

Students on the Veterinary Medicine and Science programme must make themselves familiar with the University's Fitness to Practise regulations and behave at all times in a manner that:

- I. conforms to the RCVS principles of professional conduct/practice set out in the "Fitness to Practise – A Guide for UK Veterinary Schools and Veterinary Students" guide
- II. does not jeopardise or put at risk their own welfare, wellbeing, or safety or that of others.

### **Medical Requirements**

**Visual Impairment-** A veterinary surgeon may be able to practise with some limited visual impairments (e.g. colour blindness or monocular vision), although the extent of impairment would need to be assessed against the requirements of the Day One Competences.

It should be noted that students will have to perform surgery during their course in order to meet the Day One Competences, and a judgment will need to be made in this context. A severe visual impairment would render the individual unable to practise as a veterinary surgeon.

**Hearing impairment** - Individuals with a hearing impairment are not necessarily ruled out for admission to the veterinary degree, as long as they have the appropriate coping strategies and make use of appropriate aids (e.g. cochlear implants and the use of amplified stethoscope). Issues to be taken into account will include the individual's ability to communicate with others, as well as their ability to cope in a range of practice and clinical-based contexts so as not to be a danger to themselves, colleagues, clients and animals.

**Mental health impairments** - When considering applicants with mental health problems, it must be borne in mind that studying on the veterinary course and working in the veterinary profession is a stressful undertaking. Although a history of mental illness would not necessarily preclude admission, it is advisable for such candidates to be the subject of a risk assessment. Students with mental impairments may need support from the university's special needs specialist. Where there is a clinical competency assessment in the course, however, students will need to demonstrate that they are able to perform unaided under conditions appropriate to veterinary practice. In the context of the ready availability of drugs to a veterinary surgeon, and in a profession with a higher than average suicide rate, a history of mental illness could be grounds for not admitting an applicant onto the course where they could be a danger to themselves.

**Loss or partial loss of a limb** - On its own, loss or partial loss of a limb would not necessarily preclude an individual from consideration for admission. The effects of the individual's disability with reference to the Day One Competences should be considered. In particular, any impairment of the individual's ability to handle

and restrain animals safely, and to handle equipment will need to be assessed by the OH professional and a veterinary surgeon with experience of that species, and considered.

**Wheelchair users** - An individual who is permanently based in a wheelchair would be unable to demonstrate the full range of Day One Competences, and would not therefore be able to graduate with the registerable veterinary degree.

**Allergy** - Asthma and allergies to animal dander and other allergens - In the interests of the individual's safety, self-disclosure of such conditions is important at the point of entry to the course. Generally, such conditions are controllable and students can cope well. In some severe cases, however, an allergy may prove to be uncontrollable and life threatening and thus could be grounds for non-admission. Exposure to a wide range of species on the veterinary course is an inevitable and integral part of veterinary training, and applicants need to be advised that the requirements of the Day One Competences mean that they will not be able to avoid contact with certain species on the grounds of an allergy, or to request dispensation from parts of the course.

If you are at all unsure whether you will meet the criteria for medical fitness please contact [admissions@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@surrey.ac.uk)