



# New Graduate Programme

Small and Large Animal tracks

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# 2024



 The job of all of us at CVS is to create a fantastic first job and support the beginnings of a long and rewarding career for you in the veterinary profession. The Graduate Programme will help you grow, learn new skills, find support, support others and also to learn about yourself. We will make sure you have a great place to work with lots of different opportunities for development to suit the authentic you! 

**Dr Paul Higgs MA VetMB CertSAM DipECVIM-CA FRCVS**  
Chief Veterinary Officer


 Our new graduate programme, and its signature onboarding phase is one of CVS' proudest achievements. The transition from final year vet student to practising veterinary surgeon can be daunting, but should be one of the most exciting times in our careers. The opportunity our new graduate programme affords helps ensure new graduates get the best possible start to their careers. Getting that first hands on experience as a qualified vet, real world practical clinical training, peer to peer learning and support from new colleagues is an opportunity I would have relished straight out of vet school. 

**Dr Ben Jacklin BA VetMB DipECVS MVetMed MRCVS**  
Deputy Chief Executive

 Having completed the programme myself when I first joined CVS, I am thrilled to now be instrumental in the running of it. My favourite part of running the New Graduate Programme is seeing the friendships and support networks forming, just as they did for me when I was a new grad. 

**Dr Cheryl Etherington BVMedSci BVM BVS MRCVS**  
Post Graduate Programme Lead

 With 80+% of UK veterinary professionals working in general practice, the aim of the programme is to develop new members of our profession to benefit their career, colleagues, and animals under their care. Our new graduate programme is designed to enable individuals to continually reflect on their own competencies in a supported learning environment to develop as capable clinicians.

In future, we hope to enable veterinary professionals to tailor their development for a lifelong interesting career as part of the veterinary profession and maintain a good work-life balance. 

**Dr Rob Kelly BVSc PgCert MSc PhD SFHEA MRCVS**  
Head of Veterinary Clinical Education





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# CVS Overview

## Passionate about animal care

At CVS, we are one of the leading integrated veterinary service providers in the UK, the Netherlands, the Republic of Ireland and Australia, putting our people first.

## Our key strategic pillars

**Our purpose is to give the best possible care to animals**

**Our vision is to be the veterinary company people most want to work for**

**1**

We recommend and provide the best clinical care every time

**2**

We are a great place to work and have a career

**3**

We provide great facilities and equipment

**4**

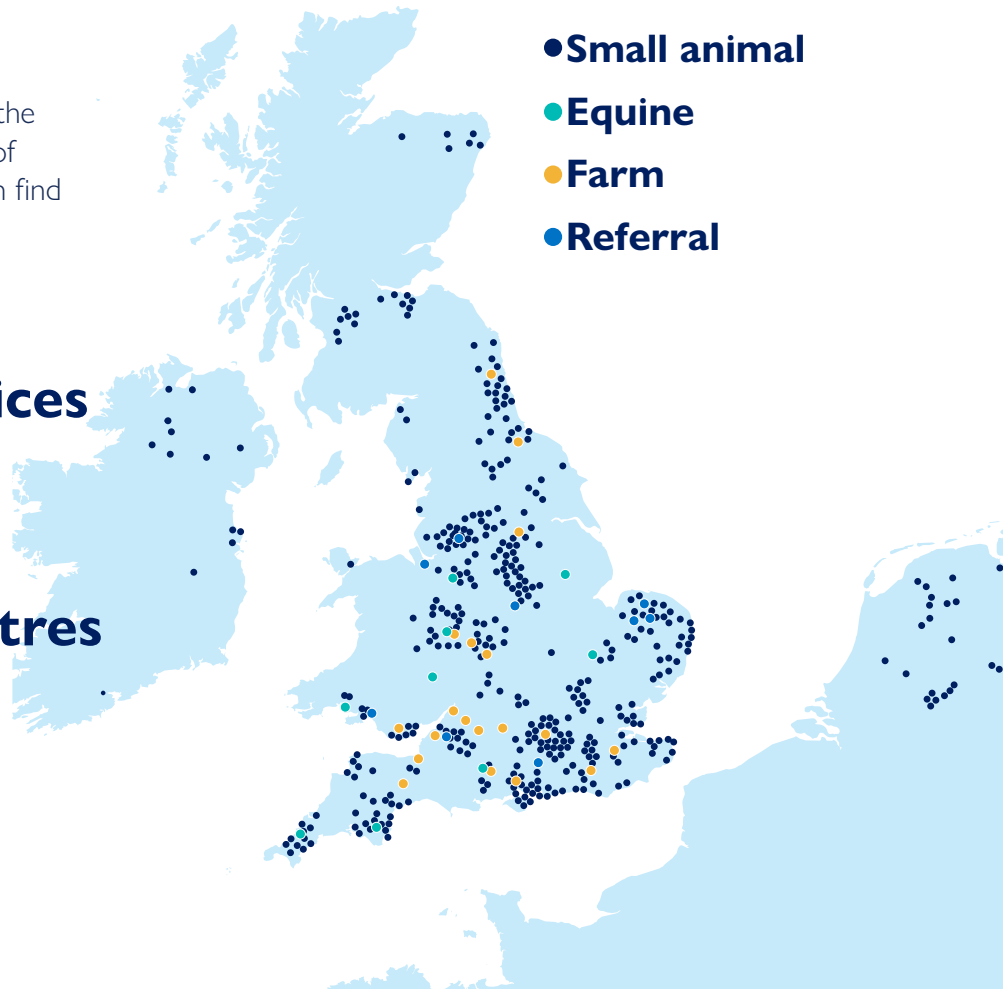
We take our responsibilities seriously

## Our locations

We have locations across all of the UK, the Netherlands, Republic of Ireland and Australia, so you can find a practice best suited to you.

- **Small animal**
- **Equine**
- **Farm**
- **Referral**

**500+ vet practices**  
**3 laboratories**  
**7 crematoria**  
**10 referral centres**  
**+2000 Vets**  
**+3000 Nurses**





# Your Graduate Programme

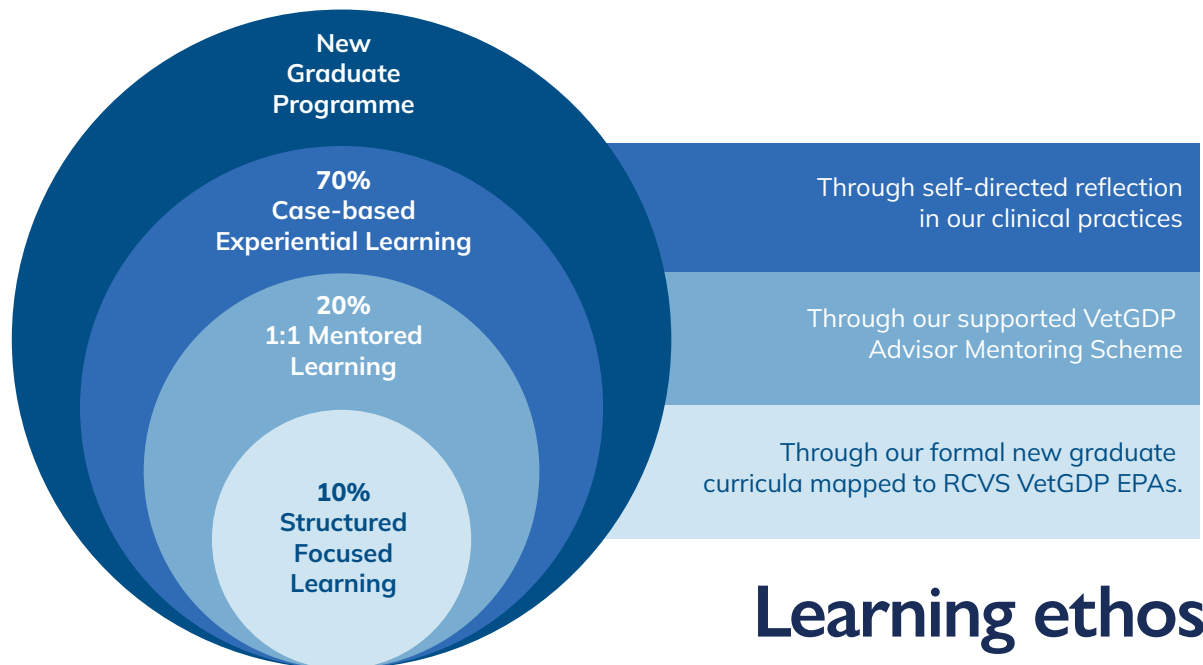
**Are you looking for a complete two-year graduate programme, designed by experienced vets, which will fully support you? If so, you have come to the right place!**

The CVS New Graduate Programme is tailor made for you, offering you the right support and training network and ensuring you have an experienced clinical mentor working alongside you in your practice. Our focus is on your development – we will ensure you get the best start to your career. The training offered in our programme is designed to help you grow and develop confidence. There is nothing to pass and you are not assessed or tied in. We will deliver to you over £6,000 worth of dedicated Continued Professional Development (CPD), supporting your development of clinical and

non-clinical skills. This will all start with our industry leading Onboarding Phase.

We are extremely proud of our longstanding CVS Graduate Programme and have supported well over 1200 brilliant graduates with the programme since 2012. We are always learning and work hard to constantly evolve the programme each year – in order to provide you with the best support and opportunity for your first years in practice. Throughout the two years, the training options open wider for you, giving you the freedom to pick and choose the areas you want to progress in, and at the end you will automatically continue in your permanent role with us.

# CVS New Graduate Vet Programme: An overview



## Learning ethos

Lombardo, Michael M; Eichinger, Robert W (1996). The Career Architect Development Planner (1st ed.). Minneapolis: Lominger. p. iv. ISBN 0-9655712-1-1. Duberman, Tracy. (2011). Developing physician leaders today using the 70/20/10 rule. Physician executive. 37. 66-8.

## What support & CPD you receive (Small Animal Programme)

**Our programme's learning ethos highlights how we support in practice learning with structured mentorship and high quality continued professional development tailored to individual new graduate needs:**

### A trained VetGDP Adviser

Your VetGDP Adviser will be an experienced vet who is there to provide day-to-day support. You will work closely with them to develop your skills and achieve your goals. They will help you to complete your VetGDP e-portfolio. In addition to the mandatory RCVS

VetGDP training, CVS VetGDP Advisers also receive additional training to further develop their mentoring skills. Additional information on this can be found later in this booklet.

### Professional skills workshops

We dedicate four days of your New Graduate Programme teaching to the important aspect of professional skills. These workshops focus on non-clinical aspects of veterinary life covering wellbeing, communication and teamwork to help you thrive in practice. In addition to these, you will also start to learn about quality improvement and patient safety and how it can be applied in practice.



## Clinical skills training

Also included is a full clinical programme delivered both online through CVS Knowledge Hub, our virtual learning environment, and through face-to-face workshops, with a focus on helping you develop core skills and grow into a well-rounded general practitioner. These include: dentistry, ultrasound, abdominal surgery, rabbit medicine and much more.

You will also have free access to the full BSAVA online library, the Vet Oracle telephone support service, providing phone access to specialists, as well as regionally based Hub Clinical Leads dedicated to supporting you.

## Year one

4 week Onboarding Phase followed by a year long structured induction into practice life

8 Clinical Training Courses

2 Professional Skills Courses

## Year two

The second year is a 50:50 split between 5 days of our clinical training courses, and a 5 day elective.

The elective is an opportunity to explore different aspects of the veterinary industry, both clinical and non-clinical. Examples of how graduates have used this time include visits to referral practices, working night shifts in Out of Hours clinics, work-shadowing business managers, graduate exchanges between practices and conference attendance.

## Wellbeing and Pastoral Support

CVS is committed to supporting the wellbeing and mental health of all our employees.

We aim to create a culture where employees can talk openly and honestly about their wellbeing and mental health and to report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

CVS is the only veterinary corporate that employs New Graduate Pastoral Support Vets (PSVs). They are available to you for direct pastoral support outside of your practice, and they also work closely with practice leaders and VetGDP Advisers, to help ensure that you receive the best possible experience within practice.

In addition, we have the following wellbeing initiatives:

- a network of Wellbeing Champions/First Aiders for Mental Health who can provide initial support and signposting within practice.
- an Employee Assistance Programme that is available 24/7 365 days a year. They have a confidential helpline staffed by trained counsellors to support not only you but also your immediate family when you need it the most.
- five Colleague EDI Groups with focuses on Ability & Neurodiversity, Ethnicity, Gender, LGBTQ+ and Social Mobility. Our focus is on making CVS a great place to work and to have a career for everyone, no matter who you are, your background, or how you identify.
- a Wellbeing Calendar for colleagues featuring topics such as resilience, exercise, sleep, stress.
- a new CVS Refresh reward scheme where teams receive a weekly allowance to spend on treats or classes.





# CVS Onboarding Phase

## (Small Animal Programme)

### Where your career begins.

We are delighted to start your New Graduate Career with a 4 week Onboarding Phase which includes a week with other new graduates at our brilliant Residential.

We want to help make your transition to work as smooth and exciting as possible, meeting new friends and gaining new skills along the way.

People are at the heart of CVS and we endeavour to provide our colleagues with the best possible experience and the support they will need to not only cope but to thrive in their roles.

To ensure your veterinary career gets off to the best possible start, we have designed a 4 week Onboarding Phase that every graduate that joins us will complete. This phase is designed to ease you into your first job in a gentle, supportive way. You will start by attending live, online webinars and completing other work online in week 1. You will then attend the residential week where you will have the chance to socialise and network with peers and staff, as well as practice your skills in a safe environment. You will join your own practice for week 3 for a relaxed, orientation week. In week 4 you will either remain at your practice or attend another local surgery where a specific training plan will be followed.

### The Residential will

- Enable us to meet you in person so that we can welcome you to CVS
- Allow you to practice key day-one skills and re-visit essential knowledge
- Bring you together with other CVS new graduates, so that you can get to know some of your new colleagues and have a peer-support network right from the start
- Provide you with the opportunity to learn about CVS and how our practices operate

# Your first 4 weeks (Small Animal Programme)

## Week 1 - Online Week

An online teaching programme, delivered through CVS Knowledge Hub, our virtual learning environment.

## Week 2 - Residential Week

A 5-five day practical residential week including:

- Colleagues from our Learning, Education and Development (LED) department build on the training from the online week and work through diary management scenarios
- Recommendation Culture training: Learn tips and tricks to help you make a confident, clear recommendation to a client when consulting.
- Dentistry: a practical wet lab session introducing you to the techniques necessary for performing dental procedures
- GP Skills: A practical classroom-based session, where you will have the opportunity to practice a range of skills from how to use a microscope, how to set up an ultrasound machine and writing clinical notes on a practice management system
- CPR: an overview of current RECOVER guidelines followed by crash scenarios
- Managing a Day in Practice: simulations preparing you for the day-to-day occurrences of general practice allowing you to develop tools for success.

## Week 3 - In practice Orientation Week

A gentle week where you will be 'off rota', giving you the chance to meet the team, find out where everything is and how the practice works. You will also spend some time shadowing either your VetGDP Adviser, or another experienced vet.

## Week 4 - In practice Training Week

This becomes a more practical week which will either take place at your practice or another local surgery. You will be working with real patients and clients and, as part of your structured training programme, will be fully supported by your experienced clinical tutors at all times during the week.

### You will spend

- Two days in the operating theatre honing your bitch spay and neutering skills
- Two days in the consultation room with real patients and clients, providing you with the opportunity to put into practice your preventative healthcare knowledge and learn how to structure and manage common first opinion consultations.

There will also be opportunity to gain feedback and for structured reflection.

# Residential Testimonials



"I've really enjoyed the Residential. It's been a great way of being eased into the working world from being a student to a fully fledged vet."

"It was a great opportunity to meet other people in the same position as me and talk through everything about being a new grad"



"I found the Residential really helpful. I feel a lot more confident now going into practice."







# Large Animal Programme

The majority of our new graduates join us and work within small animal practice. However should you be looking to work in mixed, farm or equine practice we also offer a fantastic large animal new graduate vet programme.

Whether you join us as a Farm Vet, an Equine Ambulatory Vet or an Equine Intern Vet you will be enrolled onto the new graduate programme and will benefit from:

## Online and Residential Week

Featuring both an online teaching programme, delivered through CVS Knowledge Hub, our virtual learning environment as well as face-to-face practical sessions.

The farm animal topics covered will include pregnancy diagnosis, surgery, post-mortem examinations, calving, dystocia and foot trimming.

The equine topics covered will include orthopaedic assessment and back evaluation, distal limb ultrasonography, wound management and bandaging and nerve and joint blocking techniques.

## In Practice Orientation and Welcome Week

A gentle week where you will be 'off rota', giving you the chance to meet the team, find out where everything is and how the practice works. You will also spend some time shadowing either your VetGDP Adviser, or another experienced vet.

During the programme you will undertake a mixture of both Clinical Training Courses and Professional Skills Courses as well as an elective. The elective is an opportunity to explore different aspects of the veterinary industry, both clinical and non-clinical. Examples of how graduates have used this time include visits to referral practices, working night shifts in Out of Hours clinics, work-shadowing business managers, graduate exchanges between practices and conference attendance.

We have dedicated New Graduate Programme Leads for both Farm Animal and Equine who will support you within the programme.



Here are some images  
from our recent **large  
animal** residentials



# Benefits and perks

Paid Onboarding Phase	Attractive starting salary which increases at both the end of year 1 and at the end of year 2	No financial tie in during or after the programme	Professional memberships (RCVS & VDS)
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Employee Assistance Programme: 24/7 365 days a year helpline to support you and your immediate family when you need it the most	Discounted UK gym membership with Gym Flex	Sharesave scheme
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Recommend a Friend: Financial bonus up to £5000!	EV Car Benefit Scheme	Discounted cash healthcare plan and private health insurance scheme	Fully funded visas
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Up to 7 weeks annual leave plus Bank Holidays (or equivalent) with our Buy/Sell holiday scheme - allowing you to purchase an additional two weeks of annual leave. Receive an extra days leave each year in your first 5 years at CVS.

Unlimited access to hundreds of free webinars and courses available via Knowledge Hub.	Discounted pet treatments	Internal transfers: with a network of over 500 practices we can support you should you need to relocate
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CPD valued at over £6,000 with no tie-in or claw back	Vet Oracle telephone support service, providing phone access to specialists	VetGDP Advisers all additionally trained to support you	Regionally based Pastoral Support Vets dedicated to support you
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Opportunity to attend a Careers Day at the end of the programme to discuss your next steps which may include (if you wish) new training pathways.	Free access to the full BSAVA online library
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# Meet your **VetGDP** **Adviser**

Your VetGDP Adviser will be your coach and mentor as you take your first steps into your new career pathway. They will provide you with the in practice support necessary as you develop into a confident and competent veterinary surgeon, and progress to completion of your VetGDP e-portfolio.

We recognise how important a good mentor is to your early years as a veterinary surgeon, and as such have created a development programme for our VetGDP Advisers - the CVS New Graduate Mentor Training Scheme.

This scheme helps CVS VetGDP Advisers to further develop and hone their coaching and mentoring skills, confidently support

conversations around mental health, and how to successfully support graduates faced with common challenges whilst they make that transition from student to veterinary surgeon.

VetGDP Advisers are also able to interact with each other through a network of peer support across the business, and can reach out to more experienced individuals should they feel they need to. This ensures that all VetGDP Advisers, regardless of their experience, can offer great and tailored support to the needs of their graduates.





# Wider Clinical Support

At CVS we have Regional Clinical Leads (RCLs). A RCL is a vet who is available for clinical support in your region. They have a wealth of experience and are able to help with remote advice and in-clinic mentoring. Our Regional Clinical Leads have been a key part of our business for over 3 years, working with our practice teams to champion fantastic clinical standards, develop brilliant clinical skills and provide outstanding clinical leadership. The RCLs have a real passion for general practice, believe that improvement never ends and want to help others find the joy that being a great vet brings. The Regional Clinical Lead work as part of the wider team to support practices to deliver the best experience for new graduate vets. You will be further supported by a network of specialist veterinarians throughout CVS who are all available at the end of the phone.

The VetOracle service is a free advice line for you to get specialist advice whenever you need

it. Our current new graduates say that this service gives them the extra confidence and support they need to confidently treat their cases knowing that there is always someone available to assist.

CVS also has an Advanced Clinical Services Network (or ACSN). This is a group of advanced practitioners in a range of disciplines who travel the country to visit CVS practices to perform very advanced surgical, cardiology or imaging procedures directly in general practice. It is like bringing a referral hospital to your own front door. It is aimed at the clients who may not be able to get to a referral hospital (either financially or logistically) so this team can work with the vets in our Practices to deliver this high end service. This means you can see first hand how these procedures are performed and take advantage of this network of vets to help support you in practice.



# Career progression

We are committed to making CVS a great place to work and have a career. Our Learning, Education and Development Team continue to deliver significant training in support of colleague development.

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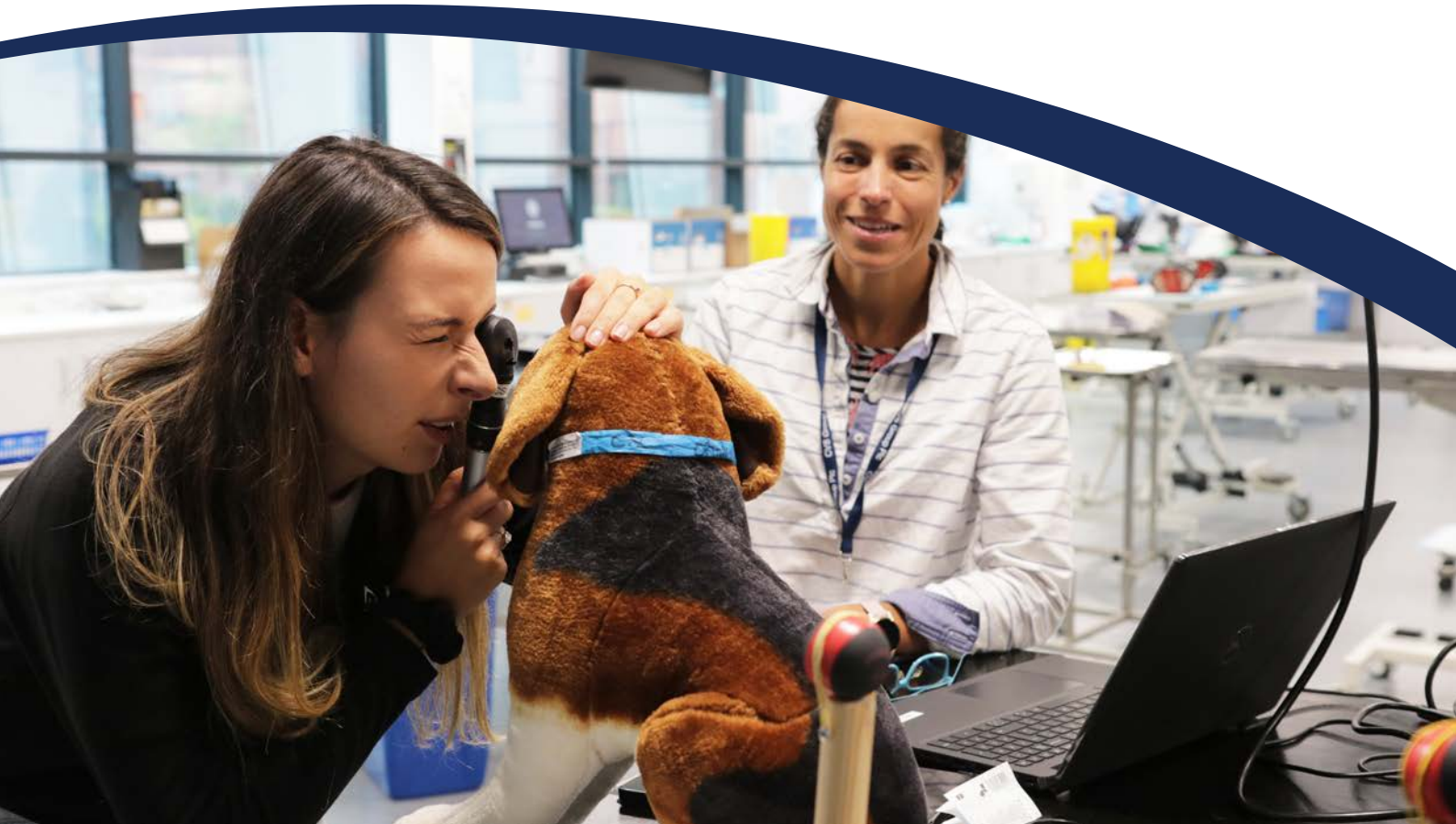
**vacancies filled by  
internal candidates in  
financial year 2022-  
2023**

**80%**

**of the CVS Executive  
and 80% of our Clinical  
Director roles filled by  
internal applicants**

**60%**

**60% of our Senior Vet  
roles filled by internal  
applicants**





# FAQs

## **How do I gain access to my online learning?**

Access to the Onboarding Phase training and resources will be available on CVS Knowledge Hub, our virtual learning environment. You will be sent login details for Knowledge Hub in the week prior to your start date to ensure you are all set for your online learning week.

## **Where do the Residentials take place?**

We run residential weeks for the small animal programme in the North and South in the Summer and in the North at other times of the year. The large animal residential takes place once a year and the location does vary however all UK based travel, accommodation and subsistence costs associated with the small animal and large animal residential week will be covered by CVS.

## **Do I need to 'pass' the New Graduate Programme?**

Not at all! Our training is here to help you become the best vet you can be, your Onboarding Phase experience is just one element of the CPD, support and mentorship you will receive as part of the New Graduate Programme. The purpose of the Onboarding Phase is about ensuring we smooth your transition from student to veterinary surgeon, giving you the perfect foundation you need to help you excel in your first years in practice. If you would like more support and training, we can help you with what you need to succeed. We want to help you become a confident vet with us and will provide a supportive team around you to help you achieve this.





### **I can't start until October – does this mean I will not be able to attend the Residential?**

We will hold several small animal residential weeks over the summer period and at least one other residential throughout the year. We can therefore be relatively flexible with regards to your start date. However if a residential is not scheduled to take place at the time you wish to start work you may instead start work directly with your practice and then be enrolled to attend the next available residential week. We hold only one large animal residential week each year so will liaise with you to try to ensure you will be able to attend. If this is not possible then you will start directly with your practice.

### **Are there any financial tie-ins for the graduate programme?**

No, we don't believe in tying you into any agreement/pay backs as part of our graduate programme. We want all our graduates to be with us because they want to. Our vision is to be the veterinary company people most want to work for and for newly qualified vets, that starts with us having a fantastic and supportive New Graduate Programme for your first years in practice.

### **Where will I be working when on the programme?**

We match you to a practice based on your geographical and clinical interests. You are then offered a permanent position to work at the practice and enrolled onto our new graduate vet programme.

# How to **apply**

- Click the relevant apply now button or scan the QR code
- Complete your application
- You will be contacted by a member of the Recruitment Team and invited for an interview
- If you are successful in your initial interview, you will then be invited to meet a practice team, this may be either virtually or in person

## Small Animal

[apply now](#)



## Equine

[apply now](#)



## Farm

[apply now](#)

