Veterinary Administrative Assistant

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Veterinary Administrative Assistant program provides comprehensive clinical training designed to prepare the student for a career in the field of animal care, including specialized skills in veterinary nursing, as well as receptionist skills for the veterinary office and animal care environment.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Successful graduates may obtain entry-level employment in veterinary clinics and other animal care agencies. This training will also provide graduates with the general administrative skills to work in a receptionist position in any office environment.

PREREQUISITES

Grade 12 or equivalent

If a student does not have Grade 12 or equivalent, he/she must achieve a score of 14 on the Wonderlic Test

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student must obtain an overall grade, in each module of at least 70% in order to graduate and receive a diploma. A student must complete all requirements of the Student Success Strategies, Career Planning and Preparation modules, the Field Placement requirements, as well as meeting the attendance requirements as outlined by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education throughout the duration of his/her program.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Course	Hours
Student Success Strategies	20
Career Planning and Preparation Level I	20
Digital Literacy for Professionals	40
Software Lab: Word Processing	40
Software Lab: Spreadsheets	40
Bookkeeping Fundamentals	40
Veterinary Office Procedures	40
Medical Terminology for VAA	60
Small Animal Breeds and Behaviour	80
Small Animal Nutrition	60
Small Animal Medicine for VAA	80
Small Animal Nursing for VAA	80
Large Animal Medicine	40
Pocket Pets and Exotics	40
Career Planning and Preparation Level II	20
Field Placement**	6 Weeks

TOTAL WEEKS	**41**
TOTAL WEEKS (maximum* scheduled break weeks)	**44**

*Number of break weeks depends on student start date

**Work terms/internships are scheduled for a minimum of 20 hours per week, but the total number of hours worked and the timing of hours scheduled are at the discretion of the employer/host to a maximum of 40 hours per week.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Student Success Strategies   *Instructor Led*

In this orientation module, you will focus on achieving success from day one. You will develop non-technical skills to enhance your personal, academic, and career success. You will explore learning styles, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning. You will also enhance your practical study skills, such as memory, reading, note- and test-taking techniques. Personal exercises will focus on teamwork, decision-making and problem-solving skills, setting SMART goals, and maintaining a positive attitude. You will also explore techniques for managing change, stress, and conflict.

Career Planning and Preparation Level I   *Instructor Led*

This module will introduce you to and provide practice in using the tools required for a successful job search. The concepts covered in this module will help you maintain a career-focused approach throughout your studies so that you are better prepared to conduct a job search after graduating. Specifically, you will learn how to identify your soft and hard skills and how to articulate your abilities in a clear and concise Elevator Pitch that will appeal to employers and resonate with industry contacts. You will learn about the job search resources available to you including using career websites, creating LinkedIn profiles, accessing the "hidden" job market, and networking. You will examine sample résumés and cover letters and begin the process of creating your own professional résumés and cover letters that align with current conventions for content, organization, and formatting. You will also learn about the role of references, thank you letters, workplace philosophies, and strategies for success including maintaining a professional image and using proper etiquette when communicating with potential employers and industry contacts.

An introduction to Occupational Health and Safety is also provided with specific focus on employees' rights and responsibilities, workplace health and safety policy and programs, hazard identification and control, and safety training options such as WHIMIS and First Aid.

Digital Literacy for Professionals   *Online Facilitated*

This course has four units that introduce you to the fundamental concepts and principles of learning and working in a digital environment. The first unit introduces you to using devices and handling information with topics on operating systems (Windows, MAC, and Linux), computer organization (folder management and naming conventions), cloud storage (including Microsoft OneDrive), types of web browsers (including Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and Apple Safari), and fundamental troubleshooting. In the second unit, you will become familiar with creating and editing information through learning about file formats (pdf, mp4, docx), productivity (including iWork and Microsoft Office Suite) and creativity platforms (Adobe, Canva, iMovie) , and basic introduction to Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. The third unit on communicating and collaborating will introduce you to web conferencing applications (Slack, Zoom, Microsoft Teams), mail applications (including Microsoft Outlook and Gmail), project management tools (Trello, Asana), and time management tools (including Todoist, Outlook Calendar, and iCal), and building rapport virtually. In the final unit, you will gain an understanding on netiquette, cybersecurity, and digital wellness. After completing this course, you will have enhanced digital literacy skills as a professional in the working and learning environment.

Software Lab: Word Processing   *Instructor Facilitated*

This software lab module will use a simulation-based program called MindTap that consists of online trainings and assessments in Microsoft Word. It builds on the skills introduced in Digital Literacy for Professionals course. You will learn a comprehensive set of skills, with coverage including creating and editing a document (this includes saving a document, using AutoComplete and AutoCorrect, undo and redo actions, paragraph spacing, and more), formatting a document (covering topics like addressing comments in documents, using drag and drop, as well as cut, copy and paste). This course will also introduce you to how to create tables and a multipage report (including options found in the Navigation pane, formatting a table, merging cells and adding a formula, using SmartArt graphic, and more). You will acquire skills in editing text or content for layout and appearance (wrap text, WordArt, cropping a picture, and so on). Additionally, you will work with templates, themes, and styles (creating a new document from a template, using thesaurus, saving a custom theme, customizing a style, and so on). This course concludes with the mail merge feature (such as inserting mail merge fields into a document, complete a mail merge, and more).

Software Lab: Spreadsheets   *Instructor Facilitated*

This software lab module will use a simulation-based program called MindTap that consists of online trainings and assessments in Microsoft Excel. You will learn the fundamentals of excel, such as opening and closing a workbook, entering formulas, modifying worksheet views, and so on. You will acquire skill in formatting workbook text and data (change fonts, font style, and font colour, format dates and times, merge, use the AVERAGE function, and more). This course will also introduce you to the skill of performing calculations with formula and functions, including sub-topics such as extend data and formulas with AutoFill, calculate statistics, and so forth. You will also be able to analyze and chart financial data using available excel charts, such as pie chart, line char, chart legends, data bar, and so on. This course will conclude with you learning how to generate reports from multiple worksheets and workbooks (such as copy worksheets between workbooks, organize worksheets in a worksheet group, hyperlink to a document, create a workbook template, and more).

Bookkeeping Fundamentals   *Instructor Led*

In this module you will explore fundamental bookkeeping principles and practices for small businesses. You will apply Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) to financial statements and demonstrate how each principle impacts the transactional recording and the business, both directly and indirectly. You will make journal entries and record transactions in the General Ledger. You will manage accounts receivable and accounts payable. You will track the use and dispensation of petty cash in journal entries. You will also calculate the correct amount to pay for taxes and remittance to the CRA. You will practice cross referencing for a bank reconciliation and correct any errors. By completing this module, you will attain the skills necessary to perform basic bookkeeping procedures and use basic bookkeeping terminology.

NOTE: In order to continuously improve our programs, Eastern College reserves the right to modify programs at any time, pending approval of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education. Program delivery order may vary depending on program start date. This diploma program may not be available at all campuses.

Veterinary Office Procedures   *Instructor Led*

Upon completion of this module, you will have been introduced to the field of veterinary medicine and the practical skills necessary to function as a competent, entry-level veterinary assistant or administrator. You will understand the role of legislation and ethics in a veterinary practice, and the purpose of policies and procedures including workplace safety. You will see how these standards relate to the day-to-day activities in the veterinary hospital. You will understand the purpose of, and be able to perform, standard veterinary front office administrative duties, such as maintaining patient medical records, scheduling appointments, processing pet insurance claims, communicating with clients, and performing financial transactions. Additionally, you will gain an understanding of veterinary office-management software such as eVet Practice Software, by completing an assignment where you will perform tasks such as creating client profiles, inserting medical history, adding notes, setting reminders, determining when additional treatment is due, generating estimates, retrieving and printing records, posting charges to invoices, billing clients, printing end-of-day reports and daily totals, and closing the debit and cash accounts. Other topics covered include the human-animal bond, euthanasia, and grief.

Medical Terminology for Veterinary Administrative Assistant   *Instructor Led*

In this course, you will acquire basic medical terminology and the corresponding pronunciation. You will learn how medical terms are derived as well as how basic word structures are used in the medical field. You will construct medical terms from the relevant word parts such as prefixes, suffixes, and root words. You will define terms common in a veterinary practice such as those used in surgical procedures, and those used when communicating about diseases, instruments, and dentistry. This module also provides a basic understanding of anatomy including tissue types, skeletons, joints, circulatory system, respiratory system, digestive system, nervous system, and more. You will be able to describe the ways in which organs and body systems function and interact. Finally, you will demonstrate your understanding of these concepts by conducting a Presentation on Anatomy.

Small Animal Breeds and Behaviour   *Instructor Led*

In this module, you will be introduced to dog and cat breeds. You will develop the skill of identifying common and distinctive breeds of dogs and cats as well as typical behaviours associated with the various breeds. Behavioural concepts including nature versus nurture, dog and cat body language, puppy and kitten training, and training foundations will be covered. Various groups of dogs will also be introduced including sporting groups, working groups, herding dogs, non-sporting groups, hounds, terriers, and toy groups. Issues specific to cats such as genetics, heritable diseases, and problem behaviours including anxiety, compulsive disorders, and inappropriate elimination are also covered. This module addresses possible treatments veterinarians may recommend for various problematic behaviours. Through presentations and a report, you will practice articulating the issues surrounding problem behaviour such as the psychology of the problem and behaviours themselves, as well as a training plan. Additionally, this module introduces you to organizations and registries such as the American Kennel Club and the Canadian Kennel Club for dogs as well as the Canadian Cat Association and the Cat Fancy Association for cats.

Small Animal Nutrition   *Instructor Led*

This module introduces you to the nutritional needs of companion animals as they relate to the 6 basic groups of nutrients, including vitamins and minerals. The key nutritional differences between dogs and cats are highlighted. You will review the classes of nutrients and distinguish between energy producing nutrients and non-energy producing nutrients. You will acquire knowledge about interpreting pet food labels, calories, Atwater Factors, resting energy, and metabolic energy. You will conduct nutritional assessments, perform an energy review based on information you gather from pet food labels, and complete the calculations to determine the dietary needs of pets. You will practice explaining this process so that you can share it with future clients. The connection between diet and disease and disorder management is also covered.

Small Animal Medicine for VAA   *Instructor Led*

This module introduces preventive health programs in small animal medicine. In completing this module, you will be able to describe the immune system, common diseases, disease transmission, causes, symptoms, prognosis, treatments, and prevention including vaccines, for both felines and canines. You will also be able to describe internal and external parasites and the corresponding treatment and control products with a focus on ticks and fleas. You will demonstrate your knowledge of these concepts by researching, preparing handouts and brochures, and leading presentations. Pet identification options such as tattooing and microchipping are covered. Key aspects of spaying and neutering, grooming, and dental health are explained. You will practice conveying these issues related to these concepts to a client with in-class scenarios. Concepts related to animal welfare and animal rights are also addressed.

Small Animal Nursing for VAA   *Instructor Led*

This module introduces you to the nursing of small animals. You will acquire the skills necessary to provide support with physical exams, restraint and handling, administration of medications, first aid, bandaging and wound closure and care. You will be able to explain key concepts related to laboratory procedures, pharmacology, diagnostic imaging, and radiology. Additionally, you will be able to describe issues surrounding vital signs, IV therapy, anesthesia, common surgical procedures, and euthanasia. You will be able to identify surgical instruments, assist in presurgical preparation, and explain discharge instructions to clients. You will show your understanding of these concepts by creating education materials for clients and researching, preparing, and leading presentations. The euthanasia process, care of remains, and the grieving process are also covered. This course includes guest speakers, field trips to veterinary clinics and hospitals, and some hands-on experiential learning opportunities as well as a practical examination.

Large Animal Medicine   *Instructor Led*

This module introduces you to large farm animals. In taking this course, you will be able to identify common breeds of horses, cows, pigs, goats, sheep, and chickens as well as the nutritional and husbandry needs of these animals. Topics include restraint methods used with large animals, general nursing care for large animals, and the administration of medication for large animals. There is a focus on bovine breeds and management, bovine procedures and conditions, goat and sheep breeds and management, equine husbandry, equine nursing including vaccines, and diseases. Your understanding of these concepts will be measured through assignments such as a Presentation and a Self-Reflective Report. Finally, you will gain hands-on experience with large animals through a field trip to the farm.

Pocket Pets and Exotics   *Instructor Led*

This module introduces pocket pets and exotic species including hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, rabbits, ferrets, and some birds and reptiles such as lizards and snakes. In completing this course, you will be able to define pocket pets and exotic animals, explain the different husbandry requirements for different species, and demonstrate sampling handling and restraint techniques appropriate to each specie. You will also be able to recognize common diseases in the various species, such as respiratory or digestive issues in birds, or wet tail in hamsters. You will practice explaining these issues to clients by completing discharge form exercises. Other topics such as beak trimming, drawing blood, molting, and tube feeding are covered. You will show your understanding of the topics covered in the course through researching, preparing, and leading presentations.

Career Planning and Preparation Level II   *Instructor Led*

This module builds on concepts and skills introduced in the Career Planning and Preparation Level 1 prerequisite module. In this subsequent module, you will update and refine your résumé and LinkedIn Profile. You will continue writing cover letters and learn the value of customizing cover letters to specific job postings. You will have the opportunity to apply this knowledge as you conduct a job search and write a cover letter tailored to an ideal job post. Through research, you will create a list of top employers and target current industry opportunities. You will learn about current methods for applying to job postings using technology. You will also gain an understanding of the job interview process, typical interview questions and possible responses, and expectations of both the interviewer and interviewee. In addition, you will engage in practical application of the interview process through role-plays. Topics such as negotiating salary, self-management, and on-the-job success for placements and post-graduate employment will be also covered.

Field Placement - Veterinary Administrative Assistant

Upon successful completion of the classroom hours of this program, you will be assigned a field placement at an outside organization in order to gain some real-world experience and apply your new knowledge and skills in a practical setting.

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