6%)
Mixed	66	(1.5%)	48	(1.3%)
Other	13	(0.3%)	10	(0.3%)
Unknown	51	(1.1%)	135	(4%)*
White	4,378	(96%)	3,539	(93.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,561</b>		<b>3,780</b>	

<b>(b) Applications and admissions to medicine and dentistry degrees in the United Kingdom, 2007</b>				
<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>No. of applicants</b>		<b>No. of applicants accepted</b>	
Asian	4,634	(26%)	1,867	(23%)
Black	902	(5%)	200	(2.5%)
Mixed	660	(4%)	287	(3.5%)
Other	470	(3%)	158	(2%)
Unknown	338	(2%)	138	(2%)
White	10,519	(60%)	5,523	(67%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,523</b>		<b>8,173</b>	

\* Figures are based on students' own declarations of ethnic origin. Some students will state their ethnic origin when they apply but may not declare it at a later stage when the 'accept' figures are calculated, hence the apparent discrepancy in these figures. Data extracted from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service statistical online enquiry service, as at 7 July 2008, ([www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk))

As and one B grade at 'A' level or its Scottish equivalent, to include at least two science subjects, normally Chemistry and/or Biology. A slightly higher percentage of girls sit Biology 'A' level examinations, although more boys than girls sit Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics. Girls slightly outperform boys in terms of achieving the highest A grade. In 2007, 20,210 boys sat Chemistry 'A' level, with 31.8% achieving grade A; 20,075 girls sat Chemistry, of whom 33% achieved the A grade (3). But only 328 boys from the UK applied for veterinary places in 2007, compared to 1,338 UK girls.

In 1996, there were 1,725 applications to the UK veterinary schools, from which a total of 536 were admitted – a ratio of applications to admissions of 3.22:1. In the years that followed, the number of UK veterinary degree places increased, but applications declined to a low of 1,410 in 2005 for 739 places. The new veterinary school at the University of Nottingham opened its doors in 2006, providing a boost to the number of

veterinary places available nationally. However, in 2006 the national applications to admissions ratio dropped further to its lowest point at 1.83:1 (Table II). Applications rose slightly in 2007, perhaps stimulated by greater student awareness of the new veterinary school but, at just over 2:1, the national ratio is still low and there is no room for complacency.

Ironically, this period of declining applications coincided with major social policy initiatives from the UK government to widen participation in higher education generally, particularly from those in lower socio-economic groups, as well as from black and minority ethnic (BME) students. In 2006, a review of the funding system in England allowed universities to start charging students higher tuition fees (1). A number of professions expressed concerns that increasing tuition fees would inhibit the government's policy of widening participation and could discourage students from lower income groups from applying for professional degrees, which generally take longer to complete than standard bachelors' degrees. In response, the then Department for Education and Skills (later renamed the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills [DIUS], and now the Department for Business Innovation and Skills [DBIS]) set up an enquiry, 'Gateways to the Professions', headed by Sir Alan Langlands to investigate access, recruitment, retention and widening participation in the professions (2). Professions taking part in the enquiry included architecture, law, teaching, engineering, chemistry, social work, accountancy, and the medical and veterinary professions.

As a result of the Langlands Report published in 2005 (4), the Government allocated £6 million over a three-year

period to support collaborative projects within these professions to investigate and start to tackle any artificial barriers to professional careers. Concerned about the narrow profile of veterinary applicants, the RCVS presented its case and secured funding for a project to develop careers information for young people to encourage a wider range of applicants to veterinary school. Funding came from two government departments: the DIUS, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The RCVS provided additional funding, as did the universities of Bristol, Cambridge, Glasgow, Liverpool, London and Nottingham. The 'Gateways' project, directed by RCVS, was led by a steering group comprising representatives from each of the contributing veterinary schools, the two government departments and additional representation from the Royal Society of Chemistry and the UK's Engineering Council, which provided a useful external dimension to the project.

## Researching attitudes towards veterinary careers: why is the student profile so narrow?

Although there was anecdotal evidence about the perceived barriers to entry to the veterinary profession, no research had been done in this area to identify the problems. From existing students, it was known why students do decide to apply, but little was known about those who do not. The first phase of the project consisted of market research undertaken by the Institute of

**Table II**  
**Analysis of student applications and admissions to United Kingdom veterinary schools, 1997-2007**

Year of entry	Applications <sup>(a)</sup>	Total admitted (data from RCVS annual reports)	Males admitted	Females admitted	Males as % of total admitted	Ratio of applicants to admissions	Number graduating
1997	1,725	536	162	374	30%	3.22:1	451
1998	1,786	586	185	401	32%	3.05:1	432
1999	1,804	622	193	429	31%	2.90:1	460
2000	1,757	602	161	441	27%	2.92:1	480
2001	1,613	636	167	469	26%	2.54:1	494
2002	1,549	665	179	486	26%	2.33:1	493
2003	1,597	722	161	561	22%	2.21:1	498
2004	1,485	729	158	571	22%	2.04:1	588
2005	1,440	739	162	577	22%	1.95:1	566
2006	1,474	807	175	632	22%	1.83:1	587
2007	1,855	855	183	672	21%	2.17:1	650
2008	2,049	(b)					

(a) Data extracted from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service statistical online enquiry service, as at 7 July 2008, ([www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk))

(b) Admissions data not available at time of writing

RCVS: Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

Employment Studies (IES) to help pinpoint reasons for low participation, and identify messages that would need to be put across in future careers materials (6).

The aim of the IES research was to provide a picture of the following:

- students' perceptions of the veterinary profession
- the careers guidance students receive and who provides it
- how students react to information they encounter about the profession
- science teachers and careers advisers' perceptions of the veterinary profession and their views of the types of people best suited to becoming veterinary surgeons
- beliefs held by students, teachers and advisers about entry requirements for the veterinary degree
- the messages being given to prospective students by veterinary schools, for example, via prospectuses and open days.

There were several strands of activity: a review of careers websites was undertaken, including those typically used by careers teachers in schools; university websites and online prospectuses aimed at prospective students were also reviewed. Two questions relating to pupils' intentions to study science and their interest in working with animals were included in a wider national 'student omnibus' survey of secondary school students run by the market research firm Ipsos-MORI, the results of which fed into the IES final report. Fieldwork undertaken by IES included focus group interviews with pupils from different year groups, including those who had already decided to take a science subject as part of their higher level school examinations ('A' levels or Scottish Highers) as well as those in lower years who were as yet undecided about studying science. Interviews were held with science teachers and careers advisers, as well as telephone interviews with admissions tutors in the seven UK universities offering veterinary degrees.

Schools taking part in the field work were chosen from a representative sample of UK local education authorities, taking in rural, urban and mixed areas of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Additionally, the Ipsos-MORI survey covered 2,417 pupils aged 11 to 16, randomly selected from secondary schools across England and Wales.

Results of the Ipsos-MORI survey indicated that, with regard to ethnicity, white students (22%) were more likely to say they would definitely consider working with animals than BME students (10%). There were no major differences between responses from rural and urban areas. Given that good academic school grades in science subjects are normally a prerequisite for entry onto the veterinary

degree, questions were also asked about students intentions to study science at 'A' level/Scottish Higher level. Slightly more boys than girls were intending to study science, but differences between ethnic groups were more pronounced, with 26% of BME students intending to study science, compared with only 18% of white students. Thirty-one per cent of Asian students were planning to study science at 'A' level.

### **Perceived difficulties and disadvantages of entering a veterinary course**

During the focus group interviews, students were asked to describe what they thought were the disadvantages of being a veterinarian and the reasons why they personally would not want to pursue a veterinary career. The reasons given confirmed earlier suspicions that the decision not to pursue a veterinary career was often based on misinformation. Students frequently mentioned the stiff competition for places at veterinary school (although it is no more competitive than many other popular subjects at similar universities). They also mentioned the long and difficult qualification process (the veterinary degree in the UK which leads to the licence to practise is normally five years in length, but although longer than the standard three-year bachelor degree, it is no longer than many other professional qualifications leading to a licence to practise).

Some students thought they may not find a job at the end of their studies, which was surprising, given that 99% of veterinarians in the UK are employed – one of the best employment rates of all the professions. They felt that training to be a veterinarian placed them on a 'one-track' career path, and that there would be few alternatives open to them if they did not get a job. The Steering Group found this particularly disappointing, given the wide range of career options available to veterinary graduates even if they choose not to go into traditional clinical practice. Other reasons given for not wanting to join the profession included the long working hours and intensive nature of the work, the emotional stresses, risks of being injured or infected, or simply because it was not an area of interest to them. As far as long working hours are concerned, the last workforce survey conducted by RCVS in 2006 (7) found that average working hours were declining within the profession, with those in full-time practice working an average of 42.8 h per week plus on-call duties for an average 21.6 h, compared to 48 h and 23 h respectively in 2002.

Although many of the students interviewed would not necessarily have been appropriate candidates for the profession, it was disappointing to hear that many had already discounted a veterinary career based on misinformation or lack of knowledge, despite many having an interest in animals. At one of the urban schools where

most participants came from minority ethnic groups, pupils mentioned that parental expectations were high for students to enter the medical profession, but not the veterinary field.

### **Lack of information: students, teachers and careers advisers**

Desk research had already established that there was a wide range of careers materials about the profession available from a variety of sources, mostly on the web, and that, on the whole, the information available was comprehensive. It became apparent, however, that it tended to be those students who had already expressed an interest in becoming a veterinarian at an early age who had taken the initiative to seek out such material for themselves. It was a case of 'preaching to the converted'. Few printed materials about careers in the veterinary profession were available in secondary schools. Information about the veterinary degree within university prospectuses was comprehensive, but with only seven universities in the UK offering the degree, students first needed to know which prospectuses to consult. Some schools only held copies of prospectuses from local universities, not necessarily those with veterinary faculties, so it was a geographical lottery as to whether some students would ever come across information about a veterinary course.

Teachers thought there was limited opportunity to awaken students' interest in working with animals through the secondary school national curriculum. Chemistry teachers were of the view that there was little of relevance to veterinary matters in the national curriculum, and that although the 'A' level Chemistry syllabus included materials on medical drugs and biochemistry, this had a human rather than an animal focus. Biology teachers said the same, although during the discussion several mentioned topics such as animal behaviour, classification, intensive farming, agriculture and conservation, issues which could have been used as a link to talk about veterinary work. Few science teachers and advisers in secondary schools appeared to know about the role played by veterinary surgeons in global disease surveillance, food safety, biomedical research and conservation. Teachers received very few enquiries about careers in veterinary science. The Institute of Employment Studies noted that one high-achieving Irish school was 'inundated with queries about medicine and that of the 40 to 45 studying Chemistry 'A' level each year here, around 20 went on to medical schools yet only one or two to veterinary or dental schools' (6).

Advice and guidance from teachers and careers advisers in the secondary schools was at best patchy, with some being unaware of existing materials, and some perpetuating

misconceived notions about the difficulties of gaining a place at university. Although good school grades are required to enter veterinary schools, these are not the only entry requirements and most university admissions tutors will still consider students who have demonstrated the right motivation even if they narrowly miss their grades. There are an increasing number of 'widening participation' schemes within universities, which seek to facilitate access by students from traditionally under-represented groups, but few school teachers and advisers appeared to be aware of the opportunities that could be open to some of their students via such routes.

## **Black and minority ethnic applicants**

There was some evidence from the interviews that students from BME backgrounds, particularly Asian families, were discouraged from working with animals for cultural reasons, or because being a veterinarian was not perceived as a 'proper profession', in contrast to medicine, pharmacy or dentistry. Other professions were seen as offering greater opportunities, for example, in terms of combining professional knowledge with entrepreneurship. This correlated with results from a wider research project on the experience of ethnic minorities undertaken under the DIUS 'Gateways to the Professions' forum, which found that 'some parents favoured careers such as pharmacy, accountancy and optometry because they would open up the option of setting up in business' (5). To gain a better understanding of the many issues involved, RCVS sought advice from a specialist public relations company dealing with BME communities, and a further focus group of BME students and their parents was established to explore these attitudes in more depth.

Black and minority ethnic groups make up about 7.9% (4.6 million) of the UK's population. Asians represent about 50% of the total (2.5 million), mostly from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Twenty-five per cent of the minority ethnic population are black African-Caribbean (0.8 million) mostly from Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Jamaica and Barbados, 5% are Chinese and 25% are of mixed race. These groupings mask a wealth of diversity, with over 300 languages spoken, and many different religions and cultures represented under each of the broad headings. It became apparent to the steering group that there could and should be no generalisations or assumptions made when trying to attract potential students from BME groups to the veterinary field.

Whilst there was a need for sensitivity towards different cultural traditions and an awareness of religious prohibitions concerning contact with some species, the

consensus from BME contacts was that there was a need for openness about what the veterinary degree involved, enabling students and their parents to make informed decisions. What may be perceived as a problem within one culture would not necessarily be so for another.

The issues that needed to be addressed within careers materials aimed at BME students were:

- a) the current lack of role models from ethnic minorities within the profession
- b) parental (and student) lack of awareness about the medical and scientific basis of the profession
- c) the lack of information about:
  - the financial status of the job
  - the longevity or security of the career
  - the personal job satisfaction possible
  - the amount of work required to succeed.

After some discussion in the focus group, parents and students commented that they would indeed have been interested in a veterinary career if they had known the facts and had been aware of the many opportunities available.

## Attracting students to the profession

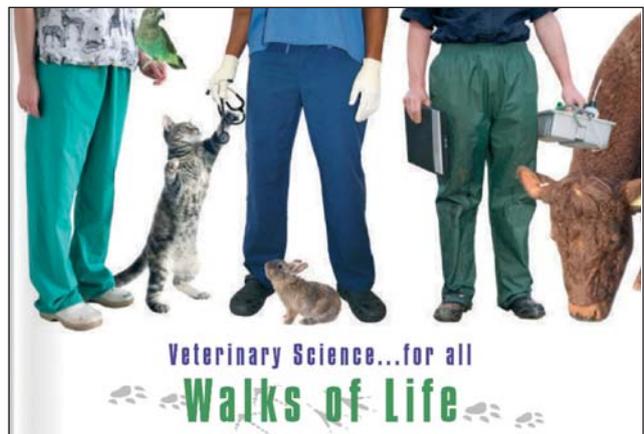
A workshop was held at RCVS in June 2007 to discuss the key messages that needed to be conveyed to young students and their parents, taking account of the research from IES and Ipsos-MORI. Over the following months, a set of materials – a colour brochure accompanied by a DVD – were designed in-house at RCVS and launched in London in May 2008. The theme ‘Walks of Life’ was chosen to emphasise that veterinarians can come from and progress to all walks of life (Fig. 1). The DVD, filmed and produced by a professional TV and video company, features a number of short video case studies aimed primarily at 14-16 year olds which can be played individually from a menu or consecutively as a single feature. Veterinarians are shown working in very different settings, showcasing their role in public health, food safety, disease surveillance and research, zoological conservation, military service and private small animal practice. Care was taken in the production of the videos (i.e. choice of images, graphics, music, and storyline), so as to ensure that the audience was not patronised, yet at the same time that the sequences would be visually appealing to young teenagers. Feedback from teenagers during the editing process led to a few changes in the final product that older adults might not have anticipated!



**Fig. 1**  
**‘Walks of Life’ logo**

To attract a more diverse range of students to the veterinary profession and increase interest in a veterinary career, the Royal College of Veterinary Medicine has developed a package of material (following the theme ‘Walks of Life’) designed to demonstrate the diverse career options available to veterinary graduates

The printed brochure picks up the same themes and case studies as the DVD. Additionally, an electronic version of the brochure is available online, including links to each of the short videos, which also appear on websites such as YouTube. The on-line materials can be seen on a dedicated website at [www.walksoflife.org.uk](http://www.walksoflife.org.uk). Copies of the brochure and DVD were posted to every secondary school and further education college in the UK in June 2008. The materials were made available to each contributing veterinary school to use in their contacts with schools and at careers events. Additional advertising has been taken out in the specialist BME careers press and magazines in an attempt to raise awareness and direct people to the online materials (Fig. 2). There has also been extensive coverage in the veterinary press and a mailing to veterinary practices. Given that so many veterinarians are a prime source of information for future students, it is most important that members of the profession are themselves aware of the full picture as regards career options. It will be a number of years before we can judge whether this project will have the desired effect of attracting a broader range of



**Fig. 2**  
**Online brochure outlining possible career choices for veterinarians, produced by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons**

[www.walksoflife.org.uk](http://www.walksoflife.org.uk)

applicants to the veterinary degree, but we have been encouraged by the early feedback. The website, [www.walksoflife.org.uk](http://www.walksoflife.org.uk), is exactly what is needed to generate interest from a broader range of students who we would like to see going into public health as well as other less well known areas of veterinary medicine.

## Widening participation in veterinary courses: selection and admissions procedures

Selection and admissions procedures within the veterinary schools are also changing to reflect an increased emphasis on widening participation; academic qualifications and teachers' references are not enough on their own to secure a place and indeed can be an unreliable indicator of a student's future potential. Whilst scientific aptitude is important, admissions staff must also take into account the student's suitability for the profession, which is heterogeneous in nature. Applicants who get through the first hurdle of the written application form will be interviewed and scored on their motivation and interest in veterinary science. Interviewers also consider their communication skills, previous experience with animals, initiative, organisational and team-working skills and their ability to empathise. Short practical tests may be used to assess dexterity, an animal may be brought into the room to see how the student reacts to it, group exercises may be used to test team-working skills; one school operates a 'speed dating' system comprising a series of five-minute interviews over the course of an hour, each session involving a different activity. All such processes are time-consuming for the staff members and practitioners involved, but are undertaken with the utmost care and attention to fairness throughout. However, the challenge for the profession, which cannot be overstated, is to ensure that the right applicants are interested enough in the profession to apply in the first place.

Each of the veterinary schools has widening participation schemes and all are working with local schools and communities through outreach programmes, running summer schools, offering shadowing and mentoring programmes, and generally trying to attract a broader range of students. New routes into the veterinary degree are also emerging, enabling students who may have been disadvantaged by their secondary school experiences to prepare for entry to veterinary school by taking a foundation year, sometimes referred to as 'year zero'. Another initiative is the 'VetNet Lifelong Learning' collaboration between veterinary faculties and vocational colleges of further education, which is seeking to improve progression routes between vocational courses at sub-degree level and higher education in the veterinary and other animal-related fields (see [www.vetnetlln.ac.uk](http://www.vetnetlln.ac.uk)). VetNet, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, aims to produce a qualifications map to clarify existing animal- and veterinary-related courses available across the country and develop curricula that will allow vocational learners to progress smoothly into veterinary and animal science-related degree courses.

## Conclusion

In years to come, it is hoped that these initiatives will encourage a more diverse range of students to consider careers in veterinary medicine and science, bringing in a wider array of talents to help solve the global veterinary and public health challenges that we face. The types of approaches described in this paper should be encouraged worldwide in order to improve the numbers entering international public health veterinary medicine. Coordination and collaboration between veterinary associations and universities at a national level are needed to identify and tackle the specific barriers faced locally within each country, in order that improvements can be made internationally.



## La sélection dans les écoles vétérinaires au Royaume-Uni : attirer les étudiants vers les filières de la médecine vétérinaire qui correspondent aux nouveaux besoins de la profession et de la société

F.M. Andrews

### Résumé

Il sera difficile d'attirer davantage d'étudiants vers les filières de la médecine vétérinaire mondiale si l'on ne s'adresse qu'à ceux déjà inscrits dans les écoles vétérinaires. Chez la plupart de ces jeunes, en effet, le choix de carrière est déjà fait depuis longtemps, sans doute motivé par une image de la profession vieille de plusieurs dizaines d'années. L'enjeu pour les écoles vétérinaires britanniques consiste à diversifier les candidats aux études vétérinaires et à s'intéresser davantage à ceux qui choisissent la profession vétérinaire en raison des possibilités offertes par le diplôme de médecine vétérinaire dans des domaines comme la santé publique, la sécurité sanitaire des aliments, la protection de la nature, ainsi que la prévention et le contrôle des maladies à l'échelle mondiale dans le contexte du changement climatique. Pour cela, il est nécessaire d'engager une démarche de sélection active et de recourir à des matériels d'orientation permettant de cibler des candidats au-delà des profils traditionnels de la vocation vétérinaire. L'auteur décrit les efforts entrepris pour concevoir ces outils et pour faciliter l'accès à la profession.

### Mots-clés

Carrière vétérinaire – Diversité – École vétérinaire – Recrutement des étudiants – Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons – Sélection des étudiants.



## La admisión en las facultades de veterinaria del Reino Unido, o cómo alentar a los estudiantes a cursar estudios veterinarios para satisfacer las crecientes necesidades de la profesión y de la sociedad mundial

F.M. Andrews

### Resumen

Atraer a los estudiantes para que emprendan una carrera de medicina veterinaria de dimensión mundial resultará una tarea muy ardua si los esfuerzos se concentran únicamente en los estudiantes que ya están cursando estudios veterinarios. La mayoría de los alumnos actuales habrán elegido la carrera a una edad temprana, seguramente basándose en una idea de la profesión que corresponde a lo que podría haber sido varios decenios atrás. La dificultad para las facultades de veterinaria del Reino Unido estriba en atraer a un conjunto más diverso de candidatos al título, personas que hayan elegido a conciencia los

estudios de veterinaria por las oportunidades laborales que ese título puede ofrecer en ámbitos como la salud pública, la inocuidad de los alimentos, la protección ambiental o el control y la prevención de enfermedades a escala mundial, en la era del cambio climático. Ello exige una dinámica activa de captación, con material explicativo dirigido a estudiantes que tradicionalmente quizá no se hubieran sentido atraídos por la profesión. El autor describe la labor que se está llevando a cabo para elaborar tal material y ampliar el acceso a la profesión veterinaria.

#### **Palabras clave**

Admisión de estudiantes – Carreras veterinarias – Diversidad – Facultad de veterinaria – Matriculación de estudiantes – Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.



## References

1. Department for Education and Skills (2006). – Widening participation in higher education. Available at: [www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/hereform/wideningparticipationnov06/index.cfm](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/hereform/wideningparticipationnov06/index.cfm) (accessed on 1 July 2008).
2. Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (2008). – Summary of 'Gateways to the Professions' initiative. Available at: [www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/hereform/gateways-to-the-professions/index.cfm](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/hereform/gateways-to-the-professions/index.cfm) (accessed on 1 July 2008).
3. Joint Council for Qualifications (2007). – A, AS and AEA Results – Summer 2007. Available at: [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk) (accessed on 9 July 2008).
4. Langlands A. (2005). – The Gateways to the Professions Report, Department for Education and Skills. Available at: [www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/hereform/gatewaystotheprofessions/index.cfm](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/hereform/gatewaystotheprofessions/index.cfm) (accessed on 1 July 2008).
5. Quest for Economic Development (QED) (2008). – Striving for success: ethnic minorities' experiences of entering the professions. Commissioned by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills as part of the Gateways to the Professions project. Available at: [www.qed-uk.org/s4s-web.pdf](http://www.qed-uk.org/s4s-web.pdf) (accessed on 16 July 2008).
6. Robinson D., Munro M., Baldwin S. & Pollard E. (2007). – Gateways to the veterinary profession: perceptions of veterinary careers. Institute of Employment Studies, Report, 443.
7. Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) (2006). – The UK Veterinary Profession in 2006. Available at: [www.rcvs.org.uk/surveys](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/surveys) (accessed on 1 July 2008).

