



**VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY
DIPLOMA PROGRAM
INFORMATION BOOKLET**



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Contents

UNIQUE AND SPECIALIZED TRAINING	3
JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	3
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES	3
STEPS TO APPLY FOR AND BE OFFERED A SEAT IN THE VTEC PROGRAM	3
CHARACTERISTICS REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS IN THE VTEC DIPLOMA PROGRAM	4
INTAKE DATE/APPLICATION DEADLINE	5
Program Requirements Specific to VTEC	5
EARLY ADMISSION	5
CURRICULUM	6
CLOTHING/EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS	6
APPENDIX I	7
Frequently Asked Questions	7
APPENDIX II	9
Standards of Behaviour	9
APPENDIX III	11

VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY (VTEC) DIPLOMA PROGRAM

UNIQUE AND SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Offering the only on-campus program of its kind in Greater Vancouver, Douglas College VTEC students study at the David Lam Campus in Coquitlam. This two-year diploma program includes both theoretical and practical aspects of providing small and large animal nursing, assisting veterinarians and performing laboratory, radiology and anesthesia procedures. The program is ideal whether you're new to the field or someone with experience who wants a credential to upgrade their career options.

As the program is accredited by the CVMA and CCAC, graduates are eligible to write the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE) and thus qualify for registration in Canada and in many parts of the USA as Registered Veterinary Technologists (RVTs).

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

The Veterinary Technologist (VT) is an integral member of the veterinary health care team enjoying a wide range of job responsibilities. The VT's responsibilities include: animal handling, restraint and examination, vaccinations, injections, dispensing of medications, maintenance of clinic and owner records, client education, exposing and developing radiographs, dental prophylaxis, application of casts and splints, first aid and emergency procedures, IV catheterization, fluid administration, obtaining blood samples through venipuncture, clinical laboratory testing, identification of internal and external parasites, surgical preparation and assisting, suturing, administration and monitoring anesthetics, and preoperative and postoperative care.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Many exciting job opportunities are available due to the diverse growth in the veterinary field and the shortage of professionally trained technicians here in British Columbia. Most VT's are employed in private veterinary hospitals, but graduates may also work in animal shelters and rescue organizations, research and government agencies, zoological parks, wildlife rehabilitation facilities, aquariums, specialty veterinary practices, industry related pharmaceutical and pet nutrition companies and large farms or ranches.

STEPS TO APPLY FOR AND BE OFFERED A SEAT IN THE VTEC PROGRAM

- Speak with AHT or VT (Animal Health or Veterinary Technology) graduates and veterinarians to ensure this is the right field for you
- Visit the VTEC website and read the online Information Booklet
- Attend an **INFORMATION SESSION at Douglas College (dates and times on VTEC Programs and Courses Page of DC Website)**
- Apply to be a Douglas College student (fee) and obtain a student number.
- FORMS are available to download from the VTEC website:
- <https://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/faculties/science-technology/veterinary-technology>

- **TASK OBSERVATION FORM**
- **STRUCTURED REFERENCE LETTERS**
- **PROGRAM ENTRANCE QUESTIONNAIRE**

- These are needed to complete the admissions process and you will have a period of time to submit these to Admissions, Registrar's Office.
- Complete ALL academic requirements (prerequisites), and consider post-secondary education or training in a related field (this will both help ensure your success in this intense program. Also, the additional experience will be given consideration in the admissions process).
- Obtain a **minimum** of 80 hours of work or volunteer/work or observation experience in the veterinary field, with a variety of species, both small and large. MORE IS BETTER –to ensure that we know about **all** hours, record them all and have a veterinarian, technician or qualified supervisor complete one or more **TASK OBSERVATION FORMS**
- Submit two **STRUCTURED REFERENCE LETTERS**, one or both animal (and non-family) related
- Legibly and carefully complete the **PROGRAM ENTRANCE QUESTIONNAIRE**
- Contact the VTEC Departmental Assistant (see Contact List on last page), an Academic Advisor, or the Registrar's Office if you have any questions or concerns
- Submit all application requirements, including completed FORMS, to Admissions, Registrar's Office before the deadline
- If invited, successfully complete an interview
- Reach the age of **18 years** by the end of the year of acceptance (e.g. December 31)

CHARACTERISTICS REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS IN THE VTEC DIPLOMA PROGRAM

The successful VTEC student:

- is a team player, flexible, mature, and emotionally stable
- is able to withstand strenuous physical activity
- is a lifelong learner, capable of self-motivated study
- is highly motivated and dedicated to his/her work
- is able to communicate tactfully with a diverse population of individuals
- is able to carefully follow verbal and written instruction; can think on his/her feet
- possesses good common sense
- possesses some animal experience
- is able to accept constructive criticism and perform self-evaluation activities which result in personal and professional growth
- has access to reliable transportation (some practicum sites are not accessible by bus)

The following causes are identified as some of the reasons for students having difficulty in the VTEC program:

- Lack of familiarity or knowledge of the veterinary field; many students have no idea of what they will be involved in.
- Lack of ability in basic sciences or mathematics. Good study habits and organization are necessary to manage the heavy course load.
- Students who have not taken higher level courses in secondary school tend to have more difficulty with the program.

INTAKE DATE/APPLICATION DEADLINE

There is one intake each year, in September. Completed applications with ALL required documents must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the application deadline.

Program Requirements Specific to VTEC

- a) Applicant must be 18 years of age by the end of the year of acceptance (e.g. December 31)
- b) PROGRAM ENTRANCE QUESTIONNAIRE – please submit **in your own handwriting**
- c) Two STRUCTURED REFERENCE LETTERS from non-family sources, at least one or both of which are veterinary or animal-related.
- d) Minimum 80 hours of veterinary-related volunteer or work experience (please provide details). A TASK OBSERVATION FORM(S) should be used to record and have a qualified supervisor verify the tasks and hours. *(If you are already logging volunteer hours, a printed copy of the sample Task Observation Form may be used).*
- e) Admission interview may be required, **by invitation only** from the VTEC program.
- f) **Completion of the following documents will be requested only after the student is offered and accepts a seat in the program:**
 - i) A satisfactory health assessment completed by a physician;
 - ii) Current record of immunizations if necessary;
 - iii) Consent and authorization by physician to begin preventative rabies immunization series. This series **may be available** to Year One students during the 1st semester at nominal cost;
 - iv) Tuition deposit to confirm offer acceptance.
- g) **Strongly recommended:**
 - i) Attend a program information or orientation session. Free information sessions for this program are held throughout the year. To register, please visit the web page at <http://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/catalogue/programs/DPVTEC> and click into the Upcoming Information Sessions “**Register**” tab;
 - ii) Computer skills – Windows, Word, Excel, email;
 - iii) A fee for Rabies vaccine will be required unless the student undergoes the preventative rabies immunization series outside of the VTEC program, or has an adequate rabies titre, in which case the fee can be waived or refunded.

EARLY ADMISSION

Although application and document deadlines may be identified for this program, we encourage all applicants to apply well before the deadline* and to submit all supporting documentation as early as possible.

*See Veterinary Technology Program page or <http://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/catalogue/programs/DPVTEC> UPCOMING APPLICATION DEADLINE.

CURRICULUM

The Veterinary Technology Diploma program is an intensive, full-time program that will require students to complete over 30 hours of classroom and laboratory work per week and a total of 22 courses over two years. In addition, it is intended that two summer terms of externship or Cooperative Education will be recommended to students. Practical courses utilize “Workplace Based Training” in which the college laboratory setting, public and private practices provide the environments for students to develop skills needed by a variety of veterinary employers. In this respect, the program has received the enthusiastic endorsement of both practicing veterinarians and registered AHT’s & VT’s.

CLOTHING/EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The following list is for information only. Please wait to purchase these items until directed to do so during your first year orientation. These items are not to be worn outside clinics, labs or hospitals.

1. Lab coats:

- a) one clean, white, professional lab coat for clinics (Vet Nursing, Vet Clinics, rotations in vet hospitals) or to cover surgical scrubs
- b) one lab coat (used is fine, any colour) protective for “dirty labs” (Anatomy, Lab Procedures)
- c) one lab coat (used is fine, any colour) protective for Microbiology labs only, to be laundered separately

2. Shoes:

- a) one pair clean (and easy to clean), professional, closed-toed as a) above
- b) one pair (used, any colour), closed-toed as b) & c) above

3. Surgical scrubs:

- a) one pair reserved for surgery only
- b) one to two other pairs for clinics or labs

4. Coveralls – protective, for large animal rotations

5. Rubber Boots – protective, steel-toed, for large animal rotations

6. Equipment: Stethoscope (high quality e.g. Littman cardiac-type or Classic II), watch with second hand, penlight, basic calculator (not cell phone) – see individual course outlines after orientation

APPENDIX I

VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY (VTEC) DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q:** I have worked in a vet hospital for a number of years but I never took chemistry, biology or math in high school. Do I really have to take this to be admitted?
- A:** *Yes you do. The prerequisite courses are in place to ensure you can be successful in the program as well as write the VTNE's (veterinary technician national board exam). There is a lot of theory that requires some basic background in the sciences, including Math to calculate dosages, etc.*
- Q:** I missed the deadline for application submission or I am still upgrading my courses. Can I still be offered one of 30 seats for this September?
- A:** *No, only completed applications with all documentation submitted by the deadline will be considered. You can apply for the following year using the same documents, but you must let the Registrar's office know that you intend to do this.*
- Q:** When is your next information session?
- A:** *Dates and times for information sessions are posted on the Douglas College website home page or found on a link through <http://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/catalogue/courses/VTEC> To register, click into the Upcoming Information Sessions "Register" tab. They are usually held 6-8 times per year but not during the summer months. Information Sessions are held at the David Lam campus at 1250 Pinetree Way in Coquitlam, which includes a tour of the VTEC facilities.*
- Q:** I have some volunteer experience and I am wondering if it is acceptable for the minimum 80 hours of veterinary volunteer/work experience that is required for admission?
- A:** *The primary purpose of these hours is for the applicant to get a sense for the field of Animal Health or Veterinary Technology specifically and veterinary medicine in general. Thus, ideally, the hours will be spent in a veterinary facility, observing or working with an RAHT/RVT, or at least a veterinarian. We recognize that there is still a shortage of VTs in B.C. so work or observation at a veterinary hospital or other veterinary facility is fine. Hours in large or small animal medicine are fine, but must be signed off by a supervisor who is ideally a veterinarian, RAHT/RVT or vet tech, or even qualified veterinary assistant.*
- Q:** What are my chances of being accepted into the program? Is it "first come, first served"?
- A:** *We use a "Preferential Admissions" process which means we don't take the first 30 students that apply, but look at all the applicants that register and submit their completed applications before the application deadline. We then "score" all of the components of the application and offer seats to the top 30 candidates based on those scores.*

Q: What do you look at for the Preferential Admissions process? How can I ensure that I am selected?

A: *We have tried to look at a number of factors that contribute to success as a Veterinary Technologist. All of the components of the application that are listed: the required courses and grades, additional post-secondary courses or degrees, the short answer hand-written questionnaire, hours spent in the veterinary setting (volunteer, paid or observational), the reference letters, volunteer and other animal or life experience. These are then scored and added. The top 60 applicants may be offered interviews, and this score may be added to the other components of the applicant's admission score. We do look at extra educational experiences as well, and the applicant's knowledge of the VTEC's role. The top 30 scores are made offers, and a waiting list of "alternates" consisting of the next highest qualified applicants is kept, in case someone cannot accept their seat. Each year, many "waitlisted" applicants are offered seats in the program. We developed this process to ensure that a good cross section of talented potential students can gain admission.*

To ensure that you are selected, please try and gain as much veterinary or animal experience as you can (the more hours, the better); get better than the minimum grades required wherever possible, and ensure that you have asked for references from the veterinary field that know you. As well, don't hand in a questionnaire with spelling and grammar errors, or in "text messaging style". Professional appearance and demeanor at the interview, if invited, is also expected (jeans and chewing gum are not appropriate).

Appointments with Academic advisors are available to review your application and ensure that you have all components ready and "optimized" as well.

Q: What is the salary range for VTs?

Starting salary \$18- \$25/hour ongoing but will vary regionally depending on local demand. Specialty practice, research laboratory, or veterinary industry RVTs can make considerably more.

APPENDIX II

VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY (VTEC) DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Standards of Behaviour

While attending courses, including negotiated fieldwork, students are expected to:

1. Attend classes and discussion groups as scheduled, regularly and on time.
 - a) notify instructors regarding any issue that might interfere with your capacity to function as a student;
 - b) acquire any notes/materials missed due to absence before the next scheduled class.
2. Make arrangements to undertake the rigors of working as a student (daycare, emergency backup, financial assistance, necessary materials).
3. Complete assignments on or before due dates.
 - a) strive for high quality, consistent effort, and pride in presentation (neatness, spelling).
4. Adhere to the ethical standards of the program with respect to classroom behavior, field related activity, interactions with student and instructor colleagues including, but not restricted to the following:
 - a) recognizing and accepting the limits of one's competence and role as defined by the practicum setting;
 - b) respecting confidentiality of patients; following the NAVT Code of Ethics.
5. Work independently or collaboratively with other students.
 - a) communicate with others in a respectful manner;
 - b) take self-responsibility for behaviour.
6. Study and prepare for class including:
 - a) pre-reading;
 - b) arranging to meet with student colleagues and/or instructors for help as necessary;
 - c) reviewing;
 - d) making an ongoing commitment to expand knowledge base including keeping abreast of current political and social affairs.
7. While on field placement:
 - a) work within the personnel policies of the practicum site;
 - b) while on practicum work treat any relationship as privileged;
 - c) use supervision as a tool for skill development;
 - d) maintain separation between personal and work life by arriving each day prepared to work;
 - e) utilize supervision as a tool for skill development by seeking out feedback, and providing supervisor with specific examples of attempts to utilize classroom concepts in practice;
 - f) notify the practicum site and the college of any intended absence.
9. Complete self-evaluation exercises and documents as required.

10. Utilize the classroom as an opportunity to enhance learning and to contribute to the learning of colleagues by:
 - a) actively participating in discussions;
 - b) creating conditions conducive for colleagues to offer feedback;
 - c) providing constructive feedback to others;
 - d) maintaining interest, energy level and positive commitment to task and process.
11. While attending classes or involved in fieldwork, it is inappropriate to use alcohol or other drugs during working hours or to report for practicum or classes while under the influence. The following is unacceptable:
 - a) observable impairment of psycho-motor behavior, judgment or speech, as a result of using non-medically prescribed drugs;
 - b) the smell of alcohol or other drugs on the breath or person.
12. Students are advised that personnel in the Faculty may share information in a confidential manner with each other regarding student performance or behavior that has implications for program and academic success.



APPENDIX III

VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY DIPLOMA PROGRAM (VTEC) Faculty of Science & Technology Contact Information

To apply to our program on-line, in person or by regular mail, please submit your completed application, together with your administration fee and **official** secondary and/or post-secondary transcripts to:

Mailing Address:

NEW WESTMINSTER CAMPUS

Douglas College
Registrar's Office
PO Box 2503
New Westminster, BC V3L 5B2
Attention: VTEC Diploma Program

Street Address:

COQUITLAM CAMPUS

Douglas College
Registrar's Office
1250 Pinetree Way
Coquitlam, BC V3B 7X3
Attention: Veterinary Technology (VTEC)
Admissions Officer

Street Address:

Douglas College
700 Royal Avenue
New Westminster, BC V3M 5Z5

For further information about our Veterinary Technology (*formerly Animal Health Technology*) Diploma program, please search our webpage at <http://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/catalogue/programs/DPVTEC> or e-mail vtec@douglascollege.ca

To donate to the VTEC Trust Fund, please contact:

DOUGLAS COLLEGE VTECTRUST FUND

Foundation Coordinator
604-777-6176
foundation@douglascollege.ca