

Bachelor of Veterinary Sciences [BVSc]

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Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc)

The full-time BVSc programme is offered by the Faculty of Veterinary Science of the University of Pretoria, the only faculty of its kind in South Africa.

Entry into the BVSc programme is highly competitive due to the popularity of the programme and limited available spaces. Selection is based on academic merit and the compulsory Veterinary Science Value-added Form.

- Applicants in the six-year BVSc programme will complete a core curriculum over four and a half years (nine semesters) and then conclude their programme with 18 months of work-integrated training in the core and elective components and a research project.
- The BVSc programme consists of a combination of lectures, electronic learning opportunities, discussions, demonstrations, seminars, assignments, curricular community engagement, group work, practicals and clinical work, which are offered mainly in the Onderstepoort Veterinary Academic Hospital and its satellite community clinics and include exposure to private practices, state veterinary services, commercial and small-scale farms, abattoirs and various other related industries.
- The programme's first year is a biological science foundation year and is presented on the Hatfield Campus. The remaining veterinary-specific years are offered at the Onderstepoort Campus.
- Veterinarians and personal wellbeing: The BVSc programme and a career in veterinary science is both challenging and enriching, and applicants should take note that a high level of mental resilience is required to thrive in this profession. Applicants with prior or existing mental health risks should consider this carefully and seek professional advice when considering a career as a veterinary professional.

BVSc is regarded as level 8 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), enabling the graduate to enter postgraduate programmes at the master's level.

The BVSc programme is accredited with the **South African Veterinary Council (SAVC)**, the **Veterinary Council of Namibia (VCN)**, the **Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)** in the United Kingdom, and the **Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC)** in Australia and New Zealand. BVSc graduates are eligible to register as veterinarians in these and several other countries without passing any further professional examinations. The **SAVC** governs the ethics and standards of

veterinary education and practice in South Africa. All students must register with the Council at first registration in the BVSc programme, maintain their registration annually, and adhere to its rules. Registration with the SAVC is a prerequisite for practising as a veterinarian in South Africa.

For a young person who likes working with people, and who is interested in animals and a career in biomedical sciences, veterinary science provides a spectrum of wonderful opportunities. Like many similar career options, veterinary science may perhaps be considered a 'calling' and the decision to become a veterinarian involves the mind, the body, as well as the heart. While a love for animals may be a component of the decision to pursue veterinary science or veterinary nursing as a career, a deeper empathy will be required, as well as the passion to improve people's lives by improving food safety and security, coupled with a sense of compassion and caring for animals, their owners and farmers. The course is demanding and requires significant mental and emotional resilience, engagement, dedication and hard work.

While love for animals may be a component of the decision to pursue veterinary science or veterinary nursing as a career, a more profound empathy will be required, as well as the passion for improving people's lives by improving food safety and security, coupled with a sense of compassion and caring for animals, their owners and farmers. The course is demanding and requires significant mental and emotional resilience, engagement, dedication and hard work.

Being a veterinarian or a veterinary nurse are both careers with long and often irregular hours, and usually involve hard physical work, while testing tolerance levels. The ability to work with animals, but even more so with people, is essential.

For more information, please consult the Faculty webpage.

Career Opportunities

The **Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)** employs all South African BVSc graduates for 12 months' **Compulsory Community Service (CCS)** after completing the BVSc programme and before graduates are allowed to practice as veterinarians in South Africa for any other employer including self-employment. For more information visit [click here](#).

State veterinary services

A significant number of veterinarians are employed as state or provincial veterinarians in government service. They render essential regulatory services related to the diagnosis, surveillance, monitoring, control, prevention and eradication of notifiable diseases. State veterinarians are also responsible for matters related to the import and export of animals and animal products as well as for food safety and security. In regions where there are no private practitioners, state veterinarians also provide clinical

services. Veterinarians are also employed in the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Private practice

Most veterinarians in the country are gainfully employed in private practice, either in their own practices, in partnership, as assistants or as locums. There are several avenues of private practice: production animal practice, providing veterinary services to the livestock farmer (cattle, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry and game), companion animal practice (dogs, cats, horses, cage birds, etc.) and mixed practice (pets/production animals/wildlife). The services provided by the private practitioner include, among others, clinical services, disease prevention strategies, advice and a whole range of consultative services on nutrition, management, production, reproduction, and biotechnology.

Research

Research can be conducted in a wide spectrum of areas (veterinary, agricultural and biomedical sciences) attending to problems related to both animals and humans.

Academia

Graduates can teach at veterinary, medical, agricultural and natural science institutions, conduct research, participate in community engagement projects and provide clinical services.

Private, state and provincial diagnostic laboratories

Graduates can provide routine or forensic diagnostic services involving disciplines such as pathology, clinical pathology, microbiology and toxicology.

Veterinary public health

Food security and the production of food that is safe for human consumption are very important fields in which the veterinarian plays a key role. Veterinarians are responsible for ensuring the maintenance of meat and milk hygiene in abattoirs and milk processing plants, in addition to their role in the maintenance and improvement of animal health on farms. Veterinarians involved in the field of veterinary public health play an important role in the control of zoonotic diseases (ie diseases transferred from animals to humans).

Commerce

The veterinarian is involved in research and product development in the pharmaceutical and feed industries, as well as in the provision of technical advice in sales and management.

Consultancy

The veterinarian can provide specialised or specialist services to the farm animal and pet industries, for example, as a consultant in the pig and poultry industries, feedlots or specialist practices (such as surgery, internal medicine, ophthalmology and dentistry). In the case of a specialist practice, the practitioner will need to have the appropriate postgraduate qualification and be registered with the SAVC to practise as a specialist veterinarian.

Laboratory animal science

The veterinarian is an essential member of the team involved in the welfare of laboratory animals, monitoring the utilisation of animals for experimental purposes and giving advice on ethical issues.

Wildlife management

The veterinarian may pursue career opportunities in wildlife ranching, conservation and at zoological institutions. This has been a growing field in recent years.

Poultry production

The poultry industry provides large volumes of animal protein for human consumption and veterinarians play a pivotal role in terms of food security.

Animal welfare

The veterinarian is intimately involved in animal welfare in the provision of clinical services and advice, and in management at welfare organisations. Veterinarians are involved in general matters pertaining to the welfare of animals through the promotion of appropriate husbandry practices, nutritional practices, disease prevention strategies and sound production systems.

International employment

Graduates from the Faculty enjoy wide national and international recognition and the BVSc degree of the University of Pretoria is accredited for registration as a veterinarian in the United Kingdom by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, as well as by the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council and the Veterinary Council of Namibia.

More information regarding career opportunities can be found on the websites of the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) at [click here](#) and the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) at [click here](#).

Programme Code

08130005



Closing Dates

- **SA** – 31/05/2023
 - **Non-SA** – 31/05/2023
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Admission Requirements

Important information for all prospective students for 2024

The admission requirements below apply to all who apply for admission to the University of Pretoria with a **National Senior Certificate (NSC)** and **Independent Examination Board (IEB)** qualifications. [Click here](#) for this Faculty Brochure.

Enquiries: [click here](#)

Minimum requirements

Achievement level

English Home

Language or

English First

Additional

Language

NSC/IEB

5

Mathematics

NSC/IEB

5

Physical Sciences

NSC/IEB

5

APS

35

Proposed second choice programmes for BVSc are BSc (Biological Sciences), BSc (Zoology) and BScAgric (Animal Science). These programmes are also recommended for applicants who intend to apply again for a transfer to the BVSc programme in 2024 or later. Note: Students who intend to apply for admission to BVSc may register for BSc (Biological Sciences) modules, including Medical Terminology (MTL 180).

Life Orientation is excluded when calculating the APS.

Applicants currently in Grade 12 must apply with their final Grade 11 (or equivalent) results.

Applicants who have completed Grade 12 must apply with their final NSC or equivalent qualification results.

Please note that meeting the minimum academic requirements does not guarantee admission.

Successful candidates will be notified once admitted or conditionally admitted.

Applicants should check their application status regularly on the UP Student Portal at [click here](#).

Applicants with qualifications other than the abovementioned should refer to the Brochure: Undergraduate Programme Information 2024: Qualifications other than the NSC and IEB, available at [click here](#).

International Students: [Click here](#).

Transferring students

A transferring student is a student who, at the time of applying at the University of Pretoria (UP) is/was a registered student at another tertiary institution. A transferring student will be considered for admission based on NSC or equivalent qualification and previous academic performance. Students who have been dismissed from other institutions due to poor academic performance will not be considered for admission to UP.

Closing dates: Same as above

Returning students

A returning student is a student who, at the time of application for a degree programme is/was a registered student at UP, and wants to transfer to another degree at UP. A returning student will be considered for admission based on NSC or equivalent qualification and previous academic performance.

- Students who have been excluded/dismissed from a faculty due to poor academic performance may be considered for admission to another programme at UP, as per faculty-specific requirements.
- Only ONE transfer between UP faculties and TWO transfers within a faculty will be allowed.
- Admission of returning students will always depend on the faculty concerned and the availability of space in the programmes for which they apply.

Closing date for applications from returning students is the same as the above

Note: Any deliberate omission of information, or any false information provided by an applicant in his/her application or on the Veterinary Science Value-added Form (VSVAF) may result in the immediate cancellation of the application, admission or registration.

Selection Process

Selection categories

School leavers

- A school leaver is someone who has never been registered in a tertiary education programme.
- A valid NSC/IEB or equivalent qualification with admission for degree purposes.
- Subject requirements and the required Admission Point Score (APS) as indicated under Admission Requirements. The APS is calculated from the achievement levels obtained in the six 20-credit subjects of the NSC.
- Life Orientation is excluded when calculating the APS.
- For applicants in the NSC or IEB schooling systems, conditional admission is based on Grade 11 final examination results and the Veterinary Science Value-added Form (VSVAF), and final admission is based on maintaining a similar performance in the NSC/IEB final examinations.
- For applicants from other schooling systems conditional admission is based on the final results of the year preceding the last year of schooling or equivalent, and final admission is based on submitting a certificate for admission to degree studies or complete or conditional exemption by USAf.
- Additional admission criteria may be used including an interview and additional selection tests.

Applicants with previous higher education exposure

- There is an opportunity for students with previous higher education experience to also apply for the BVSc programme. Placement in either the first or second year of the BVSc programme will depend on, among others, merit and subject choices.

Applicants who are not South African citizens

- A small number of students from countries other than South Africa (applicants who are not South African citizens) are admitted to the programme, including those from neighbouring Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries.
- If an applicant has multiple citizenships which includes South African citizenship, he/she will be considered as a South African applicant.
- Applicants who are accepted receive a letter of confirmation from the University, which will facilitate their application for a study permit.
- A valid study permit, obtained in the country of origin, is a prerequisite for registration.
- Applicants from countries other than South Africa (applicants who are not South African citizens) must comply with all UP and the Department of Home Affairs' regulations relating to students in this category.
- Please consult the International Cooperation Division's **Newcomer's Guide** for more information: [click here](#)

Conditional admission

- Conditionally admitted applicants forfeit their placement if they do not comply with the relevant conditions.

A total of 190 students are admitted to the BVSc programme every year. The Faculty endeavours to meet the veterinary needs of the country and the region, as well as the specific requirements of higher education legislation through the selection of applicants.

The recruitment and selection process is therefore structured in such a way that it will address diversity, excellence, equity, gender and geographic distribution.

The procedure will be reviewed on an annual basis, but typically makes provision for the following categories of students:

- South African school-leavers enrolled for the NSC or IEB: first round of selection in July
- South African school-leavers enrolled for the NSC or IEB: second round of selection in January
- South African school-leavers enrolled in other educational schooling systems (IGCSE/GCSE/NSSC OL/O level or HIGCSE/NSSC HL or A/AS level or IB SL/HL or KOMBI ABITUR or CGCE/UCE/NECO/WAEC/ZIMSEC O LEVEL or CGCE/UACE/WAEC/ZIMSEC A Level or NCV)
- South African applicants with university exposure: internal transfers from first year BSc (UP) (excluding the BSc – Extended Programme)
- South African applicants with university exposure: internal transfers from second to final year BSc (UP)
- South African applicants with university exposure: UP BSc graduates and postgraduates (BSc degree completed) (May include external transfer students who completed the required modules at UP within the past 5 years)
- South African applicants with university exposure: external transfers (other universities) from second to final year medically or biologically related BSc programmes, and BSc graduates and postgraduates
- South African applicants enrolled in the third semester of UP's BSc Extended Programme
- South African applicants with university exposure: BSc graduates (BSc degree completed) registered for the final year of postgraduate studies in the Faculty of Veterinary Science, UP
- Applicants nominated by DALRRD, Provincial Departments of Agriculture, SANDF or SAPS
- School-leaving applicants who are not South African citizens and who wrote the NSC or IEB
- School-leaving applicants who are not South African citizens and are enrolled in other schooling systems
- Applicants who are not South African citizens, but have had university exposure

The Veterinary Science Value Added Form (VSVAF)

The VSVAF is used in the Faculty of Veterinary Science to ensure that the applicant makes an informed decision about a career choice. This form will indicate prior exposure to veterinary science as profession and the Faculty will allocate a score based on the prospective student's veterinary profile.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the online VSVAF is completed by the relevant deadline and that all related documents are uploaded.

The components are:

- Applicants should provide evidence of their **balanced lifestyle that will promote and sustain personal wellness** (leadership positions, participation in sports, culture and adventure activities, etc).
- **Animal experience:** Applicants should reflect on their experience with certain aspects, including animals being killed for humane purposes, animals being slaughtered or animals giving birth. There is a section in the online VSVAF where these reflections must be typed in.
- **Career shadowing:** Applicants should provide evidence of career shadowing of practising professionals (veterinarians). Applicants should attempt to get exposure to as wide a range as possible of practice areas within the relevant profession. This includes career shadowing of a professional in the relevant profession in government and in private practice (production animals, equines, wildlife and small animals).
- **Note:** Applicants may be requested to participate in additional selection activities to verify the score obtained from the VSVAF. This may include an interview and/or additional selection tests.

Why you should complete the Veterinary Science Value Added Form (VSVAF)

- Completion of the VSVAF will help you to make an informed decision about the profession as a suitable career choice for you.
- The score achieved for the VSVAF can improve an applicant's chances for selection.
- **The VSVAF will help to prepare you for your studies by providing you with prior learning opportunities in the particular profession.**

Minimum duration of study

6 years, full-time

Faculty Notes

Modules will be presented only in English, which is the University's official language of tuition, communication and correspondence.

The Faculty of Veterinary Science is unique in South Africa. It is the only institution responsible for training veterinarians and veterinary nurses. Our graduates and research programmes are vital in enhancing human and animal health, promoting biosecurity and welfare, and ensuring our production animals, wildlife and pets are safe and in good health.

The quality and scope of the Faculty's training is such that our graduates are able to enter postgraduate programmes at universities across the world and can practice in many countries without the need to write registration exams. The Faculty is locally relevant and passionate about meeting the needs of South Africa. This not only applies to commercial farming but also to primary animal healthcare, where veterinarians as well as veterinary nurses can assist rural communities and smallholder farmers.

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Enquiries about the programme

[Click Here](#)



How to apply



Online Application



Note: Also consult General Rules and Information on the Yearbook website for additional information.

Disclaimer: Due to the continuous restructuring of the Faculty and this website, some of the information displayed here may not fully reflect the most recent developments in the Faculty. Any discrepancies that are experienced may be taken up with Student Administration of the Faculty.