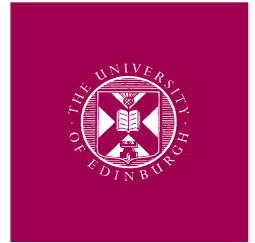


THE ROYAL (DICK) SCHOOL OF VETERINARY STUDIES



The Research Track at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

There is currently a global shortage of veterinary-trained scientists in biomedical research and disease control centres. A fundamental role for such people has been acknowledged in a number of government reports and research studies. For graduates of veterinary science courses, a career in science can be highly rewarding.

At the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (R(D)SVS) we are committed to a dedicated programme in our curriculum in which undergraduates get involved directly in research; we call this the **Research Track**. This programme aims to encourage undergraduates to identify and develop career paths that are alternative to general practice.

Our College has an outstanding international reputation for research excellence with an approach that spans molecular definition to clinical application. Together, we are uniquely-placed to deliver the best possible environment in which to train tomorrow's veterinary research scientists especially as our School now includes the new Roslin Institute. Furthermore, partnership with the Moredun Research Institute and the Scottish Agricultural College, to form the Easter Bush Research Consortium (EBRC), represents one of the highest concentrations of animal health research scientists in the world. We are currently developing a particular training focus on 'One Health'.

Within this environment the 'Research Track' encompasses a range of linked activities for students with the aim of preparing future veterinarians for a career in research or industry. Students can choose to engage at various stages of their undergraduate studies, the means by which this is achieved are laid out below:



The **Research Scholar Programme** has been designed to allow students in the middle years to get a flavour of bench research. Previous projects have ranged from genomic explorations of animal pathogens to immunological analyses of host/parasite interactions to epidemiological field projects. Since the recent development of the Research Track Programme in 2008 increasing numbers of students have undertaken projects (15 in 2008; 23 in 2009). Opportunities are further expanded by our formal link with Colorado State University (CSU).

In 2009 we developed the **Selected Science Component (SSC)**, a compulsory exercise in which all students initiate, plan and carry out research. This can be in veterinary medicine/medicine/pure science, working with a supervisor who is a leader in the field and each project can be bench or literature based.

Students can also intercalate in a BSc programme within Edinburgh or at another university and we are currently developing a novel **BSc Programme in One Health** which will be introduced for veterinary and medical students. The main objectives are to bring together excellence in biomedical research, clinical science with inter-professional training for vets and medics. The focal points of the training element will be in zoonotic diseases and food security.

Integrated PhD programme. This programme mirrors established ones in elite US Schools and medical schools at Cambridge and UCL. The model inculcates a research culture early in the teaching programme, allowing development of advanced research skills alongside clinical training. From Year 3 onwards, students integrate BVM&S and PhD studies. The PhD can be undertaken in one of the laboratories within the EBRC. There is flexibility in which BVM&S courses are completed according to the project chosen. During periods of research, students maintain contact with clinical training by attending seminars and when attending undergraduate courses, remain in contact with research supervisors.

In summary, the Research Track aims to:

- Provide clear guidance on research options to individuals and groups of veterinary undergraduates;
- Expose students to strong role models in biomedical, clinical and pharmaceutical sciences;
- Produce a cadre of vets capable of developing successful careers in science, some with a particular focus on the One Health Concept.