

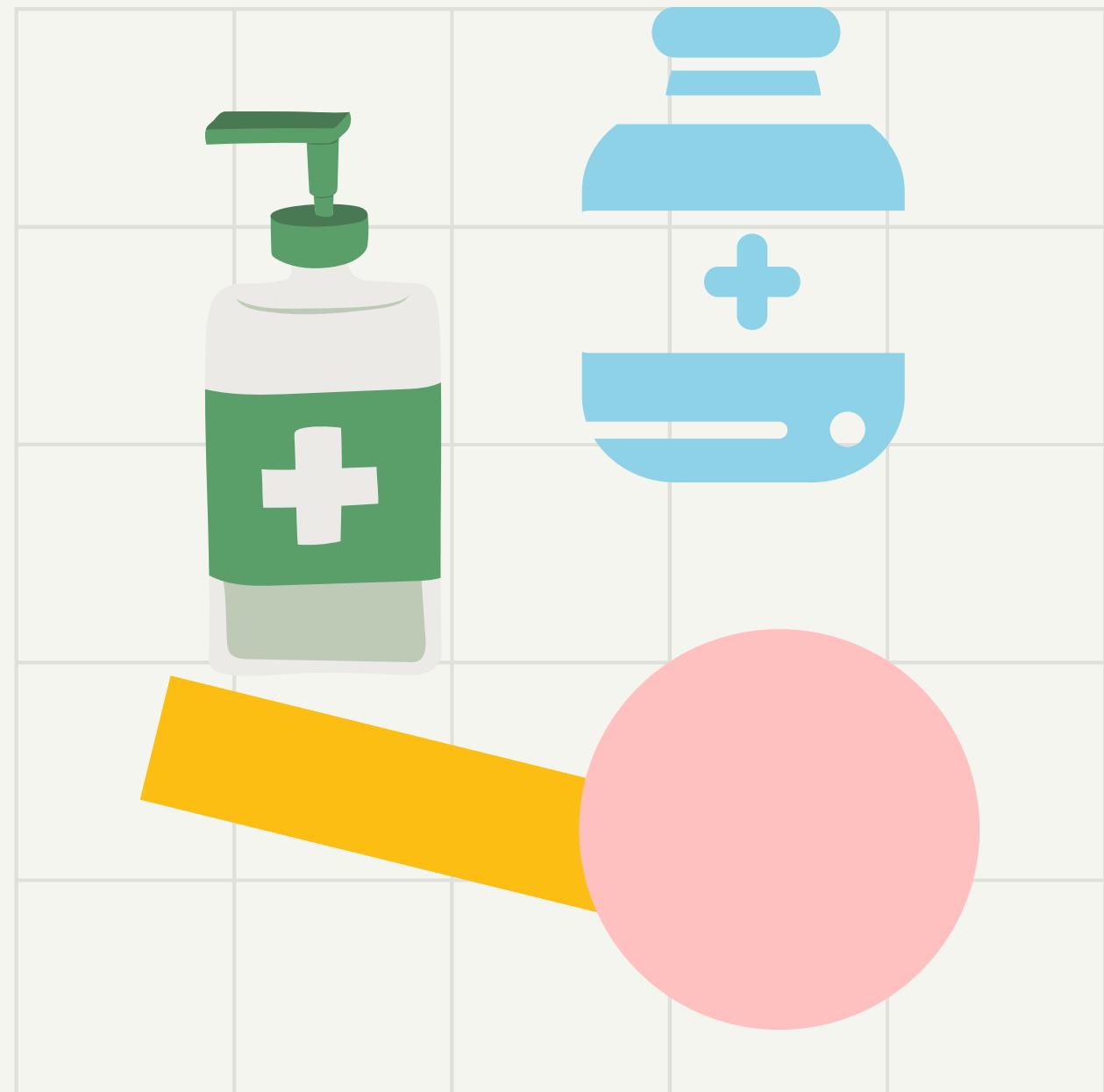


The Definitive Guide to Boosting Your Vet School Application 2025

www.theukcatpeople.co.uk

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INTRODUCTION

Getting into vet school is very hard

Where to look for information? Look no further.

Veterinary Medicine is the most competitive course to get in to study at university, with only approximately 10% of applicants receiving an offer. Prospective vet students often get categorised alongside medicine and dentistry students, but the application process is very different and it is essential to know this.

At TheUKCATPeople, our educational consultants are all qualified veterinarians and have years of experience specialising in veterinary admissions. This guide is here to provide you with EVERYTHING you need to know!

INTRODUCTION

Why have we written this?

We (the vets at TheUKCATPeople) have written this free definitive and informative guide to help you boost your chances of getting into vet school. We hope that the information we provide you will really help you to make a strong application, and ultimately lead to a successful career as a veterinary surgeon.



Free Veterinary Medicine Application Strategy Call

Free call with a veterinary admissions expert - have all your questions answered by an experienced professional. Simply select a time that suits you.

Book Now

#1 - Is Veterinary Medicine the right choice for me?

How do you decide to commit the next 5-6 years of your life to studying Veterinary Medicine, and then a life time of learning?

#1 CHOOSING VETERINARY MEDICINE

What is a career in Veterinary Medicine?

Considerations

Before you commit to becoming a vet, it is really important to get an understanding of what the career is actually like. And we mean a real understanding.

Considerations

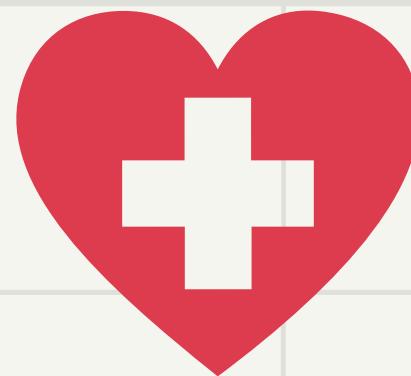
Veterinary Medicine can be one of the most challenging professions out there. There are long hours, heavy workloads and not to mention the lives of animals literally in your hands.

Considerations

So how do you go about getting a taste of this? Get yourself some work experience.

#1 CHOOSING VETERINARY MEDICINE

Organise Work Experience!



See if you can get work experience in a local vet practice. If you are really serious about becoming a vet, you will find a way to arrange this work experience - don't make any excuses! We understand that the Coronavirus pandemic might make this difficult, but there is no reason why you cannot arrange video/online work experience (FutureLearn by Nottingham University is a great place to start).

Try to find as many different sources of veterinary work experience as you can; vet practices, farms, stables, kennels, catteries, wildlife sanctuaries, laboratories, abattoirs and zoos are all great places to learn more about the profession.

This all serves to give you a more accurate insight into what it's like to be a vet.

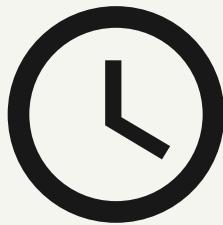
#1 CHOOSING MEDICINE

You're shadowing a GREAT vet - now what?



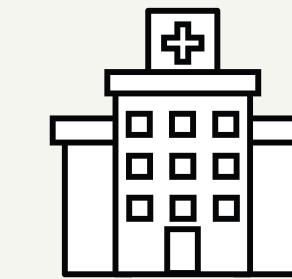
Procedures

Remember all of the key steps of any procedures you saw and why things were done in a particular order. ASK question to help improve your understanding of what happened and WHY it happened!



The Realities

This means discovering the 'difficulties' in Veterinary Medicine and how vets cope with them, but also the joys and highlights too. You need to show the Admissions Board that you have a really strong understanding of both sides.



Privatised Healthcare

There is, of course, no NHS for animals - you need to appreciate the impact of this upon the care that we are able to provide for animals and the issues that may arise.

#1 CHOOSING VETERINARY MEDICINE

Most Importantly

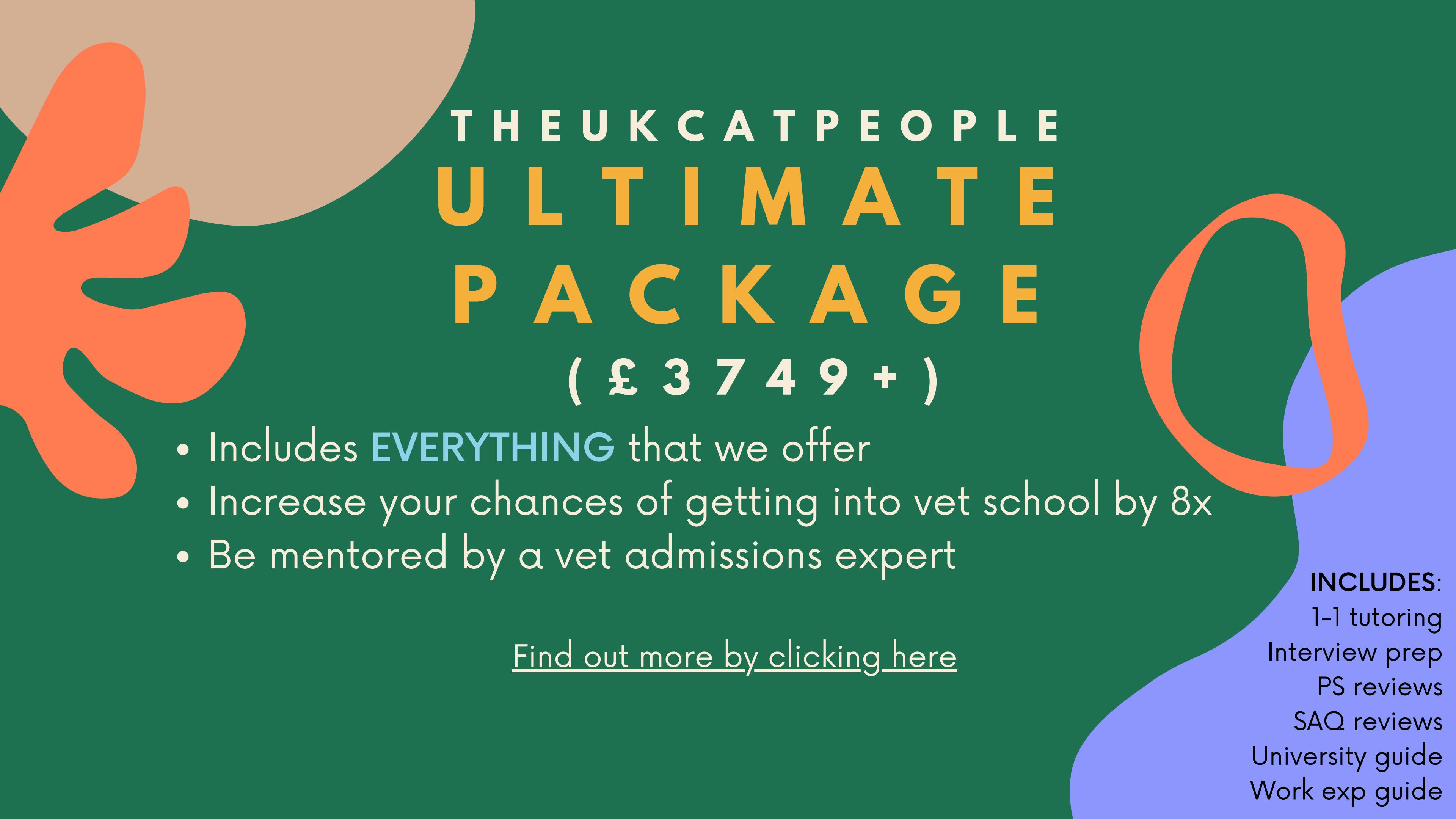


Once you have learnt as much as you can, and taken as much information in as possible, you then need to think long and hard about the next questions:

- What qualities does a vet need to be successful?
- What qualities do I have that would make me a successful vet?
- How can I continue to develop and improve my qualities and skills to make me a better applicant?

It is these three final questions, that are the golden ticket into Veterinary Medicine. If you can reflect on what you have learnt, and apply it to yourself, then you have the early makings of a great vet.

These topics, along with many many more, are discussed in great detail in our **Ultimate Package** at [TheUKCATPeople](http://TheUKCATPeople.com).



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INCLUDES:

1-1 tutoring
Interview prep
PS reviews
SAQ reviews
University guide
Work exp guide

#2 - Your Grades

What grades are needed to get into Veterinary Medicine? What places look at GCSEs that are a little lower?

Your grades are **REALLY** important!

Your GCSEs and A-Level predicted grades are one of the first criteria that universities will assess. Make sure that you check the requirements on each website to find out more. We have this all on our website as well as a blog article that goes into required GCSE grades in more detail.

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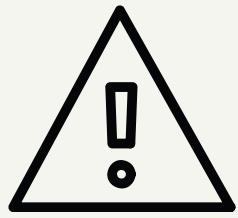
#3 - Personal Statement

Start writing your personal statement **EARLY**. If you're worried you've left things too late, let us know - we can help you!

Remember the PS has changed for 2025 (2026 entry)!

#3 PERSONAL STATEMENT

First things first



Start early

The earlier you get started, the more time you allow yourself to write and re-write the statement until it's perfect. Leaving things too late tends to lead to a state of panic and resultantly poor statement!



Make it unique

Why? Because it is a personal statement, so make it personal. It's your opportunity to showcase yourself to the vet school, so make it unique and personal to you.



Boring statements

Every single year without fail, we read the same cliché phrases such as "I have always wanted to be a vet" - this is just far too commonly stated (even if it's true) - you must be more creative if you're going to stand out!

#3 PERSONAL STATEMENT

The New Personal Statement



For 2025 veterinary medicine applicants, UCAS has replaced the traditional 4,000-character free-form personal statement with three structured questions.

The Three New Questions

1. Why do you want to study this course? - This replaces the introductory and motivational sections of the old statement. Applicants must articulate their passion for veterinary medicine, referencing personal experiences, inspirations, and future goals.
2. How have your qualifications prepared you? - Instead of general academic reflections, this question focuses specifically on how subjects like biology and chemistry, as well as school projects, have prepared applicants for the demands of the course.
3. What have you done beyond education? - This condenses the work experience and extracurricular sections into a targeted reflection on non-academic preparation, including volunteering, work placements, or personal responsibilities.

Examples of POOR personal statement openings

"I have always wanted to be a vet"

"I love science and animals"

"Becoming a vet is my dream"

#3 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?



Start with an engaging first sentence and catch the eye of the admissions team. Make it unique; the most overused phrases range from "From a young age I have always been interested in" to "I've always wanted to study...". You should find your unique reason as to how you became involved with Veterinary Medicine and what made you consider it as a subject to study at university.

Why do you want to do the course?

Talk about what made you want to apply for the course. Show that you have researched what the course involves. What motivates you to study a subject in-depth for the next 5 years?

Be reflective

Personal statements are often very descriptive or simply list candidates' experience. The admissions team aren't just interested in what you've seen. They want to know what you learned.

#3 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Work Experience



Work Experience

It is good to focus on work experience.

For those of you who have been fortunate to have work experience & volunteering - here is the time to write about it.

Stick to the structure: I came, I saw, I learnt. It is not just about listing everything out, you must explain what you learnt and why that's important in Veterinary Medicine.

Have a look at our example personal statements to learn more about this!

#3 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Supra Curricular



You want to include everything that you have done that is linked to Veterinary Medicine but not quite work experience.

This includes things such as volunteering, research, books that you have read, any online courses or extra reading that you do.

It's a great opportunity to show off, and demonstrate how committed that you are to Veterinary Medicine - it is often this paragraph that will form part of the interview as there are so many questions that can be asked from things from here.

#3 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Extra Curricular



Highlight a new skill, achievement or experience that either relates to your course or shows how you can meet its demands. Try not to start each paragraph with 'I'. Keep the relevant points first. Think about how your experience relates to the course you want to apply for, what is most interesting? Point, Evidence, Explain.

Make your point, provide the evidence behind it and explain. As an example, if you were captain of your local football team, firstly state this and give evidence of what you did (eg. I led the team to a tournament victory). Then explain it; this is the most important point. What skills and qualities does this demonstrate? How does it link to Veterinary Medicine? Do vets have to show similar skills and qualities in their day-to-day roles? (HINT: Yes, we do).



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#4 - Personal Statement Paragraph Examples (Pre 2025)

See how we review personal statements – find out more!

#4 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Example PS

“Choosing to study Veterinary Medicine is not a decision I have taken lightly. It isn't a career I have wanted to do since a particularly young age, nor did a life changing event prompt my choice. I have thought very long and hard before deciding to apply.”

Admissions tutors may be sceptical of exaggerated descriptions of a revelatory moment or lifelong desire to become a vet, as we have discussed above. At first glance, this might seem like a down-beat opening paragraph. Although you may think that an eye-catching opening statement will impress, admissions tutors may be sceptical of exaggerated and cliché descriptions of a lifelong dream of becoming a vet. This introduction shows honesty and a good degree of reflection. Throughout the statement, the applicant works hard to show that they have a realistic view of Veterinary Medicine. You won't prove that you have the motivation for Veterinary Medicine by simply saying that you do: it is what you have done to inform yourself about the career - and the views that you have formed - that will convince us that you really know what being a vet is like and that this is what you want to do.

#4 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Example PS

“Various periods of work experience have taught me much about the career. A local small animal veterinary practice gave me a good understanding of day-to-day life as a first opinion vet, and spending time on a dairy farm provided me with invaluable first-hand experience of the workings of the farming industry.”

You won't prove that you have the motivation for Veterinary Medicine by simply saying that you do. Whilst this sentence is more of a list of work experience this individual has completed, it sets up nicely for the following sentence, which thoroughly discusses the core qualities that the applicant has observed.

See the next page for how the student has rectified this!

#4 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Example PS

"Shadowing a vet in a busy small animal first-opinion practice was hugely informative to me. During the day, I sat in on consultations ranging from routine medical checkups to emergency situations and complex surgeries. In every single case, the vet demonstrated exemplary communication, teamwork and empathy. It completely revolutionised everything I had previously heard about Veterinary Medicine - the patient truly came first in every case - and I appreciated for the first time the huge variety of skills and experiences that life as a vet entails."

This student describes their experiences of animal healthcare that have helped them decide that they want to study and practise Veterinary Medicine. We understand that opportunities to obtain experience vary, so you won't be judged on what you've done: we want to know what you learned from doing it. The description of the placement here isn't over-exaggerated, and the applicant takes care to explain what they have seen alongside the insight it gave to them.

#4 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Example PS

"Throughout my time there, the vet's genuine interest in his cases and unfaltering motivation highlighted to me the privilege of having such a stimulating profession. This, together with the ever-advancing nature of a career in Veterinary Medicine, was brought to the fore by a young dog that presented for lethargy. The vet noticed the dog had pale gums and petechia, so immediately became concerned about the dog's blood clotting ability. He ran bloods in-house and did a blood smear with a manual platelet count to confirm, which confirmed that the dog had dangerously low platelet numbers. His in-depth knowledge and experience was evident here, but I also really admired his communication skills in this situation. The ease with which the vet broached and dealt with the sensitive subject matter also emphasised the importance of a warm, approachable manner and an ability to communicate to a client on their level of understanding. I believe I have honed these skills and gained invaluable experience of the eccentricities of the general public myself in my job as a salesperson."

The relatively detailed account conveys the impression of engagement during the placement and suggests an intellectual curiosity to understand the animal's condition and its treatment. The applicant also takes care to point out an example of the importance of good communication skills and argues how their sales position has helped them develop such skills. It is important to convey an impression of engagement and intellectual curiosity when talking about any work experience/placement/voluntary work.

#4 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Example PS

"Since February of this year, I have volunteered in an animal shelter for a couple of hours each week. I assist with feeding the dogs and cats, cleaning the kennels/catteries and walking the dogs. As many of the animals at the shelter were abandoned/abused, my time there has brought to my attention the importance of raising awareness of animal welfare. Education of the general public is key to reducing the number of animals that are abandoned, and neutering programmes can make a huge difference in reducing the stray population. Some of the animals at the shelter are very nervous around humans, so I have also learned a lot about behaviour and handling animals in a gentle and safe way - it has been an incredibly rewarding experience to gradually gain their trust through positive interactions."

The applicant presents evidence that they have become well-informed about animal health and welfare on their placement the realities of healthcare. This paragraph reaffirms the applicant's motivation for Veterinary Medicine. They discuss the difficulties of working with abused/abandoned animals, but also how rewarding it has been and how it contributed to their learning experience. There is evidence of analytical skills here and there is no doubt that the applicant has become well-informed about the realities of animal healthcare. Empathy comes across as well, with the applicant recognising that handling nervous animals with care and respect can have such a positive effect.

#4 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Example PS

"I know that Veterinary Medicine is not a "9 to 5" job and is by no means the glamorous source of easy money it is often perceived to be. I understand the hours are long and potentially antisocial and that the career can be physically exhausting and emotionally draining. It is apparent that becoming a vet will involve inherent sacrifice. However, Veterinary Medicine is also a deeply gratifying and fascinating career path. I want to be a vet because my passion and aptitude is foremost scientific and to me 5 or 6 years more of formal education followed by a lifetime of further learning sounds like a stimulating career option and, thankfully, a far cry from the monotony some jobs pose. Nevertheless, as an intrinsically social person, I would relish a career requiring the development of strong empathic relationships with clients and their animals too. Crucially, I know I have the enthusiasm, capacity for hard work and the open and enquiring mind needed to succeed in such a fulfilling vocation.

In the concluding paragraphs, the statement is emphasising that, although aware of the negatives associated with the practice of Veterinary Medicine, fact-finding placements have given the applicant the insight and motivation to be certain that it is the right career for them. The applicant ends by summarising the key personal attributes that they believe make them well-suited to Veterinary Medicine.



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#5 - SAQs

How to prepare for SAQs

What are SAQs?

SAQ stands for "Supplementary Assessment Questionnaire" and comprises of a series of questions that universities will use to assess your suitability for the course. Thankfully, this is something you can prepare for! Spend lots of time writing your answers, show your personality and it will pay off.

SAQ Tips 1-3

Which Universities Use SAQs?

Bristol, Cambridge, Glasgow, Nottingham, Harper & Keele RVC and Surrey currently all have SAQs as part of their application process - they are becoming an increasingly popular screening tool for applicants either alongside or in favour of the personal statement. Bristol, in fact, no longer interview as they place so much value in the SAQ.

When Will I Need To Do SAQs?

SAQs are sent out to veterinary applicants after submission of the UCAS form, provided you fit the initial criteria (namely academic grades). If you perform well in your SAQs, an interview will follow.

What Do SAQs Assess?

- Personal attributes
- Motivation for studying Veterinary Medicine
- Awareness of and insight into the profession
- Interest in the profession and further reading
- Awareness of recent developments in Veterinary Medicine and current affairs
- Work experience
- Extra-curricular experiences and achievements
- Standard of written communication

SAQ Tips 4-6

What Are SJTs?

SJTs (Situational Judgement Tests) form part of the SAQs at some universities. You complete a set of hypothetical but relevant scenario-based, multiple choice questions associated with the veterinary profession.

Your answers will be evaluated and marked against other applicants.

Ask For Help

If you are struggling to understand what the SAQs are asking of you and how to best answer the questions, please do get in touch with our admissions specialists and visit our SAQ Page. You only have one shot at doing the SAQ, so getting as much help as possible can only improve your SAQ performance and score.

Learn Key Techniques

There are certain frameworks you can use to help you to answer questions effectively. The SPARR technique is great for answering questions where you are required to provide examples of situations. We describe this in more detail on our website, and highly recommend practising answering a few questions using this technique to get a feel for it prior to your SAQs.



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#6 - Vet Schools

Which University?

#6 UNIVERSITIES

How do you decide which university to apply to?

Firstly go and visit them. You really can't make this decision by looking at the university online. You will get so much more out of visiting a university. If the open days are cancelled, attend the virtual open days!

#6 UNIVERSITIES

Questions to ask

Here are some key questions you must consider about the universities that you apply to:

Question 1

Do you like the city that the university is in?

Question 2

How far is it from home?

Question 3

What is student accommodation like?

Question 4

Is it a campus university or a city university?

Question 5

Does the university or city offer extracurricular sports and activities?

Question 6

Where are the teaching hospitals? Are they spread out?

Vet Schools 2025 Guide

Access our Ultimate Guide To Vet Schools in 2024 here.
Find out all about everything you need to know before
making your choices for vet school

#7 - The Interview

Which University?

Preparation



Make sure your preparation for the day is impeccable.

If it's an MMI, make sure you're as well informed about the different stations as possible.

You must know everything about the university:

- How is the course taught?
- Will you be studying with medical students in the pre-clinical years?
- How long is the course?
- How big is the year group?
- Where will you be placed during the five year course?
- Does it have outreach programmes?
- What is unique about the demographic around the university?
- What societies do they have that interest you?

#7 THE INTERVIEW

The Day



Ok, so it's interview day. Turn up on time (this means early). If you have to come the night before and stay in a hotel, then so be it. Turning up late not only looks unprofessional, but it will add extra stress to you and will reduce your chances of getting a place. Dress professionally....and make sure you look well groomed - A Vet has a series of blog posts on what to wear and how to present yourself in the interview, so check these out!

Now, you have prepared and know all the answers to the questions, but it's interview time. Stay calm and relaxed, breathe. If you need time to answer a question, that's absolutely fine - just ask for a little longer. If you need a question repeated, that's also absolutely fine - again, just ask. We normally recommend you take a bottle of water with you to the interview, but place it on the floor next to your chair.

Answering Questions



When you are asked a question that you have a great answer for, it's important for you answer not to sound rehearsed. You will come across more genuine and your delivery will be better. Take a deep breath and think about what you are saying, so many times students want to get all their points and they don't answer the original question.

What is your body language saying when you are in the interview? Yes, body language is a massive part of communication in Veterinary Medicine. Do you have any habits that you are not aware of? Consider recording a mock interview and see what your hands, legs and face are doing.

Thank you!

Thankfully, through our online content, TheUKCATPeople has now successfully coached many candidates who could have potentially failed to secure a spot at Vet School without our help.

We teach the importance of empathy, communication and how to present yourself in an interview, boosting your application massively.

We hope this 'Definitive Guide to Boosting Your Application to Vet School' has been detailed and informative. We hope you have picked up a new point or two (or ten!) and that you can learn to apply them. The important thing is that this guide only touches on the surface of what you need to know and learn. TheUKCATPeople's admissions specialists are dedicated to guiding candidates to securing their spot at vet school. Our **Ultimate Package** covers every aspect of the veterinary application process, and you are assigned your own personal Admissions Specialist, who you can contact 24/7 via WhatsApp!



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