

Area of Interest: Health Sciences

Veterinary Assistant

Ontario College Certificate

Program Code: 1612X01FWO

1 Year

Ottawa Campus

Our Program

Turn your interest and passion for animal care and welfare into a career.

The one-year, two-semester Veterinary Assistant Ontario College Certificate program provides you with a strong foundation of theory and practical skills necessary to provide quality care and support in veterinary and animal care settings. Areas of study include animal handling and restraint, surgical preparation, common diseases, animal behavior, laboratory procedures, grooming techniques, business practices, and client services. The development of strong interpersonal and communication skills is emphasized. The program relies on a variety of course delivery formats including traditional in-class labs and lectures, as well as on-line and hybrid courses and off-site labs. The focus is primarily companion animal care, with additional information on large animal, shelter animal and laboratory animal care.

Employment opportunities for veterinary assistants are varied and may include veterinary clinics, animal shelter and rescue organizations, wildlife sanctuaries, research facilities, grooming and pet care businesses.

SUCCESS FACTORS

This program is well-suited for students who:

- Are detail-oriented, organized and able to work independently.
- Enjoy working as a team member.
- Are receptive to direction, able to multitask and work efficiently.
- Have the ability to apply theoretical knowledge into practical skills.
- Have flexible schedules and can perform shift work including evenings, weekends and holidays.
- Possess good communication and interpersonal skills and have the ability to develop positive professional relationships with coworkers and clientele.
- Are dedicated to providing quality and compassionate animal care.
- Are comfortable working in a clinical setting and handling biological materials such as urine, feces and blood.
- Have the ability to lift and carry up to 25kg, stand for long periods of time and handle a physically demanding environment.

Employment

Graduates may find employment in areas such as veterinary clinics, laboratory animal research facilities, grooming salons, animal shelters, boarding facilities and retail pet supply outlets.

Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

- Identify and provide for the basic and specialized needs of a variety of domestic, exotic and laboratory animals.
- Restrain and manage companion animals safely in clinical situations.
- Administer medications by common drug routes under the supervision of a veterinarian.
- Assist with the administration and monitor the use of common chemical restraint agents.
- Prepare instruments, equipment and the physical environment for surgery.
- Prepare for and assist during surgical procedures.
- Assist in the production of standard diagnostic radiographs.
- Collect and process samples and perform basic diagnostic tests.
- Perform select laboratory tests.
- Provide client education related to animal care.
- Document and record patient care using established guidelines and veterinary practice software.
- Perform routine veterinary business and client service skills.
- Identify and apply discipline-specific practices that contribute to the local and global community through social responsibility, economic commitment and environmental stewardship.

Program of Study

Level: 01	Courses	Hours
ENL1813S	Communications I	42.0
VET0040	Veterinary Mathematics	14.0
VET0043	Animal Restraint, Nursing and Surgical Care I	70.0
VET0044	Grooming I	56.0
VET0046	Shelter Animal Care	28.0
VET0047	Animal Anatomy, Physiology and Common Diseases.	42.0
VET1103	Information Technology in Veterinary Practice	14.0
VET1104	Ethology	28.0
VET1123	Health and Safety in Veterinary Practice	28.0
Level: 02	Courses	Hours
GEN2003V	Healthy Lifestyle	42.0
VET0050	Field Placement	106.0
VET0051	Veterinary Pharmaceuticals	14.0
VET0052	Fundamentals of Veterinary Practice	28.0
VET0053	Animal Restraint, Nursing and Surgical Care II	70.0

VET0054	Laboratory Procedures	42.0
VET0055	Grooming II	56.0
VET0056	Laboratory Animal Care	42.0
VET1315	Animal Nutrition	28.0

Fees for the 2023/2024 Academic Year

Tuition and related ancillary fees for this program can be viewed by using the Tuition and Fees Estimator tool at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/fee-estimator> .

Further information on fees can be found by visiting the Registrar`s Office website at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro> .

Fees are subject to change.

Addition program related expenses include:

The pre-exposure rabies vaccine series is required by all students upon admission to level 01 and is estimated to be \$600-\$800.

Books, scrub sets, lab coat, veterinary kit, grooming smock, name tag, locker rental and other related supplies are estimated to cost approximately \$1,000 for the program.

Paramed Requisite immunization documentation service is estimated to cost \$80. All students are required to register in Level 01.

Travel expenses to partnering off-campus facilities are the responsibility of the student. Students are required to finance field placement related expenses such as travel and accommodation, if applicable.

Admission Requirements for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

College Eligibility

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent. Applicants with an OSSD showing senior English and/or Mathematics courses at the Basic Level, or with Workplace or Open courses, will be tested to determine their eligibility for admission; OR
- Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate; OR
- General Educational Development (GED) certificate; OR
- Mature Student status (19 years of age or older and without a high school diploma at the start of the program). Eligibility may be determined by academic achievement testing for which a fee of \$50 (subject to change) will be charged.

Program Eligibility

- English, Grade 12 (ENG4C or equivalent) with a grade of 65% or higher.
- Mathematics, Grade 12 (MAP4C or equivalent) with a grade of 65% or higher.
- Biology, Grade 11 or 12 with a grade of 65% or higher.
- Applicants with international transcripts must provide proof of the subject-specific requirements noted above and may be required to provide proof of language proficiency. Domestic applicants with international transcripts must be evaluated through the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) or World Education Services (WES).
- IELTS-International English Language Testing Service (Academic) Overall band of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each band; **OR** TOEFL-Internet-based (iBT)-overall 88, with a minimum of 22 in each component: Reading 22; Listening 22; Speaking 22; Writing 22; **OR** Duolingo English Test (DET) Overall 120, minimum of 120 in Literacy and no score below 105.

Not sure if you meet all of the requirements? Academic Upgrading may be able to help with that: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/access/>.

Should the number of qualified applicants exceed the number of available places, applicants will be selected on the basis of their proficiency in English, mathematics and biology.

Admission Requirements for 2023/2024 Academic Year

College Eligibility

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent. Applicants with an OSSD showing senior English and/or Mathematics courses at the Basic Level, or with Workplace or Open courses, will be tested to determine their eligibility for admission; OR
- Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate; OR
- General Educational Development (GED) certificate; OR
- Mature Student status (19 years of age or older and without a high school diploma at the start of the program). Eligibility may be determined by academic achievement testing for which a fee of \$50 (subject to change) will be charged.

Program Eligibility

- English, Grade 12 (ENG4C or equivalent) with a grade of 65% or higher.
- Mathematics, Grade 12 (MAP4C or equivalent) with a grade of 65% or higher.
- Biology, Grade 11 or 12 with a grade of 65% or higher.
- Applicants with international transcripts must provide proof of the subject-specific requirements noted above and may be required to provide proof of language proficiency. Domestic applicants with international transcripts must be evaluated through the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) or World Education Services (WES).
- IELTS-International English Language Testing Service (Academic) Overall band of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each band; OR TOEFL-Internet-based (iBT)-overall 88, with a minimum of 22 in each component: Reading 22; Listening 22; Speaking 22; Writing 22.

Should the number of qualified applicants exceed the number of available places, applicants will be selected on the basis of their proficiency in English, mathematics and biology.

Application Information

VETERINARY ASSISTANT Program Code 1612X01FWO

Applications to full-time day programs must be submitted with official transcripts showing completion of the academic admission requirements through:

ontariocolleges.ca
60 Corporate Court
Guelph, Ontario N1G 5J3
1-888-892-2228

Students currently enrolled in an Ontario secondary school should notify their Guidance Office prior to their online application at <http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/>.

Applications for Fall Term and Winter Term admission received by February 1 will be given equal consideration. Applications received after February 1 will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis as long as places are available.

International applicants please visit this link for application process information: <https://algonquincollege.force.com/myACint/>.

For further information on the admissions process, contact:

Registrar's Office

Algonquin College
1385 Woodroffe Ave
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8
Telephone: 613-727-0002
Toll-free: 1-800-565-4723
TTY: 613-727-7766
Fax: 613-727-7632
Contact: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>

Additional Information

All applicants are expected to own a laptop with a functioning camera and microphone, be computer proficient and have a working knowledge of Microsoft Office.

Proof of tetanus, diphtheria and pre-exposure rabies series immunizations are required for program entry by all level O1 students. Students are responsible for all costs associated with the pre-exposure rabies series. Students are required to submit immunization records to a third-party registration agency. A service fee is applicable.

All Level O1 students are expected to complete an online WHMIS training course provided at no cost by Algonquin College.

The minimum passing grade for all core theory courses is 50%. The minimum passing grade for all clinical-practical sessions and labs involving live animals is 70%.

Students must attend all scheduled on-campus laboratory sessions. Absences adversely affect the success of a student in the program.

Applicants are advised that early morning, evening, weekend and holiday hours are to be expected throughout the program for animal care and off-site labs. Travel expenses are the responsibility of the student.

Professionalism and safe working practices are evaluated in all areas of the program and are an important aspect of the student's success.

Students must successfully complete all program courses to be eligible for VET0050 Field Placement.

Contact Information

Program Coordinator(s)

- Shannon Reid, <mailto:reids@algonquincollege.com> , 613-727-4723, ext. 2971

Course Descriptions

ENL1813S Communications I

Communication remains an essential skill sought by employers, regardless of discipline or field of study. Using a practical, vocation-oriented approach, students focus on meeting the requirements of effective communication. Students practise writing, speaking, reading, listening, locating and documenting information, and using technology to communicate professionally. Students develop and strengthen communication skills that contribute to success in both educational and workplace environments.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

GEN2003V Healthy Lifestyle

Through self-evaluation, weekly journals, research and hands-on exercises students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0040 Veterinary Mathematics

Avoidance of medical errors requires veterinary staff who are competent in applied mathematics. Students review mathematical basics such as fractions, decimals, percentages, the metric system, scientific notation and ratio-proportional analysis. Students progress to applied calculations related to drug dosage, IV fluid administration, radiology, nutrition, solutions and dilutions.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0043 Animal Restraint, Nursing and Surgical Care I

Basic animal handling, nursing and surgical techniques are provided using lecture and lab delivery format. Models, mannequins and/or cadavers are used to teach low stress animal handling, restraint techniques and nursing skills such as obtaining physical exam parameters and medication administration. Surgical skills include instrument identification, sterile pack preparation, autoclave operation, patient preparation and knowledge of aseptic technique. An introduction to anesthetic equipment, monitoring devices and basic radiography techniques is provided. Students have the opportunity to gain live animal care experience through off site labs at partnering facilities.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0044 Grooming I

Pet grooming is a growing and dynamic field of the pet care industry. Students experience hands-on training in coat and skin assessment, brushing, clipping and pre-bathing techniques. Students learn to identify the variety of canine coats and the different techniques used for each type. Students obtain knowledge of canine behaviour and safe handling skills, which are required for the effective management of a pet on the grooming table. Students are introduced to basic grooming tools and equipment with a focus on proper care and maintenance.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0046 Shelter Animal Care

The physical design of shelter facilities related to reducing animal stress, minimizing disease transmission and optimizing the flow of activities is one important focus of Shelter Animal Care. Students gain knowledge of admission protocols, common infectious diseases including zoonotics, as well as infection control techniques to mitigate transmission. Temperament testing, environmental enrichment techniques, animal husbandry and proper nutritional management all contribute to a shelter animals' overall welfare and to their success at becoming adopted.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0047 Animal Anatomy, Physiology and Common Diseases.

A basic knowledge of Anatomy and Physiology provides students with a strong foundation of knowledge from which they can apply concepts in several other courses in the program of study. Students are provided a general overview of anatomy, physiology and commonly encountered diseases for a variety of species including dogs, cats, avian, exotics and large animals is provided. Selected organ systems include musculoskeletal, integumentary, cardiorespiratory, nervous, gastrointestinal, special senses and genitourinary.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0050 Field Placement

Students are assigned to an animal facility following successful completion of all Level 01 and 02 courses. This consolidation experience provides students with the opportunity to apply the

knowledge and skills they have acquired throughout the program. Students are to be available to accommodate the requirements of the placement facilities work hours and needs which may include early morning, late evenings, weekend and holiday work. Students are not assigned to a placement in which they are currently or previously employed or performed volunteer work.

Prerequisite(s): ENL1813S and VET0040 and VET0043 and VET0044 and VET0046 and VET0047 and VET0051 and VET0052 and VET0053 and VET0054 and VET0055 and VET0056 and VET1103 and VET1104 and VET1123 and VET1315
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0051 Veterinary Pharmaceuticals

Safe and correct handling, dispensing and administration of pharmaceuticals is critical in a veterinary practice. Students become familiar with the nomenclature of common veterinary terms and abbreviations, pharmaceutical products, their classification, indications, side effects and administration routes. Applied math related to drug dosage and dispensing is performed. Students are prepared to provide accurate information to clients and practise safe pharmaceutical dispensing protocols.

Prerequisite(s): VET0040 and VET0043 and VET0047
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0052 Fundamentals of Veterinary Practice

Principles of managing a successful veterinary practice and select animal care businesses are presented. The creation of positive and professional client and veterinary team relationships is emphasized. Skills acquired include managing correspondence, communication etiquette, managing confrontational situations and supporting clients through pet loss. Basic accounting, inventory management, marketing techniques, human resources issues, legal and ethical aspects are discussed. Veterinary regulatory and accrediting standards are reviewed.

Prerequisite(s): VET1103
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0053 Animal Restraint, Nursing and Surgical Care II

The theory and skills acquired in VET0043 are applied within a live animal clinical environment. Students actively participate in assisting veterinary staff with animal care, husbandry, physical exams, vaccinations, medical treatments, surgery and dental procedures.

Prerequisite(s): VET0040 and VET0043 and VET1103 and VET1104
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0054 Laboratory Procedures

Biological samples provide important diagnostic information to the veterinary practitioner. This combined lecture and lab course provides information on the safe collection, handling and preparation of biological samples to ensure accurate diagnostic results. Students perform a variety of laboratory techniques using whole blood, serum, urine, feces, cytological and microbial samples. Health and safety of veterinary staff in a laboratory setting, including zoonotic disease transmission, is emphasized.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0055 Grooming II

Grooming I skills are expanded to include bathing, drying and minor finishing techniques on canines. Students learn to perform an evaluation to identify problems involving the skin, coat, external parasites, lifestyle factors and odour control. Grooming products are discussed and compared in a practical setting. Students are familiarized with the aspects of a grooming business. A variety of grooming techniques are demonstrated.

Prerequisite(s): VET0044 and VET1104
Corerequisite(s):none

VET0056 Laboratory Animal Care

Veterinary assistants play an important role in research facilities regarding animal care and welfare. Students acquire information on the variety of species used in research. Combined lectures and labs use models, mannequins and cadavers to provide details on lab animal housing, environmental enrichment, safe handling, treatment procedures, nutrition and facility sanitation. Ethical and humane care in the research setting are integral to the course. Students are introduced to Canadian Council of Animal Care standards and online animal training modules.

Prerequisite(s): VET0047 and VET1104
Corerequisite(s):none

VET1103 Information Technology in Veterinary Practice

The use of media and medical data management software is an essential skill for veterinary professionals. Students become proficient with the use of Avimark, a veterinary practice software. Skills acquired include client and staff scheduling, booking appointments, client file setup, updating medical records, integration of lab results, inventory control and price lists, estimate and invoice generation, completion of transactions and budget analysis. Competency in Microsoft Office is reviewed, and students create a client-oriented slide show. Use of social media and telemedicine in veterinary medicine is explored. Students examine veterinary practice websites for quality, and will develop their own professional social media presence to market themselves in a manner that gives them the best opportunity for establishing long lasting professional connections.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET1104 Ethology

Thorough understanding of animal behaviour and communication is required to work safely, knowledgeably and effectively with patients and clients. The Ethology theory course studies animal evolution, domestication and the physiological, environmental and developmental basis of behaviour. Common normal and abnormal manifestations of behaviour in domestic animal species are explored/ Approaches regarding prevention, basic training tools and various treatments to correct undesirable behaviours are described. Video presentations, demonstrations and guest presenters will complement the delivery and students will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge in the on campus veterinary clinic throughout the duration of the program.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET1123 Health and Safety in Veterinary Practice

Health and safety protocols must be respected while working in all veterinary environments. Students learn about the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) legislation which promotes hazard recognition and prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses. An overview of relevant legislation and regulatory organizations are provided. Other topics include chemical and biological hazards, laser and radiation safety, facility maintenance and emergency protocols, workplace violence and harassment, ergonomics and farm safety.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

VET1315 Animal Nutrition

A patient's nutritional profile is an important consideration when assessing their overall health and quality of life. Students learn the nutritional requirements of large and small animals at various life stages including specific dietary needs of ill and recovering patients. Through evaluating and comparing a variety of veterinary diets, students gain the knowledge to accurately assess patients' nutritional needs and potential disease state, then accurately counsel clients, helping

them to make informed diet selections for their pet. The Veterinary Team plays a key role in providing client education regarding clinical nutrition.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none