



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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Free vet course offers taste of how things work in practice

A free online course will offer people a glimpse of what it takes to study for a veterinary medicine degree.

The five-week course, launched by the University of Edinburgh on 19 May, is designed for people who have no previous knowledge of veterinary medicine.

It gives learners a taster of courses covered in the first year of a degree at the University's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

The EDIVET course includes introductions to anatomy, basic animal care and clinical skills. It also provides insights into the profession's past and glimpses of its future.

It is one of two new Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) being launched this year by the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

A course on Animal Behaviour and Welfare, delivered in collaboration with Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), will begin in July.

It will examine why animal welfare is key to the profession, exploring how different management styles affect conditions and how these can be improved.

The courses will be delivered via the Coursera learning platform – a partnership of international universities that offers higher-education standard learning opportunities to all.

They will be taught using a mix of video lectures, supporting notes and peer-to-peer discussions. Learners are encouraged to help each other examine key points and to debate issues.

The Royal (Dick) School already offers a successful Equine Nutrition course, which ran for the second time in January 2014 and will be available for a third time early next year.

So far 30,000 learners have signed up to find out more about the dietary requirements for horses and other equine species.

Ranked among the top universities in the world

The course details the anatomy and physiology of equines and discusses the best approaches to nutrition-related disorders. Learners can also find out how optimum equine nutrition helps to prevent common disorders such as laminitis and dental problems.

Prof David Argyle, Head of the University of Edinburgh's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, said: "As one of the world's top 20 universities, it is fitting that Edinburgh takes a lead role in the provision of MOOCs.

Edinburgh was the first university in Europe to join the Coursera platform and I am hugely proud that the Dick Vet, which has had such a major impact on the veterinary profession both here in the UK and internationally, is providing these three courses to anyone with an interest in veterinary studies."

Since Edinburgh offered its first MOOC in January 2013, more than 600,000 learners have signed up for MOOCs offered by the University.

The University currently offers 14 MOOCs, including *The Discovery of the Higgs boson*, *Introduction to Astrobiology and the Search for Extraterrestrial Life* and *Warhol*, a study of the pop art movement pioneer.

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