
RCVS Survey of Recent Graduates

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) asked the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) to conduct an online survey of recent (2008 onwards) qualifiers from UK veterinary schools. The purpose of the survey was to discover: how easy or difficult it had been for veterinary school graduates to find suitable employment; the type of work they were in, or were seeking; and their views and experiences of their employment so far. These issues are particularly important given that the University of Surrey is planning to open a veterinary school in the near future, which will increase the number of veterinary graduates in the labour market.

1.2 The survey

During May 2013, the questionnaire was agreed with the RCVS before being set up and tested online. The survey was launched on 29 May via email invitations to qualifiers from veterinary school from 2008 onwards, after which there were three email reminders before the survey was closed on 17 June.

1.3 Completion rates

Table 1.1: Number of respondents who fully completed and partially completed the survey

	Frequency	%
Completed	1,371	97.5
Partially completed	35	2.5
Total	1,406	100.0

Note: As a result of partial completions, and the routing of the survey, the response rate for each survey question can vary.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

1.3.1 Final response rate

A total of 3,449 email invitations were sent, although nine addresses were invalid and a further 173 'bounced', so the sample size was reduced to 3,267. After the initial email invitation and three reminders, 1,371 completed submissions and 46 partial submissions were received. However, 11 of the partial submissions did not complete any questions so the partial submission count was reduced to 35, which takes the total number of responses to 1,406.

The final response rate was therefore 43 per cent.

2 Headline Results

This chapter presents the overall results in the order in which they appeared on the questionnaire.

2.1 Section A: About you...

Table 2.1: Gender of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Male	256	18.2
Female	1147	81.8
Total	1403	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.2: Average age of respondents (Years)

	Range	Mean
Age	23 to 51	27.11
N =	1400	

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.3: Nationality of respondents

Nationality	Frequency	Percent
British	1259	90.4
Irish	29	2.1
European, other EU	21	1.5
European, outside EU	5	.4
Other	79	5.7
Total	1393	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.4: 'Other' nationality specified

Nationality	Frequency	Percent
Indian	1	1.4
Japanese	3	4.3
Singaporean	2	2.9
Chinese	1	1.4
South African	1	1.4
Malaysian	2	2.9
USA	46	65.7
Canadian	11	15.7
Barbadian	1	1.4
Mixed nationality	2	2.9
N =	70	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.5: Veterinary School respondents graduated from

School	Frequency	Percent
University of Bristol	209	14.9
University of Cambridge	140	10.0
University of Edinburgh	233	16.6
University of Glasgow	148	10.6
University of Liverpool	195	13.9
University of Nottingham	69	4.9
RVC, University of London	407	29.1
Total	1401	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.6: Year of graduation

Year	Frequency	Percent
2006	1	.1
2008	219	15.6
2009	258	18.4
2010	260	18.5
2011	323	23.0
2012	325	23.2
2013	17	1.2
Total	1403	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.7: 'Have you completed your Professional Development Phase?' (PDP)

Completed PDP?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	762	54.3
No	641	45.7
Total	1403	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.8: Average time taken to complete PDP (Months)

	Range	Mean
Time taken (months)	1 to 51	16.28
N =	751	

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

2.2 Section B: About your activity since qualifying...

Table 2.9: 'Did you delay actively seeking employment for any reason?'

Delay seeking employment?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	344	24.5
No	1059	75.5
Total	1403	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The top three reasons for delaying actively seeking employment (Note: Some respondents provided more than one reason)

- Travel/holiday/honeymoon – 156 respondents

- Wanted a break/time out after years of study – 89 respondents
- Work experience/charity/volunteer (home and abroad) – 67 respondents

Table 2.10: ‘Have you done any veterinary work (paid or unpaid) since qualifying?’

Done veterinary work?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1374	97.9
No	30	2.1
Total	1404	100.0

Note: Respondents who answered ‘No’ to this question were routed straight to Section C, and did not have the opportunity to answer any of the remaining questions within this section.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.11: ‘When did you first start actively looking for work?’

When did you start looking for work?	Frequency	Percent
Before graduation	696	50.9
As soon as I graduated	278	20.3
1-3 months after graduating	293	21.4
4-6 months after graduating	77	5.6
More than 6 months after graduating	23	1.7
Total	1367	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.12: Time taken to find first veterinary position, after beginning to actively seek work.

	Range	Mean
Time taken to find first position (months)	0 to 27	2.71
N =	1360	

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.13: Nature of veterinary work in first position

Type of work	Frequency	Percent
Clinical practice	1253	91.7
Internship (in either private practice or vet school)	93	6.8
Government-related veterinary work	3	.2
Academic (research/teaching)	7	.5
Industry (e.g. animal health, pet food, insurance)	2	.1
Other	9	.7
Total	1367	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.14: 'Other' type of veterinary work in first position specified.

Type of work	Frequency
Charity/ voluntary	1
Locum at university	1
Locum clinical practice (self employed)	1
Locum small animal work	1
Military - Royal Army Veterinary Corps	1
Overseas charity work	1
Pathology residency	1
Self-employed non-veterinary consultancy, alternative veterinary medicine	1
Voluntary work abroad for 9 months	1
Total	9

Note: Respondents who stated that they had worked within a clinical practice in this first position (N = 1253) had the opportunity to answer the following three additional questions (Detailed within Tables 2.15, 2.16, 2.17 and 2.18). For the first of these, respondents were able to tick all categories that were applicable.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.15: Type of clinical practice specified

Type of clinical practice	Frequency	Percent of responses
Small animals	782	53.1
Farm	147	10
Equine	137	9.3
Mixed	390	26.5
Other	17	1.2
Total	1473	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.16: Type of mixed clinical practice work specified

Type of mixed practice	Frequency	Percent
Small animals and equine	18	4.6
Farm and equine	3	.8
Fully mixed (i.e. small animals, equine and farm)	367	94.6
Total	388	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.17: ‘Was this work within an RCVS accredited practice?’

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	720	58.3
No	514	41.7
Total	1234	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.18: ‘Did you actively seek work within an RCVS accredited practice?’

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	204	16.4
No	1043	83.6
Total	1247	100.0

Note: All respondents who had found veterinary work since qualifying (N = 1374) were brought back into the survey at this stage.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.19: ‘Was this first position paid or unpaid?’

	Frequency	Percent
Paid	1305	96.0
Unpaid	54	4.0
Total	1359	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.20: ‘Did this first veterinary position meet your needs?’ (e.g. in terms of pay, location and type of work)

	Frequency	Percent
Yes - the work met all my needs	462	33.8
Yes - the work met most of my needs	717	52.4
No - the work did not meet my needs	189	13.8
Total	1368	100.0

Note: Respondents who answered ‘No’ to this question (N = 189), had the opportunity to answer the following two additional questions (Detailed within Tables 2.21 and 2.22). For the first of these, respondents were able to provide as many reasons as were applicable.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.21: Reason(s) first position did not meet respondents’ needs

Reason(s) did not meet needs	Frequency	Percent of responses
The position was too lowly paid	58	10.1
I did not receive enough professional support from my employers and colleagues	131	22.8
I did not receive enough emotional/social support from my employers and colleagues	100	17.4
I was not able to work the hours that I wanted	37	6.4
The position was not in the location that I wanted	67	11.7
The position was not in the type of clinical practice that I wanted	58	10.1
There were not enough development opportunities	92	16
Other	31	5.4
Total	574	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The top three reasons listed by respondents under the category ‘other’:

- The position was locum/temporary – 8 respondents
- Respondents were bullied by their managers and/or employers – 5 respondents
- The position was unpaid – 3 respondents

Table 2.22: Most important reason first position did not meet respondents' needs

Reason did not meet needs	Frequency	Percent
The position was too lowly paid	16	8.6
I did not receive enough professional support from my employers and colleagues	99	52.9
I did not receive enough emotional/social support from my employers and colleagues	13	7.0
I was not able to work the hours that I wanted	2	1.1
The position was not in the location that I wanted	11	5.9
The position was not in the type of clinical practice that I wanted	13	7.0
There were not enough development opportunities	15	8.0
Other	18	9.6
Total	187	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.23: 'Where was this first position located?'

Location	Frequency	Percent
Within the UK	1251	91.6
Outside the UK	114	8.4
Total	1365	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.24: Location within the UK specified

Region	Frequency	Percent
North East	71	5.7
North West	135	10.9
Yorkshire & the Humber	81	6.5
East Midlands	108	8.7
West Midlands	107	8.6
East of England	93	7.5
London	62	5.0
South East	215	17.3
South West	182	14.7
Wales	88	7.1
Scotland	77	6.2
Northern Ireland	22	1.8
Total	1241	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.25: 'Was this your preferred location?'

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	752	55.1
No	312	22.8
Not applicable - I did not mind where I worked	302	22.1
Total	1366	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.26: 'Are you still in this first position?'

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	594	43.4
No	774	56.6
Total	1368	100.0

Note: End of questions for respondents who answered 'Yes' to this question.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.27: 'Why did you leave this first position?'

Reason(s) for leaving first position	Frequency	Percent of responses
General job dissatisfaction	60	5.8
Poor management	179	17.2
Workload	68	6.5
Long hours	73	7.0
Salary	52	5.0
Training/career progression	63	6.1
Sacked/made redundant	18	1.7
Temporary position	134	12.9
Unpaid role/volunteer	16	1.5
Change in speciality/role/more challenging role & opportunity	138	13.3
Wanted to travel/work abroad	35	3.4
Illness/injury	8	0.8
Further education/study/research	33	3.2
Location reasons	125	12.0
Personal reasons	12	1.2
Not relevant/other comment	25	2.4
Total	1039	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.28: Average time spent in first veterinary position

	Range	Mean
Time in first position (months)	0 to 53	15.11
N =	769	

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.29: 'Have you found other veterinary work since leaving this position?'

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	742	96.2
No	29	3.8
Total	771	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

2.3 Section C: About your present work status...

In addition to respondents who had left their first veterinary position (N = 774), respondents who stated that they had yet to find employment within the veterinary sector (N = 30) were brought back into the survey at this stage.

Table 2.30: Respondents' present work status

	Frequency	Percent
In vet work	727	91.1
In non-vet work	29	3.6
Not working	42	5.3
Total	798	100.0

Note: Respondents who stated that they were currently 'In non-vet work' or 'Not working' were asked the following additional question.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Respondents who stated that they were currently in non-vet work (N = 29) were asked for details of their present work activity. In response to this question, ten respondents (34.5%) specified that they were currently completing a PhD. The remaining responses were diverse in range, and included undertaking scientific research, attending medical school and agricultural work.

Table 2.31: ‘Are you currently seeking employment within the veterinary sector?’

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	31	43.7
No	40	56.3
Total	71	100.0

Note: Respondents who answered ‘Yes’ to this question were asked to specify how long they had been actively seeking work within the veterinary sector.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.32: Time spent actively seeking employment within the veterinary sector

	Range	Mean
Time spent seeking work (months)	0 to 14	4.24
N =	31	

Note: Respondents who specified at the beginning of Section C that they were either currently ‘In vet work’ (N = 727) or seeking employment within the veterinary sector (N = 31) had the opportunity to answer the remaining questions in this section. Participants who stated that they were not presently seeking work within the sector were routed to Section D.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.33: ‘What type of veterinary work are you currently seeking/doing?’ (Tick all that apply)

Type of veterinary work currently seeking/doing:	Frequency	Percent of responses
Clinical practice	652	82
Internship or residency (in either private practice or vet school)	80	10.1
Government-related veterinary work	10	1.3
Academic (research/teaching)	36	4.5
Industry (e.g. animal health, pet food, insurance)	12	1.5
Other	6	0.8
Total	796	100

Note: Respondents who stated that they were either currently working or seeking to work within a clinical practice (N = 652) had the opportunity to answer the following three additional questions (Detailed within Tables 2.34, 2.35 and 2.36).

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.34: ‘What type of clinical practice work are you currently seeking/doing?’

Type of clinical practice:	Frequency	Percent of responses
Small animals	480	67.7
Farm	68	9.6
Equine	66	9.3
Mixed (i.e. equally across a number of species)	80	11.3
Other	15	2.1
Total	709	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.35: Type of mixed clinical practice specified

Type of mixed clinical practice	Frequency	Percent
Small animals and equine	11	13.6
Farm and equine	0	0
Fully mixed (i.e. small animals, equine and farm)	70	86.4
Total	81	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.36: ‘Are you currently working/seeking work within an RCVS accredited practice?’

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	396	60.8
No	255	39.2
Total	651	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.37: ‘In which geographical location are you currently working/seeking work?’

Location	Frequency	Percent
Within the UK	659	86.9
Outside the UK	99	13.1
Total	758	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.38: Location(s) within the UK in which respondents are currently seeking work/working

Region(s):	Frequency	Percent of responses
North East	37	4.8
North West	85	10.9
Yorkshire & the Humber	46	5.9
East Midlands	51	6.6
West Midlands	73	9.4
East of England	57	7.3
London	73	9.4
South East	122	15.7
South West	120	15.4
Wales	38	4.9
Scotland	63	8.1
Northern Ireland	12	1.5
Total	777	100

Note: End of questions for respondents either currently seeking work or working within the veterinary sector (N = 758).

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

2.4 Section D: For respondents not currently seeking employment within the veterinary sector...

Table 2.39: 'Are you currently registered as a veterinary surgeon with RCVS?'

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	90
No	4	10
Total	40	100

Note: End of questions for respondents who answered 'Yes' to the preceding question (N = 36).

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 2.40: 'When did you discontinue your membership?'

Year	Frequency	Percent
2011	1	25
2013	3	75
Total	4	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

‘Why did you decide to discontinue your membership?’

- I am not planning on working as a vet in the future.
- Maternity leave
- No longer wish to work in the veterinary sector
- Working in academia at the moment so don't need plus fee was high

‘What are you currently doing? (e.g. your present occupation/employment status)’

- At university of Edinburgh completing a PhD in human colorectal cancer research
- Full time mother
- Full time student studying medicine
- I have just finished medical school and begin work as a doctor in August.

Can you think of anything (i.e. additional career guidance, greater employment opportunities) that would have helped you to remain within the profession?

- As my degree progressed I realized it wasn't the career I wanted. An area of the profession which I feel needs addressing is the place of the vet student in the practice as EMS. I spent time in some great helpful practices but I also spend some time in practices where the staff were rude to me, vets ignored the students and clearly didn't want you there.

Table 2.41: ‘Are you considering rejoining the profession within the next five years?’

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1	25
No	3	75
Total	4	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

3 Analysis by Year of Graduation

This chapter reports on the analysis of the survey data by year of graduation, and draws out any findings that suggest that there might have been changes over time in either or both of the ease/difficulty of finding suitable employment and the work experiences of newly qualified veterinary surgeons.

As Table 3.1 demonstrates, the proportion of respondents from each year group who have undertaken some form of veterinary work after leaving university has been decreasing very slightly since 2008, although the percentage who have not yet done any veterinary work is still very low in 2012 (under 5%).

Table 3.1: Have you done any veterinary work since qualifying?

	Year qualified				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Yes (%)	99.09	98.84	98.85	97.83	95.37
No (%)	0.91	1.16	1.15	2.17	4.63
N =	219	258	260	323	324

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

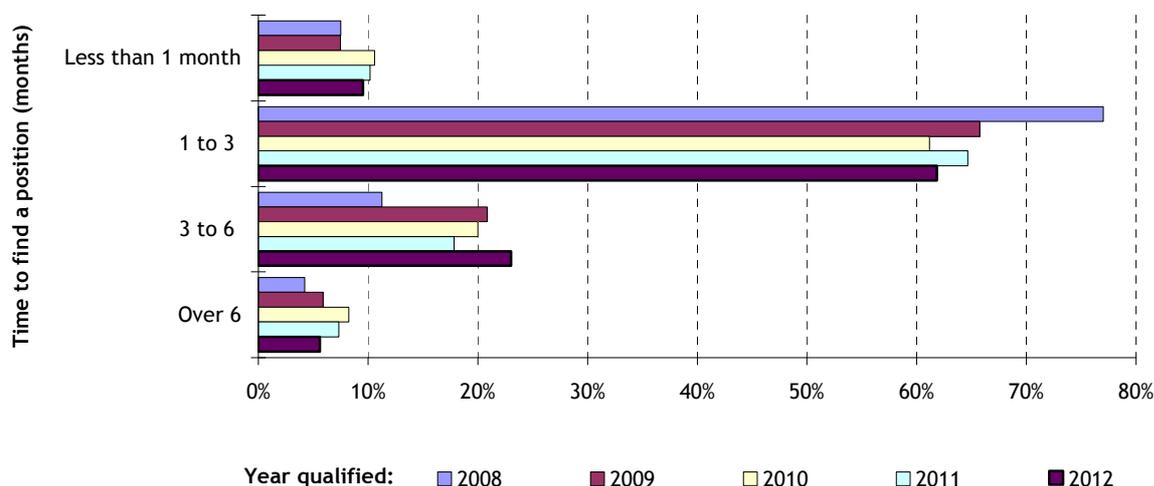
Respondents who answered 'Yes' (N = 1,354) to the preceding question, were then asked to provide further details about the nature of this position, the ease at which they found work, and whether or not they have remained within this post.

The responses detailed in Table 3.2 and Figure 3.1 show that it seems to have become slightly harder to find a first position from 2009 onwards. This shift occurred between the proportion of respondents who were able to acquire their first veterinary position one to three months after graduating, and those who were able to find work three to six months after graduating.

Table 3.2: From when you started actively looking for work, how long did it take you to find your first position?

Time to find position (months)	Year qualified				
	2008 (%)	2009 (%)	2010 (%)	2011 (%)	2012 (%)
Less than 1	7.51	7.48	10.59	10.19	9.54
1 to 3	77.00	65.75	61.18	64.65	61.84
3 -to 6	11.27	20.87	20.00	17.83	23.03
6 to 12	3.29	5.51	6.27	7.01	5.59
Over 12	0.94	0.39	1.96	0.32	0
N =	213	254	255	314	304

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Figure 3.1: How long did it take you to find your first position?

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Respondents who had acquired employment within the veterinary sector after leaving university were then asked to specify whether this work met their emotional, personal, financial and professional needs. The results provided in Table 3.3 indicate that there has been no substantial variation year on year in respondents' perceptions of how well their first position fulfilled these requirements, with the vast majority from each year group (i.e. over 80% in each instance) stating that the work was at least partially adequate.

**Table 3.3: Did this first veterinary position meet your needs?
(e.g. in terms of pay, location and type of work)**

	Year qualified				
	2008 (%)	2009 (%)	2010 (%)	2011 (%)	2012 (%)
Yes - the work met all my needs	34.88	36.86	30.86	30.89	35.71
Yes - the work met most of my needs	53.02	49.80	53.91	52.55	52.27
No - the work did not meet my needs	12.09	13.33	15.23	16.56	12.01
N =	215	255	256	314	308

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Respondents who answered 'No' to the preceding question (N = 189) were then asked to identify the most important reason why this first veterinary position did not satisfactorily meet their needs. A consistent reason provided by respondents across year groups (see Table 3.4) was that they did not receive enough professional support from employers and colleagues while working within this post, although this is less marked in 2009 to 2012 than in 2008. Since 2008/09, there has been a rise in the percentage of people whose first job was not in their preferred area of practice, and a higher percentage of graduates from 2009 onwards felt there was a lack of development opportunities.

Table 3.4: Most important reason first position did not meet needs

Reason did not meet needs	Year qualified				
	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
The position was too lowly paid	7.69	11.76	15.38	5.88	2.78
I did not receive enough professional support from my employers and colleagues	65.38	50.00	46.15	52.94	52.78
I did not receive enough emotional/social support from my employers and colleagues	7.69	11.76	7.69	3.92	5.56
I was not able to work the hours that I wanted	0	0	0	3.92	0
The position was not in the location that I wanted	0	5.88	10.26	9.80	0
The position was not in the type of clinical practice that I wanted	3.85	0	7.69	7.84	13.89
There were not enough development opportunities	3.85	11.76	5.13	9.80	8.33
Other	11.54	8.82	7.69	5.88	16.67
N =	26	34	39	51	36

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 3.4 also shows that low pay is becoming a less important factor in respondents' overall job satisfaction year on year. This may be due to graduates lowering their expectations about the level of pay they will be able to receive within their first veterinary position, as a result of the economic slowdown of recent years.

The results provided in Table 3.5 suggest that there has been a slight, albeit variable, increase in the proportion of respondents since 2008 whose first position within the veterinary sector was unpaid. The overwhelming majority of respondents, however, are still managing to acquire paid veterinary work after graduating from university.

Table 3.5: Was this first position paid or unpaid?

	Year qualified				
	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
Paid	98.14	95.28	97.24	96.13	94.12
Unpaid	1.86	4.72	2.76	3.87	5.88
N =	215	254	254	310	306

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The year in which respondents graduated does not appear to be associated with their ability to find work within the location that they wanted; over 50 per cent of the respondents from each year group stated that the first veterinary position they acquired was in their preferred location.

Table 3.6: Was this first position within your preferred location?

	Year qualified				
	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
Yes	58.14	55.51	50.39	54.78	56.35
No	21.86	22.05	25.00	25.16	20.52
Not applicable I did not mind where I worked	20.00	22.44	24.61	20.06	23.13
N =	215	254	256	314	307

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

When respondents were asked whether or not they are still working within their first position the results were as expected, with a greater proportion of more recent graduates still working within this post (see Table 3.7). Respondents who answered 'No' to this question (N = 774) were asked for additional details concerning how long they had remained within their first job, why their employment had been terminated and whether or not they had found other veterinary work since leaving.

Table 3.7: Are you still in this first position?

	Year qualified				
	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
Yes	18.60	21.18	33.59	47.77	81.82
No	81.40	78.82	66.41	52.23	18.18
N =	215	255	256	314	308

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

In addressing the first of these points, the results provided in Table 3.8 show that, in some instances, respondents' answers to this question differed markedly between year groups.

Table 3.8: How long did you stay in this first position?

Time in position (Months)	Year qualified				
	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
Less than 1 month	0.00	0.00	1.78	0.00	1.85
1 - 3	4.02	9.00	7.69	15.85	42.59
3 - 6	8.05	7.50	9.47	14.63	29.63
6 - 12	21.84	20.50	31.36	37.80	24.07
12 - 18	20.11	21.00	28.40	25.00	1.85
18 - 24	16.67	16.50	13.61	6.71	0.00
24 - 48	27.59	25.50	7.69	0.00	0.00
over 48	1.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
N =	174	200	169	164	54

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

From 2011 onwards there is a substantial increase in the proportion of respondents who left their first position after a relatively short period. This increase is particularly marked in 2012; over 40 per cent of respondents who graduated in 2012 had left their first veterinary position within at least three months of starting work, a rise of 27 per cent on the previous year.

A tentative indication as to why respondents are increasingly leaving their first job after just a couple months may be derived from Table 3.9, which provides a breakdown of the reasons respondents gave for their employment being terminated. This question was free response, with respondents able to state as many reasons as were applicable. In 2012, the second most popular reason respondents provided in

explaining why they left their first veterinary position was that this post was temporary. Further, this proportion has risen year on year since 2009.

As such, part of the rise in the proportion of graduates working within their first position for a limited period could be due to the fact that a greater number are now acquiring short term contracts. However, this must be considered alongside the fact that graduates from the class of 2012 who managed to acquire employment on a long-term basis were, at the time of completing the questionnaire, still working within this first position, and are yet to show up in these figures.

We can therefore glean from these results that while recently qualified veterinary surgeons are not finding it any more difficult to acquire veterinary work after leaving veterinary school, the nature of these positions appears to be changing, perhaps due to the limited availability of long-term contracts.

Table 3.9: Why did you leave this first position?

Reason left position (% of total number of responses)	Year qualified				
	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
General job dissatisfaction	6.78	2.58	6.90	7.31	7.04
Poor management	15.68	15.50	18.10	19.18	25.35
Workload	6.36	5.54	8.19	5.94	7.04
Long hours	5.93	9.59	5.60	5.94	8.45
Salary	5.51	6.64	5.17	3.65	0.00
Training/career progression	5.08	7.01	5.17	5.48	7.04
Sacked/made redundant	1.69	0.74	3.02	2.28	0.00
Temporary position	11.86	9.23	15.09	15.98	21.13
Unpaid role/volunteer	0.00	1.85	1.29	1.83	5.63
Change in speciality/role/more challenging role & opportunity	18.22	14.39	10.78	11.42	7.04
Wanted to travel/work abroad	3.81	4.43	1.72	3.20	4.23
Illness/injury	0.85	0.00	1.72	1.83	1.41
Further education/study/research	3.39	3.32	3.45	3.65	0.00
Location reasons	11.44	14.76	11.64	12.33	4.23
Personal reasons	1.69	1.85	0.43	0.46	0.00
Not relevant/other comment	1.69	2.58	1.72	1.83	1.41
Total number of responses	236	271	232	219	71

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The results presented within Table 3.9 and Figure 3.2 also indicate that recent qualifiers are increasingly citing poor management as one of the main reasons why they left their first position.

Figure 3.2: Why did you leave this first position?



Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Aside from respondents who qualified in 2012, who have had less time to find other veterinary work since leaving their first position, there does not appear to be any substantial variation in respondents' ability to acquire further employment within the veterinary sector based upon their year of graduation.

Table 3.10: Since leaving this first position, have you found other veterinary work?

	Year qualified				
	2008 %	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %
Yes	96.57	97.51	98.22	95.73	85.19
No	3.43	2.49	1.78	4.27	14.81
N =	175	201	169	164	54

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

4 Analysis by Gender

This chapter explores whether there were any marked differences in the experiences of male and female recent qualifiers.

Of the registered veterinary surgeons who responded to this survey 81.80 per cent were female, while 18.20 per cent were male (see Table 4.1). These proportions roughly reflect the composition of the student population currently attending, as well as graduating from, one of the UK's seven RCVS accredited veterinary schools. Figures attained from the most recent RCVS annual report, for instance, show that of those students attending a veterinary degree course in 2011/12 (N = 4,578), 76.93 per cent were female, while 23.06 per cent were male. Similar proportions can be observed in the number of students who graduated with a veterinary degree in 2011: 79.23 per cent of which were female, and 20.76 per cent of which were male.

Table 4.1: Gender of respondents

	Frequency	%
Male	256	18.20
Female	1,147	81.80
N =	1,403	100.00

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The results presented in Table 4.2 suggest that males found it slightly easier to find veterinary work after leaving university than females, but the difference is very small; the vast majority of respondents from both cohorts have managed to find some form of veterinary work.

Table 4.2: Have you done any veterinary work since qualifying?

	Male %	Female %
Yes	99.22	97.56
No	0.78	2.44
N =	256	1,146

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

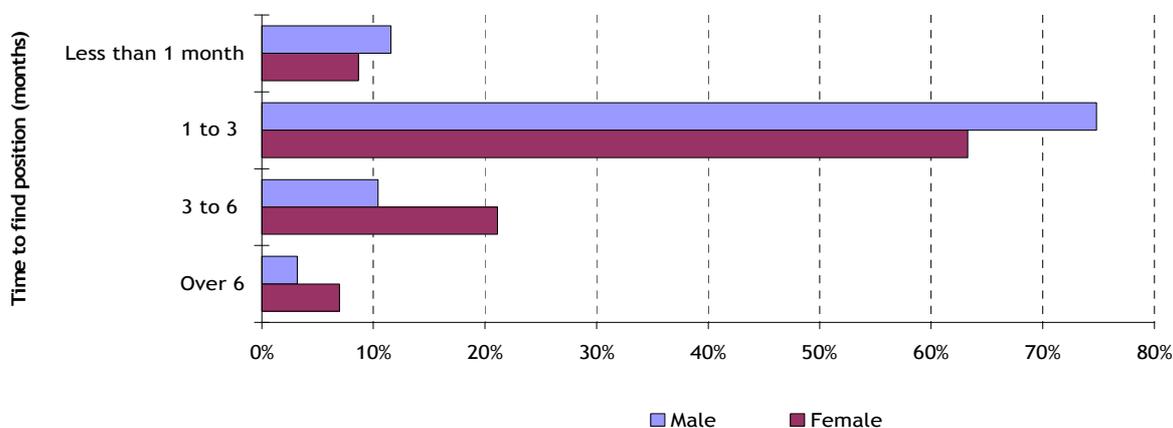
The speed at which respondents were able to find work after qualifying as veterinary surgeons did differ slightly between genders. Around ten per cent more male respondents were able to find veterinary work one to three months after qualifying, for instance, in comparison with their female counterparts (see Table 4.3 and Figure 4.1). These proportions are roughly reversed for respondents who took around three to six months to acquire employment, suggesting that it took female respondents slightly longer overall to attain veterinary work.

Table 4.3: From when you started actively looking for work, how long did it take you to find your first position?

Time to find position (months)	Male %	Female %
Less than 1	11.60	8.66
1 - 3	74.80	63.27
3 - 6	10.40	21.12
6 - 12	2.80	6.23
over 12	0.40	0.72
N =	250	1,108

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Figure 4.1: How long did it take you to find your first position?



Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

When respondents were asked to specify whether the first veterinary position they attained met all of their financial, emotional, professional and personal needs, the answers they provided differed between genders. 42.06 per cent of males believed that this first position met all of their requirements compared with 31.87 per cent of females (a difference of 10%), while almost twice as many females said the work did not meet their needs.

Table 4.4: Did this first veterinary position meet your needs? (e.g. in terms of pay, location and type of work)

	Male %	Female %
Yes - the work met all my needs	42.06	31.87
Yes - the work met most of my needs	49.21	53.14
No - the work did not meet my needs	8.73	14.99
N =	252	1,114

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

In identifying the most important reason why they felt that their first veterinary position did not meet their needs (N = 189), respondents' answers did not appear to vary considerably by gender, apart from the issue of not receiving enough support; males were more likely to cite lack of professional support than females (59% compared to 52%), while no males cited a lack of emotional support compared to eight per cent of females. A slightly higher percentage of females took an unpaid first position (see Table 4.6), but the percentages are small for both genders and low pay is the top reason for leaving for less than ten per cent of both males and females.

Table 4.5: Most important reason first position did not meet needs

Reason did not meet needs	Male %	Female %
The position was too lowly paid	9.09	8.48
I did not receive enough professional support from my employers and colleagues	59.09	52.12
I did not receive enough emotional/social support from my employers and colleagues	0.00	7.88
I was not able to work the hours that I wanted	4.55	0.61
The position was not in the location that I wanted	0.00	6.67
The position was not in the type of clinical practice that I wanted	9.09	6.67
There were not enough development opportunities	4.55	8.48
Other	13.64	9.09
N =	22	165

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Gender did not appear to be strongly tied to respondents' ability to find work within the location that they wanted (although a slightly larger proportion of males did not mind which location they worked in) or whether or not they are still in this position (see Table 4.7 and Table 4.8).

Table 4.6: Was this first position paid or unpaid?

	Male %	Female %
Paid	97.20	95.75
Unpaid	2.80	4.25
N =	250	1,107

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 4.7: Was this first position within your preferred location?

	Male %	Female %
Yes	51.59	55.76
No	18.65	23.83
Not applicable I did not mind where I worked	29.76	20.41
N =	252	1,112

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 4.8: Are you still in this first position?

	Male %	Female %
Yes	44.44	43.18
No	55.56	56.82
N =	252	1,114

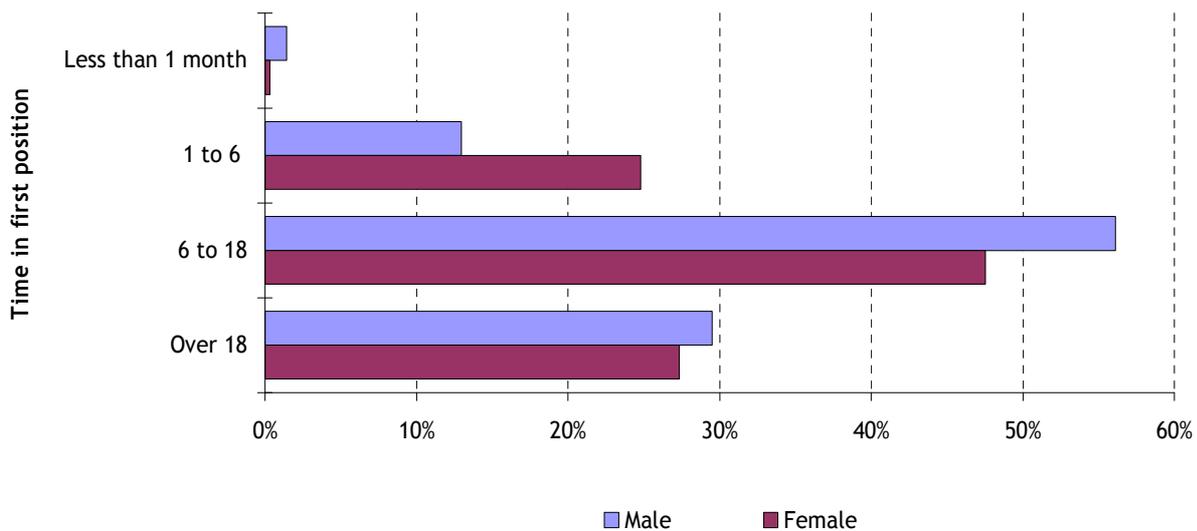
Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

For respondents who have left their first veterinary position (N = 774), there were some gender differences with regard to how long they stayed within this post, with 25 per cent of females staying less than six months compared to 14 per cent of males (see Table 4.9 and Figure 4.2).

Table 4.9: How long did you stay in this first position?

Time in position (Months)	Male %	Female %
less than 1 month	1.44	0.32
1 - 3	7.91	12.40
3 - 6	5.04	12.40
6 - 12	33.09	25.91
12 - 18	23.02	21.62
18 - 24	14.39	12.24
24 - 48	15.11	14.63
over 48	0.00	0.48
N =	139	629

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Figure 4.2: How long did you stay in this first position?

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

There were also some differences in the reasons they provided for leaving (see Table 4.10), with women being more likely to cite issues around the job experience and feelings of exploitation (poor management, workload, long hours) and men issues around their career (salary, training/career progression, more challenging opportunity, further study). However, the proportions of both male and female respondents who have managed to find subsequent veterinary work after leaving their first position were almost identical (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.10: Why did you leave this first position?

Reason left position (% of total number of responses)	Male	Female
General job dissatisfaction	5.92	5.75
Poor management	11.24	18.41
Workload	4.73	6.90
Long hours	3.55	7.71
Salary	8.28	4.37
Training/career progression	8.88	5.52
Sacked/made redundant	0.59	1.96
Temporary position	10.65	13.35
Unpaid role/volunteer	0.00	1.84
Change in speciality/role/more challenging role & opportunity	15.98	12.66
Wanted to travel/work abroad	4.73	3.11
Illness/injury	1.78	0.58
Further education/study/research	6.51	2.53
Location reasons	11.24	12.20
Personal reasons	2.37	0.92
Not relevant/other comment	3.55	2.19
Total number of responses	169	869

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 4.11: Since leaving this first position, have you found other veterinary work?

	Male %	Female %
Yes	96.40	96.20
No	3.60	3.80
N =	139	631

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Respondents to the RCVS survey were subsequently asked about the location of their present position if they were still working within the veterinary sector. Table 4.12 illustrates that there were slight variations between genders in respondents' answers to this question. For example, a greater proportion of males than females (4.74%) were working outside England, in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. Similar disparities can be observed in the North West, the South East and within London. The greatest proportional difference, however, appears to be occurring within the East of England, with 6.79 percent more females presently working within this region when compared with the number of males.

Table 4.12: Where is your present veterinary position located?

Region	Gender	
	Male	Female
North East	3.33	4.60
North West	15.00	10.66
Yorkshire & the Humber	5.83	4.96
East Midlands	5.00	6.07
West Midlands	8.33	9.38
East of England	1.67	8.46
London	13.33	8.46
South East	13.33	17.10
South West	15.83	16.73
Wales	6.67	4.23
Scotland	9.17	7.72
Northern Ireland	2.50	1.65
N =	120	544

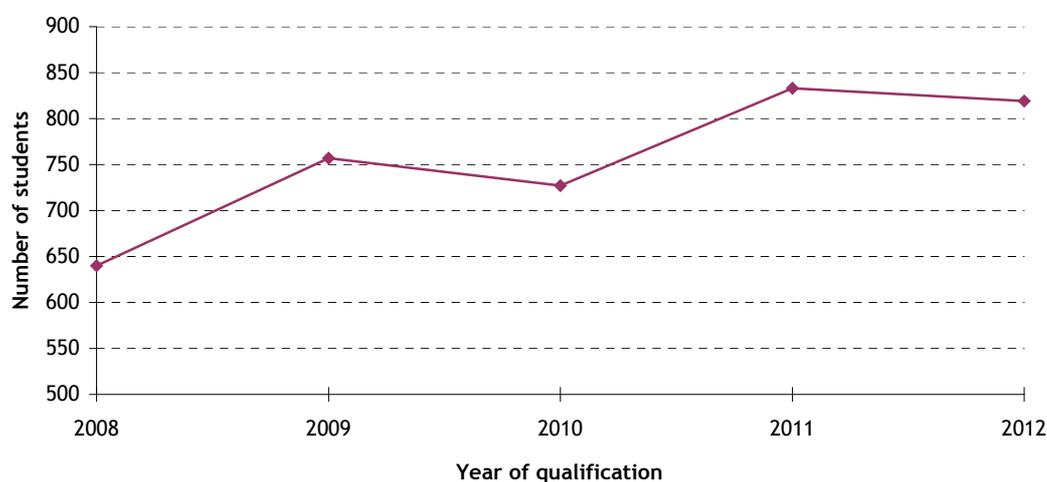
Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

5 Analysis by Veterinary School

This chapter examines whether the veterinary school from which recently-qualified veterinary surgeons graduated has had any impact of their ease/difficulty of finding work or on their employment experiences to date.

As Figure 5.1 illustrates, there has been an increasing number of veterinary graduates entering the labour market over the past five years. A large proportion of this overall increase has come from the University of Nottingham's recently established School of Veterinary Medicine and Science, which began teaching new undergraduate students in 2006.

Figure 5.1: Total number of students obtaining a veterinary degree

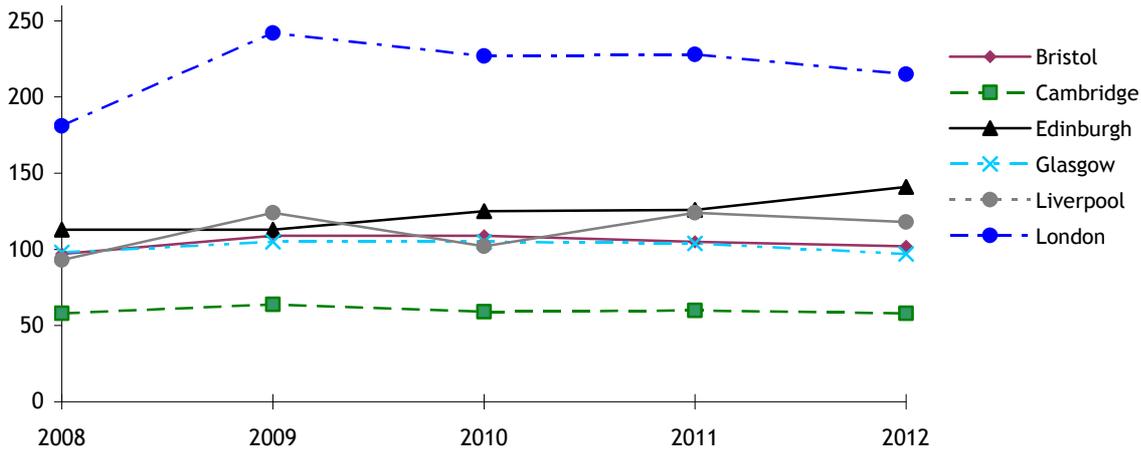


Source: RCVS annual report, 2009-2013

In other institutions, graduate numbers have remained relatively stable (see Figure 5.2) with the notable exception of Edinburgh where student numbers have increased slightly over the past three years. RVC still produces the largest number of veterinary graduates, and Cambridge the fewest.

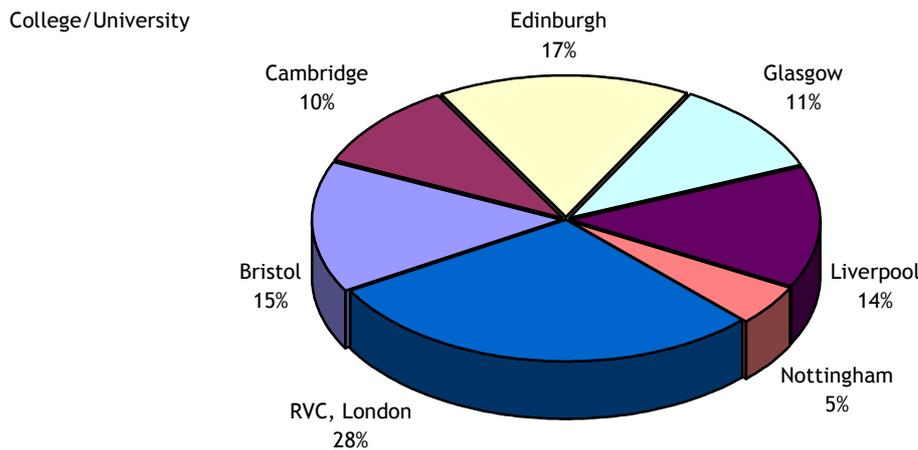
These proportions are roughly reflected in the number of recent qualifiers who responded to this survey from each of these institutions (see Figure 5.3). The University of Nottingham elicited the lowest response rate, despite having higher yearly student numbers than Cambridge, as veterinary students only began graduating from this institution in 2011.

Figure 5.2: Number of students obtaining a degree by veterinary school



Source: RCVS annual report, 2009-2013

Figure 5.3: Veterinary School respondents graduated from



Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 5.1: Veterinary School respondents graduated from

School	Frequency	%
University of Bristol	209	14.9
University of Cambridge	140	10.0
University of Edinburgh	233	16.6
University of Glasgow	148	10.6
University of Liverpool	195	13.9
University of Nottingham	69	4.9
RVC, University of London	407	29.1
Total	1,401	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 5.2 shows that whether or not a survey respondent had completed any veterinary work since leaving university did not have any apparent association with the veterinary school they attended. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of participants from each institution (i.e. over 95%) were able to locate some form of work within the veterinary sector following graduation.

Table 5.2: Have you done any veterinary work since qualifying?

	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Yes	97.61	98.57	96.57	97.30	97.94	98.55	98.53
No	2.39	1.43	3.43	2.70	2.06	1.45	1.47
N =	209	140	233	148	194	69	407

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The length of time it took respondents to find veterinary work after qualifying as a veterinary surgeon did not vary substantially between veterinary schools (see Table 5.3). However, graduates from Liverpool seem to have found it a little easier than others to find work within three months of starting their search.

Table 5.3: From when you started actively looking for work, how long did it take you to find your first position?

Time to find position (months)	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Less than 1	8.00	6.57	10.71	11.35	14.44	7.35	7.02
1 - 3	65.50	71.53	58.04	66.67	65.24	63.24	67.42
3 - 6	19.00	18.25	22.32	17.02	16.04	22.06	19.30
6 - 12	6.00	3.65	7.59	4.26	4.28	7.35	5.76
over 12	1.50	0.00	1.34	0.71	0.00	0.00	0.50
N =	200	137	224	141	187	68	399

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Respondents' perceptions of whether their first veterinary position fully satisfied, partially satisfied or did not meet their needs did not differ markedly in relation to the veterinary school they had attended (see Table 5.4), although a higher percentage of graduates from Liverpool and Nottingham, and a lower percentage from Edinburgh, felt the first position met all of their needs.

Table 5.4: Did this first veterinary position meet your needs? (e.g. in terms of pay, location and type of work)

	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Yes - the work met all my needs	33.50	34.06	26.79	32.87	38.95	39.71	34.16
Yes - the work met most of my needs	54.00	50.00	57.59	55.94	46.84	48.53	51.87
No - the work did not meet my needs	12.50	15.94	15.63	11.19	14.21	11.76	13.97
N =	200	138	224	143	190	68	401

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 5.5: Most important reason first position did not meet needs

Reason did not meet needs	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
The position was too lowly paid	8.00	4.55	14.29	6.67	3.70	0.00	10.91
I did not receive enough professional support from my employers and colleagues	60.00	40.91	54.29	66.67	59.26	37.50	49.09
I did not receive enough emotional support from my employers/colleagues	4.00	4.55	5.71	0.00	3.70	12.50	12.73
I was not able to work the hours that I wanted	0.00	4.55	0.00	0.00	3.70	0.00	0.00
The position was not in the location that I wanted	4.00	4.55	8.57	0.00	3.70	12.50	7.27
The position was not in the type of clinical practice that I wanted	4.00	22.73	0.00	6.67	11.11	25.00	1.82
There were not enough development opportunities	8.00	4.55	8.57	6.67	11.11	0.00	9.09
Other	12.00	13.64	8.57	13.33	3.70	12.50	9.09
N =	25	22	35	15	27	8	55

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

For those respondents who answered 'No' to the preceding question (N = 189), and who were asked to specify the most important reason why their first veterinary post did not meet their needs, their answers showed some variation according to the UK veterinary school they attended. These should be treated with caution due to the relatively small numbers involved, especially from Nottingham. Around 60 per cent of respondents who graduated from the University of Bristol, Glasgow and Liverpool, for instance, felt that they did not receive enough professional support from their employers and/or colleagues. While this remained the most popular reason provided by respondents from other veterinary schools, other reasons also received a degree of support.

Over 20 per cent of respondents from Cambridge stated that their first veterinary position was not in the type of clinical practice that they wanted: quite a high proportion when compared with other veterinary schools. Further, twice as many graduates from RVC stated that they left their first position as they did not receive enough emotional support from their employers and/or colleagues, in comparison with the next highest number of responses in this category.

As indicated by Table 5.6, whether the first veterinary position respondents acquired after leaving university was paid or unpaid did not alter considerably by veterinary school, with over 90 per cent from each university stating that they had been able to attain paid employment.

Table 5.6: Was this first position paid or unpaid?

	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Paid	96.98	94.16	95.96	97.18	96.83	98.53	94.96
Unpaid	3.02	5.84	4.04	2.82	3.17	1.47	5.04
N =	199	137	223	142	189	68	397

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The proportion of respondents that stated that the first veterinary position they acquired was within their preferred location varied by a maximum of roughly ten per cent between veterinary schools. This variability was broadly similar for respondents who stated that the post was not within their preferred location, and for those who did not mind where they worked.

Table 5.7: Was this first position within your preferred location?

	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Yes	58.29	58.70	49.11	56.64	57.89	60.29	52.50
No	24.12	16.67	29.46	15.38	21.05	14.71	25.75
Not applicable	17.59	24.64	21.43	27.97	21.05	25.00	21.75
N =	199	138	224	143	190	68	400

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

One notable outlier was the proportion of respondents from the University of Edinburgh (29.46%) who observed that the first veterinary position they found after qualifying was not within their preferred location. This represented a difference of around 15 per cent in comparison with respondents from the University of Cambridge, Glasgow and Nottingham. As Table 5.8 demonstrates, over 60 per cent of this cohort worked within either Scotland or Northern England, more than any other group of university graduates.

Table 5.8 also shows that respondents tended to find work in the area where they had studied; for each group of graduates, the proportion was over 20%. The highest proportions were in the South West and South East, from the University of Bristol (34.55%) and the RVC (29.46%), respectively.

Table 5.8: Where in the UK was this first position located?

Region	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
North East	3.14	6.15	11.24	10.53	6.42	5.88	2.43
North West	5.24	6.15	15.73	16.67	25.13	13.24	3.78
Yorkshire & the Humber	3.14	4.62	12.36	7.02	7.49	5.88	5.68
East Midlands	5.24	10.00	6.18	4.39	10.70	20.59	9.46
West Midlands	10.47	9.23	5.06	4.39	8.02	11.76	10.00
East of England	5.24	16.15	1.69	1.75	7.49	8.82	10.00
London	4.19	8.46	3.37	4.39	1.60	4.41	7.03
South East	15.18	20.77	9.55	7.02	7.49	14.71	29.46
South West	34.55	10.77	7.87	5.26	11.76	11.76	14.05
Wales	11.52	3.85	3.93	6.14	11.76	1.47	6.49

Region	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Scotland	0.52	2.31	21.35	23.68	0.53	1.47	1.35
Northern Ireland	1.57	1.54	1.69	8.77	1.60	0.00	0.27
N =	191	130	178	114	187	68	370

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Again, whether or not respondents were still within their first veterinary position did not appear to be associated with the institution from which they qualified; over half of respondents from six of the seven UK veterinary schools had left their first position at the time of survey.

Table 5.9: Are you still in this first position?

	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Yes	45.50	38.41	45.98	37.76	40.53	66.18	41.90
No	54.50	61.59	54.02	62.24	59.47	33.82	58.10
N =	200	138	224	143	190	68	401

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The responses attained from graduates of the University of Nottingham did however differ markedly from the rest of the sample. As indicated in Table 5.10, this is due to the fact that none of the registered surgeons who responded to the survey from this institution had graduated any earlier than 2011. As such, respondents from this cohort are far more likely to be working within their first veterinary position, having only recently qualified.

Table 5.10: Qualifiers from Nottingham by year of graduation

	University of Nottingham
2008	0
2009	0
2010	0
2011	32
2012	35
N =	67

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

For respondents who were no longer within their first veterinary position, in specifying how long they had remained within this post there was not a great deal of variability between veterinary schools (see Table 5.11). A clear exception again came from respondents who had qualified from the University of Nottingham. None of these respondents had remained within their first position for longer than 18 months.

It is likely that this is attributable to the years in which these respondents graduated (see Table 5.10), and mirrors the trend outlined earlier of increasing proportions of graduates from the classes of 2011 and 2012 taking on temporary work, in comparison with less recent qualifiers.

Table 5.11: How long did you stay in this first position?

Time in position (Months)	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Less than 1 month	0.00	0.00	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.30
1 - 3	14.95	15.48	10.74	6.74	15.04	26.09	7.79
3 - 6	5.61	9.52	10.74	5.62	15.93	17.39	13.42
6 - 12	26.17	26.19	28.10	33.71	23.89	30.43	26.41
12 - 18	24.30	16.67	26.45	19.10	18.58	26.09	22.51
18 - 24	7.48	16.67	11.57	16.85	10.62	0.00	14.72
24 - 48	21.50	14.29	11.57	15.73	15.93	0.00	13.85
over 48	0.00	1.19	0.00	2.25	0.00	0.00	0.00
N =	107	84	121	89	113	23	231

These findings are supported by the results presented in Table 5.12 where respondents were asked to list the reasons why they left their first veterinary position. A greater proportion of graduates from the University of Nottingham stated that they left this position because it was temporary work than respondents from other UK veterinary schools.

Table 5.12: Why did you leave this first position?

Reason left position (% of number of responses)	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
General job dissatisfaction	6.45	7.48	4.17	4.20	6.00	6.67	6.15
Poor management	18.71	14.02	20.83	16.81	18.00	20.00	15.21
Workload	4.52	5.61	4.76	9.24	9.33	6.67	6.47
Long hours	7.74	5.61	10.71	8.40	4.67	3.33	6.15
Salary	7.10	2.80	5.95	8.40	3.33	6.67	3.56
Training/career progression	7.10	6.54	5.95	5.04	6.67	6.67	5.50
Sacked/made redundant	0.65	3.74	2.38	0.84	2.67	3.33	0.97
Temporary position	14.19	9.35	10.71	13.45	12.67	20.00	13.92
Unpaid role/volunteer	0.65	0.93	1.79	0.84	1.33	3.33	2.27
Change in speciality/role/more challenging role & opportunity	10.97	15.89	12.50	13.45	11.33	16.67	14.24
Wanted to travel/work abroad	1.94	3.74	2.98	5.04	4.00	3.33	3.24
Illness/injury	0.00	1.87	1.79	0.84	0.67	0.00	0.32
Further education/study/research	1.29	6.54	1.79	3.36	5.33	0.00	2.91
Location reasons	15.48	11.21	13.69	3.36	10.00	3.33	14.89
Personal reasons	1.29	1.87	0.00	1.68	0.67	0.00	1.62
Not relevant/other comment	1.94	2.80	0.00	5.04	3.33	0.00	2.59
Total number of responses	155	107	168	119	150	30	309

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The overwhelming majority of respondents (i.e. over 90%) from each university had managed to find further employment within the veterinary sector after leaving their first position, irrespective of the school they had attended.

Table 5.13: Since leaving this first position, have you found other veterinary work?

	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
Yes	96.30	97.62	98.35	94.38	93.81	95.65	96.55
No	3.70	2.38	1.65	5.62	6.19	4.35	3.45
N =	108	84	121	89	113	23	232

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

When respondents were asked about their present employment status, the overwhelming majority (over 85%) from each university were working within a veterinary position. The University of Liverpool had the highest proportion of qualifiers presently in employment but working outside of the veterinary sector, while both Liverpool and Edinburgh had the highest proportions of graduates currently not in employment.

Table 5.14: Current work status of respondents

	Bristol %	Cambridge %	Edinburgh %	Glasgow %	Liverpool %	Nottingham %	RVC, London %
In vet work	92.86	93.02	89.92	91.40	85.34	100.00	91.98
In non-vet work	2.68	4.65	2.33	4.30	6.90	0.00	2.95
Not working	4.46	2.33	7.75	4.30	7.76	0.00	5.06
N =	112	86	129	93	116	24	237

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Respondents currently undertaking veterinary work, at the time of the RCVS survey, were subsequently asked to specify the location of this position. The results presented in Table 5.15 show that even for their subsequent jobs within the veterinary sector, respondents tended to remain within the location where they had studied.

Table 5.15: Where is your current veterinary position located?

Region	Bristol	Cambridge	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Liverpool	Nottingham	RVC, London
North East	2.91	0.00	10.31	9.68	7.14	3.57	1.01
North West	4.85	10.26	12.37	17.74	30.61	7.14	4.04
Yorkshire & the Humber	1.94	3.85	7.22	6.45	7.14	14.29	3.54
East Midlands	4.85	5.13	7.22	6.45	4.08	14.29	5.56
West Midlands	11.65	5.13	3.09	3.23	15.31	10.71	11.11
East of England	2.91	17.95	5.15	0.00	4.08	21.43	8.08
London	11.65	7.69	6.19	4.84	5.10	3.57	14.65
South East	16.50	20.51	10.31	9.68	9.18	14.29	23.74
South West	33.98	15.38	11.34	4.84	8.16	3.57	20.20
Wales	4.85	0.00	4.12	3.23	8.16	3.57	5.56
Scotland	0.00	11.54	21.65	29.03	0.00	3.57	2.02
Northern Ireland	3.88	2.56	1.03	4.84	1.02	0.00	0.51
N =	103	78	97	62	98	28	198

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

6 Analysis Using Other Variables

6.1 Age of respondents

The vast majority of respondents (i.e. over 90%) to the RCVS survey of recent graduates were under the age of 30. The age range was between 23 and 51, and the average (mean) age of respondents was 27.

Table 6.1: Age of respondents

	Frequency	%
23-25	423	30.2
26-30	866	61.9
31+	111	7.9
Total	1,400	100.0

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 6.2: Have you done any veterinary work since qualifying?

	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
Yes	97.20	98.20	98.20
No	2.80	1.80	1.80
N =	423	865	111

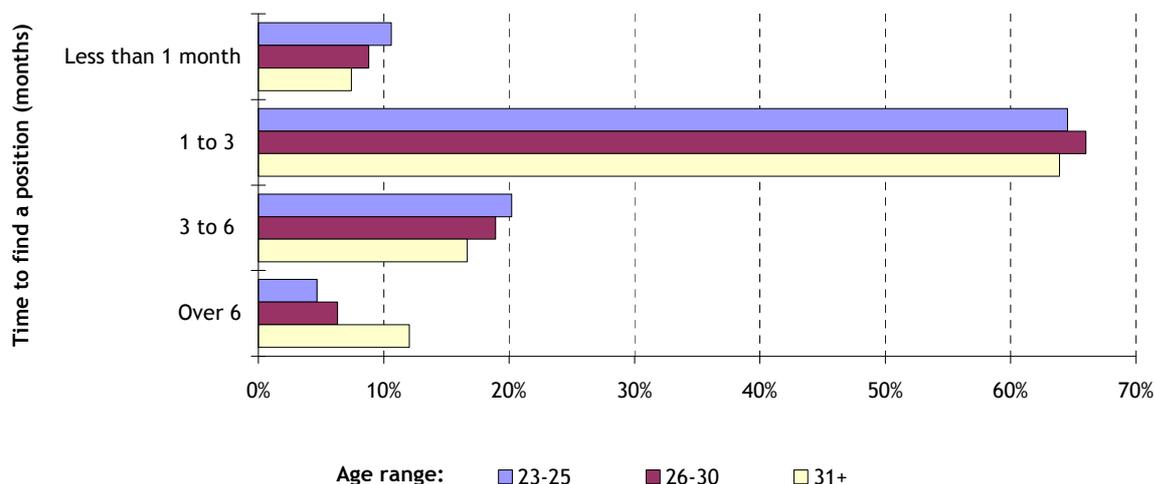
Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The time it took respondents to find their first veterinary position after leaving university varied only slightly in relation to their age. As Table 6.3 and Figure 6.1 illustrate, those who graduated aged 31 and over took slightly longer to find their first position than their younger counterparts, with 12 per cent taking over six months.

Table 6.3: From when you started actively looking for work, how long did it take you to find your first position?

	Age range		
	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
Less than 1	10.59	8.80	7.41
1 - 3	64.53	65.99	63.89
3 - 6	20.20	18.91	16.67
6 - 12	4.68	5.83	7.41
over 12	0.00	0.48	4.63
N =	423	866	111

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Figure 6.1: How long did it take you to find your first position?

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

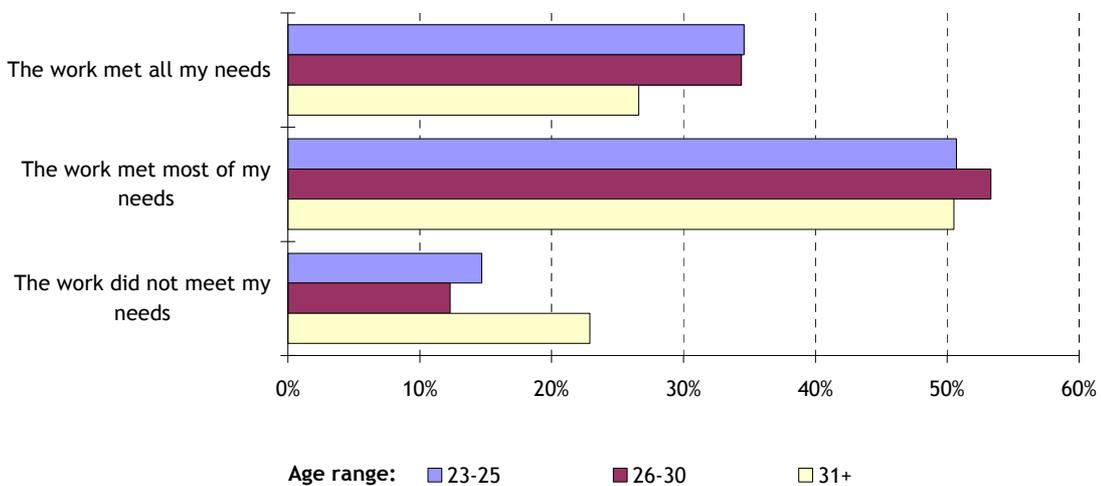
Respondents' perceptions of how well the first veterinary position they acquired met their financial, emotional, professional and personal needs appeared to vary according to their age category. The results presented in Table 6.4 show that a greater proportion of 23-35 year olds (8%) believed that their first job satisfactorily met all their requirements, than those aged 31 and over. These proportions were roughly inverted for those respondents who stated that the work did not address their needs.

Table 6.4: Did this first veterinary position meet your needs? (e.g. in terms of pay, location and type of work)

	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
Yes - the work met all my needs	34.60	34.40	26.60
Yes - the work met most of my needs	50.70	53.30	50.50
No - the work did not meet my needs	14.70	12.30	22.90
N =	408	846	109

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Figure 6.2: Did this first veterinary position meet your needs?



Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The variations observed here may be due to older respondents having a greater number of personal, domestic and financial commitments that need to be addressed before they are satisfied in their employment. Younger respondents, however, may be far more flexible in terms of the working conditions they are willing to accept, at least for their first veterinary position.

These propositions are strengthened by an examination of the reasons respondents provided for this first position not meeting their requirements. As Table 6.5 indicates, a greater proportion of respondents aged 31 and over (7.4% in each instance) identified both pay and the location of their first position as reasons why they were not satisfied in this post, than those aged 23 to 25.

Table 6.5: Most important reason first position did not meet needs

Reason did not meet needs	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
The position was too lowly paid	5.10	9.60	12.50
I did not receive enough professional support from my employers and colleagues	57.60	50.00	54.20
I did not receive enough emotional/social support from my employers and colleagues	3.40	10.60	0.00
I was not able to work the hours that I wanted	0.00	1.90	0.00
The position was not in the location that I wanted	5.10	4.80	12.50
The position was not in the type of clinical practice that I wanted	11.90	4.80	4.20
There were not enough development opportunities	11.90	6.70	4.20
Other	5.10	11.50	12.50
N =	59	104	24

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

These findings are further confirmed by the responses obtained when respondents were asked whether or not the first veterinary position they acquired was in their preferred location. As Table 6.6 shows, around half as many respondents aged 31 and over stated that they did not mind where they worked in comparison with respondents from younger age cohorts.

Table 6.6: Was this first position within your preferred location?

	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
Yes	53.10	54.10	68.50
No	23.10	23.00	20.40
Not applicable I did not mind where I worked	23.80	22.80	11.10
N =	407	846	108

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

When respondents were asked to specify whether the first job they managed to find within the veterinary sector was paid or unpaid, their answers varied only marginally by age. For instance, Table 6.7 illustrates that a slightly larger proportion

of recent qualifiers aged 31 and over accepted an unpaid veterinary position after leaving university than graduates aged 23 to 25.

Table 6.7: Was this first position paid or unpaid?

	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
Paid	95.10	96.90	93.50
Unpaid	4.90	3.10	6.50
N =	406	840	108

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Whether or not respondents were still within their first veterinary position also varied by age; the vast majority of 23 to 25 year olds (67.9%) were still in this post, compared with just 29 per cent of respondents age 31 and over. Again, this may be linked to the personal circumstances of respondents, and the fact that older qualifiers may have less flexibility in terms of the working conditions they are willing to accept over a protracted period.

Table 6.8: Are you still in this first position?

	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
Yes	67.90	33.70	29.40
No	32.10	66.30	70.60
N =	408	846	109

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The reasons respondents provided for leaving their first position supported these inferences, with a greater proportion of recently qualified surgeons aged 31 and over citing salary and location issues as key reasons for leaving this post compared to their younger counterparts.

Table 6.9: Why did you leave this position?

Reason left position (% of number of responses)	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
General job dissatisfaction	8.88	5.37	4.00
Poor management	17.75	17.67	14.00
Workload	5.33	6.94	5.00
Long hours	6.51	6.81	10.00
Salary	2.96	4.97	9.00
Training/career progression	5.92	6.41	4.00

Reason left position (% of number of responses)	23-25 %	26-30 %	31+ %
Sacked/made redundant	1.78	1.44	4.00
Temporary position	17.16	12.57	9.00
Unpaid role/volunteer	2.96	1.05	3.00
Change in speciality/role/more challenging role & opportunity	11.83	13.35	14.00
Wanted to travel/work abroad	4.14	3.40	2.00
Illness/injury	0.00	0.79	1.00
Further education/study/research	2.96	3.27	2.00
Location reasons	8.28	12.43	15.00
Personal reasons	0.00	1.44	1.00
Not relevant/other comment	3.55	2.09	3.00
Total number of responses	169	764	100

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

6.2 Type of clinical practice work

The overwhelming majority of respondents (over 90%) were working within a clinical practice in their first post as a qualified veterinary surgeon (see Table 6.10). When respondents who fell into this category (N = 1,253) were asked to specify the nature of this work – selecting as many categories as were applicable - a substantial number stated that it entailed working with small animals. Mixed clinical practice work also received a good proportion of the total number of responses (26.48%).

Table 6.10: What type of veterinary work were you doing in your first position?

Type of work	Frequency	%
Clinical practice	1253	91.66
Internship (in either private practice or vet school)	93	6.80
Government-related veterinary work	3	0.22
Academic (research/teaching)	7	0.51
Industry (e.g. animal health, pet food, insurance)	2	0.15
Other	9	0.66
N =	1,367	100.00

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 6.11: Type of clinical practice work specified

Type of clinical work	Frequency	%
Small animals	782	53.09
Farm	147	9.98
Equine	137	9.30
Mixed	390	26.48
Other	17	1.15
Total number of responses	1473	100.00

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 6.12: Type of clinical practice work (Year of qualification)

Type of clinical work	2008 (%)	2009 (%)	2010 (%)	2011 (%)	2012 (%)
Small animals	52.25	47.20	49.81	57.10	58.46
Farm	8.56	9.79	8.11	11.01	10.98
Equine	8.11	10.84	8.88	10.72	7.72
Mixed	30.18	30.77	32.82	20.29	20.77
Total number of responses	222	286	259	345	337

Note: 'Other' clinical work was discounted from the above table, due to the small number of respondents for whom this category was applicable among each year group

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

These results were then separated by year of qualification, to see if there were any significant changes in the main types of clinical practice work that graduates are entering into year on year. The findings presented in Table 6.12 show a 12 percent decline between 2010 and 2012 in the proportion of graduates who reported undertaking some form of mixed clinical practice work upon leaving university. This has been met by an eight and a half percent increase, over the same period, in the proportion of graduates stating that they worked at least partly with small animals within their first position.

Other proportional declines and increases are evident in the equine and farm categories, respectively, although the level of change year on year has been less dramatic in these areas.

Table 6.13 Did this first veterinary position meet your needs? (e.g. in terms of pay, location and type of work)

	Small animals	Farm	Equine	Mixed	Other
Yes - the work met all my needs	32.99	42.18	35.77	32.31	47.06
Yes - the work met most of my needs	50.64	45.58	50.36	55.9	41.18
No - the work did not meet my needs	16.37	12.24	13.87	11.79	11.76
N =	782	147	137	390	17

Source: RCVS survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 6.13 presents respondents' views on whether their first veterinary position met all, most or none of their needs. It is restricted to those respondents who stated that their first position was within a clinical practice; their answers are separated by the different type(s) of clinical work which they completed while working within this post. The results show that veterinary surgeons working with farm animals within their first veterinary post have one of the highest rates of job satisfaction.

Table 6.14: Type of clinical practice work compared

Currently seeking/ working within	First position					Total responses
	Small animals	Farm	Equine	Mixed	Other	
Small animals	83.97	42.03	50.75	53.96	77.78	509
Farm	3.31	33.33	8.96	12.87	0	68
Equine	4.33	10.14	28.36	7.92	0	59
Mixed	6.11	13.04	8.96	21.78	0	83
Other	2.29	1.45	2.99	3.47	22.22	21
Total responses	393	69	67	202	9	

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

In comparing the type(s) of clinical practice work which respondents undertook within their first veterinary position, and the type(s) of clinical work they are either currently seeking or doing (Table 6.14) it is clear that many respondents are now incorporating or choosing to incorporate some form of work with small animals into their veterinary career. For instance, over 40 per cent of respondents who had previously worked within other practice areas are now either working with or seeking to work with small animals.

The biggest departure by respondents from their previous practice area occurred among those who had worked within a mixed clinical practice within their first position. Only 21.78 of respondents stated that they either had chosen or were choosing to remain within this field of work within their present/next veterinary position.

Table 6.15: Why did you leave this position?

Reason left position (% of number of responses)	Small animals	Farm	Equine	Mixed
General job dissatisfaction	6.35	6.73	6.72	5.47
Poor management	19.57	18.27	15.97	17.04
Workload	6.86	9.62	6.72	6.43
Long hours	6.19	10.58	8.40	11.25
Salary	5.18	4.81	5.88	4.82
Training/career progression	7.19	8.65	8.40	4.50
Sacked/made redundant	2.01	1.92	3.36	1.61
Temporary position	9.36	4.81	5.04	3.22
Unpaid role/volunteer	2.51	0.00	0.00	0.00
Change in speciality/role/more challenging role & opportunity	12.37	17.31	15.97	18.65
Wanted to travel/work abroad	2.68	1.92	1.68	4.82
Illness/injury	0.67	0.00	0.84	0.96
Further education/study/research	2.34	2.88	2.52	4.82
Location reasons	12.54	11.54	16.81	12.86
Personal reasons	1.17	0.00	0.84	1.61
Not relevant/other comment	3.01	0.96	0.84	1.93
Total number of responses	598	108	119	311

NB: The category of 'Other' was discounted from the above table, as the total number of responses (N = 9) were too small to provide any meaningful data.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

As Table 6.15 illustrates, there was not a great deal of variation between the reasons respondents provided for leaving their first veterinary position and the type(s) of clinical practice work that this role entailed. A slightly higher proportion of respondents whose first position involved equine work did cite location issues as a key reason for leaving, however, in comparison with other areas of practice. Further, marginally more surgeons who had completed some form of mixed clinical work left in favour of a more challenging position, perhaps within a more specialist area.

If respondents were currently in clinical veterinary work at the time of the RCVS survey, they were asked to specify the location of this position. Table 6.16 shows that, as might be expected, the type(s) of clinical practice in which respondents were working varied according to their geographical location.

Table 6.16: Where is your present veterinary position located?

Region	% of number of responses				
	Small animals	Farm	Equine	Mixed	Other
North East	4.67	1.92	8.89	4.35	7.69
North West	9.81	15.38	13.33	5.80	0.00
Yorkshire & the Humber	4.67	5.77	11.11	8.70	0.00
East Midlands	6.31	1.92	2.22	8.70	7.69
West Midlands	10.05	13.46	17.78	5.80	15.38
East of England	7.71	3.85	11.11	5.80	15.38
London	11.45	0.00	2.22	0.00	7.69
South East	18.22	11.54	6.67	11.59	7.69
South West	14.72	34.62	13.33	18.84	23.08
Wales	3.97	5.77	4.44	14.49	0.00
Scotland	6.78	1.92	6.67	8.70	15.38
Northern Ireland	1.64	3.85	2.22	7.25	0.00
Total number of responses	428	52	45	69	13

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

6.3 First role location and job satisfaction

Whether the first veterinary position respondents acquired met all, most or none of their needs, differed slightly in relation to the location of this post. For instance, a quarter of respondents who had managed to find work within either London or Northern Ireland stated that this job did not meet any of their requirements. For these respondents, their general dissatisfaction with work did not appear to be directly linked with their geographical location.

Table 6.17: Did this first veterinary position meet your needs? (e.g. in terms of pay, location and type of work)

	NE	NW	Y&H	East Mid	West Mid	East	LDN	SE	SW	Wales	Scot	NI
Yes - all	19.72	32.59	29.63	37.96	36.45	31.18	33.87	39.07	39.56	27.27	28.57	22.73
Yes - most	64.79	57.04	55.56	48.15	51.40	52.69	40.32	51.63	46.70	54.55	61.04	50.00
No	15.49	10.37	14.81	13.89	12.15	16.13	25.81	9.30	13.74	18.18	10.39	27.27
N =	71	135	81	108	107	93	62	215	182	88	77	22

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

Table 6.18, which details respondents' reasons for leaving their first position, illustrates that surgeons located in either London or Northern Ireland were among some of the least likely to cite the location of the job as a key reason for terminating their employment.

Indeed, much more prominent reasons identified by this cohort were the fact that this post was temporary (30% of the responses provided by respondents who worked within London) and that it suffered from poor management (8 respondents, almost 30 percent, of those who had worked within Northern Ireland). The latter reason was also cited by roughly a fifth of respondents who had worked within the South West (20%) and the North West of England (21.2%) in their first veterinary position, while 19.3 percent of those veterinary surgeons who had been situated within the North East raised the issue of long working hours.

Table 6.18: Why did you leave this position?

Reason left position (% of number of responses)	NE	NW	Y&H	East Mid	West Mid	East	LDN	SE	SW	Wales	Scot	NI
General job dissatisfaction	1.8	2.9	6.8	7.0	8.1	4.7	11.5	5.3	9.0	8.9	0.0	3.7
Poor management	12.3	21.2	17.8	19.7	17.6	18.8	11.5	12.0	20.0	13.9	17.0	29.6
Workload	8.8	7.7	11.0	7.0	10.8	4.7	5.8	2.7	6.9	2.5	8.5	11.1
Long hours	19.3	8.7	5.5	1.4	9.5	3.1	0.0	6.7	8.3	7.6	6.4	11.1
Salary	10.5	5.8	4.1	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.3	4.1	5.1	8.5	14.8
Training/career progression	1.8	5.8	11.0	5.6	2.7	4.7	5.8	7.3	12.4	3.8	2.1	3.7
Sacked/made redundant	1.8	1.0	1.4	2.8	1.4	6.3	0.0	0.7	0.7	1.3	2.1	3.7
Temporary position	8.8	15.4	5.5	9.9	4.1	23.4	30.8	15.3	6.9	3.8	14.9	0.0
Unpaid role/volunteer	1.8	0.0	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	5.8	0.7	2.8	0.0	4.3	0.0
Change in speciality/role/more challenging role & opportunity	10.5	13.5	15.1	11.3	18.9	9.4	5.8	16.0	11.7	22.8	12.8	11.1
Wanted to travel/work abroad	1.8	2.9	0.0	1.4	5.4	0.0	7.7	4.7	2.1	3.8	6.4	3.7
Illness/injury	1.8	0.0	1.4	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	6.4	0.0
Further education/study/research	3.5	1.9	4.1	2.8	2.7	7.8	5.8	2.0	2.1	3.8	4.3	0.0
Location reasons	14.0	10.6	9.6	16.9	13.5	12.5	3.8	15.3	11.0	17.7	6.4	0.0
Personal reasons	0.0	1.0	0.0	2.8	1.4	1.6	0.0	1.3	0.7	2.5	0.0	0.0
Not relevant/other comment	1.8	1.9	5.5	1.4	2.7	1.6	5.8	2.0	1.4	2.5	0.0	7.4
Total number of responses	57	104	73	71	74	64	52	150	145	79	47	27

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

6.4 Working within an RCVS accredited practice and job satisfaction

Table 6.19: Reasons respondents left their first veterinary position

Reason left position (% of number of responses)	Was this an RCVS accredited practice?	
	Yes	No
The position was too lowly paid	11.02	8.89
I did not receive enough professional support from my employers and colleagues	22.46	23.49
I did not receive enough emotional/social support from my employers and colleagues	16.95	17.78
I was not able to work the hours that I wanted	6.36	6.67
The position was not in the location that I wanted	13.98	10.16
The position was not in the type of clinical practice that I wanted	8.47	11.11
There were not enough development opportunities	13.98	17.78
Other	6.78	4.13
Total number of responses	236	315

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

There were no substantial differences in the main reasons respondents provided for leaving their first veterinary position between those participants who occupied a role within a RCVS accredited practice and those who did not.

A slightly larger proportion of respondents who did not work within an RCVS accredited practice cited the lack of development opportunities as one of the reasons why they left their first position, in comparison with those who did manage to find work under such accreditation. Although this was the area in which the two groups diverged most markedly, the proportional difference was relatively small at just 3.8 percent.

6.5 Professional Development Phase

Respondents to the RCVS survey who had completed their Professional Development Phase (PDP) were asked to specify how long this process had taken. The answers provided in Table 6.20 suggest that it is gradually taking new qualifiers longer to complete their PDP year on year. From 2008 – 2010, the proportion of respondents who took between 12 – 24 months to complete their PDP rose by 17.38 percent.

Table 6.20: Time taken to complete PDP (Year of qualification)

Time taken (months)	2008 (%)	2009 (%)	2010 (%)	2011 (%)
6-12	54.14%	41.18%	40.22%	47.83%
12-24	34.25%	41.18%	51.63%	52.17%
24-48	11.60%	17.65%	8.15%	0.00
N =	181	204	184	161

Note: Respondents who graduated in 2012 were discounted from the above analyses, having had less time to complete their PDP.

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

The time it took respondents to complete their PDP also appeared to vary by gender. Table 6.21, for example, suggests that males are completing their PDP quicker than females, with around five percent more males completing the scheme within 6 – 12 months.

Table 6.21: Time taken to complete PDP (Gender)

Time taken (months)	Male (%)	Female (%)
6-12	50.38	45.75
12-24	42.11	43.95
24-48	7.52	10.29
N =	133	612

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

When the type of clinical practice which respondents are presently working within was compared with the time it took them to complete their PDP, there was again some variability between categories. A substantial proportion of those currently working, at least in part, within mixed clinical practices (40%) had taken far longer to complete the scheme (between 1 and 2 years) than respondents who are presently specialising within other areas of clinical work.

Table 6.22: Time taken to complete PDP (Type of clinical practice currently working within)

Time taken (months)	% of total number of responses			
	Small animals	Farm	Equine	Mixed
6 -12	19.03	22.50	14.29	7.50
12 - 24	61.61	52.50	61.90	52.50
24 - 48	19.35	25.00	23.81	40.00
Total number of responses	310	40	42	40

Note: 'Other' clinical work was discounted from the above table, due to the small number of respondents for whom this category was applicable (N= 9).

Source: RCVS Survey of recent qualifiers, 2013

7 Conclusions

In many ways, these results are very encouraging. The large majority of newly qualified veterinary surgeons are finding their first positions relatively quickly, and almost all of those who left their first position have succeeded in finding subsequent work. It is, however, taking graduates slightly longer, on average, to find their first position.

In general, there are few differences depending on personal characteristics (gender and age). Women are not finding it quite as easy as their male counterparts to find work, and older qualifiers are experiencing slightly more difficulty than their younger counterparts, perhaps because they have a greater level of domestic responsibility so are less geographically mobile.

The veterinary school attended also does not seem to make a marked difference, although there are some subtle variations. It is noticeable that newly qualified veterinary surgeons seem to prefer to take their first and even their subsequent jobs in the area in which they attended veterinary school.

An analysis by year of graduation suggests there are some trends developing over time, in particular relating to the greater percentage of recent qualifiers taking short-term, temporary positions for their first role, sometimes unpaid. It is also taking new qualifiers longer to complete their professional development phase (PDP).

Given the proportional decline, between 2010 and 2012, in the number of graduates who reported undertaking some form of mixed clinical practice work within their first veterinary position – a factor that tends to prolong the completion of the PDP, as veterinary surgeons are required to gather experience across multiple species - this observed change in PDP completion rates could be due to new qualifiers changing jobs more frequently.

There is some cause for concern from the analysis of the reasons new qualifiers gave when their first position did not meet their needs. Over half cited insufficient professional support from their employer and colleagues, and this has consistently

been the top reason regardless of the year of qualification. In addition, 'poor management' was the top reason for leaving given by those who had left their first position.