

# Veterinary Technician (VETN)

## 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?

Graduates of the Veterinary Technician program can become registered with the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians (OAVT). This process includes writing the Veterinary Technician National Examination, as well as completing other requirements as required by the professional association. For more information, [visit the OAVT website](#). While completing this requirement is optional, it is highly recommended as most veterinarians will only hire a registered veterinary technician (RVT) and it will likely one day be mandatory to be an RVT to work in a veterinary clinic.

### 3. Do graduates find jobs?

The most recent key performance indicator data (2019) found that 92 per cent of students in the Veterinary Technician program found employment upon graduation. There is currently a shortage of RVTs in Ontario, which is evident in numerous job postings on the OAVT website.

#### 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.

First-year students complete rotations of kennel duty between Monday to Friday. The rotation may be one day a week throughout the semester, or two rotations of five consecutive days. 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 6:30 a.m. for 1 ½ hours and also includes a late afternoon shift between 5 and 6 p.m.

Second-year students complete rotations of animal care duty, seven days a week. The rotation may be one day a week throughout the semester, or two rotations of seven consecutive days. You will work in a group to provide veterinary care for the animals including physical exams, performing diagnostic tests, administering medication as well weekend care of the animals. The students are expected to be available three times a day, similar to shifts above for kennel duty.

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

Yes. There are two unpaid field placements which are program requirements. They are completed after the winter semester (May/June) in first year and second year of the program. Each placement is 160 hours and completed within a six-week time period. You are required to find your own placements and must complete a list of essential skill competencies while on placement. While most students complete their placement in small animal clinics, there is opportunity to complete a large animal placement in second year.

In addition to the field placements, our onsite veterinary hospital is designed to give students the feeling of working in a veterinary clinic. In the final semester of the program, you will participate in courses that mimic a surgical, anesthetic and dental rotation. With dogs and cats as patients, you will assist the veterinarian and RVTs in the completion of spays, neuters and dentistry's.

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