Postgraduate opportunities for cattle vets

Changes to the modules studied within the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice (Cattle) have been approved by the RCVS and the Quality and Standards Committee of the University of Liverpool. Module coordinator, Jo Oultram, and director of CPD, Cathy McGowan, explain what the changes mean:

THE modules for the CertAVP (Cattle) have been restructured by the University of Liverpool working in collaboration with the RCVS and the British Cattle Veterinary Association (BCVA). The original three modules have been extended to four and this change has been agreed by the RCVS education subcommittee and the University of Liverpool’s Faculty Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

This change enables practitioners with an interest in obtaining a postgraduate qualification in cattle studies to obtain their certificate by studying the compulsory A and B modules, plus four C modules that are dedicated to the study of bovine subjects.

These modules cover bovine nutrition, husbandry and lactogenesis; bovine reproduction; bovine mastitis and lameness (compulsory module); youngstock rearing and infectious diseases. The study of both the beef and dairy industries are included in the syllabuses.

The University of Liverpool is accredited by the RCVS to assess candidates for CertAVP modules through a series of case reports, problem-solving exercises (that are designed to test the candidate’s ability to advise beef and dairy farmers), the writing of herd health plans, and participation in at least one live online journal critique/discussion. Each 16-week module culminates with an online examination.

With the successful completion of a module the candidate gains 10 Masters (M) level university credits, which are accrued and may count either towards successful completion of the CertAVP (60 credits) or a university award (PGCert). This can then be used to continue onto a higher postgraduate award (diploma or Masters degree).

The designation CertAVP (Cattle) is obtained by the candidate passing a combined oral and practical examination that aims to test their thinking and how they can apply what they have been taught. The RCVS has accredited the University of Liverpool to hold the synoptic examination for the cattle designation and recently announced that the first successful candidate was Hollie Dale from Wright and Morten Veterinary Surgeons in Cheshire. She says: ‘Completing the CertAVP has improved my knowledge and skills, enabling me to offer a high level of service to my clients. Liverpool university provided a structured approach that made studying while working achievable and enjoyable.’

The modules may be completed by a candidate who opts for the ‘assessment only’ option, or candidates may subscribe to the online taught module, which contains additional study material, usually a lecture.
(narrated) and/or directed study suggestions in each week of the course. Lectures are well referenced to guide candidates in their private study and appropriate use of resources), and are subject to review and updates.

Enrolled candidates also have access to the university’s libraries (including electronic access to journals and textbooks).

The BCVA’s advanced practitioner workshops, which are delivered by universities and other providers, are comprehensive workshop-based CPD that complement the RCVS accredited modules. The CertAVP modules and the BCVA workshops are both available as standalone CPD.

Further information about enrolment on the University of Liverpool modules is available from Gill Beckett, telephone 0151 794 6016 or e-mail: beckett@liverpool.ac.uk

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### Ten-minute chat

**Anna Prest** works in veterinary marketing as a brand manager for Lintbells; she won the Young Marketeer Award at last year’s Veterinary Marketing Association annual awards. She has worked in the animal health industry for seven years.

#### How did you get into the veterinary industry?

I moved to Somerset in 2007 with my husband for his work. I have always loved animals, so joining Royal Canin and James Wellbeloved as a sales administrator held an appeal to me. I felt it was a great company to work for so when the role of marketing assistant came up, I went for it, finally being promoted to marketing executive for the veterinary arm of Royal Canin, before having to move again due to my husband’s work. During my time there I ran the successful Pet Health Counsellor courses for vet nurses, alongside organising numerous events and supporting product campaigns.

Early in 2012 we moved to Bedfordshire and I had to leave Royal Canin, but luckily I came across Lintbells. It was a small but fast-growing company that has expanded considerably in the past couple of years. I was taken on as a marketing communications executive reporting to director John Howie; however, I have now been promoted to brand manager and the team of two has grown to four, with two new assistants who started recently.

My role includes managing the marketing for the company, including packaging, product campaigns, advertising, nurse training and event organisation.

#### What do you like about your job?

Being able to create and develop projects and then see the final results in practices, veterinary journals and at exhibitions. It’s also important to me that I am marketing products that I believe in, and in an industry that I have grown to love.

#### What was the best piece of advice you have been given?

‘Keep fighting for what you want.’ My husband told me this when we first met and I haven’t stopped since. When I left university with a BA in interior architecture and design, I never imagined I’d work in marketing, but as soon as I started I knew it was for me.

#### Tell us about the Young Marketeer Award.

My director and co-founder of Lintbells, John Howie, put me forward for the VMA’s Young Marketeer of the Year 2012 award after just seven months with the company. I was extremely surprised to win. I know there were a number of entrants from larger companies, so the competition was strong. I was awarded a £2000 bursary towards further training within marketing.

#### How have you used your bursary?

I have put the bursary towards an intensive three-day residential course ‘Foundations of Marketing Strategy in Practice’. My aim is to bring a more strategic proposition to the company in the future. I am hoping that it will help me create more logical and in-depth strategies for the company and enable me to monitor campaigns more effectively as we grow. I would also like to develop the marketing support we provide for veterinary practices.

#### How was the award benefitted you as a person?

Winning the Young Marketeer Award, I felt my hard work had been worthwhile and I was proud to put the company on the map. The award has boosted my confidence in my work, and I’m sure that the course I’ve booked with the bursary will mean that I will learn even more. It will also give me a chance to speak to other like-minded marketeers and will help me to build on the company’s success.

#### Tell us something not many people know about you.

I am a qualified ballet teacher and trained as a professional ballet dancer.

#### What would you say to anyone considering a nomination?

I would say to put someone forward who really has a passion for what they are doing. They don’t have to have a qualification or many years’ experience; it is more about being able to see where that person can go in their career and what they have achieved so far. To be a successful marketeer you need to work for a company or in an industry you are passionate about and be ready to juggle numerous projects all at once – it’s not all glamorous!

The VMA Young Marketeer of the Year Award is open to those involved in veterinary marketing who are under 35 years old. For more information on how to make a nomination, visit www.vma.org, or contact VMA secretary Colin George, telephone 0844 561 6157 or 07845 141 171, or e-mail: secretary@vma.org.