

VETERINARY ASSISTANT (VTA)

About the Program

Throughout this eight-month certificate program, you will gain the essential skills needed to effectively assist veterinary professionals in the practice of veterinary science. To prepare you for a career as a veterinary assistant, you will be provided with a variety of basic laboratory skills and techniques to diagnose and treat domestic animals.

You will gain a comprehensive understanding of:

- Animal health and disease
- Sanitation and disinfection
- Animal husbandry
- Medical terminology
- Veterinary software applications
- Client communication
- Ethical conduct
- Laboratory procedures

Credential Awarded

Ontario College Certificate

Duration

2 Semesters (8 Months)

Starts

January, September

Program and Course Delivery

This program is offered in Seneca's hybrid delivery format with some courses available in Seneca's flexible delivery format. Some coursework is online and some must be completed in person. Students will need to come on campus to complete in-person learning requirements. For courses offered in the flexible delivery format, professors use innovative learning spaces and technology to teach students in a classroom or lab and broadcast in real time to students attending remotely. In flexible courses, students have the choice of coming on campus or learning online.

Skills

Throughout this program you will develop the following skills:

- Knowledge and practice for laboratory techniques
- Clerical and administrative skills
- Behaviour and restraint techniques
- Basic surgical and radiology skills
- Animal grooming

Work Experience

Field Placement

As a student in this program, if all academic requirements are met in the first and second semesters, you will have the opportunity to participate in an unpaid field placement. Field placements take place in a professional

setting outside of Seneca, two weeks after completion of classes during the second semester.

Your Career

When you graduate from this program, these are the types of career options you can explore:

- Veterinary clinics
- Animal shelters
- Research institutes
- Grooming salons
- Wildlife facilities

Program of Study

Course Code	Course Name	Weekly Hours
Semester 1		
BOA112	Behaviour of Animals	3
COM101	Communicating Across Contexts	3
	or COM111 Communicating Across Contexts (Enriched)	
ETY100	Veterinary Etymology	1
VAH100	Animal Handling Introduction	2
VAP101	Anatomy and Physiology	3
VCR100	Client Relations	2
VLP100	Laboratory Procedures and Techniques	4
VMP100	Math and Pharmacology	3
Semester 2		
VAC200	Animal and Clinic Care	2
VCP200	Career Management and Field Placement	7
VGH200	Animal Handling, Therapeutic and Grooming Skills	4
VIN200	Introduction to Animal Nutrition	1
VLL200	Large and Laboratory Handling	2
VSR200	Surgical Assisting and Radiology	4
	plus: General Education Course (1)	3

Program Learning Outcomes

This Seneca program has been validated by the Credential Validation Service as an Ontario College Credential as required by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

As a graduate, you will be prepared to reliably demonstrate the ability to:

- Assist with the restraint of a variety of animal species, physically or with the use of chemical restraining agents, in clinical situations.
- Administer medications, under the supervision of a veterinary professional.
- Assist during surgical procedures by preparing and maintaining the surgical area.
- Produce standard diagnostic radiographs.
- Assist the technician with sample collection and processing.
- Counsel clients in humane animal care, basic needs, and nutritional requirements.
- Perform receptionist duties and basic bookkeeping functions to support an animal health business.

- Perform basic grooming techniques.
- Identify a variety of animal breeds and the normal and abnormal animal behaviour associated with them.
- Perform animal husbandry and provide ethical care for animals' basic needs.

Admission Requirements

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), or equivalent, or a mature applicant (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html>)
- English: Grade 12 C or U, or equivalent course
- Biology: Grade 11 C or U, or equivalent course

Canadian citizens and permanent residents may satisfy the English and/or mathematics requirements for this program through successful Seneca pre-admission testing. (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html>)

Recommended upgrading for applicants who do not meet academic subject requirements (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/upgrading-options.html>).

Additional Information

To be eligible for promotion into semester two, students must have a completed a "Clearance Review" through Concise Health (<https://www.concisehealthsolutions.ca/seneca-veterinary-program/>) that includes:

- Prophylactic vaccination against rabies in accordance with Health Canada guidelines
- Bloodwork confirming immunity against rabies (antibody titre # 0.5 IU/mL)

To succeed in the program, students must be capable of lifting 25 kg unassisted and demonstrate a variety of physical activities including, but not limited to, the handling of domesticated small animals (feline, canine and rodents) and farm animals (equine, ovine and bovine).

Admission to this program is highly competitive. Applicants are ranked on academic strength in English and Biology. Only the top-ranked applicants will be offered a seat in the program.

Animal Care

Caring for animals on campus is a mandatory component of the Veterinary Assistant program in 2nd semester. All students will be assigned clinical shifts in order to immerse themselves in the hospital environment. Students will work with and care for a range of species. Shifts may start as early as 6:30 a.m. and end as late as 7 p.m. Students may also be required to work weekends. All students must participate in their assigned shifts throughout the program.

Notes

Although not required for admission, prior work experience with animals is recommended for your success in the program.

Pathways

As a leader in academic pathways, we offer a range of options that will allow you to take your credential further in another Seneca program or a program at a partner institution.

To learn more about your eligibility, visit the Academic Pathways (<https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/pathways.html>) web page.