

# Veterinary Assistant (VETA)

## Frequently asked questions

### 1. What is the difference between a veterinary technician and a veterinary assistant?

While both of these professionals are valuable members of the veterinary health-care team, there are notable differences in the responsibilities.

A veterinary technician is often referred to as the veterinarian's "right-hand person". They are responsible for an assortment of duties including: anesthesia, surgical assisting, taking radiographs and completing diagnostic lab work as well as providing an array of nursing skills, such as intravenous catheterization and taking blood.

A veterinary assistant works to support the veterinary team by performing duties such as restraining animals, providing care for the animals (e.g. walking dogs, cleaning kennels), cleaning surgical instruments and the veterinary hospital as well as performing receptionist duties.

### 2. Is there opportunity to become part of a registered organization?

Veterinary assistants are not a regulated profession. Currently, there is no professional association for veterinary assistants.

### 3. Do graduates find jobs?

The most recent key performance indicator data (2019) found that 60 per cent of students in the Veterinary Assistant program found employment upon graduation.

### 4. Is the program demanding?

Yes! You can expect classes (lectures and labs) any day between Monday to Friday, starting as early as 8 a.m. and extending into the evening. To be successful, you should have strong time

management and study skills. Typically, you would be expected to complete chapter readings, review videos, lectures and procedures before lab as well as complete prep work for lab and lecture classes.

In addition to course demands, you will also complete rotations caring for the animals that are housed on campus. This rotation occurs in the second semester of the program

Kennel duty occurs Monday to Thursday. The rotation is usually performed three times throughout the semester. You will work in a group and will be responsible for walking the dogs, feeding and watering the cats and dogs as well as cleaning the kennels and the animal housing area. Kennel duty begins at 8 a.m. for one hour and also includes a late afternoon shift between 5 6 p.m.

### 5. Are there opportunities for work experience in the program?

Yes. Our onsite veterinary hospital is designed to give you the feeling of working in a veterinary clinic. In your final semester, you will participate in courses that mimic a surgical rotation. With dogs and cats as patients, students assist the veterinarian and registered veterinary technician in the completion of spays and neuters.

These experiences will help you become job-ready upon graduation.