

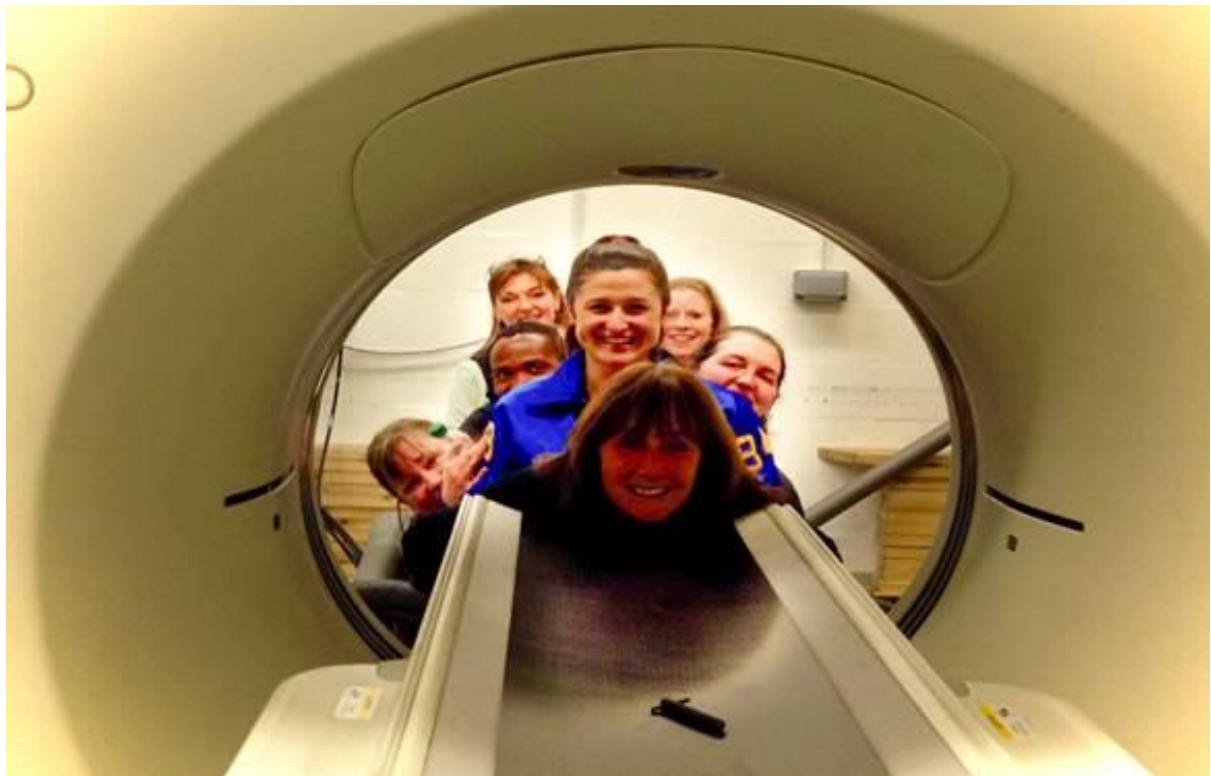


LIFELONG INDEPENDENT VETERINARY
EDUCATION

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LIVE Newsletter 2106

MSc Vet Ed Welcomes educators from around the world



From left to right: Linda Barter & Munashe Chigerwe (both from UCDavis), Elaine Hall (Oxfordshire), Fiona Francis at front (Antiqua), Ebony Escalona (The Brookes), Tammy Shadbolt (RVC) Abbe Kirtland (RLN Project)

As part of our expanding programme of Veterinary Education qualifications, LIVE recently ran a residential week for veterinary practitioners from around the world.

Principles and Practice in Veterinary Education I, is the first qualification in a series leading to the full MSc in Veterinary Education. As well as providing five days of interactive study, the course enabled learners to meet other veterinary professionals to share experiences, compare practice and learn from each other.

Feedback from course participants was enthusiastic:

- *“Fantastic small group of people from a diversity of backgrounds made for constructive and enthusiastic discussion”*
- *“It felt empowering to learn why we teach the way we teach”*

We also really enjoyed working with such a dedicated and enthusiastic group of learners.



The residential participants plus some of the course tutors and administrators.

By offering a series of progressive, standalone qualifications such as this we hope to better meet the needs of participants and to attract a wide and varied range of learners from across the veterinary sector.

Dr Ayona Silva-Fletcher & Kim Whittlestone Co-Course Directors

For further information on any aspect of the MSc in Veterinary Education or its modular parts, please contact the team at mscvetedu@rvc.ac.uk or visit our web pages:

<http://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/veterinary-education>

The range of educational research being undertaken as part of the MSc in Veterinary education research projects is expanding year on year. From investigating the educational effectiveness of plastinated specimens in teaching anatomy to exploring whether clinical reasoning is being encouraged in first opinion practices. See the full list of projects on the LIVE website at www.live.ac.uk/

PhD Completion, Tierney Kinnison

Pioneering new ground in inter-professional practice and systems processes (errors)

Tierney successfully defended her thesis entitled: 'Insights from veterinary professional interactions: implications for interprofessional education (IPE) in the veterinary curricula' on 26th February 2016 at the Institute of Education. Her PhD was funded by a Bloomsbury Colleges Studentship.

As part of her PhD, Tierney Kinnison has investigated the modern day veterinary team. Through a novel combination of mixed methods (including Social Network Analysis and Case Studies), Tierney was able to map interprofessional interactions in veterinary practices and identify the facilitators and barriers towards interprofessional working and learning.

One of the most interesting findings from the study relates to systems errors in veterinary teams. The real-time, independent observations that Tierney undertook within veterinary practices identified errors as they occurred. Analysis suggested that veterinary errors are not simply individuals making cognitive mistakes, but can also include team errors such as mistakes during interprofessional communication, with implications for the practice, team, client and patient. This is the first instance empirical errors being reported in this way. It is hoped that the results of the PhD may help to guide future interprofessional working and learning in practice, and to inform interprofessional education at the undergraduate level.

Tierney remains at LIVE and is now undertaking a one year Post-Doctorate Research Associate position with Dr Ayona Silva-Fletcher and Professor Stephen May.

Introducing training for all non-academic staff who teach in the RVC's educational programmes "Teaching and Learning in Higher Education" (TLiHE)

The QAA Higher Education Review of the RVC in February 2015 recommended that "the College ensure all research students receive appropriate training before undertaking teaching and/or assessment." 1. Currently we have a PG Cert in Veterinary Education that is compulsory for probationary lecturers only (although other academic staff from the RVC and elsewhere attend). There are many other staff at the RVC who teach and/or assess students in our educational programmes, including assistant lecturers, post-doctoral scientists, research fellows, PhD students, research assistants and other non-academic staff. These individuals teach undergraduate and postgraduate students on various courses in formal teaching sessions, through research project supervision (year 3 BSc and RP2 projects in particular), in practical sessions and in the teaching hospitals. At present we offer a variety of different training options to these groups on an optional basis.

Therefore, in response to the QAA recommendation the college have decided to provide a short course for all staff and students who teach in the RVC's educational programmes. This course - called "Teaching and Learning in Higher Education" (TLiHE) - will have flexible entry and exit points, with the option of building towards Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and the Postgraduate Certificate in Veterinary Education as appropriate for each individual.

For more information, please visit <http://www.live.ac.uk/our-work/msc-in-veterinary-education>

INSET Days past, present and future

If you have been to one of the recent INSET days you will have noticed that students are now playing a significant part in these academic development sessions. This is part of an ongoing collaboration between Learning Development (led by Rachel Davis) and Academic Staff Development (led by Kim Whittlestone).

Bringing students into our discussions about curriculum development, feedback and assessment has had several benefits:

1. Staff and students are talking informally to each other about important topics in a supportive environment.
2. Staff are hearing about the student experience directly and are able to reflect on their own influence on the scenarios discussed.
3. Students are able to better understand the reasons why certain things are done the way they are.
4. Collaboration between staff and students in developing new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment results in a more efficient process as all stakeholders are involved from the start.
5. Students recognise the effort being put in by staff to improve the student experience.
6. The atmosphere is very positive and supportive

You may also have noticed that we have introduced some new group techniques in these sessions that tap into creativity, playfulness and the emotional components of academic life in general. These originate from group coaching approaches that Kim & Rachel developed during a 60 credit Leadership through a Coaching course they recently completed at the University of Hertfordshire. At the end of the recent "Feedback Conundrom" INSET day we asked "What's next for you?" here are three of the responses:

- 'Humanising staff and communicating that changes need to be made by both staff and students to improve satisfaction with feedback'
- 'Feedback is about so much more than academic work - the RVC has to develop staff-student relations and staff should lead by example.'
- 'Promoting self-directed learning by giving learning objectives and time and resources, then with a wrap up I collate ideas and answers'

More responses and some great video responses from staff and students are available on learn:

<https://learn.rvc.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=45393&chapterid=78927>

Communication Skills training

Over the past 18 months, we have doubled the provision of communication skills training for BVetMed students in 3rd and 4th Year. This is in response to a recognition that students did not have enough opportunity to practice this essential skill before needing it in rotations and on EMS.

The additional sessions have been designed as peer-to-peer experiential learning. They focus on building history taking and clinical reasoning skills alongside recognising the importance of developing the relationship, identifying the client's perspective and expressing empathy.

Asking students to play the role of the client as well as the vet, helps them to understand that clients come with different perspectives and needs. The sessions have been very well received by students and are enjoyable for facilitators too.

We are currently working on a new experiential session for 3rd year students to help them with explaining medications and procedures and closing the consultation.

If you would like to be involved with helping facilitate any of these sessions (or the 2nd and 4th year actor based sessions) please contact Kim Whittlestone. Kim will be arranging training sessions for all staff who would like to be involved.

LIVE Teaching Development Awards: Each year between one and two awards are available, with a maximum value of £10,000 per project. The call for projects went out in May. Our winner this year is Mrs Elizabeth Chan, Dr Elizabeth Jackson & Dr Anke Hendricks, the winning project is entitled 'The three R's of Veterinary Professionals: Resilient, Reflective and 'Ar'tistic. Here you will also find a list of previously awarded projects, interim reports and final project write ups: <http://www.live.ac.uk/our-work/live-teaching-development-fund>

Student Presentation Awards: These awards are a chance for RVC Undergraduate students to get the opportunity to present at Conferences and Seminars and gain valuable experience in presenting in front of large audiences. Each year, LIVE offers up to 3 awards (1 per term), each award up to the value £250.00. For more information on these awards, how to enter and to read previous winners abstracts, please visit www.live.ac.uk/our-work/live-student-presentation-prize . Congratulations to Josh Relf (BVet Med 5), our first winner this year, for Term 1.

Web Developments: In the past year, Jeff Bullock and Peter Nunn started and completed the build of the European Board of Veterinary Specialists (EBVS) website, a bid that was won the previous year. The site was released just after the EBVS Annual General Meeting in May last year. The response to the site has been well received especially by college administrators whose administration duties have been streamlined and reduced significantly.

The Animal Care Trust (ACT) pages were updated to take on the visual identity of the other areas of the RVC site and the ACT online shop was updated with a responsive design ensuring that it worked natively on mobile devices. Peter and Jeff are currently looking into updating the Continuing Professional Development online shop and pages in a similar fashion.

Peter and Jeff have also been involved in building the first version of the VetCompass search engine, <https://www.vetcompass.org> . VetCompass indexes millions of clinical records collected from primary practices and referral centres. Researchers use these records to create an evidence-base. The evidence is used by vets to improve the health and welfare of animals.

Other Staff News

Developing a Veterinary Clinical Skills Laboratory Facility for Undergraduate Teaching and Evaluation methodology at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences (FVMAS), University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.

Dr Ayona Silva-Fletcher is a joint grant holder for this project funded by the Higher Education for 21st Century scheme of the World Bank. In June 2015, the clinical skills laboratory was opened and a staff development workshop was conducted at FVMAS on 23rd June 2015. Staff and students were very enthusiastic about the CSC lab and the first evaluation has been completed. This laboratory is the first of its kind in the South Asian region. Further details about the CSC lab has been published in the national press in Sri Lanka, see below:

http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=127409

Launch of the www.GlobalVetAcademy.com under the British Council Knowledge Economy Partnership – Royal Veterinary College and Madras Veterinary College.

Dr Ayona Silva-Fletcher, Dr Jill Maddison and Dr Christine Thurania- McKeever have been involved in developing a joint Moodle platform (Global Vet Academy) to deliver online e-courses for continuous professional development programmes in veterinary and animal sciences with the [Madras Veterinary College](http://www.MadrasVeterinaryCollege.com). The project was part of the Knowledge Economy Partnership (British Council) grant that was awarded to both institutions. There was a launch event for the project and the platform was launched in June 2015 in Madras Veterinary College, Chennai, India. Dr Ayona Silva-Fletcher was present at the launch event together with the Head of British Council, India and the Vice Chancellor of Madras Veterinary College. More details at: <http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/Madras-Veterinary-College-Launches-Eight-e-courses/2015/06/29/article2891273.ece>

Workshop on Developing and Assessing Reflective Writing using Patchwork Texts

Dr Ayona Silva Fletcher and Mr Kim Whittlestone conducted a workshop during the AMEE conference in Glasgow in August 2015 on 'Developing and Assessing Reflective Writing using Patchwork Texts'. Thirty one health education professionals who were keen to explore reliable, valid methods to teach, assess, and evaluate reflection attended the workshop. The difficulties and challenges in developing reflective writing with those from a science-based backgrounds was a particular focus of the discussion.

Curriculum Development at the Mongolian Vet School under the RVC-SVM Project

This Swiss Development Agency-funded project ended in October 2015 and Dr Ayona Silva-Fletcher and Dr Nigel Goode went to Mongolia for the final project meeting. Overall the progress made since the start of the project has been considerable. Among these the most significant are the new teaching facilities:

- The upgraded animal holding facility and large animal clinic will make remarkable changes to clinical teaching and student learning.
- The clinical skills laboratory will facilitate clinical skills teaching and assessment. Students are very engaged with the facilities and those we spoke to find it extremely useful.
- During their visit they saw animal husbandry / clinical teaching on several occasions - herder and goats used in the case based teaching session, an ovariohysterectomy on dog with students assisting, exploratory laparotomy on a dog and a horse visiting clinic with abscess on the final day.
- The new library and learning resources space is well utilized by the students.
- The new large lecture theatre and the library that is currently under construction will make massive changes to teaching and for the students.
- The survey conducted using final year students at graduation to assess new D1C document was a very worthwhile exercise. This has led to the identification of areas that require more attention during teaching as well as areas that can be removed from D1C. The teaching sessions that they observed have given us a good indication regarding teaching strengths and areas that can be improved in individual teach

OIE Jordan Project

Dr Ayona Silva Fletcher is part of the project team in receipt of funding from the World Organisation for Animal Health working with Jordan University of Science and Technology on curriculum and faculty development. A second visit was made to Jordan in February 2016 to start the second year of the project. The agenda included undergraduate education with a particular focus on JUST Day 1 skills and logbook, undergraduate teaching interventions, development of the Clinical Skills lab and postgraduate education. Ten studentships to do MRes that are related to public health and food safety and two projects, one on education and one on ethics will be offered in 2016 to 6 students from the UK and 6 from Jordan.

For her PhD, Liz Armitage-Chan has spent the last 8 months collecting data from 2015 RVC graduates, in the form of discussions and reflections on their practice experience in a closed Facebook group. This novel research methodology (narrative inquiry through collaborative conversations in social media) has been the subject of her presentations at several higher education research conferences. The findings (professional identity change in novice professionals) will further inform future developments in veterinary professional studies teaching, and will augment her findings of the contemporary veterinary identity viewed from the perspective of experienced veterinary practitioners ([Armitage-Chan, Maddison & May, 2016](#)).

Liz has presented findings from both her PhD work and research associated with the BVetMed Professional Studies strand at the Society for Research in Higher Education, the meeting of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, the Veterinary Education Conference (with Martin Whiting), and the International Narrative Inquiry Conference. Working with Liz Jackson, Liz and Liz were also panellists on the Higher Education Academy Research Webinar, presenting their [findings on student retention and attainment in veterinary education](#)

Sarah Bayliss has recently joined the LIVE Veterinary Education team as a Junior Developer in Distance Learning & Veterinary Education (maternity cover for Kirsty Fox) and works two days a week (Tuesdays and Wednesdays).

Her role will include managing and monitoring the Vet Ed Moodle platform for the PG Cert, PG Dip and MSc in Veterinary Education, assisting in the delivery of teaching workshops with technical setup and recording, and co-ordinating and participating in practical teaching assignments for Vet Ed distance learning students via Adobe Connect.

Sarah is no stranger to the RVC. She has previously worked in the Veterinary Nursing team as an Administrative Manager, which involved supporting students on online and face-to-face veterinary nursing courses. More recently she has undertaken some consultancy work for the RVC e-Media team supporting staff and students with the use of the RVC's Moodle platform.

Hannah Perrin also joined the LIVE centre in March as Junior Developer in Distance Learning and Veterinary Education with a more academic focus, (part-time, Maternity Cover for Kirsty Fox) She will be acting as a Personal Tutor and Course Tutor for the PG Certificate in Veterinary Education, responsible for creating online content, designing learning activities and assisting with teaching workshops; as well as conducting teaching observations and supporting tutees with formative assessments throughout the course.

Hannah has over 15 years' experience in veterinary practice. She originally qualified as a pharmacologist from the University of Bristol while working in a variety of practices, subsequently becoming Practice Manager of a busy four-site mixed and exotic veterinary group. After ten years with the practice she returned to full-time study with an MA in Health Services Research followed by a Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Higher Education at the University of Kent, while teaching on undergraduate courses at the interface between medicine and social science.

Her PhD was completed in 2015 on the role of EMS practice staff as teachers and the development of occupational identity in veterinary students, funded by the Economic and Social Research

Council. She is currently a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy; and works part-time at LIVE (Wednesday to Friday), and part-time at a veterinary ophthalmology referral practice in Kent.

Carrie Roder returned from maternity leave at the start of 2016 and is now looking forward to leading the new PGCert in Science Education, together with Charlotte Lawson, and also continuing further research into the effects of the hidden curriculum this time focussing on faculty.

Kirsty Fox commenced maternity leave in April and gave birth to a little girl, named Alice, on Friday 6th May. Mother and daughter are doing well.

All previous issues of the LIVE Newsletter can be found [here](#)