

A painting depicting a man in a white tunic, possibly a veterinarian or a scholar, examining the paw of a lion. The man is leaning over the lion, which is looking towards him with a calm expression. The background is a soft, textured wash of colors, suggesting an outdoor setting.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN ASSESSMENT  
TOOL FOR THE QUALITY OF  
VETERINARY EDUCATION, USING  
ALUMNI AS SOURCE OF INFORMATION

ONTWIKKELING VAN EEN EVALUATIE-INSTRUMENT OM  
DE KWALITEIT VAN DIERGENEESKUNDIG ONDERWIJS TE  
BEOORDELEN, MET ALUMNI ALS INFORMATIEBRON

Karlijn Schlooz  
3052001

Utrecht  
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Project supervisors  
P. van Beukelen  
A.D.C. Jaarsma  
Chair Quality Improvement in Veterinary  
Education, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine,  
Utrecht University



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## **SUMMARY**

Veterinary education is a lifelong process. To ensure its quality, the curriculum needs to be assessed to make sure it adequately prepares students for the veterinary profession. Studies of alumni's retrospective views on their training, i.e. from the users' perspective, are a valuable tool in outcomes assessment (as part of quality assurance). These outcomes assessments are also needed for accreditation.

A literature review was conducted on alumni outcomes. Most publications were on medical education, although veterinary medicine and dentistry were also addressed. Most researchers used questionnaires, based on competences, as a quantitative survey tool. Focus groups and one-to-one interviews can be used to gather more in-depth information. To ensure success of quality assurance, evaluation activities should be carried out systematically and structurally, integrated in an organisation's regular work patterns. Many researchers gathered valuable information on the quality of education making use of (a combination of) questionnaires and focus groups. Some researchers involved not only alumni, but also their employers in the survey. Especially this triangulation seems to be highly effective in assessing the quality of education. Alumni assessment also has downsides though, such as lack of comparison to other educational programmes, details of the programme can be forgotten about, and self-evaluation is prone to be biased.



## **SAMENVATTING**

De kwaliteit van diergeneeskundig onderwijs moet voortdurend beoordeeld worden om dierenartsen op te leiden die voldoen aan verwachtingen uit de beroepsgroep en maatschappij. De mening van alumni over de opleiding, als ervaringsdeskundige, is heel waardevol binnen deze quality assurance. Tevens is outcomes assessment van belang bij de accreditatie van de opleiding.

Een literatuuronderzoek over alumni outcomes is uitgevoerd. De meeste publicaties gingen over medisch onderwijs, hoewel ook artikelen over diergeneeskunde en tandheelkunde gevonden zijn. De meeste onderzoekers maken gebruik van vragenlijsten, gebaseerd op competenties. Hiermee wordt kwantitatieve informatie verkregen. Voor meer kwalitatieve data kunnen focus-groepen en één-op-één interviews uitgevoerd worden. Voor een goede quality assurance, moet evaluatie van het curriculum systematisch en gestructureerd uitgevoerd worden. Veel onderzoekers hebben door het gebruik van (een combinatie van) vragenlijsten en focus groepen waardevolle informatie verzameld over de kwaliteit van onderwijs. Sommige onderzoekers hebben naast alumni zelf ook hun werkgevers betrokken bij de evaluatie. Met name deze triangulatie lijkt zeer effectief in outcomes assessment. Er kleeft ook een aantal nadelen aan alumni assessment, zoals een gebrek aan vergelijking met andere opleidingen, geheugen, en vooroordelen.



## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AVMA	American Veterinary Medical Association
CVMA	Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
EAEVE	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
ERIC	Education Resources Information Center
FVM	Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
IVLOS	Instituut Voor Lerarenopleiding, Onderwijsontwikkeling en Studievaardigheden
KNMvD	Koninklijke Nederlandse Maatschappij voor Diergeneeskunde, Royal Netherlands Veterinary Association
NVAO	Nederlands-Vlaamse AccreditatieOrganisatie, Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization
OA	Outcomes Assessment
OER	Onderwijs- en ExamenRegeling, Education and Examination Regulations
OSZ	Onderwijs- en StudentenZaken
PBL	Problem-Based Learning
PRHO	Pre-Registration House Officer
QA	Quality Assurance
UU	Utrecht University
VSNU	Vereniging Samenwerkende Nederlandse Universiteiten



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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 - Background**

The needs of the veterinary profession are constantly evolving, and the knowledge and technology base is ever-growing<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, veterinary education is a lifelong process. Colleges face the challenge of adapting their undergraduate curricula and assessing the programme whether they adequately prepare their students for the specific needs of the profession in practice<sup>1</sup>. Business management, financial planning and marketing, communication and interpersonal skills are subjects today's veterinarian should be familiar with and capable of<sup>2</sup>.

In response to changing insights on the ways of education and reports of accreditation organizations, the Dutch veterinary curriculum has changed drastically over the past 15 years<sup>3,4</sup>. In 1995, a 6-years innovative curriculum was introduced with more focus on problem-solving skills and generic competences such as communication and academic skills. Also, students had to choose specific tracking in the final year for more in-depth knowledge and experience in a certain species or sector. In 2001, this curriculum was elaborated further and specific tracking started in the first year of the programme. In 2007, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (FVM) at Utrecht University (UU) started a Bachelor-Master curriculum following European legislation<sup>5,6</sup>. More information on the Dutch veterinary curriculum and its developments is available in Appendix A.

To evaluate the quality of the veterinary curriculum, several tools are available. During education, students' knowledge can be examined e.g. by paper-and-pencil tests, practical tests, feedback from educational staff, and student surveys<sup>7</sup>. Studies of alumni's retrospective views on their training are also a valuable tool in the assessment of the quality of the education received<sup>3,8</sup>. During the first year of working as a veterinarian, alumni can encounter situations they feel underprepared for. From the users' perspective, graduates can offer feedback to institutions about the achievement of educational objectives, the competences acquired by students, the design and organization of the curriculum, and gaps in the curriculum that alumni encounter in professional practice<sup>3</sup>. In other words, alumni with some working experience can judge the significance of their education, and thus can give significant information on the strengths and weaknesses of a curriculum<sup>9,10</sup>. In addition to assessment of quality of education, alumni research can provide important insight into the current educational needs of students<sup>11</sup>, and provide information on employment status and characteristics, satisfaction with ones career, and community involvement<sup>8</sup>.

Others can also provide information on graduates' functioning in their early career as veterinarian. Employers of recently graduated veterinarians can give information on how well prepared alumni are for practice, as can (to a lesser extent) their clients<sup>2</sup>.

Quality assurance (QA) can be defined as a continuous process of measurement, judgement, and improvement of an educational programme<sup>10,12,13</sup>. Outcomes assessment (OA) is the systematic gathering, interpretation, and use of information about the view of students and alumni on the education they received<sup>7,13,14</sup>. QA and OA can be used internally to control and improve the quality of an educational programme, and to make data-based decisions for curricular changes<sup>3,7,9,10,12,14-17</sup>. Externally, QA and OA are used to provide evidence that the veterinary programme provides adequate training, what can lead to accreditation of the veterinary college<sup>1,7,9,12,14,15,17-19</sup>. In addition to the quality of education, the quality of research and other services can be evaluated<sup>18</sup>.



The findings mentioned above lead to the following research question: *How can alumni be used optimally to evaluate the quality of veterinary education?* To define this question more clearly, it was divided into the following sub-questions:

1. With what tools can the opinions (on the quality of education) of large numbers of alumni be inquired quantitatively?
  - a. Who should be subject of such a survey?
  - b. What questions should be included into such a survey?
2. With what tools can the opinions of alumni be inquired qualitatively?
3. How valuable are the opinions (on the performance of alumni) of alumni's employers in outcomes assessment?
  - a. How can the opinion of employers be inquired?
4. How valuable are the opinions (on the performance of alumni) of alumni's clients in outcomes assessment?
  - a. How can the opinion of clients be inquired?

This study focuses on the development of an assessment tool for the quality of veterinary education, by obtaining input from its primary stakeholders; its alumni. OA should be evidence-based<sup>15</sup>, and this paper reviews the literature on the use of alumni assessing the quality of the education. Different kinds of survey tools and subjects (stakeholders) are explained and their (dis)advantages, reliability and validity discussed. In addition, a questionnaire was designed especially for alumni. Following the literature review and questionnaire design, a set of alumni assessment tools will be proposed for QA. This set could, with some minor adjustments to meet each institutions purposes individually, also be used by other veterinary colleges.



## **II. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 - Literature Research**

Scientific publications were collected using the electronic databases of PubMed, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), and Scopus. The URL's used are shown in table 1. PubMed is a database on biomedical topics, while ERIC focuses on education literature and Scopus on scholarly journal articles in general. Various combinations of search terms were used, containing alumnus or graduate, survey, questionnaire, veterinary education, medical education, focus group, assessment, outcomes assessment, quality, education, employer, interview, dentistry, education, quality assessment, and/or quality assurance. The search was limited to publications dating back to 2000, in either English or Dutch. Titles and abstracts were checked to ensure relevance. Of two journals, namely the Journal of Veterinary Medical Education and Medical Education, the archives were searched for relevant publications dating back to 2004. References cited in publications were also checked for usefulness.

When analyzing the publications, emphasis was on study design, reasons for the design, and results (as a measure effectiveness of the study). Furthermore, if a questionnaire was used in a study to evaluate quality of education, survey items were collected for our own questionnaire design.

Table 1: Search strategies

Database	Search terms <i>(NB combinations were used)</i>
PubMed <a href="http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed">http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed</a>	survey, assessment, questionnaire, focus group, interview, evaluation
ERIC <a href="http://www.eric.ed.gov/">http://www.eric.ed.gov/</a>	alumnus, graduate, employer veterinary education, medical education, dentistry, education
Scopus <a href="http://www.scopus.com/home.url">http://www.scopus.com/home.url</a>	quality, quality assessment, outcomes assessment, quality assurance

### **2.2 - Alumni Survey**

To obtain alumni's view on their education, a questionnaire was designed. This survey was based on literature research and competences each student should be capable of by graduation. The first part of the survey contained multiple-choice and open-ended questions to obtain general information on the respondent, about his/her education, workplace, and other activities.

Next was a section with statements and Likert-type scales on the level of preparedness for various competences. These competences were drawn up following internal research at the faculty<sup>20</sup>, in which focus group sessions were held with several stakeholders; alumni working with companion animals, farm animals, and in management & policy (6 months to 5 years after graduation), clients of farm animal and companion animal veterinarians, and experts from industry, university, and employers with many years of practice. All these stakeholders have their own distinct perspective of what the educational programme should accomplish<sup>17</sup>. The list of competences formulated met the educational goals of the faculty<sup>21</sup> and accreditation organizations. Competences used in the questionnaires found in the literature search were checked for any missing competences.



The questionnaire ended with some statements and Likert-type scales on satisfaction with education and career, and open-ended questions about the education received. These questions were also formulated after literature research.

SurveyMonkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>) was used to turn the questionnaire into a web-based survey. SurveyMonkey was chosen for its accessibility (respondents only have to go online to complete the survey), and is easy to use for the survey design and collection of data.

The survey was pilot tested by recently graduated veterinarians of various specific trackings (n=5) and sixth year students (n=4). These graduates were asked what their expectations of an alumni survey were. After completion of the questionnaire, they were asked to share comments on the survey such as its length, clarity of the questions, and missing or insignificant questions.



### **III. RESULTS**

#### **3.1 - Literature Review**

Over the past decades, many institutions and faculties have used alumni assessment to investigate the quality of their education. This trend is mainly described in publications on medical education, although veterinary medicine and dentistry are also addressed. Different instruments can be used, e.g. questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, phone-surveys, and observations. The purpose of a particular research should determine which type or types of instrument(s) is/are used<sup>10</sup>. If an evaluation process is used to improve education, rich and descriptive information is needed to identify sources of difficulty and viable sources for change<sup>10</sup>. When accountability is the purpose, objective, standardized, and externally defensible information about the curriculum is needed<sup>10</sup>.

Usually, questionnaires are used, based on competences set by accreditation bodies, literature research, and/or an institutions educational goals<sup>1,2,14,19</sup>. Sometimes, competences are derived from interviews with stakeholders<sup>1,19,22,23</sup>. Alumni assessments mainly focus on the transition (preparedness) from student to practitioner<sup>3,12,22,24-29</sup>. In most cases, problem-based learning curricula are compared to more traditional ways of education<sup>3,24,26,29</sup>. A summary of survey instruments used in the publications found is shown in table 2.

##### 3.1.1: Quantitative Surveys

Questionnaires are well suited to describing population characteristics and ranges of attitudes and opinions<sup>30</sup>. The biggest advantage of the use of a well-designed questionnaire, is its simplicity<sup>2,31</sup>. Once the survey is developed, it can be sent to as many participants as desired, and processing of results is relatively easy compared to information gathered from interviews<sup>31</sup>. This can also be a downside though, because it does not provide a deeper appreciation of educational outcomes<sup>2</sup>. Open-ended questions can yield richer information though<sup>10</sup>.

Most questionnaires begin with some demographic questions and educational and employment characteristics (e.g. species of interest, number of hours worked per week, number of years of experience)<sup>8,11,12,14,19,30</sup>, to retrieve general information on the respondents. Results can then later be analyzed by separating respondents into subgroups, based on the type of education and professional activity. This way, potential bias is reduced although group sizes may become small<sup>1,9,12,16</sup>. Sometimes questions about work opportunities, salary, and time spent job searching are also included to provide more insight into a programme's strengths and weaknesses<sup>11,15,32,33</sup>.

Following demographic questions and other characteristics, most surveys then ask the respondents to rate their preparedness on a set of competences. Competences are composites of knowledge, skills, and attitudes<sup>32</sup>. Clearly defined competences are vital when assessing the outcomes of a programme; measured either by alumni themselves (although over- and underestimating might occur) or their observers<sup>17,32</sup>. These surveys attempt to link a graduate's current skills and abilities to teaching, learning, and outside-the-classroom activities<sup>34</sup>. Some use a different approach though, i.e. prioritising specific content areas within the curriculum<sup>35</sup>. Others want respondents to evaluate all courses and clinical rotations<sup>8,14</sup>.

In addition to closed-ended questions, many researchers give respondents the opportunity to share free comments<sup>28</sup>, or specific open-ended questions<sup>3,12,30</sup>. Information gathered by free comments and open-ended questions can be used to identify broad concepts or concerns of respondents<sup>11</sup>. Open-ended questions can be about transition from student to practitioner<sup>3</sup>, underrepresented topics in the



curriculum<sup>3,8,35</sup>, or satisfaction with education and career<sup>8</sup>. Surveying educational and job satisfaction and transition from university to practice, is based on the assumption that the quality and effectiveness of an educational programme can be measured by monitoring what alumni have accomplished in the years following graduation<sup>9,34</sup>. Accomplishments of alumni can, however, also be attributed to external factors such as student-involvement during the education and post-graduation courses<sup>34</sup>. Also, career satisfaction can affect the opinion on the quality of the education received<sup>34</sup>.

### 3.1.2: Qualitative Surveys

Qualitative studies such as one-to-one interviews and focus groups are aimed to explore and obtain insight into complex issues<sup>25,29,33,36-38</sup>. The data (constructs, i.e. ideas derived from participants' experiences) can be used to improve to understand the subject under investigation<sup>36</sup>. These assessment tools can also be used as instruments to clarify survey results of a more general questionnaire<sup>16</sup>. A downside of interviews and focus groups is that the researcher has less control over the data that are generated<sup>38</sup>, and processing results is highly time-consuming. Also, interviews lack external validity<sup>36</sup>. Group interaction in focus groups will encourage people to explore and clarify their opinion further than in one-to-one interviews<sup>25,38</sup>. Group influence is also a disadvantage of focus groups however, possibly effecting results<sup>29</sup>.

### 3.1.3: Other Survey Instruments

Questionnaires and interview techniques are good means of obtaining participants' perception on how well prepared alumni are. It would be interesting, however, to be able to evaluate a graduate's competences by his/her acting and behaviour.

The simulated client method (also known as undercover careseekers or mystery shopping) is a survey instrument mainly used in health care for self-assessment to evaluate quality of provided services<sup>39</sup>, and in medical education<sup>7,40</sup>. Weiss et al. used simulated clients to assess the clinical and communication skills of pharmacists<sup>41</sup>. Overall the communication skills of pharmacists visited were good, although some used jargon<sup>41</sup>. Surveying veterinary alumni with this method seems unfit though for evaluating the quality of education. Standardized patients provide information on what the veterinarian actually does in practice (and thus the quality of his/her education)<sup>40</sup>, but have many disadvantages such as the thorough selection and training of patients and clients needed, the high number of veterinarians to be surveyed, ethical concerns, and costs<sup>41</sup>.

Fraser et al. focused on the career paths of veterinary students whom participated in the Cornell Leadership Program<sup>42</sup>. Annual tracking records of alumni were kept to provide insight in career paths. Another information source used in their publication was a list of published scientific papers by alumni.

### 3.1.4: Subjects

When assessing how well the veterinary medical curriculum prepares its graduates for their careers, alumni and their immediate employers (or supervisors) can be considered as the most pertinent initial targets<sup>12,14</sup>. Although not previously reported, employers' perception on the curriculum can be biased either positively or negatively by influences such as personal relations with alumni<sup>12</sup>.

Client satisfaction surveys are held in dentistry and medical schools<sup>9</sup>. Results of such surveys are prone to be biased however when used to assess graduated veterinarians; people have the tendency to become attached to their veterinarian, resulting in falsely high ratings<sup>9</sup>. Also, the further away the information source is, the more resource-intensive data collection effort becomes<sup>2</sup>.



### 3.1.5: Triangulation

What might be the most valuable assessment includes a combination of survey instruments and subjects; benefitting from the gathering of both quantitative and qualitative information from several stakeholders (alumni and their employers).

To survey employers, adapted questionnaires for alumni can be used. With these similar questionnaires, comparisons between those groups' opinions can be made easily<sup>28,30</sup>. Doucet and Vrins sent questionnaires to both veterinary alumni and their employers<sup>12</sup>. Each group was satisfied with the level of preparation graduates have for practice, although weaknesses were stated on communication skills. Wall developed similar questionnaires for both medical alumni (in this case PRHOs) and their consultant educational supervisors<sup>28</sup>. Overall, consultants rated the preparedness of new house officers lower than the house officers themselves<sup>28</sup>. The main concern was the preparedness in basic doctoring skills. Black et al. used different questionnaires for veterinary alumni and their employers respectively. The employers' survey focused on satisfaction with graduates, the adequacy of their training, the strengths and weaknesses of alumni, comparison of alumni from different colleges, and future hiring intentions<sup>14</sup>. Butler used similar questionnaires for both alumni and their employers. Both groups were satisfied with the recent graduate's performance/competence for workplace, although alumni were ill prepared in treating exotic animals en to a lesser extent equine practice<sup>30</sup>.

Watmough et al. wanted to compare the communication skills of PRHOs of a traditional lecture-based and PBL (problem-based learning) curriculum respectively. They designed questionnaires for both PRHOs and their educational supervisors, based on key skills formed by *The New Doctor*<sup>29</sup>. Following these questionnaires, 9 focus groups were held among 61 PRHOs<sup>29</sup>. The alumni were asked to rate their own communication skills and their opinion on the communication skills training educated<sup>29</sup>. In addition, 41 interviews were organized with educational supervisors<sup>29</sup>. During these semi-structured interviews, the new PBL curriculum was discussed and participants were asked for their view on the preparedness of graduates to work as PRHOs<sup>29</sup>.

### 3.1.6: Implementation

It is useful to have a project group that is responsible for quality assurance, to construct the instruments, interpret the data, and report the results<sup>10</sup>. This way, a coherent system is established in which not only the programme is evaluated, but also the system by which the evaluation took place. A report about the results of an evaluation can be written by the project group, and presented to members of the curriculum committee who can ask course coordinators to imply small changes or make greater changes to the curriculum themselves. Black et al. for instance have already assigned their OA to certain faculty staff members, namely those involved in the self-study for accreditation<sup>14</sup>.

Many researchers sent questionnaires to their alumni only once<sup>3,14,19,22,28,33</sup>. Others have sent questionnaires to consecutive cohorts of alumni<sup>11,43,44</sup>, being able to compare the different cohorts and possible changes in the educational programme (measure to a standard)<sup>10,12,30</sup>. Regular evaluation is also needed so that the involvement of stakeholders will not diminish<sup>10</sup>. The frequency by which evaluations should be held is difficult to define, and should be sufficient to measure whether changes result in improvements<sup>10</sup>. The Ontario Veterinary College sends out questionnaires annually to report the level of employer satisfaction with the performance of veterinarians who graduated less than one year<sup>30</sup>.



## 3.2 - Development of a Questionnaire for Alumni

### 3.2.1: Questionnaire design

Based on the literature study, a questionnaire was designed with the structure described in paragraph 3.1.1; demographic questions and characteristics of education and employment, followed by ratings of preparedness for competences, and open-ended questions. The complete list of questions (in Dutch) can be found in appendix B.

Many researchers use a similar set of competences in their questionnaires<sup>3,22,28</sup>. For the questionnaire design, a set of competences was used that is currently being defined at the FVM of UU. This set of competences can be divided into the following domains:

- Veterinary Expertise
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Entrepreneurship
- Health and Animal Welfare
- Scholarship
- Personal Development

Each domain contains a number of competences; e.g. the category 'Veterinary Expertise' contains items on consultation (i.e. history taking, physical examination, treatment, make a prognosis), diagnostics (imaging, blood work, faecal examination), surgical skills, euthanasia, and emergency care. Questionnaires found in publications of the literature study were checked, to see whether no items were missing. A summary of these findings is illustrated in table 3.

Participants are asked for their opinions about their education preparing them for these competences, using a Likert-type<sup>45</sup> scale. Most researchers use a symmetrical scale of 5-points wide<sup>3,14,22,24,29,30</sup>, although any number between 3 and 10 can be used<sup>11,12,27,28</sup>. When using the same questionnaire for a longitudinal annual survey, a wider Likert-type scale might be more useful in detecting small improvements in the experienced quality of the curriculum<sup>11</sup>. For reporting, responses on a wider Likert-type scale can be condensed into positive, neutral, and negative perceptions<sup>11</sup>. When asking to rate the overall quality of education, or satisfaction with career, a wider scale of 10 is preferred<sup>3</sup>.

For our questionnaire, an asymmetrical scale was chosen on which respondents could indicate their level of preparedness for a list of competences, following the statement '*Did your training adequately prepare you for the following competences and situations?*' On this scale, 1 equals bad, 2 moderate, 3 sufficient, 4 good, and 5 very good. Respondents were also given the option 'not applicable', so that the data do not get contaminated and to stimulate completion of the questionnaire<sup>30</sup>. This design with an asymmetrical scale was chosen based on the following information from the literature research.

When a programme prepares students insufficiently for a certain competence, it is not very relevant whether that item would score extremely bad, very bad, bad, or moderate - the curriculum needs improvement on that particular item anyway. On the positive side of the scale, a wider scale can be more useful in detecting small improvements in the experienced quality of the curriculum<sup>11</sup>. Hardin and Ainsworth proposed a method for interpreting data, that is to determine a threshold of acceptable responses that, once surpassed, indicates need for action on the related item<sup>11</sup>. Doucet and Vrins used a similar approach for quality assurance<sup>12</sup>, as do Dolmans et al<sup>10</sup>. Overall strengths and weaknesses of a programme can be made visible by listing item-scores ranking high to low<sup>12</sup>. On our scale, if an item scores a median of 1 or 2, the programme prepares its students insufficiently for that competence and measures should be taken to improve the curriculum.

The literature study showed differences on when (how much time post graduation) to send questionnaires to alumni. Many different times after graduation were found; 7 to



10 months<sup>30</sup>, 1 to 2,5 years<sup>22</sup>, 2 years<sup>3</sup>, 1 and 3 years<sup>12</sup>, 1 and 5 years<sup>44</sup>, 1 and 6 years<sup>27</sup>, 2, 6 and 10 years<sup>2</sup>, 1 to 5 and 6 to 15 years<sup>14</sup>, and all alumni found in a database<sup>19,33</sup>. Our questionnaire was designed to be administered to veterinarians 1 and 3 years post graduation. Competences can be measured immediately after graduation, or after the transition to the labour market<sup>46</sup>. Although competences at the moment of graduation are more reflective of the actual output of an educational programme, it is desirable to survey alumni with some practical work experience<sup>46</sup>. This way, alumni will have experienced how well prepared for practice they feel, and any shortages or surpluses in the curriculum can be identified more easily. A previous study actually showed that if the length of time between graduation and survey completion is too short, alumni are less able to judge the significance of their education in all aspects of their chosen professional activities<sup>12</sup>. Butler sent questionnaires to alumni (and their employers) 7 to 10 months after graduation, so that graduates have been adequately oriented to the workplace, have had experience a wide variety of client and case interactions, and have experienced other workplace demands<sup>30</sup>. Doucet and Vrins decided to consult their alumni (and their employers) 1 and 3 years post graduation, to obtain complementary sets of data that would compensate for the potential biases of surveying alumni too early or too late after obtaining their degree<sup>12</sup>. Surveys held a long time after graduation are prone to be biased; things learned by experience will be mistaken for things learned at college and vice versa<sup>8,9,12,34</sup>, and details about the education can be forgotten<sup>3,8,9,12</sup>. Dagenais et al. state that for these reasons, a survey should not be sent out to alumni who have been in practice for over a decade<sup>9</sup>. Previous studies have shown that perceptions of education among alumni can change overtime<sup>34</sup>, arguing in favour of sending the same questionnaire to respondents twice. Hence, our questionnaire was designed to be sent 1 year following graduation and a second one another two years later.

### 3.2.2: Pilot Testing

Pilot testing of a questionnaire design has been used previously to ensure clarity of questions, validate the overall questionnaire, and ensure its completeness<sup>12,47,48</sup>. Also, a pilot can give good insight in the time it takes participants to complete the questionnaire<sup>37</sup>. Read-out-loud sessions can also be conducted with alumni, in order to identify any illegibilities<sup>1</sup>.

It took the average participant 15 minutes to complete the survey. This amount of time was considered appropriate by all but one participant. People found the questions to be clear and the structure of the questionnaire logical. One participant complained of the many Likert-scale type questions, but these were considered to be of great value for the survey and thus were kept. The questionnaire was considered to be complete, unnecessary questions were removed. Some competences were found to be too specific to a certain trackings (e.g. diagnostic imaging for Companion Animals and Equine, emergency slaughter for Farm Animals and Equine). We chose to develop the questionnaire for all veterinary alumni though, independent of specific tracking during education or job experience. To prevent pollution of the questionnaire results by lack of experience in a certain competence, a 'not applicable'-option was included to the answer options.

Table 2: Findings of the literature research

Publication			Survey instrument(s)	Subject(s)	Findings
author(s)	year	field			
Bearn, Chadwick	2010	dentistry	focus groups, interviews	post graduate students	students' opinion on their orthodontic PBL programme differed a lot from one to another
Bristol	2002	veterinary medicine	questionnaire	alumni	alumni were generally satisfied with the received education, although differences were found between courses; gender differences were found in length of first employment, salary, species treated, practice ownership, career satisfaction
Butler	2003	veterinary medicine	questionnaire	alumni, employers	both alumni and employers were on general satisfied with graduate's performance/competence in most areas
Doucet, Vrins	2010	veterinary medicine	questionnaire	alumni, employers	both alumni and their employers were satisfied with their level of preparation for practice; weaknesses were communication skills, resource management
Evans, Roberts	2006	medicine	questionnaire	PRHOs	PRHOs of both a system-based and PBL curriculum felt poorly prepared for their position; PRHOs from the PBL curriculum were more confident in clinical skills, less anxious, and better prepared than PRHOs from the traditional curriculum
Jaarsma et al.	2008	veterinary medicine	questionnaire	alumni	alumni of a innovative curriculum felt better prepared for clinical knowledge and skills, communication skills, academic skills, compared to alumni of a traditional curriculum; both cohorts found the transition from student to practitioner difficult due to lack of experience with practical skills and primary-care cases
Jones et al.	2006	medicine	interviews	PRHOs	'shadowing' PRHOs helped students (now PRHOs themselves) gain familiarity with the work environment, orientate on the role of a PRHO, and specific learning
Lindberg	2010	medicine	interviews, questionnaire	alumni	alumni felt least prepared for clinical skills, handling stressful situations, applied knowledge
Lueddeke et al.	2006	medicine	questionnaire	PRHOs	alumni rated their curriculum highly and value its aims; more emphasis should be on preventive medicine
Prince et al.	2000	medicine	focus groups	undergraduates	transition from theoretical training to clinical rotations was found difficult (by students of a PBL curriculum)
Prince et al.	2004	medicine	focus groups	alumni	transition from student to practitioner was found difficult with regard to patient management, practical matters, role on the team
Prince et al.	2005	medicine	questionnaire	alumni	Graduates were satisfied with their knowledge and skills, although experiencing deficits in general competences (working with computers, planning and organising work); PBL prepared students better regarding several competences



-Table 2, continued-

Publication			Survey instrument(s)	Subject(s)	Findings
author	year	field			
Tinga et al.	2001	veterinary medicine	questionnaire	students, alumni	respondents felt well prepared in technical and professional skills, and least in delivering bad news, setting time limits, helping clients with limited funds, dealing with demanding people, euthanasia
Wall et al.	2006	medicine	questionnaire	PRHOs, educational supervisors	PRHOs felt best prepared in communication skills and least in basic doctoring skills; PRHOs rated themselves better prepared than their educational supervisors
Watmough et al.	2006	medicine	questionnaires, focus groups	PRHOs	PRHOs found themselves to have good communication skills, for different reasons (traditional curriculum » 'natural communicators'; PBL curriculum » communication skills training)
			questionnaire, interviews	educational supervisors	communication skills of PRHOs of a PBL curriculum are better than those of a traditional curriculum

Table 3: Competences used in questionnaires or found lacking in the survey by respondents

Category	Examples	
	medicine	veterinary medicine
(veterinary) technical skills	consultation (history taking, physical examination, diagnostic skills, decision-making, treatment) <sup>24,28</sup> , emergency care <sup>28</sup>	consultation (history taking, physical examination, diagnostic skills, decision-making, treatment, surgery) <sup>2,3,11,12,19,22,23,27,30</sup> , emergency care <sup>12,30</sup>
interpersonal skills	communication with patients <sup>28</sup> , communication with colleagues <sup>28</sup> , respect patients <sup>28</sup>	communication with clients <sup>3,11,12,19,22,23,27,30</sup> , communication with colleagues <sup>3,12</sup> , breaking bad news <sup>3,12,30</sup>
cooperation	teamworking <sup>28</sup>	teamworking <sup>3,12,30</sup> , instruct colleagues <sup>3,12</sup>
entrepreneurship	time management <sup>28</sup> , following procedures <sup>28</sup> , understanding information technology <sup>28</sup>	record findings <sup>3,12,19,23,30</sup> , management <sup>2,3,11,12,19,30</sup> , negotiate <sup>3</sup>
(public) healthcare and animal welfare		public healthcare (including zoonoses) <sup>3,12,19,23,30</sup> , population health <sup>11,12,23</sup> , animal health and welfare <sup>2,3,11,12,19,23,30</sup>
scientific skills	lifelong learning <sup>28</sup>	use of scientific literature <sup>2,3,11,12,19</sup> , lifelong learning <sup>2,22,23</sup> , research <sup>12</sup>
personal development	awareness of own limitations <sup>28</sup>	self-awareness and evaluation <sup>2,12,19,27</sup> , deal with stressful situations <sup>12,22</sup> , handle conflicts <sup>3,12</sup> , firmness <sup>22</sup>



## **IV. DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 - General Discussion**

To ensure success of QA, evaluation activities should be carried out systematically and structurally, integrated in an organisation's regular work patterns<sup>10,12</sup>. For systematic evaluation, all educational aspects and all stakeholders should be involved. Structural means that the evaluations should be carried out at regular intervals with proper frequency, and data compared and judged to predefined standards. By integrating evaluation in regular work patterns, responsibilities are defined and any QA activities are coherent. Staff involved in OA should be trained in educational and statistical methods required to accomplish good design and implementation of evaluations<sup>7,15</sup>.

Questionnaires and interviews (focus groups) are used to gather information on alumni's opinion on the quality of the education they received. Alumni assessment is highly valuable when evaluating the quality of medical education, as illustrated by the results many researchers found.

Some researchers used these tools to compare medical PBL curricula to more traditional programmes<sup>24,26,28,29,49</sup>. In a study of Hardin and Ainsworth, medical alumni felt technology in the clinics needed improvement in their curriculum, as well as case load and variety<sup>11</sup>. Lindberg's survey indicated medical alumni felt underprepared in clinical skills, handling stressful situations, and applied knowledge<sup>22</sup>. Another survey showed a medical curriculum fell short in clinical attachments, clinical anatomy, pharmacology, acute patient management, and dealing with stressful situations<sup>35</sup>. In another study, consultant educational supervisors rated the preparedness of new house officers on several competences lower than the house officers themselves<sup>28</sup>. The main concern was the preparedness in basic doctoring skills. Dentistry alumni of a community-based learning programme felt much more confident in their clinical preparation than graduates of a traditional curriculum<sup>50</sup>. The findings of the different researchers illustrate the effectiveness of the assessment tools used.

Alumni surveys in veterinary education show similar results as those in medical programmes. The questionnaire Bristol used showed alumni felt to be underprepared in business management, financial planning, accounting, marketing, communication skills, and interpersonal skills<sup>8</sup>. Graduates would have liked to see specific tracking, more clinical time and hands-on-experience, more surgery, more time on everyday applications, and more internships and externships<sup>8</sup>. Jaarsma et al. compared Dutch veterinary alumni's perception of preparation for practice of a traditional and innovative curriculum. The innovative curriculum scored significantly better than the traditional one regarding the overall mean scores for clinical knowledge and skills, communication skills, and academic skills<sup>3</sup>. However, despite the improvements with the innovative curriculum certain items (e.g. communication with clients) remained unsatisfactory. No differences were observed for practical skills and practice/business management<sup>3</sup>.

Doucet and Vrin conducted assessments with both alumni and their employers, and showed that employers rated alumni significantly higher on several items than the alumni themselves<sup>12</sup>. It has been hypothesized that this may be caused by generational differences in perception, that new graduates may not be good evaluators of their abilities, or that new graduates have a relative lack of self-confidence<sup>12</sup>.

Focus groups and interviews can be good instruments to interpret the results of a questionnaire, as illustrated by Watmough et al. During focus groups with PRHOs and interview sessions with their supervisors, more in depth information was gathered on the reasons of the questionnaires' results<sup>29</sup>. PRHOs of both a traditional as PBL



curriculum felt well prepared in communication skills, in the questionnaire results and focus groups<sup>29</sup>. The general feeling of the traditional educated house officers was that if you are in medicine, 'you are either one of those people who are good at communication naturally, or who will learn in time'. PRHOs from the PBL curriculum also felt well prepared in communication, however their opinion was that the preparedness was due to communication classes and other one-to-one patient consultations in their programme<sup>29</sup>. The supervisors, on the other hand, thought that the new curriculum graduates were better at communicating than their traditional predecessors, in patient, relatives, and colleagues contact<sup>29</sup>. The questionnaire results did not show this as clearly as did the interviews. 'They are much better than the old. They have an understanding of verbal and non-verbal communication. They understand listening. It isn't just about speaking'. The supervisors linked the improvement in communication skills directly to the classes within the new curriculum.

Useful as it is, alumni assessment also has downsides<sup>8</sup>. First, most veterinary graduates have not been educated elsewhere and thus cannot compare their curriculum with other programmes. In addition, the more time has passed since graduating, the more details of a programme are forgotten. Many people will be biased in their views on their education. Also, questionnaires and interview techniques are based on self-assessment i.e. not all information provided will be objective<sup>26</sup>. Without proper education, the average alumnus will lack important competences. However, the exact correlation between an individual's self-perception on ones competence and the quality of the education received is unknown<sup>51</sup>. When comparing two different curricula, views and attitudes of alumni towards the programme might be biased by their personal investment<sup>50</sup>.

#### **4.2 - Perspectives**

The FVM will continue and intensify their alumni assessment. The questionnaire developed as part of this research project will be sent continuously by e-mail to all alumni whose names and addresses are recorded in the electronic database of the Royal Dutch Veterinary Society (KNMvD), 12 months and 3 years after graduation. In addition to the paper-survey for alumni, a similar questionnaire (competence-based) will be designed to acquire the opinions of employers on the preparedness of alumni. Questions about strengths and weaknesses of the alumni and future hiring intentions will also be included. Annual focus groups will be held amongst alumni and employers, discussing the results of the questionnaires, providing more in-depth information.

With this triangulation of assessments tools (questionnaire and focus groups) and stakeholders (alumni and their employers), the FVM will gather valuable information on the quality of veterinary education. Continued longitudinal assessment will provide good feedback on modifications in the curriculum, and changes in de curriculum will be data-based. The results from the questionnaires and focus groups will be included in the self-study reports necessary for accreditation. A similar set of assessment tools can be used by other faculties, with some minor adjustments to meet each institutions' own educational goals.



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## **APPENDIX A: DIERGENEESKUNDE BIJ DE UNIVERSITEIT UTRECHT**

### **A.1 - Toetsing van het curriculum**

Er zijn verschillende accreditatie-organisaties die de kwaliteit van het veterinaire onderwijs controleren en waarborgen<sup>21</sup>. De American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) heeft richtlijnen opgesteld voor hun accreditatie (de meest recente uit 2005), waaraan de Faculteit Diergeneeskunde van de UU al sinds 1973 voldoet als een van de weinige faculteiten buiten de Verenigde Staten. Een andere belangrijke organisatie, die veel samenwerkt met de AVMA, is de Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA).

In 2002 heeft de European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) standard operating procedures vastgelegd, om Europese veterinaire opleidingen te toetsen aan door EU als minimaal gestelde eisen. De UU beschikt over accreditatie door de EAEVE sinds 1992. Sinds 2000 visiteert ook de Vereniging Samenwerkende Nederlandse Universiteiten (VSNU) de faculteit. De Nederlands-Vlaams AccreditatieOrganisatie zal met de komst van de bachelor/master deze visitatie overnemen van de NVAO. Zij hebben hiertoe in 2003 een accreditatiekader opgesteld.

De KNMvD heeft een eigen Code voor de Dierenarts opgesteld<sup>21</sup>. Deze omvat gedragsregels voor dierenartsen als practicus en het functioneren van dierenartsen in de maatschappij (beroepsverantwoordelijkheid). De Europese variant, Good Veterinary Practice Code, is opgesteld door Federation of Veterinarians of Europe.

In 2006 zijn de Eindtermen Curriculum Diergeneeskunde geformuleerd door een speciaal hiervoor aangestelde projectgroep<sup>21</sup>. Deze eindtermen vormen een (toetsbare) set van kennis, vaardigheden en professioneel gedrag waarover de veterinaire alumnus moet beschikken. Omdat de beroepsuitoefening van dierenartsen varieert, zijn ook de eindtermen onderhevig aan bijvoorbeeld ontwikkelingen binnen het vakgebied, nieuwe wetenschappelijke inzichten, en veranderende opvattingen binnen maatschappij. Daarom worden de eindtermen voortdurend geëvalueerd en indien nodig bijgesteld.

Bij de opstelling van de eindtermen zijn verschillende partijen betrokken, waaronder dierenartsen van de faculteit, OSZ (Onderwijs- en StudentenZaken), IVLOS (Instituut Voor Lerarenopleiding, Onderwijsontwikkeling en Studievaardigheden), de KNMvD, en onderwijsbestuur<sup>21</sup>. Aan de hand van de eindtermen krijgen studenten informatie over wat van het verwacht wordt bij afstuderen. Docenten kunnen leerdoelen opstellen die de eindtermen dekken, en zo de eindtermen vertalen naar concreet onderwijs. Dierenartsen, overheid en bijvoorbeeld accreditatie-organisaties kunnen afleiden wat zij mogen verwachten van een dierenarts die is afgestudeerd aan de Universiteit Utrecht.

Uit de Eindtermen volgt de volgende profielschets van de diergeneeskundige alumnus, ongeacht de gevolgde differentiatie<sup>21</sup>.

#### *Deskundig*

- Heeft een breed pathobiologisch, populatiebiologisch en natuurwetenschappelijk inzicht, in overeenstemming met hedendaagse inzichten van de wetenschap
- Heeft zich het probleemoplossen eigen gemaakt en is in staat zich een vakkundig oordeel te vormen, zelfstandig beslissingen te nemen en die te verantwoorden
- Is in staat relevante veterinaire handelingen uit te voeren

#### *Vaardig*

- Is zich bewust van zijn maatschappelijke verantwoordelijkheid voor de gezondheid en welzijn van dieren en aspecten van de volksgezondheid



- Onderhoudt de eigen deskundigheid en is in staat flexibel om te gaan met nieuwe ontwikkelingen
- Neemt zijn beperkingen in acht met betrekking tot diersoorten of handelingen waarvoor in de studie onvoldoende competentie is verworven

En bovendien

- Is wettelijk bevoegd om de diergeneeskunde zelfstandig uit te oefenen
- Is geschikt om een vervolgopleiding zoals specialisatie en/of academische promotie aan te vangen

Deze algemene profielschets wordt aangevuld met de door de alumnus gevolgde differentiatie<sup>21</sup>. Zo wordt van een dierenarts met als afstudeerrichting gezelschapsdieren verwacht dat deze als eerstelijns practicus kan werken met honden, katten, en kleine gezelschapsdieren (konijnen, knaagdieren, fretten, en gezelschapsvogels). Deze dieren kunnen zowel individueel als groepsgehouden worden, voor recreatie, sport, of fokkerij. De paardendierenarts is in het bijzonder geschikt om individueel of groepsgehouden paarden te onderzoeken en behandelen, die gehouden worden met als doel gezelschap, recreatie, sport, of fokkerij. Een afgestudeerde in de landbouwhuisdieren is in staat te werken met individueel en als koppel gehouden herkauwers, varkens, en pluimvee. Daarnaast vormt deze alumnus een gesprekspartner voor de individuele dierhouder, overheid, en het bedrijfsleven in de dierlijke productieketen op het gebied van diergezondheid, dierenwelzijn, en volksgezondheid. Dierenartsen die zijn afgestudeerd in de richting veterinaire volksgezondheid borgen diergezondheid en volksgezondheid, en vormen een gesprekspartner voor de individuele dierhouder, overheid, en het bedrijfsleven in de dierlijke productieketen. Bij bestuur en beleid wordt van de afgestudeerde verwacht dat deze een intermediair vormt tussen bedrijfsmatige dierhouderij, het bedrijfsleven, en de overheid. Zij zijn veelal werkzaam in bestuurs- en beleidsfuncties gerelateerd aan diergeneeskundige werkvelden zoals overheid, bedrijfsleven, en maatschappelijke organisaties. Dierenartsen die zijn afgestudeerd in de richting wetenschappelijk onderzoek, kunnen aan de slag in (veterinair) biomedisch onderzoek. Zij vormen een intermediair tussen het biomedisch onderzoeksveld en de toegepaste diergeneeskunde.

## A.2 - Curriculumontwikkelingen

In 1821 werd in Utrecht de Rijsveeartsenijschool opgericht, en in 1925 ingebed in wat nu Universiteit Utrecht heet. Tot 1995 was het veterinaire curriculum gericht op het verkrijgen van feitenkennis, door middel van hoorcolleges en discipline bij de studenten. Co-schappen waren beperkt tot het zesde en laatste jaar van de opleiding. Studenten werden opgeleid tot allround dierenarts.

Door veranderende inzichten en rapporten van internationale accreditatie-organisaties werd in 1995 een geheel nieuw curriculum geïntroduceerd, gebaseerd op het zogenaamde problem-based learning<sup>3</sup>. De nadruk kwam meer te liggen op probleemoplossende vaardigheden, communicatie, en academische vorming. De eerste vier jaar kregen studenten hoorcolleges, werkcolleges, practica, en opdrachten. Het eerste jaar waren dat basisvakken als celbiologie, embryologie, anatomie en fysiologie, in de latere jaren gevolgd door pathologie en ziekteleer. Het vijfde en zesde leerjaar bestonden uit een onderzoekstage en co-schappen, waarbij voor het laatste jaar gekozen moest worden voor een differentiatie in landbouwhuisdieren, paard, gezelschapsdieren, veterinaire volksgezondheid, of bestuur en beleid. In 2001 is dit curriculum aangepast, met verdere academisering en introductie van gedifferentieerde studiepaden reeds in het eerste jaar van de opleiding<sup>52</sup>.

In 2007 is, naar aanleiding van Europese wetgeving (het Verdrag van Bologna), begonnen met de bachelor-master<sup>5,6,52</sup>. Tijdens de driejarige bachelor wordt de student voorbereid op de master diergeneeskunde (of een andere biomedische



master). Na een aantal algemene vakken als celbiologie en genetica, wordt het gezonde en zieke dier behandeld per orgaansysteem. Ook nu is er in het PBL-curriculum veel aandacht voor probleemoplossende vaardigheden, communicatie, en academische vorming. Kort omschreven omvat de bachelor het totale kerncurriculum van C2001, maar dan thematisch georganiseerd en met meer aandacht voor de interactie gezond en ziek<sup>5</sup>. In de driejarige master worden studenten opgeleid tot dierenarts met algemene bevoegdheid, gedifferentieerd in landbouwhuisdieren/veterinaire volksgezondheid, paard, of gezelschapsdieren<sup>6</sup>. Binnen de gekozen afstudeerrichting kunnen ze kiezen voor een klinische, wetenschappelijke, of bestuurlijke variant. Extern onderwijs is een structureel onderdeel van het programma. De wijze van lesgeven is gericht op actieve verwerking van lesstof, met co-schappen en meer theoretisch onderwijs (casus) naast elkaar. Studenten krijgen meer verantwoordelijkheden en zelfstandigheid, voor een goede professionele en academische ontwikkeling. De onderzoeksstage blijft gehandhaafd.

#### Curriculum 1995

- Opbouw: vierjarige doctoraal (hoorcolleges, werkcolleges/active small-group learning, practica, opdrachten), eenjarige uniforme co-schappen en onderzoeksstage, eenjarige gedifferentieerde co-schappen
- Doelstellingen
  - Verkrijgen van probleemoplossende vaardigheden
  - Verwerven van een academisch denk- en werkniveau
  - Verkrijgen van sociale en communicatieve vaardigheden
  - Verkrijgen van een op de arbeidsmarkt aansluitende en diersoortegerichte startcompetentie voor de eerstelijns praktijkuitoefening in een deelgebied van de diergeneeskunde; differentiatie in landbouwhuisdieren, paard, gezelschapsdieren, veterinaire volksgezondheid, bestuur en beleid
  - Bewustwording van belang van levenslang leren
- Leidt op tot algemeen bevoegd dierenarts, met een startcompetentie voor de eerstelijns praktijkuitoefening in een deelgebied van de diergeneeskunde

#### Curriculum 2001

- Opbouw: vierjarige doctoraal met vanaf het eerste jaar differentiatie in een diersoort of sector (hoorcolleges, werkcolleges, practica, opdrachten), eenjarige uniforme co-schappen en onderzoeksstage, eenjarige gedifferentieerde co-schappen
- Doelstellingen
  - Verdere academisering van het curriculum
  - Verderde differentiatie door introductie van gescheiden studiepaden vanaf het eerste studiejaar
- Leidt op tot algemeen bevoegd dierenarts, met een startcompetentie voor de eerstelijns praktijkuitoefening in een deelgebied van de diergeneeskunde

#### Bachelor-master

- Opbouw: driejarige bachelor (hoorcolleges, werkcolleges, practica, opdrachten), en driejarige gedifferentieerde bachelor (hoorcolleges, werkcolleges, practica, opdrachten, onderzoeksstage, uniforme en gedifferentieerde co-schappen)
- Doelstellingen
  - Kennis, vaardigheid en inzicht op het gebied van de diergeneeskunde, en bereiken van eindkwalificaties
  - Academische vorming: competenties ten aanzien van academisch denken, handelen en communiceren, professioneel gedrag, het gebruik van wetenschappelijke literatuur
- Leidt op tot algemeen bevoegd dierenarts, met een startcompetentie voor de eerstelijns praktijkuitoefening in een deelgebied van de diergeneeskunde



## **APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ALUMNI**

Geachte dierenarts,

Namens de Leerstoelgroep Kwaliteitsbevordering Diergeneeskundig Onderwijs stuurt Onderwijs- en Studentenzaken een vragenlijst uit naar alle alumni van de Universiteit Utrecht, 1 en 3 jaar na afstuderen. De Leerstoelgroep doet wetenschappelijk onderzoek naar het onderwijs binnen de Faculteit Diergeneeskunde, waarbij kwaliteitsbevordering centraal staat.

De vragenlijst vormt een onderdeel van een breder onderzoek naar de kwaliteit van de opleiding. De mening van alumni -als ervaringsdeskundigen- over het curriculum is daarbij heel waardevol. Met de resultaten van de vragenlijsten willen we onderzoeken in hoeverre het doel van de studie (het opleiden tot een optimaal toegeruste dierenarts) bereikt wordt. Ook willen we de sterke en zwakke punten van de opleiding in kaart brengen, zodat we het curriculum kunnen blijven verbeteren en waar nodig aanpassen aan veranderingen binnen het beroepsveld.

De (elektronische) vragenlijst bestaat voornamelijk uit invul- of meerkeuzevragen, bij veel vragen wordt gebruik gemaakt van een schaal waarop u uw oordeel over een bepaalde stelling kunt geven. Tevens is er een aantal open vragen. Het invullen van de enquête neemt ongeveer 15 minuten in beslag. Er zal zorgvuldig omgegaan worden met de antwoorden, gegevens zullen alleen gebruikt worden in het kader van dit onderzoek en niet teruggekoppeld naar personen.

Om mee te doen aan het onderzoek, klikt u op de volgende link (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KVG6DRJ>). Voor het onderzoek is het van belang dat zoveel mogelijk afgestudeerden de enquête invullen.

Voor vragen of opmerkingen over het onderzoek kunt u contact opnemen met ..., via ...@uu.nl. We willen u alvast hartelijk danken voor uw meewerking aan het onderzoek.

Met vriendelijke groet,

...



## Alumni-onderzoek kwaliteit van opleiding

### 1. Enquête alumni-onderzoek

Geachte alumna,

Om de kwaliteit van de opleiding diergeneeskunde te evalueren, willen we graag uw mening horen over uw ervaringen als dierenarts. We zullen dit doen op 1 en 3 jaar na afstuderen, zodat de alumni al werkervaring opgedaan hebben en de kwaliteit van het onderwijs van de opleiding op waarde kunnen schatten. Met de resultaten van dit onderzoek krijgen we een beter inzicht in de sterke en zwakke punten van het curriculum, wat belangrijke informatie geeft voor verdere ontwikkeling van de opleiding. Zo waarborgen we de kwaliteit van het onderwijs.

Wij verzoeken u dit evaluatieformulier in te vullen, dit neemt ongeveer 15 minuten in beslag. Er wordt een aantal vragen gesteld over uw opleiding en huidige werkzaamheden, zodat wij de verkregen data kunnen opsplitsen in verschillende richtingen. Uiteraard zullen wij zeer vertrouwelijk omgaan met de door u ingevulde informatie. De antwoorden zullen onherleidbaar naar individuen gerapporteerd worden.

Alvast bedankt voor het invullen en met vriendelijke groet,

Onderwijs- en Studentenzaken & Leerstoel Kwaliteitsbevordering Diergeneeskundig Onderwijs

### 2. Algemene gegevens

\* Ik ben begonnen met de studie diergeneeskunde in ...

\* Wanneer bent u afgestudeerd aan de faculteit Diergeneeskunde?

	Maand	Jaar
Ik ben afgestudeerd in ...	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

\* Ik ben afgestudeerd in het curriculum

- C2001  
 BaMa

### 3. Algemene gegevens

\* Gekozen studiep pad

- landbouwhuisdieren  
 gezelschapsdieren  
 paard  
 veterinaire volksgezondheid  
 bestuur en beleid  
 wetenschappelijk onderzoek

### 4. Algemene gegevens

\* Gekozen studiep pad

- landbouwhuisdieren/veterinaire volksgezondheid  
 gezelschapsdieren  
 paard

\* Gekozen variant

- klinisch  
 wetenschappelijk  
 bestuurlijk



### 5. Algemene gegevens

\* Heeft u als student, buiten uw studie, wel eens meegelopen met een dierenarts?

- niet/nauwelijks (<10 dagen)
- regelmatig
- vaak (>30 dagen)

\* Heeft u als student, buiten uw studie, weleens meegeholpen of gewerkt op bijvoorbeeld een veehouderij, dierenopvang of manege?

- niet/nauwelijks (<10 dagen)
- regelmatig
- vaak (>30 dagen)

\* Bent u als student lid geweest van een bestuur, commissie of studentenraad?

- ja
- nee

\* Heeft u een excellent tracé of honours-programma gevolgd?

- ja
- nee

\* Heeft u naast diergeneeskunde nog een andere opleiding gevolgd?

- nee
- ja: welke, en heeft u hiervoor een diploma behaald?

### 6. Algemene gegevens

\* Bent u momenteel werkzaam in de veterinaire sector?

- ja
- nee

Afhankelijk van het door u gegeven antwoord wordt u langs een aantal vragen geleid die betrekking kunnen hebben op uw werkzaamheden.

### 7. Algemene gegevens

\* Kunt u aangeven welke van onderstaande situaties het meest op u van toepassing is?

- werkzaam buiten de veterinaire sector
- werkzoekend
- bewust werkloos
- arbeidsongeschikt
- anders, namelijk ...

### 8. Algemene gegevens

\* Bent u werkzaam in een dier(en)artsenpraktijk?

- ja
- nee



## 9. Algemene gegevens

### \* Wat is het meest op u van toepassing?

- waarnemend dierenarts
- loondienst in groepspraktijk
- eigen praktijk
- maat in maatschap

### \* Kunt u aangeven in welke richting u voornamelijk werkzaam bent?

- herkauwers
- varken
- pluimvee
- gezelschapsdieren
- paard
- vogels en bijzondere dieren
- bestuur en beleid
- onderzoek

Kunt u per werkgebied aangeven hoeveel tijd u er procentueel gezien aan besteedt?

	percentage
herkauwers	<input type="text"/>
varken	<input type="text"/>
pluimvee	<input type="text"/>
gezelschapsdieren	<input type="text"/>
paard	<input type="text"/>
vogels en bijzondere dieren	<input type="text"/>
bestuur en beleid	<input type="text"/>
onderzoek	<input type="text"/>

## 10. Algemene gegevens

### \* Bent u werkzaam bij een onderwijsinstelling?

- ja
- nee

## 11. Algemene gegevens

### \* Kunt u aangeven waar u hoofdzakelijk werkzaam bent?

- Universiteit Utrecht, faculteit Diergeneeskunde
- (hoger) agrarisch onderwijs
- anders, namelijk ...

### \* Kunt u aangeven wat uw voornaamste functie is bij deze onderwijsinstelling?

- onderzoek
- specialisatie
- onderwijs
- promotie
- anders, namelijk ...



## 12. Algemene gegevens

\* Bent u werkzaam bij een (semi-)overheidsinstelling?

- ja  
 nee

## 13. Algemene gegevens

\* Kunt u aangeven waar u voornamelijk werkzaam bent?

- Gezondheidsdienst voor Dieren  
 Voedsel en Waren Autoriteit  
 Ministerie LNV  
 Europese Unie  
 anders, namelijk ...

\* Kunt u aangeven wat uw voornaamste functie is bij deze (semi)overheidsinstelling?

- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> slachthuis           | <input type="radio"/> advisering |
| <input type="radio"/> pathologie           | <input type="radio"/> douane     |
| <input type="radio"/> onderzoek            | <input type="radio"/> kantoor    |
| <input type="radio"/> management           |                                  |
| <input type="radio"/> anders, namelijk ... |                                  |

## 14. Algemene gegevens

\* Bent u werkzaam in het bedrijfsleven?

- ja  
 nee

## 15. Algemene gegevens

\* In welke sector bent u vooral werkzaam?

- consultancy  
 farmacie  
 toeleverende industrie  
 anders, namelijk ...

\* Kunt u aangeven wat uw voornaamste functie is binnen het bedrijfsleven?

- onderzoek  
 management  
 vertegenwoordiger  
 consultant  
 anders, namelijk ...

**16. Algemene gegevens**

\* Als u kijkt naar uw huidige werksituatie, komt deze dan overeen met de differentiatie die u tijdens uw opleiding gekozen heeft?

\* Ik werk gemiddeld ... uur per week (inclusief actief gewerkte uren tijdens dienst)

\* In welk land bent u werkzaam?


**17. Algemene gegevens**

\* Hoeveel maanden bent u actief op zoek geweest voor u een passende baan had gevonden, die past bij de door u gevolgde studierichting?

\* Hoeveel relevante werkervaring heeft u?

jaren

maanden

Ik heb ... (jaren en maanden) relevante werkervaring


**18. Competenties**

Er volgt nu een aantal situaties en handelingen die u als alumnus in de praktijk kunt tegenkomen. Om deze correct af te handelen moet u beschikken over bepaalde competenties (kennis, vaardigheden en houding). De studie diergeneeskunde behoort u hierin op te leiden.

NB: Als u te weinig ervaring heeft met een bepaalde competentie om een goed oordeel te kunnen geven over uw voorbereiding, vink dan 'niet van toepassing' (blauw) aan in de rechter kolom.

\* Bent u door de opleiding voldoende voorbereid op de nu volgende situaties en handelingen?

	slecht	matig	voldoende	goed	zeer goed	n.v.t.
Het signaleren van een veterinair probleem	<input type="radio"/>					
Een anamnese afnemen	<input type="radio"/>					
Lichamelijk onderzoek uitvoeren	<input type="radio"/>					
Een plan van aanpak beredeneren	<input type="radio"/>					
Een diagnose stellen (na deductie van een differentiële diagnose)	<input type="radio"/>					
Een behandelplan opstellen, rekening houdend met volksgezondheid, diergezondheid en dierwelzijn	<input type="radio"/>					
Preventieve maatregelen bedenken	<input type="radio"/>					
Een prognose geven	<input type="radio"/>					
Een consult afhandelen in de tijd die er voor staat	<input type="radio"/>					

**19. Competenties**

\* Bent u door de opleiding voldoende voorbereid op de nu volgende situaties en handelingen?

	slecht	matig	voldoende	goed	zeer goed	n.v.t.
Op verantwoorde wijze gebruik maken van medicijnen	<input type="radio"/>					
Eenvoudig bloedonderzoek uitvoeren en verkregen waarden interpreteren	<input type="radio"/>					
Eenvoudig laboratoriumonderzoek uitvoeren en resultaten interpreteren	<input type="radio"/>					
Drachtigheidsonderzoek uitvoeren en interpreteren	<input type="radio"/>					
Echografie uitvoeren en interpreteren	<input type="radio"/>					
Röntgenonderzoek uitvoeren en interpreteren	<input type="radio"/>					
Eerstelijns-operaties uitvoeren	<input type="radio"/>					
Op verantwoorde wijze gebruik maken van medicijnen	<input type="radio"/>					

**20. Competenties**

\* Bent u door de opleiding voldoende voorbereid op de nu volgende situaties en handelingen?

	slecht	matig	voldoende	goed	zeer goed	n.v.t.
Een patiënt tijdig doorverwijzen	<input type="radio"/>					
Een euthanasie uitvoeren	<input type="radio"/>					
Een noodslachting uitvoeren	<input type="radio"/>					
Dieren, diertransporten en (nood) slachtingen keuren	<input type="radio"/>					
Het verlenen van eerste hulp aan een diersoort van het door u gevolgde studiepad	<input type="radio"/>					
Het verlenen van eerste hulp aan een diersoort anders dan het door u gevolgde studiepad	<input type="radio"/>					
Het analyseren van het bedrijfsmanagement van een cliënt	<input type="radio"/>					

**21. Competenties**

\* Bent u door de opleiding voldoende voorbereid op de nu volgende situaties en handelingen?

	slecht	matig	voldoende	goed	zeer goed	n.v.t.
Aandacht hebben voor de wensen van patiënt en cliënt	<input type="radio"/>					
Begrijpelijk uitleg geven aan een cliënt	<input type="radio"/>					
Een slechtnieuwsgesprek voeren met een cliënt	<input type="radio"/>					
Een cliënt kalmeren	<input type="radio"/>					
Een eigen netwerk vormen en inzetten	<input type="radio"/>					
Samenwerken met dierenartsen en overige collega's	<input type="radio"/>					
Collega's en overig personeel aansturen	<input type="radio"/>					
Patiënten overdragen aan collega's	<input type="radio"/>					
Kritisch communiceren met vertegenwoordigers uit diverse beroepsvelden	<input type="radio"/>					

**22. Competenties**

\* Bent u door de opleiding voldoende voorbereid op de nu volgende situaties en handelingen?

	slecht	matig	voldoende	goed	zeer goed	n.v.t.
Werken volgens protocollen	<input type="radio"/>					
Een tijdsplanning maken op korte en lange termijn	<input type="radio"/>					
Het gestructureerd rapporteren van bevindingen	<input type="radio"/>					
Clënten een kostenraming geven	<input type="radio"/>					
Het beheren van een apotheek en voorraad	<input type="radio"/>					
Het uitvoeren van managementtaken	<input type="radio"/>					
Het opstellen van beleid	<input type="radio"/>					
Het onderhandelen over prijzen en kosten	<input type="radio"/>					
Het vermarkten van de opgedane veterinaire kennis	<input type="radio"/>					
Een bedrijf/carière opbouwen	<input type="radio"/>					

**23. Competenties**

\* Bent u door de opleiding voldoende voorbereid op de nu volgende situaties en handelingen?

	slecht	matig	voldoende	goed	zeer goed	n.v.t.
Het beoordelen van kwaliteitssystemen in het kader van volksgezondheid	<input type="radio"/>					
Het welzijn van dieren bewaken door middel van inspectie en voorlichting	<input type="radio"/>					
Besluitvaardig, overtuigend, standvastig, principieel, geduldig en integer handelen bij besmettelijke dierziekten	<input type="radio"/>					
Omgaan met dilemma's tussen eigen belang, belangen van diereigenaar, volksgezondheid, diergezondheid en dierwelzijn	<input type="radio"/>					
Het opzoeken en gebruiken van relevante wetenschappelijke literatuur	<input type="radio"/>					
Het uitvoeren van wetenschappelijk onderzoek	<input type="radio"/>					
Het begeleiden en opleiden van assistenten, stagiaires, studenten en nieuwe collega's	<input type="radio"/>					
Onderwijs (bijvoorbeeld voorlichting of een cursus) voorbereiden, organiseren, coördineren en doceren	<input type="radio"/>					

**24. Competenties**

\* Bent u door de opleiding voldoende voorbereid op de nu volgende situaties en handelingen?

	slecht	matig	voldoende	goed	zeer goed	n.v.t.
Omgaan met verantwoordelijkheden op doortastende, besluitvaardige en standvastige wijze	<input type="radio"/>					
Omgaan met stress	<input type="radio"/>					
Vertrouwen hebben in eigen kennis en kunde	<input type="radio"/>					
Het (h)erkennen van de eigen grenzen met betrekking tot veterinaire kennis en kunde	<input type="radio"/>					
Werken aan hiaten in kennis, vaardigheden en persoonlijke aspecten (levenslang leren)	<input type="radio"/>					
Het omgaan met en kunnen toegeven van fouten	<input type="radio"/>					
Vragen om en open staan voor feedback over het eigen functioneren	<input type="radio"/>					
Het geven van feedback (opbouwende kritiek) aan dierenartsen en andere collega's	<input type="radio"/>					
Het oplossen van conflictsituaties	<input type="radio"/>					

**25. Competenties**

Kunt u voor onderstaande competentie-domeinen aangeven of er in de opleiding te veel, genoeg, of te weinig aandacht aan is geschonken? Wat is het belang van deze domeinen voor uw dagelijkse werkzaamheden? Onder het kopje 'toelichting' kunt u desgewenst uw antwoorden nader toelichten.

\* Kunt u voor onderstaande competenties aangeven of er in de opleiding te veel, genoeg, of te weinig aandacht aan is geschonken?

	te weinig	voldoende	te veel
Vetennair handelen (vetennaire werkzaamheden, spoedisende veterinaire situaties)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicatie (adequaat communiceren met cliënten, dierenartsen, andere collega's en derden, het opbouwen en gebruiken van een netwerk)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Samenwerken (samenwerken met en aansturen en begeleiden van dierenartsen, andere collega's en derden)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ondernemerschap (eigen werkzaamheden plannen en organiseren, succesvol bedrijfsmanagement voeren, apotheek- en voorraadbeheer, kwaliteitszorg van beroepspraktijk)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gezondheid en welzijn (verantwoordelijkheid nemen ten aanzien van volksgezondheid, diergezondheid en dierwelzijn)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wetenschappelijk handelen (literatuur vinden en beoordelen, wetenschappelijk onderzoek opzetten en uitvoeren, onderwijs en opleiding verzorgen)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persoonlijke ontwikkeling (eigen functioneren analyseren en hiernaar handelen)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**\* Wat is het belang van deze competenties voor uw dagelijkse werkzaamheden?**

	geheel onbelangrijk	onbelangrijk	neutraal	belangrijk	zeer belangrijk
Veterinair handelen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicatie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Samenwerken	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ondernemerschap	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gezondheid en welzijn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wetenschappelijk handelen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persoonlijke ontwikkeling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

U kunt hieronder een toelichting geven over de verschillende competentie-domeinen.

Wat is uw mening over de wijze van toetsing (theoretische fase, co-schappen) tijdens de opleiding? Was deze ondersteunend als middel om de competenties te bereiken?

## 26. Slotvragen

**\* Hoe verliep de overstap van de universiteit naar de praktijk?**

- zeer slecht     slecht     neutraal     goed     zeer goed

Kunt u dit toelichten? Wat ging er goed? Wat waren moeilijkheden?

Welke onderwerpen hebben te weinig aandacht gekregen tijdens de opleiding?

Welke onderwerpen hebben te veel aandacht gekregen tijdens de opleiding?



\* Ik heb tijdens mijn opleiding voldoende praktische kennis en vaardigheden opgedaan om aan de slag te gaan in mijn eerste functie

- volledig  oneens  neutraal  eens  volledig eens

Kunt u uw antwoord toelichten?

\* Welk cijfer zou u de opleiding diergeneeskunde als geheel willen geven?

- 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

\* Welk cijfer zou u toekennen aan de voldoening die uw beroepsuitoefening u tot nu toe geeft?

- 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

\* Zou u weer voor diergeneeskunde kiezen als u overnieuw kon starten?

Kunt u dit toelichten?

## 27. Slotvragen

Wat is uw geslacht?

- vrouw  
 man

Wat is uw leeftijd (in jaren)?

Studentnummer.

Indien u uw studentnummer nog weet, kunt u deze hieronder invullen. Dit nummer zal uitsluitend gebruikt worden om antwoorden van de enquête op 1 en 3 jaar na afstuderen onderling te vergelijken.

## 28. Einde

Hartelijk dank voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst. Door op de knop 'Gereed' te klikken voltooit u deze enquête en worden uw antwoorden verzonden.