

# **THE UK VETERINARY PROFESSION IN 2006**

## **THE FINDINGS OF A SURVEY OF THE PROFESSION CONDUCTED BY THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS**

**Dilys Robinson and Hülya Hooker, Institute for Employment Studies      June 2006**

## **THE 2006 SURVEY OF THE PROFESSION**

The 2006 Survey of the Profession was carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) on behalf of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS). The Survey was supported by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the British Veterinary Association.

## CONTENTS

<b>LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>vi</b>
The 2006 Survey of the Profession	vi
Veterinary profile	vi
International movement	vii
Working outside the profession	vii
Working within the profession	viii
Recent graduates	xi
Use of ICT	xi
Veterinary viewpoint	xi
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Survey process	1
1.3. Response	1
1.4. Data input and survey analysis	3
<b>2. PERSONAL DETAILS</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1. Gender	4
2.2. Age	4
2.3. Ethnicity	5
2.4. Responsibility for dependants	5
2.5. Disability	5
2.6. Year of qualification	5
2.7. Country of qualification	6
2.8. Membership of veterinary associations	6
<b>3. JOB DETAILS</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1. Employment status	7
3.2. Full and partial retirement	7
3.3. Unemployment	8
3.4. Career breaks	8
3.5. Previous employment	8
3.6. Country of work	9
3.7. Working within or outside the profession	9
<b>4. WORKING OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1. Employment status	10
4.2. Type of work	10
4.3. Type of organisation	10
4.4. Length of service	11
4.5. Lost to the profession?	11
<b>5. WORKING WITHIN THE PROFESSION</b>	<b>12</b>
5.1. Area of work	12
5.2. Hours of work	12
5.3. Expertise areas	14
5.4. Career plans	15

<b>6. VETERINARY SURGEONS WORKING IN PRACTICE</b>	<b>16</b>
6.1. Type of practice	16
6.2. Position in practice	16
6.3. Locums and consultants	17
6.4. Practice ownership	17
6.5. On-call arrangements	17
6.6. Number of people in the practice	17
6.7. Paraprofessionals and consultants	18
6.8. Time breakdown	19
6.9. Routine visits	22
6.10. Practices and ICT	22
<b>7. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)</b>	<b>23</b>
7.1. Days away from the workplace	23
7.2. Qualifications	23
7.3. CPD methods	24
7.4. CPD funding	25
<b>8. VETERINARY SURGEONS WITH ATTITUDE</b>	<b>26</b>
8.1. Introduction	26
8.2. Electronic communications and use of the internet	26
8.3. Views about the profession	26
8.4. Starting again	31
8.5. Best things, suggestions for improvement and challenges	31
8.6. Recent graduates	33
8.7. Final thoughts	33
<b>9. Appendix 1 – questionnaire</b>	<b>34</b>

**June 2006**

Dear Reader

Welcome to the latest of our Surveys of the Veterinary Profession. Our objective is to take a snapshot of the profession today (what kind of work is being carried out, where and to what extent) and to gain an understanding of future aspirations.

With a nearly 50% response rate from our membership, the results provide a robust picture of veterinary life in 2006. But is it what you might expect?

There are actually a few surprises. Despite anecdotal evidence to the contrary, the dynamics of the veterinary profession remain relatively stable. For example, the impact of the so-called 'feminisation of the profession' seems to be less marked than anticipated, given the rise in the number of female veterinary surgeons.

In fact, the number of part-time workers has risen by only 2% since 2002 (page 7). Meanwhile 23% of sole principals, practice partners or directors are now female, putting paid to the suggestion that women are unwilling to invest in practice (page 17).

Looking at working hours, although 37% of respondents stated that an improved 'work-life balance' would make the profession better for them, the average hours worked in practice are down on the 2002 findings, at 42.8 per week in general/first opinion practice, compared with 51.6 in 2002 (figures are for full-timers only – page 13).

On-call hours for full-time workers have also dropped, from an average of 27.3 per week for general/first opinion practice in 2002, compared with 21.6 now. The fact that 22% of respondents say their practice is using out-of-hours services may account in part for this decrease (page 17).

To discover where time in practice was spent, we asked veterinary surgeons to estimate the percentage of their time they had spent in 2001, are spending now and will spend in 2011, by species or type of work. Not surprisingly, the trend for time spent on cats, rabbits, horses and practice management/admin was felt to be going up and that spent on dogs, cattle (both beef and dairy), sheep, meat hygiene and Local Veterinary Inspector work was estimated to be going down (page 21).

The survey was supported by Defra and the British Veterinary Association. The latter will use aggregated data from the survey to help establish a stronger evidence base on the current state and the potential changes facing the provision of veterinary services in rural GB. I would also like to thank the Institute for Employment Studies and RCVS staff for their hard work in producing this report. I hope that it will provoke debate and provide the profession with a firm foundation on which to build a strategy for its future development.

Yours faithfully



Lynne V Hill MVB MBA MRCVS

**President**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### THE 2006 SURVEY OF THE PROFESSION

During February and March 2006, the RCVS surveyed its membership using a postal questionnaire, with an online version available. The survey yielded a response rate of 47 per cent, with almost one in eight opting for the online questionnaire.

A response analysis showed that respondents matched the RCVS database of members fairly closely in terms of age, ethnicity and year of qualification; however, there was a slight over-response from female vets and a clear under-response from vets who qualified overseas. A full response analysis can be found in the main report (Table 1.1).

### VETERINARY PROFILE

There is, of course, no 'typical' vet; as an example of this, respondents to the survey range in age from 22 to an impressive 95 (see Table 1 for an age breakdown). This section of the executive summary outlines the characteristics of respondents and their employment, and draws the reader's attention to issues that are important in the profession.

---

**Table 1: Age of breakdown of respondents: per cent**

Age group	%
20-29	17
30-39	27
40-49	22
50-59	15
60-69	10
70+	9

---

The '**feminisation**' of the profession continues apace. Although the average age of respondents is 44.9, there is a big difference between the genders; the average age of male respondents is 51.0, while for female respondents it is only 37.5. This year, 45 per cent of respondents are female – while in 2002 it was 37 per cent, and in 2000 just 34 per cent. If we look at only vets working within the profession (i.e. taking out vets who don't work as vets, and retired vets) women comprise 49 per cent of respondents – and if we look simply at vets in practice, we can see a 'survey first' for the profession, in that women are in the majority, at 51 per cent.

The issue of **career breaks** is a live one for the profession, and is linked to feminisation. Although some male vets are on a career break, mostly it is women who take such breaks, and mostly their reasons are related to having children and raising a family. As Table 2 shows, proportionally ten times as many women as men are on a career break, and the predicted length of the break is very variable. A 'typical' break appears to be 12 months, but the mean average is higher, at 26 months, as it is skewed by a small number of respondents anticipating very long breaks of several years. An understanding of career breaks is important for the profession, as there are clear implications in terms of planning future numbers, which in turn is related to training places in veterinary schools.

Women are also more likely than men to work **part time** (see Table 2), and this also has implications for future planning and required numbers. Only 5 per cent of men work part time, compared to 25 per cent of women. Although part time working is increasing slightly (from 11 per cent of respondents in 2000, to 12 per cent in 2002 and 14 per cent in 2006), it is important to understand that **full time working** is still the norm for both male and female vets.

**Table 2: Employment status of all respondents by gender: per cent**

	Male	Female
<b>Full time</b>	70	64
<b>Part time</b>	5	25
<b>Partially-retired</b>	5	1
<b>Total employed</b>	80	90
<b>Unemployed</b>	0.5	1
<b>Career break</b>	0.5	5
<b>Fully retired</b>	18	4

When asked about **membership of veterinary associations** (apart, of course, from the RCVS), 25 per cent say they do not belong to any. Of those with memberships, the most popular is the BVA, to which 64 per cent of respondents belong. A further 17 per cent are also in a BVA Territorial Division, while 5 per cent say they belong to other (non-BVA) veterinary associations. Finally, 23 per cent are in an international association (which would be expected, given the number of overseas-qualified vets).

#### **INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT**

A great deal of international exchange is apparent within the profession. Only 78 per cent of respondents to the 2006 survey qualified in the UK. Overseas qualifiers come from: elsewhere in Europe including Ireland (13 per cent), Australia and New Zealand (5 per cent), South Africa (3 per cent) and North America (1 per cent). There is also movement in the other direction, following a fairly similar pattern. Although 88 per cent of respondents work in the UK, 5 per cent work in Europe including Ireland, 3 per cent in Australia or New Zealand, just over 2 per cent in North America and just under 1 per cent in South Africa.

#### **WORKING OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION**

Some vets with RCVS membership work outside the profession (*i.e.* in employment that does not require RCVS membership, and does not involve the use of veterinary skills). Many vets who leave the profession also opt out of RCVS membership, but some choose to keep up their registration and they have been included in the survey. Only 4 per cent of respondents say they work outside the profession, in a variety of types of work. Management, research and office work are the most frequently mentioned. They also work for a variety of sectors; 40 per cent are in the private sector (14 per cent in pharmaceutical companies), 25 per cent in the public sector and 5 per cent in the voluntary sector, with a whole collection of 'other employment' categories including self-employed. Most of these vets are unlikely to return, as only 14 per cent of them say they intend to seek employment in the profession in the future.

## WORKING WITHIN THE PROFESSION

Vets in the profession are the main focus of the membership survey. Table 3 shows that the proportion of vets working in **practice** has increased since the previous two surveys, while non-practice work, especially government work, has decreased. Some vets, of course, work in more than one area (eg as an LVI inspector in addition to being in practice).

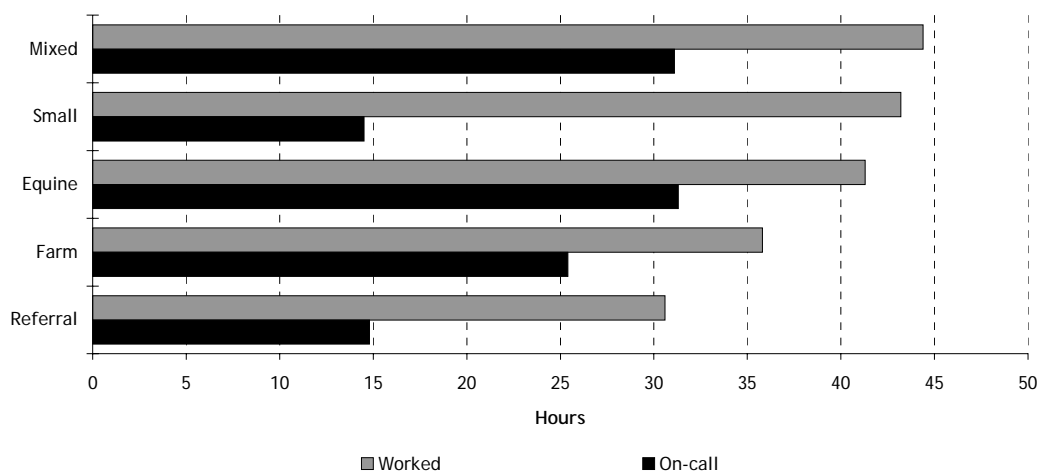
**Table 3: Area of work: per cent**

	2006	2002	2000
<b>Non-practice areas:</b>			
Government	10	14	15
University	7	9	7
Commerce and industry	4	4	3
Charities and trusts	2	3	2
Other	1		
<b>Total non-practice</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Practice</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>81</b>

*Note: Percentages total more than 100, as some respondents work in more than one area*

The profession has traditionally been one in which **long working hours** were fairly common, but it seems that the trend is downwards in terms of both working hours and on-call hours. Full time respondents in practice now work 42.8 hours per week on average, and are on call for 21.6, compared to 48 and 23 hours respectively in 2002. Figure 1 illustrates the working and on-call hours of full-time vets in different practice areas.

**Figure 1: Hours worked and on call, by practice area: average (mean)**



Vets with **specialist expertise** are in the minority, although the minority is sizeable (40 per cent feel that they have at least one area of expertise). Those who gave further details specified particular animals (notably small animals, horses, cattle, zoo animals and laboratory animals) or particular specialties (notably medical, surgical, virology/bacteriology/particular diseases, and reproduction). It will be interesting to monitor whether there is a trend towards increasing specialisation in future surveys.



An analysis of **practice roles** shows that women are still more likely to be assistants (52 per cent are full-time assistants and 20 per cent are part-time assistants) rather than sole principals or partners. However, Table 4 shows that some women are taking on these senior roles. To some extent, practice role is a function of age, so the proportion of principal/partner positions being occupied by women is likely to increase in line with the average age of female vets.

**Table 4: Position in practice: per cent**

	Male	Female	Total
Sole principal	17	5	11
Partner/director of limited company	16	4	10
Salaried partner	2	1	2
Partner	25	7	16
Total partner	43	12	28
Full-time assistant	28	52	40
Part-time assistant	3	20	11
Consultant	2	1	1
Locum	5	8	6
Other	1	2	2

**Ownership** of practices still appears to follow the traditional model, in that 50 per cent are owned by a partnership, and 29 per cent by a sole principal. Only 2 per cent of respondents say they work in a practice owned by a corporate concern, although 15 per cent say their practice is owned by a limited company.

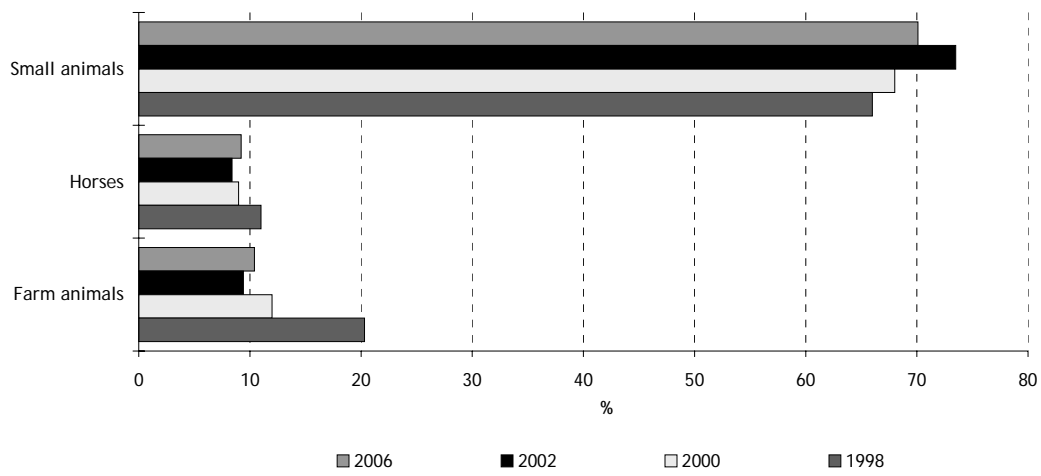
**On-call arrangements** are still, it appears, largely being handled in the usual way, that is solely by the practice (63 per cent). However, 22 per cent of practices are now using an out-of-hours service and 11 per cent have a sharing arrangement with other practices. On-call is an important feature of work-life balance so this issue is another that will be flagged for future monitoring.

Most vets are prepared to travel to see their clients, in that 74 per cent provide **routine visits** to see clients. There is a huge variation in distances travelled, with the type of practice also playing a part in the variable distances. Vets in small animal practices appear to have the shortest distances to travel to see their clients. Table 6.10 in the main report gives further details.

Another illustration of the fact that there is no 'typical' vet is the variation in terms of the **number of people working in the practice** (defined as the vet's immediate working environment). Some vets work in very small practices, with little or no veterinary, nursing, technical or administrative support, while others are surrounded by many colleagues of different disciplines. Table 6.4 in the main report gives a fuller analysis. Some use of **paraprofessionals and consultants** within the practice (rather than referring the client elsewhere) is evident. Eighteen per cent of respondents say that their practice uses paraprofessionals (especially physiotherapists, dentists and farriers), while 17 per cent use consultants within the practice (notably dermatologists, ophthalmologist, orthopaedists, cardiologists and surgeons).

For the 2006 survey, as in previous surveys, respondents were asked about their typical **time breakdown** on different activities in the practice. Figure shows the trends for small animals, horses and farm animals, and seems to indicate that the movement towards small animals, and away from farm animals, may have achieved a plateau. Vets were also asked to compare five years ago (2001) with their expectations of five years in the future (2011). Here, vets believe that the trend will be down for dogs, cattle, sheep, meat hygiene and LVI work and up for cats, rabbits, and practice management.

**Figure 2: Percentage breakdown of practice time: trend over time**



It is reassuring that only 13 per cent of respondents say they are **planning to leave** the profession, and that the majority of these will be leaving because they intend to fully retire within the next 5 years. Only 3 per cent plan to leave prematurely; for over half, their reasons are to do with dissatisfaction with the profession (usually around stress or hours of work).

Vets report that they are **away from work** for a variety of reasons. The majority of respondents typically have 20 or 25 days holiday a year, with a mean average of 21.6 days. This is an increase on 2002's low figure of 19.8 days. On the whole, vets appear to be very healthy, with 64 per cent reporting no days absent through illness in the past 12 months; the mean average is a very low two days.

One reason why vets are sometimes away from the workplace is **continuing professional development (CPD)** – clearly very important in keeping the profession up-to-date. The majority of vets (82 per cent) are not involved in giving CDP, but almost all respondents say that they engage in CPD activities, typically for five days in the past year. Substantial percentages of respondents hold, are studying for, or intend to study for, further qualifications, with RCVS certificates being especially popular. A variety of CPD methods are in use, with reading being most frequently cited. When asked about their preferred CPD methods, vets indicate that they like courses (day/weekend/evening), perhaps because they get the opportunity to meet fellow professionals. Most CPD (67 per cent) is funded by the employer/practice.

## RECENT GRADUATES

For the first time, recent qualifiers (those who graduated in 2000 onwards) were asked about their early experiences. Most (87 per cent) say they went straight into practice. Just over half of those entering practice (51 per cent) received further training, although only a third of these (36 per cent) received any formal appraisal or performance review. Section 8.6 of the main report shows that recent graduates felt well supported by their colleagues during their practice training, and reasonably well supported by their employer, but were not too happy with their salary level.

## USE OF ICT

The profession appears to be reasonably ICT-literate. Almost all practices (94 per cent) use a computer system for client details, and 84 per cent of practices are connected to the Internet. Most respondents (82 per cent) use email regularly, although of these, only 57 per cent have a work email address. Most vets (61 per cent) have visited the RCVS website at least once in the past year.

## VETERINARY VIEWPOINT

Another 'first' for the 2006 survey was the inclusion of a section asking vets about their **attitudes, perceptions and opinions** about the profession. Figure shows how vets responded to a series of attitude statements. Responses indicate that vets enjoy their work and find it varied (but also stressful); however, part-time opportunities and family friendliness are not rated highly. There is general agreement that farm work is on the decline and small animal work increasing, but disagreement that demand for veterinary services will increase over the next ten years. Further analysis shows that women are particularly likely to have concerns about part-time working, stress and family friendliness, while men are more positive about farm work - and older vets are more positive about everything!

Figure 3: Veterinary attitudes: average scores



When asked whether, if they could **start their career again**, they would still opt for the veterinary profession, the majority (53 per cent) say yes. Twenty per cent give a definite 'no' while the remaining 27 per cent are unsure. Figure 8.5 in the main report shows that vets who say no find the work much less enjoyable than their more positive colleagues (especially farm work), and are particularly concerned about family friendliness.

Finally, vets were asked to describe the **best** three things about being in the profession, give three suggestions for **improvement**, and identify the three biggest **challenges** facing the profession. Table 5 shows the results, which bear out the findings elsewhere in the survey – vets enjoy their work, but have concerns about work-life balance and recognise the importance of issues related to the decline of the farming sector in the UK.

**Table 5: The best, the improvements and the challenges: top 6 suggestions**

Best things about being a vet		What would make the profession better?		Challenges faced by the profession	
Variety	(48%)	Better work life balance/hours	(37%)	Agriculture/farming sector issues	(25%)
Working with animals	(33%)	Better pay/benefits	(32%)	Competition	(24%)
Challenge/using skills	(33%)	Tackling on call issues	(27%)	Regulation	(15%)
Job satisfaction	(32%)	Better CPD	(12%)	Client expectations	(14%)
Clients	(28%)	Less regulation	(10%)	Prescription medicines	(14%)
Interest/enjoyment	(17%)	Better support	(10%)	Maintaining profitability	(12%)

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. BACKGROUND**

This report presents the results of the 2006 Survey of the Profession, carried out on behalf of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES). The 2006 survey is the fourth survey carried out by the RCVS; the membership was also surveyed in 1998, 2000 and 2002. Throughout this report, where possible and appropriate, results are compared with those of previous surveys. The aim of these membership surveys is to provide RCVS, and other interested parties, with an evidence-based view of the veterinary profession and the changes taking place within it. This year, for the first time, the views of veterinary surgeons were sought on a variety of aspects of the profession; these attitudinal data have been analysed in detail, and provide a fascinating insight into the membership's perceptions and opinions.

### **1.2. SURVEY PROCESS**

The questionnaire was compiled by IES using questions from previous surveys, together with additional questions and attitude statements derived from discussions with the RCVS and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1 to this report.

The survey was launched on 3 February 2006, following a small pilot at the end of 2005 using a random sample of 100 members taken from the membership database; the purpose of the pilot was to ensure that questions and routing instructions could be understood and were not ambiguous or misleading. Following minor amendments the questionnaire, together with a reply-paid envelope, was sent to all 20,479 people on the membership database, including non-practising, overseas and Southern Irish members. In the covering letter from the RCVS President, questionnaire recipients were given the option, if they preferred, of completing an online version of the questionnaire.

### **1.3. RESPONSE**

By the time the survey closed on 29 March 2006, IES had received 9,671 completed questionnaires from RCVS members, representing an overall response rate of just over 47 per cent. Of these, 8,536 completed paper questionnaires, while the remaining 1,135 opted to complete the online version.

The response rate of 47 per cent compares favourably with the 29 per cent achieved in 2002 and is only a little lower than the 2000 survey's 49 per cent, but is lower than the 61 per cent achieved for the first survey in 1998.

**Table 1.1: Response analysis: per cent**

		Survey respondents	Membership database	Over/under response
<b>Gender</b>	Male	55	59	slightly under
	Female	45	41	slightly over
<b>Age</b>	20s	17	18	
	30s	27	28	
	40s	22	21	
	50s	15	15	
	60s	10	9	
	70s	9	8	
<b>Ethnicity</b>	White	98	98	
	Minority ethnic	2	2	
<b>Year of qualification</b>	1930s	0.2	0.2	
	1940s	2	2	
	1950s	6	5	
	1960s	10	9	
	1970s	15	14	
	1980s	21	19	slightly over
	1990s	26	26	
	2000 +	20	24	under
<b>Country of qualification</b>	UK	78	66	over
	Other	22	34	under

*Note: Ethnicity is known for only 36 per cent of those on the membership database; the percentages in this table for ethnicity represent a breakdown of those whose ethnicity is known.*

A response analysis was carried out to compare survey respondents to the membership database as a whole. The results are shown in Table 1.1 and indicate that the match between respondents and the membership is reasonably close in most aspects.

- The gender breakdown shows a small under-response by men, and a corresponding over-response by women.
- Age and ethnicity are closely matched.
- Year of qualification shows a fairly close match, expect for a slight over-response from those qualifying in the 1980s, and an under-response from more recent (2000 and later) qualifiers.
- There is an over-response, although not a large one, from fully or partially-retired veterinary surgeons, and a corresponding under-response from those who are not yet retired.

- Finally, the one category which is not well matched is that of country of qualification; here, there is a clear over-response from UK-qualified veterinary surgeons, and a corresponding under-response from those who qualified outside the UK.

#### **1.4. DATA INPUT AND SURVEY ANALYSIS**

The survey responses were coded and inputted into the statistical package SPSS for analysis. The responses to open-ended, free-text questions (such as, 'What are the best three things about being in the veterinary profession?') were also coded to enable detailed analysis. When carrying out the analysis, IES used key variables to provide breakdowns, such as age group, gender and employment status, and also took account of any analysis undertaken for previous surveys.

## 2. PERSONAL DETAILS

### 2.1. GENDER

Overall, 55 per cent of respondents are male and 45 per cent female. The 'feminisation' of the profession is apparent when looking at comparisons with previous surveys. In 2000, 34 per cent of respondents were female; by 2002, this had increased to 37 per cent. When examining only veterinary surgeons currently working within the profession who have replied to the 2006 survey (*i.e.* omitting those working outside the profession, and those who have retired), the percentages of men and women are even closer, at 51 per cent male and 49 per cent female. Narrowing this down to veterinary surgeons working in practice reveals that female respondents are actually in the majority here; 49 per cent are male and 51 per cent female.

One small caveat, however, is that Table 1.1 shows that women are slightly over-represented within the survey data, as they represent 41 per cent of the membership compared to 45 per cent of respondents to the survey. Nevertheless, the increase in the percentages of practising female veterinary surgeons is notable.

### 2.2. AGE

The age of respondents ranges from 22 to 95, with age breakdowns as indicated by Table 2.1.

---

**Table 2.1: Age breakdown of respondents: per cent**

Age group	%
20-29	17
30-39	27
40-49	22
50-59	15
60-69	10
70+	9

---

The overall average (mean) age of respondents is 44.9. Men have a notably higher average age than women – 51.0 compared to 37.5. Further breakdowns show that the average age of respondents working within the profession is 40.9, while for partially-retired veterinary surgeons it is 65.3, and fully retired 72.1; veterinary surgeons who are on a career break have an average (mean) age of 35.5. As would be expected, the average (mean) age of veterinary surgeons in practice varies depending on their position, as Table 2.2 shows.

---

**Table 2.2: Average (mean) age of respondents by position in practice**

Position	Average age
Sole principal	50.2
Partner/director	45.7
Salaried partner	41.4
Partner	46.3
Full-time assistant	31.7
Part-time assistant	40.8
Consultant	53.2
Locum	39.9
Other	40.4

---



### 2.3. ETHNICITY

Just two per cent of respondents are from a minority ethnic group, with this two per cent being made up of: Asian 0.6 per cent, mixed ethnicity 0.5 per cent, Chinese 0.3 per cent, black 0.2 per cent, and other ethnicity 0.4 per cent. Table 1.1 shows that this ethnic split among respondents is matched by the database overall, although ethnicity is known for only a minority (36 per cent) of the membership.

### 2.4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEPENDANTS

Thirty-five per cent of respondents say they have dependent children living with them, while 5.5 per cent provide care to a dependent adult.

### 2.5. DISABILITY

Eight per cent of respondents say that they have a disability or medical condition that limits the work they can do. When asked to provide further details, respondents described their disabilities/limiting conditions as: varied physical problems (apart from back problems and specific injuries) 50 per cent, back problems 18 per cent, age 14 per cent, heart problems 9 per cent, stress/depression/mental health problems 6 per cent, and specific physical injury 3 per cent.

### 2.6. YEAR OF QUALIFICATION

The qualification years given by respondents ranges from 1931 to 2006. The percentage breakdown by decade is given in Table 2.3.

---

**Table 2.3: Year of qualification of respondents: per cent**

<b>Decade</b>	<b>%</b>
1930-39	0.2
1943-49	2
1950-59	6
1960-69	10
1970-79	15
1980-89	21
1990-99	26
2000 onwards	20

---

Table 1.1 shows that there is a fairly close match between the survey respondents and the membership database, with a slight over-response by those who qualified in the 1980s, and an under-response from more recent qualifiers (2000 onwards).

## 2.7. COUNTRY OF QUALIFICATION

Seventy-eight per cent of respondents qualified in the UK. Table 2.4 gives details.

**Table 2.4: Respondents' country of qualification: per cent**

Country of qualification	%
UK	78
Ireland	6
Elsewhere in Europe	7
Australia	4
South Africa	3
New Zealand	1
Canada	0.5
USA	0.5
Elsewhere	0.5

Table 1.1 shows that country of qualification is one aspect where there is a big difference between the breakdown of survey respondents and that of the membership database. There is a clear over-response by UK qualified veterinary surgeons, and a corresponding under-response from veterinary surgeons who qualified outside the UK.

## 2.8. MEMBERSHIP OF VETERINARY ASSOCIATIONS

One quarter (25%) of respondents say that they are not currently a member of any veterinary associations (apart from RCVS). The three quarters who do have such memberships were asked if they belonged to the BVA, a BVA Territorial Division, a non-BVA association or an international association. Sixty-four per cent say they belong to the BVA and 23 per cent to international associations. The BVA Territorial Division and the non-BVA association responses show evidence of respondent confusion, however, in that respondents, when asked to specify, frequently cited non-territorial BVA divisions under both these headings. Disengaging these responses with accuracy is impossible, but it appears that 17 per cent of those who belong to a veterinary association are in a BVA Territorial Division, and 5 per cent are in a non-BVA association in the UK. These percentages total more than 100 because some respondents belong to associations under more than one heading.

### 3. JOB DETAILS

#### 3.1. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Table 3.1: Employment status of all respondents: per cent

	2006	2002	2000
Full time	68	69	66
Part time	14	12	11
Unemployed	1	1	1
Career break	2	3	3
Partially retired	4	2	4
Fully retired	12	12	14

Table 3.1 shows that part-time working is becoming more common among respondents, with 14 per cent working part time compared to 12 per cent in 2002 and 11 per cent in 2000. The majority of veterinary surgeons, however, are working full time. Table 3.2 gives a gender breakdown, and shows that there are considerable differences between the employment status of male and female veterinary surgeons. Women are much more likely than men to be working part time, or to be on a career break. Conversely, and related to the age structure of male respondents, men are much more likely than women to be fully or partially retired. However, for the majority of female respondents – nearly two-thirds – full time is the current working pattern.

Table 3.2: Employment status of all respondents by gender: per cent

	2006		2002		2000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Full time	70	64				
Part time	5	25				
Partially retired	5	1	3	1		
Total employed	80	90	80	89	79	88
Unemployed	0.5	1				
Career break	0.5	5	2	4	1	6
Fully retired	18	4	16	4	19	5

#### 3.2. FULL AND PARTIAL RETIREMENT

Sixteen per cent of respondents are fully or partially retired (see Table 1.1), and there is a big discrepancy between men and women (see Table 3.2); 23 per cent of male respondents, but only 5 per cent of female respondents, are fully or partially retired. Looking at the data another way, 86 per cent of partially retired, and 85 per cent of fully retired, veterinary surgeons are male. The average age of partially retired veterinary surgeons is 65.3, and that of fully retired veterinary surgeons 72.1.

Partially retired veterinary surgeons work a very varied number of hours in a typical week; responses ranged from 0 to 98. The average (mean) is 17.8 hours, while the mode (most common value) is ten and the median (middle value) is 15.

### 3.3. UNEMPLOYMENT

Only 1 per cent of veterinary surgeons who responded to the survey are currently unemployed, and this figure has been consistent over three surveys – 2006, 2002 and 2000. These veterinary surgeons have been unemployed from between less than one month, to 90 months, with a mean average of 18.3 months. The mode is 1 month, while the median is 7 months. A caveat here is that the questionnaire was distributed to RCVS members; it is not possible to know how many veterinary surgeons are unemployed and have left the RCVS Register.

One third (33 per cent) of unemployed veterinary surgeons are seeking work. Of these, over half (58 per cent) are seeking work within the profession. A further 17 per cent say that they are not currently seeking work within the profession, but may do in future, while 25 per cent say that they do not intend to seek work within the profession. Only 17 per cent of veterinary surgeons who are seeking work are looking outside the profession, with a further 35 per cent saying they may do so in future; almost half (48 per cent) say that they do not intend to seek work outside the profession.

### 3.4. CAREER BREAKS

Table 3.1 shows that two per cent of respondents are currently on a career break, and Table 3.2 shows that this is far more likely to apply to women than men; 5 per cent of women, and only 0.5 per cent of men, are on a career break. The reasons given for being on a career break are given in Table 3.3.

---

**Table 3.3: Career break reasons: per cent**

Reason	%
Parental leave/looking after children	54
Study	12
Travel	11
Illness (self)	8
Sabbatical	3
Looking after adult dependent	1
Other reason	12

---

When asked how long they expected their career break to last, respondents gave very varied responses – from 1 to 180 months. The mean is 26.1 months, while the mode and median are both 12.

### 3.5. PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Respondents who are unemployed, on a career break, or fully retired, were asked about their most recent employment. Over half (57 per cent) say they worked in a veterinary practice, 20 per cent in Government veterinary work, 6 per cent in university veterinary work, and 13 per cent in other employment; just 4 per cent say they worked outside the profession. A large majority (88 per cent) were employed in the UK, with 5 per cent saying 'other EU' and 7 per cent 'other'.

### 3.6. COUNTRY OF WORK

Most respondents (88 per cent) work in the UK. Table 3.4 gives further details.

---

**Table 3.4: Country of work: per cent**

<b>Country</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>UK:</b>	
England	71
Scotland	10
Wales	4
N. Ireland	3
<b>Total UK</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Outside UK:</b>	
Ireland	3.1
Australia	2.0
Europe	1.7
USA	1.7
New Zealand	1.0
South Africa	0.7
Canada	0.6
Far East	0.5
Africa (outside S. Africa)	0.2
Asia	0.1
South America	0.1
Elsewhere	0.2
<b>Total outside UK</b>	<b>12</b>

---

### 3.7. WORKING WITHIN OR OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION

Of those respondents who are currently working (*i.e.* who are not unemployed, on a career break or retired), almost all (96 per cent) say that they work within the veterinary profession, leaving just 4 per cent who say that they work outside the profession. The next chapter of this report gives further analysis of respondents working outside the veterinary profession.

## 4. WORKING OUTSIDE THE PROFESSION

This short chapter gives details of the 4 per cent of working respondents who say that they work outside the profession. The definition of 'working outside the profession' is working in employment in which membership of the RCVS, or an equivalent overseas professional body, is **not** mandatory or desirable, and which does **not** require a veterinary qualification or the use of veterinary skills.

### 4.1. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Sixty-nine per cent of respondents working outside the profession are employed, while 27 per cent are self-employed and 4 per cent are working on a voluntary basis.

### 4.2. TYPE OF WORK

Table 4.1 gives a breakdown of the type of work respondents working outside the profession.

---

**Table 4.1: Type of work respondents working outside the profession: per cent**

Type of work	%
Management	33
Research	14
Sales/marketing	8
Office work	13
Outdoors work	9
Teaching	9
Consultancy	5
Finance	1
Other	8

---

### 4.3. TYPE OF ORGANISATION

The breakdown of the type of organisation in which respondents say they work is shown in Table 4.2.

---

**Table 4.2: Type of organisation of respondents working outside the profession**

Type of organisation	%
Pharmaceutical company	14
Pet food company	1
Other private sector	25
<b>Total private sector</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Public sector</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Charity/voluntary sector</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>31</b>

---

Further analysis shows that:

- Over three-quarters of respondents working in the private sector who gave further details specified business/office/IT, manufacturing, research/education/HE or transport/distribution/construction
- Over 90 per cent of those working in the public sector who gave further details specified research/education/HE, government departments or local authorities, or government agencies
- Over two-thirds of respondents working for 'other' types of organisation who gave further details specified research/education/HE, self-employed, or business/office/IT.

#### **4.4. LENGTH OF SERVICE**

Respondents reported that they had worked for between less than 1 year and 50 years for their current organisation. The (mean) average is 8.5 years while the median is 5 years; there is no clear modal value.

#### **4.5. LOST TO THE PROFESSION?**

It appears that the majority of veterinary surgeons working outside the profession are unlikely to return. Fifty-five per cent said 'no' when asked if they intended to seek employment in the veterinary profession in the future, and 31 per cent are unsure; this leaves just 14 per cent who do intend to seek work within the profession. Half of this 14 per cent plan to do this within the next year, while the other half have longer term plans to do so.

## 5. WORKING WITHIN THE PROFESSION

This chapter gives details of the 96 per cent of working respondents who say that they work within the profession. The definition of 'working within the profession' is working in employment in which membership of the RCVS, or an equivalent overseas professional body, is mandatory or desirable.

### 5.1. AREA OF WORK

**Table 5.1: Veterinary surgeons working within the profession by area of work: per cent**

	2006	2002	2000
Government: UK	8		
Government: Overseas	2		
<b>Total government</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
Universities: Veterinary school	6		
Universities: Other	1		
<b>Total universities</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Commerce and industry</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Charities and trusts</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Other (including Research Council)</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Total non-practice</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>All practice areas</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>81</b>

*Note: Percentages total more than 100, as some veterinary surgeons work in more than one area.*

Table 5.1 shows that the majority of respondents (89 per cent of those working in the profession) work in practice, while 24 per cent work in non-practice areas. The percentages add up to more than 100, however, as some respondents work in more than one area; for example, they may work as a Local Veterinary Inspector (LVI) as well as being in practice.

Table 5.1 appears to indicate that practice working has increased considerably since the 2002 survey, and that government work has decreased; these figures should be treated with caution, however, as the question about area of work was phrased differently in the 2002 questionnaire.

### 5.2. HOURS OF WORK

Respondents were asked to give their working and on-call hours in a typical week. Table 5.2 shows the results, and indicates that respondents working in veterinary schools, mixed practices, small animal/exotic practices, 'other' areas of work, and equine practices work the longest hours on average (over 40 a week). The highest on-call commitment is found in practice, notably equine, mixed, and farm, where the average (mean) commitment is over 25 hours.



---

**Table 5.2: Hours worked and on-call in a typical week by full-time respondents: average (mean) hours**

	<b>Hours worked</b>	<b>Hours on call</b>
<b>Practice:</b>		
General/first opinion practice:		
Mixed	44.4	31.1
Small animal/exotic	43.2	14.5
Equine	41.3	31.3
Farm	35.8	25.4
Other	33.9	11.7
Referral practice/consultancy	30.6	14.8
UK government	39.0	8.3
Overseas government	37.1	10.5
University:		
Veterinary school	45.7	14.9
Other	36.5	11.6
Commerce and industry	39.0	7.3
Charities and trusts	31.9	6.2
Research council	33.8	14.7
Other	42.4	10.4

---

Detailed comparisons of hours worked and on-call with previous surveys are difficult, as the questions were asked differently. However, there is a clear downward trend, as Table 5.3 shows.

---

**Table 5.3: Trends in hours worked and on call by full-time respondents: average (mean) hours**

		<b>2006</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>
<b>All respondents:</b>	<b>weekly hours</b>	41.6	47	48
	<b>on-call hours</b>	18.8	22	
<b>All respondents in practice:</b>	<b>weekly hours</b>	42.8	48	49
	<b>on-call hours</b>	21.6	23	

*Note: 'All respondents in practice' excludes those working in a referral practice, as working patterns in referral practices are notably different from those in general/first opinion practices.*

---

### 5.3. EXPERTISE AREAS

Forty per cent of respondents indicated that they have a particular area of expertise. The majority of these respondents gave further details for one or two expertise areas; some specified the animal in which they specialised, while others specified the clinical area. The results are shown in Table 5.4, which shows, separately for the first and second expertise areas, all the areas specified by 50 or more respondents.

**Table 5.4: Expertise areas given by respondents: per cent**

	First expertise area (N = 1708)	Second expertise area (N = 719)
<b>Animal:</b>		
Small animals	23	15
Horses	18	15
Cattle	15	16
Zoo animals	9	7
Laboratory animals: fieldwork/research	7	9
Exotics	5	
Farm animals	3	
<b>Clinical:</b>	<b>(N = 2747)</b>	<b>(N = 1247)</b>
Medicine	15	9
Surgery	9	10
Virology/Bacteriology/Disease/TB/Avian flu	9	11
Reproduction	8	6
Orthopaedics	5	
Pathology	5	
Complementary therapy	4	
Radiology/Radiography/Imaging	4	5
Ophthalmology	4	
Dermatology	3	4
Health and production	3	
Anaesthesia	3	
Food hygiene/safety	2	
Cardiology	2	
Epidemiology	2	
Public health	2	
Welfare service		4

#### 5.4. CAREER PLANS

The majority of respondents (82 per cent) who are working within the profession plan to stay in the profession. A further 5 per cent say they plan to stay in the profession for at least a year. The remaining 13 per cent are planning to leave the profession. The majority of these are planning to leave because they will be fully retiring within the next five years (10 per cent), but 2 per cent plan to leave as soon as possible, and 1 per cent within the next year, for other reasons. Those who plan to leave for reasons other than retirement were asked to specify why, and the answers are shown in Table 5.5

---

**Table 5.5: Reasons for planning to leave: per cent**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>%</b>
Dissatisfaction with the profession eg with hours/ stress	55
Wanting a new career/challenge	16
To have a family/care for dependents	14
Pay	4
Legislation	3
Study	3
Emigration/travel	2
Other	3

---

## 6. VETERINARY SURGEONS WORKING IN PRACTICE

### 6.1. TYPE OF PRACTICE

Table 6.1 shows the percentage breakdown of respondents working in practice, and indicates that over three-quarters of those working in practice are in small animal or mixed practices.

**Table 6.1: Veterinary surgeons working in practice, by type of practice**

	Per cent of respondents working within the profession	Per cent of respondents working in practice
<b>General/first opinion:</b>		
mixed	25	28
small animal/exotic	45	50
equine	6	7
farm	4	5
other	3	3
<b>Referral practice/consultancy</b>	6	7
<b>Total working in practice</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100</b>

### 6.2. POSITION IN PRACTICE

**Table 6.2: Position in practice: per cent**

	2006			2002
	Male	Female	Total	Total
Sole principal	17	5	11	14
Partner/director of limited company	16	4	10	
Salaried partner	2	1	2	
Partner	25	7	16	
<b>Total partner</b>	43	12	28	24
<b>Full-time assistant</b>	28	52	40	43
<b>Part-time assistant</b>	3	20	11	11
<b>Consultant</b>	2	1	1	-
<b>Locum</b>	5	8	6	9
<b>Other</b>	1	2	2	-

Table 6.2 gives a breakdown of respondents' positions in their practice. There appear to be fewer sole principals, full-time assistants, and locums in 2006 compared to 2002, and more partners, consultants and 'other' roles. The gender breakdown shows clearly that men are much more likely than women to occupy senior roles; almost three-quarters (72 per cent) of female respondents are either full-time or part-time assistants. Men are particularly unlikely to be part-time assistants. To a large extent, the more senior roles occupied by men are a function of age, in that male RCVS members are on average considerably older than their female counterparts, and therefore would be expected to have advanced further in their careers (see section 2.2).

### 6.3. LOCUMS AND CONSULTANTS

Respondents who indicated that their role was that of locum or consultant were asked to specify whether they worked in more than one practice, and if so, how many. Altogether, 59 per cent of locums/consultants say that they work in more than one practice. Of these, 45 per cent work in two practices, 24 per cent in three, 9 per cent in four, 7 per cent in five, 4 per cent in six and the remaining 11 per cent in seven or more. The greatest number of practices mentioned by a respondent is 26.

### 6.4. PRACTICE OWNERSHIP

The ownership of practices in which respondents work is shown in Table 6.3

**Table 6.3: Practice ownership: per cent**

Practice ownership	%
Partnership	50
Sole principal	29
Limited company	15
Charity	3
Corporate concern	2
Other ownership:	2
Combination	0.9
University/veterinary school	0.3
Club	0.3
Non veterinary owner	0.1
Other	0.3

### 6.5. ON-CALL ARRANGEMENTS

On-call arrangements, for the majority of practices (63 per cent) are handled solely by the practice. Twenty-two per cent of practices use an out-of-hours service, while 11 per cent share their arrangement with one or more other practices. Three per cent handle on-call in another way; of these, 59 per cent say they use a combination of methods, 26 per cent are themselves a specialist on-call/out-of-hours/emergency service, 6 per cent share arrangements within the company, and the remaining 8 per cent use other means.

### 6.6. NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE PRACTICE

Respondents were asked about the number of different categories of people in their practices. Those working in practices operating from more than one premises, or as part of a chain, were asked to define their practice as their immediate workplace; however, the ranges suggest that some respondents answered the question about their entire chain rather than their immediate workplace. Table 6.4 gives the breakdown of responses. The mean average is somewhat misleading, so further details of model or 'typical' values have been provided.

**Table 6.4: People in veterinary practices**

Category	Range	Mean average	Modal ('typical') values
Partner/director	0 to 33	2.3	62% of respondents said 1 or 2
Full-time assistants	0 to 64	3.0	25% of respondents said 1, 2, or 3
Part-time assistants (20+ hours)	0 to 40	0.6	68% said none 19% said 1
Part-time assistants (<20 hours)	0 to 30	0.4	76% said none 16% said 1
Locums	0 to 6	0.2	88% said none 10% said 1
Listed veterinary nurses	0 to 75	2.7	31% said none 50% said 1
Unlisted veterinary nurses	0 to 40	0.5	81% said none 9% said 1
Student veterinary nurses	0 to 73	1.4	50% said none 38% said 1, 2, or 3
Non-qualified clinical staff	0 to 97	1.4	53% said none 28% said 1 or 2
Practice managers	0 to 20	0.5	55% said none 40% said 1
Other staff	0 to 53	3.7	27% said none 44% said 1, 2, 3, or 4

Of the 'other' staff, the most frequently-mentioned descriptions are: clerical/reception 52 per cent, grooming/clipping/kennel assistants 5 per cent, cleaners/maintenance staff 4 per cent, and accounts/finance staff 3 per cent.

## 6.7. PARAPROFESSIONALS AND CONSULTANTS

Eighteen per cent of respondents say that they use the services of paraprofessionals within the practice, indicating that this is still relatively unusual. Further details are given in Table 6.5. Twenty-five per cent of first paraprofessionals, and 20 per cent of second paraprofessionals, are employed by the practice.

**Table 6.5: Breakdown of paraprofessionals used within the practice: per cent**

	First paraprofessional (N = 893)	Second paraprofessional (N = 334)
Physiotherapist	42	28
Dentist	19	13
Farmer	10	15
Hoof/foot trimmer	7	4
Behaviourist	4	12
Homeopath/acupuncturist	3	7
Hydrotherapist	2	
Osteopath	2	

Seventeen per cent of respondents say that they use the services of consultants within the practice, which suggests that the majority of practices refer cases requiring a specialist to a referral practice rather than dealing with them in-house. Table 6.6 gives more details. Eighty-five per cent of first consultants, and 82 per cent of second consultants, share facilities with the practice.

**Table 6.6: Breakdown of consultants used within the practice: per cent**

	First consultant (N = 898)	Second consultant (N = 341)
<b>Dermatologist</b>	21	14
<b>Ophthalmologist</b>	17	18
<b>Orthopaedics specialist</b>	11	
<b>Cardiologist</b>	10	11
<b>Surgeon</b>	10	11
<b>Other medical speciality</b>	6	10
<b>Specialist in a particular animal</b>	4	
<b>Diagnostics (imaging, x-ray, scanning etc)</b>	4	
<b>Dentist</b>	2	

## 6.8. TIME BREAKDOWN

Table 6.7 gives a breakdown of the time spent on different animals and other practice activities, with a comparison with previous surveys. It is hard to read the trends, but it does look as if some of the movement apparent in previous surveys (towards small animals and away from farm animals) may have levelled out.

**Table 6.7: Breakdown of time spent in practice: per cent**

	2006	2002	2000	1998
<b>Small animals</b>				
Dogs	33.5			
Cats	29.1			
Rabbits	4.8			
Birds	1.1			
Other small	1.6			
<b>Total small animals</b>	70.1	73.5	68	66
<b>Horses</b>	9.2	8.4	9	11
<b>Cattle</b>				
Beef cattle	3.0			
Dairy cattle	5.2			
<b>Total cattle</b>	8.2	7.5	9	14

	2006	2002	2000	1998
Sheep	1.3	1.3	2	4
Pigs	0.5	0.4	1	2
Poultry	0.4	0.2	0	0.3
Exotics	0.6	1.0	1	-
Meat Hygiene	1.1	1.1	1	1
Fish for food	0.1	0.1	0	-
Local Veterinary Inspector	2.7	2.7	2	-
Practice management/administration	5.0	3.0	6	-
Other	0.8	0.4	1	1

Table 6.8: Practice time compared to on-call time: per cent

	Practice	On-call
Small animals	70.1	64.2
Horses	9.2	13.9
Cattle	8.2	14.0
Sheep	1.3	2.1
Pigs	0.5	0.2
Poultry	0.4	0.3
Exotics	0.6	0.3
Meat Hygiene	1.1	0.1
Fish	0.1	0.1
Local Veterinary Inspector	2.7	0.2
Practice management	5.0	2.4
Other	0.8	1.4

Table 6.8 shows the breakdown of working versus on-call time spent on different activities. It would appear that horses, cattle and sheep are particularly demanding on on-call time in comparison to working time, while the reverse is true for small animals, pigs and exotics.



---

**Table 6.9: Past, present and future predictions of practice time breakdowns: per cent**

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Trend</b>
<b>Small animal</b>				
Dogs	33.8	33.5	31.7	Down
Cats	27.6	29.1	29.8	Up
Rabbits	3.4	4.8	5.3	Up
Birds	1.0	1.1	1.1	
Other small	1.2	1.6	1.5	
<b>Total small animals</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>70.1</b>	<b>69.4</b>	
<b>Horses</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>9.8</b>	
<b>Cattle</b>				
Beef cattle	3.8	3.0	2.5	Down
Dairy cattle	6.8	5.2	4.7	Down
<b>Total cattle</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>7.2</b>	
<b>Sheep</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.0</b>	Down
<b>Pigs</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	
<b>Poultry</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>	
<b>Exotics</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>	
<b>Meat Hygiene</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.8</b>	Down
<b>Fish for food</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	
<b>Local Veterinary Inspector</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>1.8</b>	Down
<b>Practice management/administration</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>	Up
<b>Other</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.5</b>	

---

Respondents were asked to estimate the time they had spent on various activities in 2001, and to predict the amount of time they would be spending on the same activities in 2011. The results are shown in Table 6.9. Some trends are apparent and have been indicated in the table. In particular, respondents think the time they spend on dogs, cattle, sheep, meat hygiene and LVI work is going down, while time spent on cats, rabbits and practice management/administration is increasing.

## 6.9. ROUTINE VISITS

Seventy-four per cent of respondents say that they provide routine (i.e. not out of hours) farm or house visits to their client. When asked about the average and maximum one-way distances travelled, respondents say:

- They travel between 0 and 300 miles to an **average** routine call (mean 8.2 miles, median 5 miles; 97 per cent of replies are 20 miles or less)
- They travel a **maximum** distance to a routine call of between 0 and 1000 miles (mean 24.2 miles, median 19 miles; 95 per cent of replies are 50 miles or less).

The very long one-way distances cited by a small number of respondents suggest that there may have been some misinterpretation of these questions. A breakdown by type of practice is given in Table 6.10.

**Table 6.10: Breakdown of average (mean) distances for average and maximum distances**

Type of practice	Mean for an average routine call (miles)	Mean for a maximum distance routine call (miles)
Mixed	9.2	27.5
Small animal	4.7	14.8
Equine	12.6	41.3
Farm	15.4	43.5
Other first opinion	27.0	54.4
Referral/consultancy practice	16.0	47.8

## 6.10. PRACTICES AND ICT

Most practices (94 per cent) use a computer system for client details such as names and addresses, and for biographical details about animals. Of this 94 per cent, 91 per cent say that they also use the system for recording clinical information. Altogether, 84 per cent of respondents say that their practice is connected to the Internet.

## 7. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

### 7.1. DAYS AWAY FROM THE WORKPLACE

Table 7.1: Days away from work: average (mean)

	2006	2002	2000
Giving CPD	1.1	1.3	-
Receiving CPD	5.6	5.6	5.0
Holidays	21.6	19.8	23.0
Veterinary politics	1.0	0.7	0.5
Illness	2.0	-	-
Other	2.4	1.2	-

Table 7.1 shows how many days respondents have been away from the workplace due to CPD, holidays and veterinary politics, and shows that CPD time is fairly consistent with 2002.

- The majority of veterinary surgeons (82 per cent) have not given any CPD over the past year. Only 12 per cent of respondents, however, have not received any CPD. The modal number of days received is five, while the median value is four.
- Holiday time has increased since 2002 and is now nearer, though still below, the 2000 level. 'Typical' (modal) time spent away on holiday appears to be 20 or 25 days.
- The amount of time spent on veterinary politics appears to be steadily increasing, although it still occupies only a small amount of time in comparison to other activities.
- Veterinary surgeons appear to be very healthy; only two days per respondent, on average, have been lost due to illness. Sixty-six per cent of respondents have not had any time away from the workplace due to illness over the past year.
- 'Other' reasons for being away are mainly domestic/personal reasons such as moving house and compassionate leave (29 per cent), work-related reasons such as examinations and internal meetings (26 per cent), and maternity/paternity leave (18 per cent).

### 7.2. QUALIFICATIONS

Table 7.2 indicates that veterinary surgery is a well qualified professional group, with many respondents holding qualifications in addition to their primary veterinary qualification. The analysis of those currently studying for, or planning to study for, qualifications shows that RCVS certificates are particularly popular. 'Other' qualifications include veterinary diplomas (32 per cent), certificates (18 per cent), non-veterinary degrees (11 per cent) and overseas qualifications (ten per cent).

Table 7.2: Qualifications: other than primary veterinary qualification: per cent

	Held	Studying for	Plan to study for in next five years
RCVS Diploma	2.3	0.8	1.7
RCVS Certificate	9.2	5.2	10.6
Masters degree - veterinary	3.7	0.8	1.0
Masters degree - other	3.9	0.6	0.6

PhD	5.6	0.9	1.1
Fellowship	1.5	0.2	0.4
Other	9.7	3.8	2.1

### 7.3. CPD METHODS

Table 7.3: CPD methods used (per cent) and average (mean) hours spent in past 12 months

	Used %	Hours
Weekend courses	44	23
Evening courses	63	9
In-house courses	39	12
Seminars	46	19
Videos/DVDs	24	6
Distance learning - on line	6	20
Distance learning - correspondence	3	49
Books/journals/articles	87	42
Other	23	32

Table 7.3 shows the percentage of respondents who have used different CPD methods over the past 12 months, together with the average (mean) hours spent using these methods. The majority of respondents have used books/journals/articles and spent a lot of hours doing so, while almost half have used seminars and weekend courses. Distance learning is relatively infrequently used, although it uses a considerable number of hours for those who do opt for it. 'Other' methods include weekday courses (57 per cent), conferences and national meetings (13 per cent), Congress (8 per cent), short courses (4 per cent), work experience such as shadowing (4 per cent), and discussion groups (3 per cent).

When asked about preferred methods, the most popular first preferences were weekend courses (23 per cent), seminars (21 per cent), other methods (20 per cent), evening courses (15 per cent) and books/journals/articles (11 per cent). For the second preference, respondents opted for evening courses (25 per cent), books/journals/articles (24 per cent), weekend courses (14 per cent), and seminars (12 per cent).

#### **7.4. CPD FUNDING**

When asked how their CPD was funded, respondents gave the following answers:

- Employer/practice: 67 per cent
- Privately: 25 per cent
- Grant: 1 per cent
- Other: 2 per cent (of which drug companies represented 41 per cent, business sponsors 13 per cent and self 13 per cent).

## 8. VETERINARY SURGEONS WITH ATTITUDE

### 8.1. INTRODUCTION

For the first time in 2006, veterinary surgeons were asked their opinion about various aspects of the profession. This chapter presents the results, and provides a fascinating insight into the opinions, perceptions and preferences of the veterinary profession.

### 8.2. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND USE OF THE INTERNET

When asked about **Internet** use, 41 per cent of respondents say they use the Internet mainly at home, 15 per cent mainly at work, 35 per cent both, and only 9 per cent neither.

The **RCVS website** has been used by the majority (61 per cent) of respondents in the past 12 months, although for most people the use is not frequent. One per cent say they use the website 'frequently', 17 per cent 'occasionally', 43 per cent 'rarely', and 39 per cent 'never'.

Eighty-two per cent of respondents use **email** regularly; 57 per cent of these have an email address at work, while 92 per cent have a home email address. Over half (59 per cent), however, would prefer to receive RCVS communications by post rather than electronically. Eighteen per cent would prefer communications via work email, and 22 per cent via home email. Almost half (48 per cent) would be prepared to pay their registration fee online if possible.

The best **source of information** about the RCVS, respondents feel, is *RCVS News* (73 per cent), followed by the website (14 per cent), the *RCVS Annual Report* (13 per cent), *RCVS E-news* (8 per cent), the media (4 per cent), meetings (2 per cent) and other means (3 per cent). The most frequently-mentioned 'other' methods are the *Veterinary Times* or *The Veterinary Record* (64 per cent) and colleagues (22 per cent).

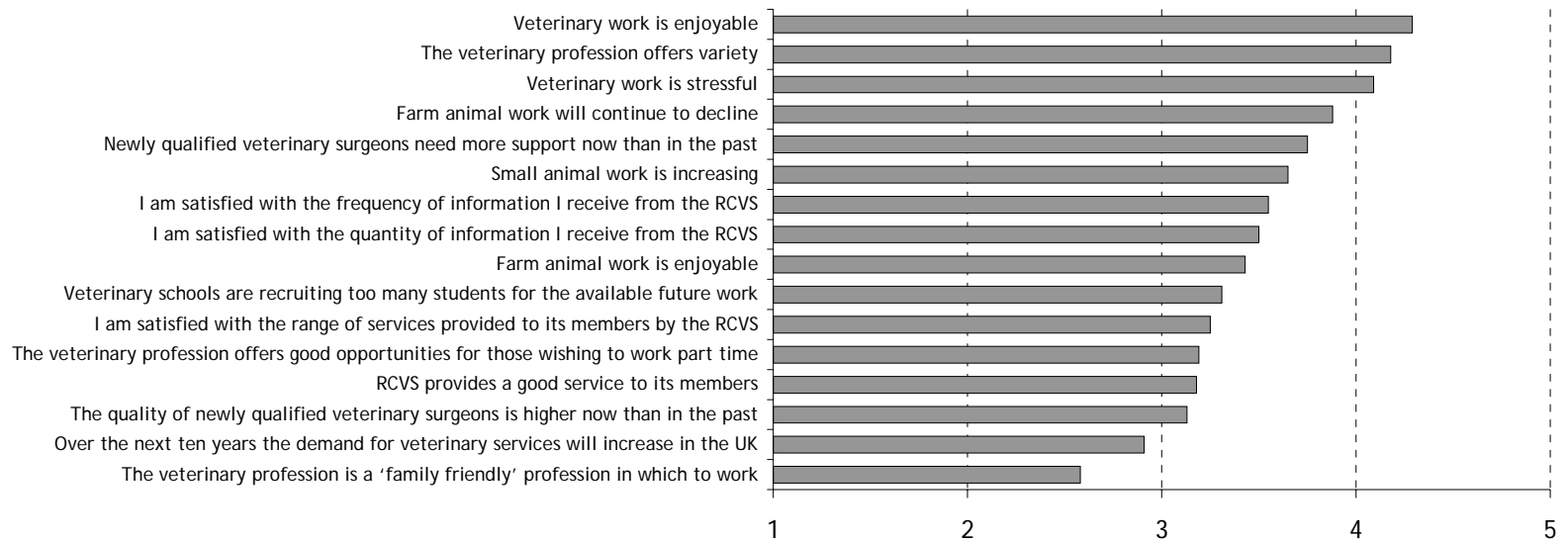
### 8.3. VIEWS ABOUT THE PROFESSION

Respondents were asked to give their views about a series of 16 attitude statements, on a scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (scoring 1) to 'strongly agree' (scoring 5), with a mid-point score of 3. Table 8.1 gives the spread of responses and mean scores, while Figure 8.1 shows the mean scores in order of the strength of response.

**Table 8.1: Respondent attitudes**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Strongly disagree %</b>	<b>Disagree %</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree %</b>	<b>Agree %</b>	<b>Strongly agree %</b>	<b>Average (mean score)</b>
Veterinary schools are recruiting too many students for the available future work	9249	3	20	33	33	11	3.31
The veterinary profession is a 'family friendly' profession in which to work	9353	19	36	16	26	3	2.58
The veterinary profession offers good opportunities for those wishing to work part time	9313	5	24	23	44	4	3.19
Newly-qualified veterinary surgeons need more support now than in the past	9314	1	12	19	46	22	3.75
Over the next ten years the demand for veterinary services will increase in the UK	9203	4	31	37	26	2	2.91
Farm animal work will continue to decline	9314	1	6	13	64	16	3.88
Farm animal work is enjoyable	9129	6	14	27	39	14	3.43
Small animal work is increasing	9288	1	12	20	54	13	3.65
Veterinary work is stressful	9354	1	6	10	50	33	4.09
Veterinary work is enjoyable	9383	0.5	1	5	55	38	4.29
The veterinary profession offers variety	9344	1	3	6	58	32	4.18
The quality of newly qualified veterinary surgeons is higher now than in the past	9260	4	17	46	28	5	3.13
I am satisfied with the quantity of information I receive from the RCVS	9413	2	9	30	57	3	3.5
I am satisfied with the frequency of information I receive from the RCVS	9463	2	9	30	57	3	3.55
RCVS provides a good service to its members	9398	5	15	39	39	2	3.18
I am satisfied with the range of services provided to its members by the RCVS	9328	3	13	41	41	2	3.25

**Figure 8.1: Overall attitudes: average (mean) scores**



*1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree*

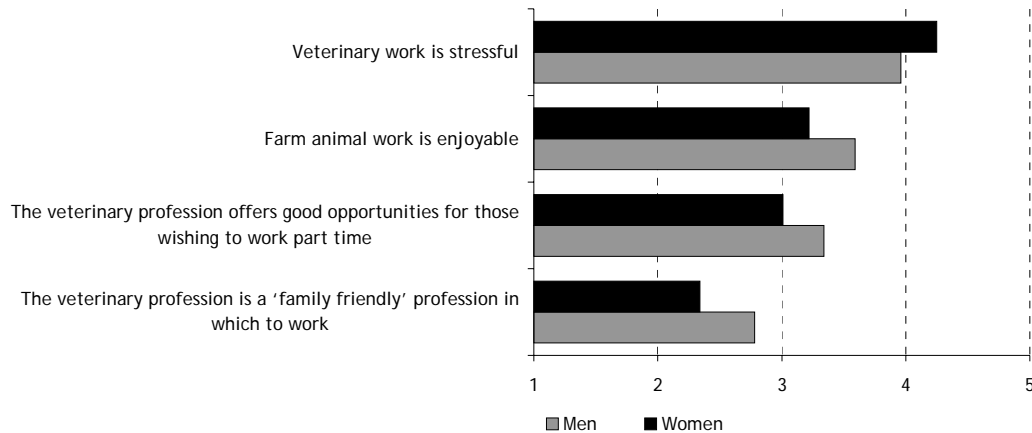


Further analysis shows that some of the responses vary by gender (Figure 8.2), age (Figure 8.3), employment status (Figure 8.4) and whether or not respondents would opt for the profession if they could start their career again (Figure 8.5).

It is notable that:

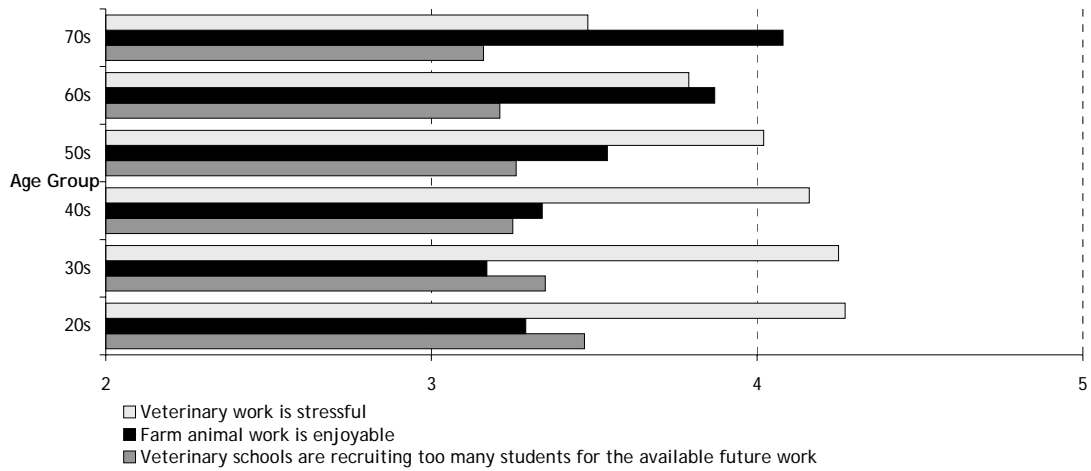
- Older veterinary surgeons are more positive than their younger counterparts about most aspects of the profession.
- Women, those on a career break, and unemployed veterinary surgeons are less positive than men about part time opportunities and family friendliness, and are more likely to find the work stressful.
- Older veterinary surgeons are more positive about farm work while female respondents are less positive than men about this aspect.
- The younger the respondent, the more likely he/she is to agree that veterinary schools are recruiting too many students; this suggests some anxiety about future career prospects for younger veterinary surgeons.

**Figure 8.2: Attitudes showing marked differences between men and women: average (mean) scores**



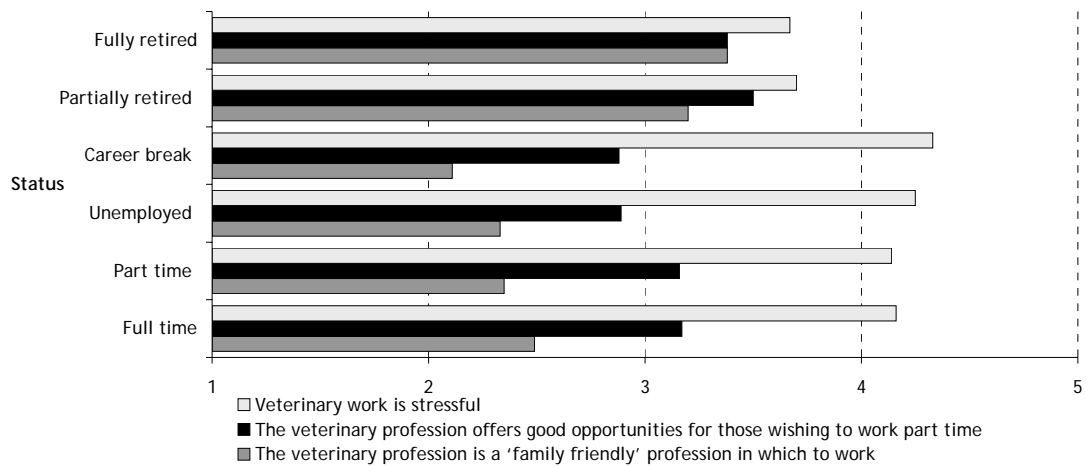
*1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree*

**Figure 8.3: Attitudes showing marked differences by age group: average (mean) scores**



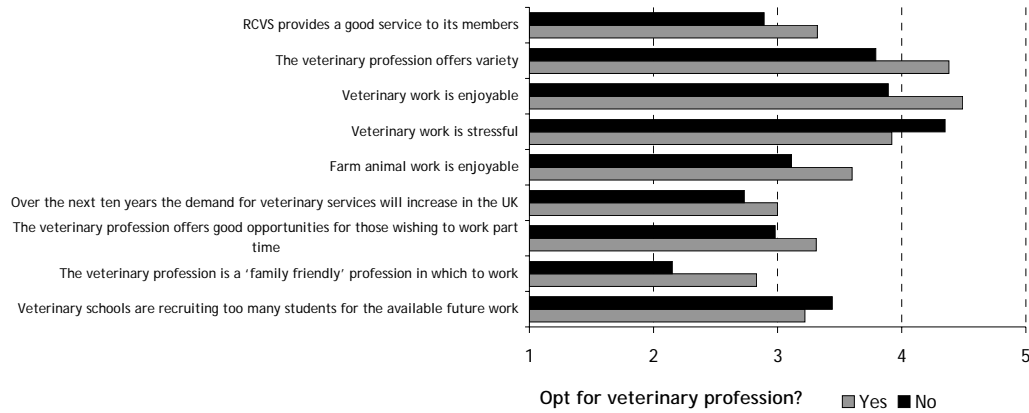
1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

**Figure 8.4: Attitudes towards family friendliness, part-time opportunities, and stress, by employment status: average (mean) scores**



1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

**Figure 8.5: Attitudes showing a marked difference between those who would, and those who would not opt for the veterinary profession if they could start their career again: average (mean) scores**



1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

#### 8.4. STARTING AGAIN

Respondents were asked if they would still opt for the veterinary profession if they could start their career again. Fifty-three per cent say yes, 27 per cent are unsure and 20 per cent say no. As figure 8.5 shows, those who would not opt for the veterinary profession again have markedly less positive views about many aspects of the profession; they seem to find their jobs more stressful, less 'family friendly' and less enjoyable than their counterparts who would opt for the profession if starting again.

There seem to be no obvious differences between those who say they would opt for the profession again and those who are definite that they would not. Those who say 'yes' have an average (mean) age of 46.3, while those who say 'no' are a little younger on average, at 43.3. The gender breakdown is fairly similar, with 55 per cent of those saying 'yes' being male, compared to 58 per cent of those saying 'no'. Their lists of suggestions for improvement to the profession (see section 8.5 below) are very similar, with the same top three suggestions, in the same order.

#### 8.5. BEST THINGS, SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND CHALLENGES

In response to being asked about the three best things about being in the veterinary profession, the top answers (with the percentage of respondents citing them in brackets) are:

- Variety (48)
- Working with animals (33)
- Challenge/using skills (33)
- Job satisfaction (32)
- Clients (28)

- Interest/enjoyment (17)
- Status (14)
- Autonomy (12)
- Colleagues (12)
- Career opportunities (11)
- Working outside (10).

Respondents also gave three suggestions to make the profession a better place to work:

- Better work-life balance/hours (37)
- Better pay/benefits (32)
- Tackling on call issues (27)
- Better CPD (12)
- Less regulation (10)
- Better support (10).

Finally, respondents were asked about the three main challenges facing the profession:

- Agricultural sector/farming issues (25)
- Competition (too many veterinary surgeons) (24)
- Regulation (15)
- Client expectations (14)
- Prescription medications (14)
- Maintaining profitability (12)
- Recruitment/retention/shortages (11)
- Clinical challenges/disease control (11)
- Litigation (10)
- Number of women in the profession (10).

## **8.6. RECENT GRADUATES**

Those who graduated from 2000 onwards were asked what they did straight after graduating. Eighty-seven per cent say they went straight into practice, while 4 per cent began post-graduate studies. The remaining 9 per cent specified a variety of things, mainly: internship/residency 36 per cent, travel 15 per cent, career break 14 per cent, university work 7 per cent, other practice work 7 per cent, unemployment 6 per cent and voluntary work 6 per cent.

Those who went straight into practice were asked if they had received training in their first year after graduating, and whether they received appraisals or performance reviews during this training. Just over half (51 per cent) say they received training, and of these, 36 per cent say they received appraisals or performance reviews.

Finally, recent graduates were asked how satisfied they were with the support given by their employer, the support given by others in the practice, and their salary level. They responded on a five-point scale ranging from 'very dissatisfied' (scoring 1) to 'very satisfied' (scoring 5), with a midpoint of 3. The average (mean) scores are:

- Support given by your employer: 3.44
- Support given by others in the practice: 3.93
- Your salary level: 3.05

Although all three aspects yielded average scores above the midpoint, it is clear that recent graduates feel they received more support from colleagues than their employer, and were not too happy about their salary level.

## **8.7. FINAL THOUGHTS**

This survey provides interesting insights into the veterinary profession in 2006 including, for the first time, the attitudes, perceptions and opinions of veterinary surgeons about their profession. The results will be used by the RCVS and other interested bodies, such as Defra, to take the profession forward. Thanks are due to all those veterinary surgeons who gave up their time, from their busy schedules, to contribute by completing a questionnaire.

## 9. APPENDIX 1 – QUESTIONNAIRE

February 2006

**The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons  
Survey of the Profession – 2006**

Dear Colleague

We are conducting a comprehensive survey of RCVS members to follow on from our previous surveys in 1998, 2000 and 2002.

The purpose of the survey is to examine the current profile of the veterinary profession and anticipate future trends and changes. We hope to find out more about veterinary surgeons' employment type and experiences, working patterns and professional development, and we are also asking about members' aspirations for the short- and long-term and their current views on the veterinary profession.

This information will help to show us how the provision of veterinary services might be affected by various factors including increasing numbers of veterinary graduates, career breaks, part-time working, early retirement and members choosing to work outside the profession and/or the UK.

It will assist our ongoing discussions about a new Veterinary Surgeons Act and the successful implementation of the professional development phase for new veterinary graduates and will help to ensure that the Practice Standards Scheme remains applicable to modern veterinary practice.

Data from the survey will also provide us with an extremely useful tool for use in discussions with Government, the veterinary schools, the general public and other interested parties.

The survey is being carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), an independent, not-for-profit research organisation. Data in anonymous form will be used by RCVS and DEFRA for further analysis; only IES researchers will see your individual responses on the questionnaires.

I do hope you will be able to assist us in this important exercise and would like to thank you in advance for your input.

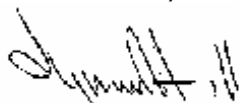
**If you would prefer to complete this questionnaire on-line, please go to the following address:**

**<http://www.employmentresearch.co.uk/rcvs.htm>**

**You may find on-line completion faster and easier than the paper version.**

I do hope you will be able to assist us in this important exercise and would like to thank you in advance for your input.

Yours faithfully



L.V. Hill  
President

**Please complete the survey form and return it in the enclosed pre-paid envelope.**

**Now turn to Section A**





**Section A: All veterinary surgeons**

Please provide the following details to help us analyse your responses. These details will only be used to produce statistics.

Q1 Gender: Male  Female

Q2 Age: .....

Q3 Year of qualification: .....

Q4 In which country did you qualify?

UK  Other  please specify .....

Q5 If wholly or partly retired from employment, veterinary or otherwise::

Q5.1 Year of partial retirement: .....

Q5.2 Year of full retirement: .....

Q6 Do you have dependent children living with you? Yes  No

Q7 Do you provide care to a dependent adult? Yes  No

Q8.1 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or medical condition that limits the work you can do? Yes  No

Q8.2 If yes, please tell us more about the nature of your disability or medical condition, and how it limits what you can do at work

.....

Q9 What is your ethnicity? (These are the main headings taken from the 2001 census). (Please tick one box)

White  1      Mixed  2      Asian/Asian British  3  
 Black/Black British  4      Chinese  4      Other  6 (please specify) .....

Q10 Of which veterinary associations are you currently a member? (please tick all that apply, and provide further details)

None   
 BVA   
 BVA Territorial Division  (please list which ones) .....  
 Non BVA Associations in UK  (please list which ones) .....  
 International associations  (please list which ones) .....

**Section B: All veterinary surgeons**

Q11 What is your current employment status (regardless of whether you are in veterinary or non-veterinary employment)? (Please tick one box)

Full-time employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Part-time employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
	Go to Section C		Go to Q13
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Taking career break	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
	Go to Section C		Go to Q15
Partially retired	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Fully retired	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

Go to Q12

Go to Q16

Q12 If you are unemployed:

Q12.1 For how many months have you been unemployed?

Q12.2 Are you seeking work? Yes  Continue with the rest of the question No  Go to Q16

Q12.3 Are you seeking work within the veterinary profession?  
 Yes  No, but may in future  No, and do not intend to

Q12.4 Are you seeking work outside the veterinary profession?  
 Yes  Go to Q16 No, but may in future  Go to Q16 No, and do not intend to  Go to Q16

Q13 For what purpose have you taken your current career break? (Please tick one box)

- |                                       |                          |   |                               |                          |   |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Travel                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Study                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Illness (self)                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | Sabbatical                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Parental leave/looking after children | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | Looking after adult dependant | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| Other reason                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 | (please write in) .....       |                          |   |

Q14 For how many months do you expect your current career break to last from start to finish?

Number of months   
 Go to Q16

Q15 If partially retired, for how many hours do you work in a typical week?

Number of hours   
 Go to Section C

Q16 What was your most recent employment? ie before you retired, took your career break or became unemployed. (Please tick one box)

- |                            |                          |   |                            |                          |   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Worked outside profession  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Veterinary Practice        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| Government veterinary work | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | University veterinary work | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Other employment           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | (please write in) .....    |                          |   |

Q17 Where were you employed?

UK  Go to Section H Other EU  Go to Section H Other  Go to Section H

**Section C: All veterinary surgeons in current employment (veterinary or non-veterinary)**

Q18 In which country do you work?

UK: England  Scotland  Wales  Northern Ireland

Non UK: Please write in .....

Q19 If based in the UK, what is the first part of the postcode where you live (eg SW1P)? .....

Q20 If working in the UK, what is the first part of the postcode of your workplace (eg RG41)? .....

**Q21** Are you working within the veterinary profession (i.e. in employment in which membership of the RCVS or an equivalent overseas professional body is mandatory or desirable), or outside it (i.e. your current work does not require you to hold a veterinary qualification or use veterinary skills)?

Within the profession

Outside the profession

Go to Section E

Go to Section D

**Section D: All veterinary surgeons working outside the veterinary profession**

**Q22** Are you: Employed?  Self-employed?  Working on a voluntary basis?

**Q23** What is your type of work? (Please tick one box)

Management  1      Research  2      Sales/marketing  3  
 Other  4 (please write in) .....

**Q24** In what type of organisation do you work? (Please tick one box)

Pharmaceutical company       Pet food company

Elsewhere in the Private Sector  (please specify broad area, eg manufacturing, financial sector)  
 .....

Charity/Voluntary Sector  (please specify broad area, eg animal charity, housing association)  
 .....

Public Sector  (please specify broad area, eg local government, government department)  
 .....

Other  (please write in) .....

**Q25** How long have you worked in this organisation?

Number of years

**Q26** Do you intend to seek employment in the veterinary profession in the future? (Please tick one box)

Yes – within the next year  1      Yes - longer term  2      No  3      Unsure  4

Go to Section H

**Section E: All veterinary surgeons working within the veterinary profession**

**Q27** The following question asks you to tell us about the type of organisation(s) in which you work, the hours you work in a typical week (excluding meal breaks), and the hours you spend on call in a typical week.

Note: "Hours worked" should be the hours you attend at your practice (including university practice) or place of work during "open hours" (eg 8.30 am to 7.30 pm) when clients can visit the practice or when outside visits are made by appointment. If the practice or place of work is normally "open" during Saturdays and Sundays and you are on duty, include your attendance as hours worked. Please include overtime above your contractual hours.

Note: "Hours on call" are the hours that you are required to be available for emergencies. Please include all time "on-call" regardless of how the time is spent. It is important that "on-call" time spent on veterinary or administrative work is not double counted as hours worked.

	Organisation employed in: (if more than one, please tick all that apply)	Hours worked in a typical week	Hours on call in a typical week
<b>Practice:</b>			
<b>General/first opinion practice:</b>			
Mixed practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small animal/exotic practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equine practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farm practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Referral practice/consultancy</b> (Please write in the nature of the practice/consultancy) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>UK Government:</b>			
Please give main government department (eg DEFRA) or agency (eg SVS) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Overseas Government</b> (please specify) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>University:</b>			
Veterinary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Commerce and industry</b> (please specify) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Charities and trusts</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Research Council</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q28 Do you consider yourself to have particular areas of expertise? (eg ophthalmology, equine surgery, bovine reproduction, live animal exports, epidemiology teaching, TB fieldwork, small animal pathology).

Yes  No

If yes, please give a maximum of two expertise areas which you provided to clients or your employer in the past 12 months

- 1) .....
- 2) .....

Q29 What are your career plans with regard to the veterinary profession? (Please tick one box)

Stay in the profession for the foreseeable future	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Stay in the profession for at least a year	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Wholly retire within the next five years	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Leave the profession as soon as possible (for reasons other than retirement)	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Leave the profession within the next year (for reasons other than retirement)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5		

If you are planning to leave for reasons other than retirement, please tell us why:

.....

If you are in practice please go to Section F

Otherwise please go to Section G

**Section F: All veterinary surgeons working in general practice**

(Others go to Section G)

Q30.1 What is your position in the practice that you work in? (Please tick one box)

Position held	Position held
Sole Principal <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Partner/director (of limited company) <input type="checkbox"/> 2
Salaried partner <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Partner <input type="checkbox"/> 4
Full-time assistant (or employee of limited company) <input type="checkbox"/> 5	Part-time assistant (or employee of limited company) <input type="checkbox"/> 6
Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> 7	Locum <input type="checkbox"/> 8
Other <input type="checkbox"/> 9 (please write in).....	

30.2 If you ticked 'Locum' or 'Consultant', do you work in more than one practice?

Yes  How many? ..... No

Q31 Who owns the practice that you work in? (Please tick one box)

Sole Principal  1 Partnership  2 Limited company  3 Corporate concern  4 Charity  5  
 Other  6 please specify .....

Q32 How are on-call arrangements handled in your practice? (Please tick one box)

Solely by your practice  1 Shared with another practice(s)  2 By an out-of-hours service  3  
 In another way  4 please specify .....

Q33 If you are the sole principal or partner in your practice, please tell us how many partners, full or part-time veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses or other staff are employed in your practice? If the practice operates from more than one premises, or is part of a commercial or charitable chain, tell us only about the people employed in your immediate workplace.

Numbers in Practice (write in boxes)	Numbers in Practice (write in boxes)
<u>Veterinary surgeons:</u>	<u>Others:</u>
Partners/directors <i>(if sole principal enter 1)</i> <input type="text"/>	Qualified (listed) veterinary nurses <input type="text"/>
Full-time assistants/employees <input type="text"/>	Qualified (unlisted) veterinary nurses <input type="text"/>
Part-time assistants/employees <i>(20-39 hours per week)</i> <input type="text"/>	Student veterinary nurses <input type="text"/>
Part-time assistants/employees <i>(less than 20 hours per week)</i> <input type="text"/>	Non-qualified clinical staff <input type="text"/>
Locums <input type="text"/>	Practice managers <input type="text"/>
	Other staff (eg receptionists) <input type="text"/>
	Please specify .....

Q34.1 Do you use the services of para professionals (for example, hoof trimmers, equine dentists, physiotherapists, artificial inseminators) in your practice? Yes  No

Q34.2 If yes, please enter descriptions below, and indicate, by ticking the appropriate box, whether employed or contracted:

Description of para professional	Employed by the practice	Contracted
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q35.1 Do you have consultants working with you in your practice? Yes  No

Q35.2 If yes, please enter descriptions below, and indicate, by ticking the appropriate box, whether the consultants share your facilities or work externally.

Description of consultancy	Share practice facilities	Work externally
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q36 Please indicate the percentages of *your* working time and on-call time, during a typical week, which is spent on veterinary work with each of the following species or disciplines, and the percentage of time which you spend on practice management or administrative work.

	% Working time	% On-call time
<b>Small animals:</b>		
Dogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rabbits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Birds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (eg tortoises, gerbils)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exotics*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horses (excluding LVI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beef Cattle (excluding LVI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dairy Cattle (excluding LVI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sheep (excluding LVI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pigs (excluding LVI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poultry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meat hygiene	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish for food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice management/administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Veterinary Inspector (LVI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (write in) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Exotics are animals that are more likely to be known as living wild in another climate than as household pets in the UK. Snakes and iguanas would be considered exotics but not rabbits, budgerigars or tortoises.

Q37 If you qualified at least five years ago, please *estimate* the percentage of your working time you spent on the same species or disciplines in 2001. Regardless of your qualifying year, please estimate the time you expect to be spending on these categories in five years from now, in 2011.

	% working time 5 years ago (2001)	% working time 5 years from now (2011)
<b>Small animals:</b>		
Dogs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Cats	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Rabbits	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Birds	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other (eg tortoises, gerbils)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Exotics*	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Horses (excluding LVI)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Beef Cattle (excluding LVI)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Dairy Cattle (excluding LVI)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sheep (excluding LVI)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Pigs (excluding LVI)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Poultry	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Meat hygiene	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Fish for food	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Practice management/administration	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Local Veterinary Inspector (LVI)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other (write in) .....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Q37.1 Do you provide routine (not out of hours) farm or house visits to your clients? Yes  No

Q37.2 If yes what is the:

average distance you travel to a routine call? (one way) ..... miles

maximum distance you travel to a routine call? (one way) ..... miles

Q38.1 Does your practice use a computer system for client details? (eg names, addresses, animal details)

Yes  No

Q38.2 If yes, do you also use the system for recording clinical information? Yes  No

Q39 Is your practice connected to the Internet? Yes  No

**Section G: All veterinary surgeons in current employment within the veterinary profession**

Q40 How many days have you spent, in the past 12 months, away from your workplace due to the following? (Please tick one box)

CPD (giving)  1 CPD (receiving)  2 Holidays  3 Veterinary politics, committees etc.  4

Illness  5 Other  6 (please write in) .....

**Q41 Other than your primary veterinary qualification, do you hold any further work-related qualifications, are you studying for any qualifications, or do you plan to study for any qualifications in the next five years?**

	Further qualifications held	Currently studying for	Plan to study for in the next five years
a) RCVS Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) RCVS Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Masters degree veterinary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Masters degree other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) PhD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Fellowship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Other (please write in) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q42.1 Which of the following CPD provision methods have you experienced used in the past 12 months?**

	Used	Total hours in past 12 months (please estimate if unsure)
a) Weekend Courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Evening Courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In-house courses eg within own practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Seminars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Videos/DVDs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Distance Learning - on line courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Distance Learning - correspondence courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Books/journals/articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Other (please write in) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q42.2 Of the above methods, which do you prefer? (Please write the in the letter from the above list)**

First preference ..... Second preference .....

**Q43 What percentage of your CPD in the past year was funded by the following means? (Please tick one box)**

Private  1 Employer or practice  2 Grant  3 Other  4 please specify .....

Note: percentages should total to 100%

**Section H: All veterinary surgeons**

**Electronic communications and use of the Internet**

**Q44 Do you use the Internet mainly: at work?  1 at home?  2 both?  3 neither  4**  
(Please tick one box)



Q45 In the past 12 months, have you used the RCVS website:

Frequently eg several times a week?  1      Occasionally eg a few times a month?  2  
 Rarely eg a few times over the year?  3      Never?  4

Q46.1 Do you use email regularly?    Yes       No

Q46.2 If yes, do you have:  
 a work email address?    Yes     No       a home email address?    Yes     No

Q47 Would you prefer to receive RCVS communications:

via work email?       via home email?       in the post?

Q48 Would you pay your registration fee on-line (on a secure connection) if this was possible?    Yes     No

Q49 Which of the following is your best source of information about the RCVS? (Please tick one box)

RCVS News  1      Web site  2      Meetings       RCVS e-news  3      Annual report  4  
 Media  5      Other  6 (please specify) .....

**Views about the Veterinary Profession**

Q50 We would like to gather your views about various aspects of the veterinary professions. Please tell us about the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements, by circling one number for each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Veterinary schools are recruiting too many students for the available future work	1	2	3	4	5
b) The veterinary profession is a 'family friendly' profession in which to work	1	2	3	4	5
c) The veterinary profession offers good opportunities for those wishing to work part time	1	2	3	4	5
d) Newly qualified veterinary surgeons need more support now than in the past	1	2	3	4	5
e) Over the next ten years, the demand for veterinary services overall will increase in the UK	1	2	3	4	5
f) Farm animal work will continue to decline	1	2	3	4	5
g) Farm animal work is enjoyable	1	2	3	4	5
h) Small animal work is increasing	1	2	3	4	5
i) Veterinary work is stressful	1	2	3	4	5
j) Veterinary work is interesting	1	2	3	4	5
k) The veterinary profession offers variety	1	2	3	4	5
l) The quality of newly qualified veterinary surgeons is higher now than in the past	1	2	3	4	5
m) I am satisfied with the quantity of information I receive from the RCVS	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
n) I am satisfied with the frequency of information I receive from the RCVS	1	2	3	4	5
o) RCVS provides a good service to its members	1	2	3	4	5
p) I am satisfied with the range of services provided to its members by the RCVS	1	2	3	4	5

Q51 If you could start your career again, would you still opt for the veterinary profession?

Yes  No  Unsure

Q52 What are the three best things about being in the veterinary profession?

- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....

Q53 What three things would, for you, make the veterinary profession a better profession in which to work?

- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....

Q54 In your opinion, what are the three main challenges currently facing the veterinary profession?

- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....

Q55.1 If you graduated in 2000 onwards, did you: (Please tick one box)

Go straight into practice?  1      Begin post-graduate studies  2  
 Other (please specify) .....  3

Q55.2 If you went into practice, were you given training in a practice in your first year after graduation?

Yes  No

Q55.3 Did you receive appraisals or performance reviews during your training?

Yes  No

Q55.4 How satisfied were you with the following? (Please circle one number from each statement)

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Support given by your employer	1	2	3	4	5
Support given by others in the practice	1	2	3	4	5
Your salary level	1	2	3	4	5

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire**  
 Please place it in the reply-paid envelope provided and return it to IES