Veterinary Medicine application deadlines are fast approaching, and the number of rumors and ‘tips’ available on online forums and blogs are growing faster than mushrooms after a rainy day (is that still a thing?)

So today, the Association of Veterinary Students decided to tackle the five most common myths out there regarding applications. We contacted all the universities in UK & Ireland that offer veterinary medicine, and here are the responses:

**MYTH #1**
You need A*s in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Maths to maximize your chances of getting in.

**OUR ANSWER:**
Yes and No.
Some universities do require an A*. For instance, Glasgow requires “A*AA in chemistry, biology and one other academic subject.” Others simply do not: “predictions for A* will not give advantage at selection or offer stage over applicants predicted A” (RVC). Ultimately, if you have an A*, congratulations to you. If you don’t, don’t fret about! Bristol kindly elaborated by saying: “[during one of the stages of selection] we take 15% of our selection criteria from A levels, 15% from GCSE and 70% from the personal statement. Therefore although there is some advantage in having the higher A level grades of A* in reality it doesn’t make that much difference.”

To the matter of the third subject. It largely depends on where you apply. Nottingham said “…all third subjects [excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking] are considered equally, they do not have to be science related.” Glasgow kindly summarized many schools’ policies: “You will not be at a disadvantage if you do not study maths or physics as a third A-Level.”

**MYTH #2**
Veterinary medicine is a promised route to a well-paid job.

**OUR ANSWER:**
It depends on what you want. Employment after graduation is usually not as worrying as other sectors. “Nottingham has a success rate of 98% employment within 6 months of graduation.” Likewise, Glasgow also commented by saying “the majority of our graduates will find employment after graduation.”

So it seems like getting a job isn’t too bad. But how much does it pay? Bristol said: “Depends on your definition of well paid - we sit with teachers, architects and the like if you look at last year’s HMRC income figure for veterinary surgeons with an average salary from memory around 44K.”
But our favourite answer was from the RVC: “There are no promises in life, and salary is dependent on various factors including location, specialism, sector, etc. Money is also not the defining factor in many people’s decision to become a vet.”

**MYTH #3**
Admission into veterinary medicine is more competitive than medicine

**OUR ANSWER:**
*Probably not.* We unfortunately weren’t able to get very many straight answers on this one, although Bristol kindly supplied us with some statistics: “Not at Bristol that’s for sure - Bristol Vet Science is about 9:1 (about 1300 apps for 150 places) and medicine is about 20:1.”

Glasgow merely said: “In Scotland there are more Medical Schools than Veterinary Schools (only 2) therefore there are more opportunities in Scotland to study medicine than veterinary medicine.

Nottingham further confused the matter by saying “We believe veterinary medicine is the second most employable career after medicine.”

So all we can say is - it is doable!

**MYTH #4**
You need a mountain of work experience to even be considered

**OUR ANSWER:**
*Absolute bullocks.* This is one of our most frequently asked questions regarding application processes. It is also by far one of the most ‘rumored’ on as well. So let’s see what the Universities had to say...

RVC said “We do not rank applicants on how much they exceed our requirements as we feel this is against the principles of widening participation and may also disadvantage city-based applicants. We fully consider everyone who meets our minimum entry requirements.”

Nottingham, too, reiterated by saying “no extra credit is given to work experience above this quota.”

It is absolutely crucial that you meet the minimum requirements for work experiences. But beyond that, it’s what you gain from it. How can you relate what you have seen during work experiences? How has the work experiences helped you grow? These are the questions you need to be wondering when you are at a placement.

Ultimately, our favourite summary was from Bristol: “Arguably more [work experience] can place you better for talking knowledgeably at interview but equally good reflection on a smaller number of weeks (e.g. 4 in total) could be much better.”
MYTH #5
Boys can get into vet schools with lower grades

OUR ANSWER:
*Once again, who came up with that??* The answers were quite clear on this one.

- “Gender plays no part in determining who would get taken in this situation.” (Bristol)
- “This is false - all applicants must meet the minimum requirements to be considered.” (Nottingham)
- “We do not lower the entry requirements for male applicants.” (Glasgow)
- Our offers are standardised; we do not give differentiated offers based on gender or any other biological factor. (RVC)

Admission isn’t a simple process, and so many different factors play into it. There are, of course, potentially confusing factors. Bristol for instance said “The only people who have a lower offer are those who fit our widening participation criteria who would get an AAB rather than AAA offer.” As mentioned above, 70% of their selection criteria during the one stage of selection is based on Personal Statement. So our advice is: work on your Personal Statement!

Conclusion
The admission process is highly multi-factorial - there are countless different factors that could influence the outcome. But ultimately, they are all looking for students that would be the best fit for their programmes. So make sure you ask around, look around, and do your research!

As Liverpool kindly responded to our questionnaire: “80% of all queries are answered on our website or in our guidance notes - please visit [their website] for further details. Due to the number of enquiries we receive we are unable to deal with queries which are answered on our website.” Ouch!

**All quotes and information above were sourced from responses to our online questionnaire. All universities with veterinary medicine programmes in UK and Ireland were contacted at least once. All information was correct at time of publication. We were not able to obtain any responses from Cambridge, Dublin, Edinburgh or Surrey. *