

CVLM Frequently Asked Questions 2022

Are you considering our VMG/ILM Level 5 Award, Certificate and Diploma in Veterinary Leadership & Management? Here's some helpful information to help you decide whether the course is for you.

Who are the qualifications for? Are they for anybody in veterinary practice?

They are qualifications in leadership and management, so we would normally expect participants to have a management, leadership or supervisory role in some area of the veterinary sector – talk to us if you're at all unsure. We also have participants from many different types of veterinary workplace including practice, academia, industry, and charity – as well as around the world!

Is there a certain amount of time that you have to complete it within?

You have six years! Most participants choose to go straight through and finish in one year for the Certificate and two years for the Diploma, but you can absolutely take advantage of the flexibility if you would like a break at any point, or spread your studies over a longer period if that works better for you.

How does the flexible structure work?

We have 15 modules available. The Award is one module, the Certificate is four, and the Diploma is eight; meaning that you can build a qualification that suits your interests, your team, your role, your practice, or your ambitions! Some modules look at specific practice functions such as finance or marketing; some are more people-focused such as mental health at work or developing teams; and some are more holistic, looking at the role of veterinary practice culture and wider society.

How does each module work?

Each module lasts three months. The first thing you'll receive is a little bit of preparatory work just to start getting the brain cells ticking over! Next we have an online workshop where we introduce the module and your tutor group, and have the introductory teaching on the topic. After that you're launched into the online platform, where you work through the content, resources and activities with support from your tutor. You'll have at least one one-to-one tutorial in the middle, and there's an assessment due at the end of each module (see below).

Are there exams?

No. The qualifications are entirely coursework-assessed (see below).

I haven't written an essay in years and I'm scared of the assessments – help?

Please don't be scared! Our emphasis on accessibility means that you don't have to write essays if you prefer not to. We always have format options for you to submit your assessments – so for example, if you prefer to talk about your learning, you can record a narrated presentation or an audio diary. If you're more creative, you can produce a resource to use in your practice or an

educational poster. The important thing is that you can demonstrate that you've understood the concepts and can apply them to your own work. If there are ways we can better support you through the course, we'd love to talk to you about them.

How difficult is it?

Level 5 is the equivalent of a foundation degree, or the second year of an honours degree. While there are no formal academic requirements to join the course, you should be happy that your literacy, numeracy and IT skills are sufficient to work at this level. You will have the support of your tutor – plus your coursemates and plenty of previous participants – the whole way through.

I already have X qualification, can I count that towards this one?

Possibly! If you already hold a qualification at least Level 5 in a relevant field you may be able to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to be awarded the specified VMG modules on an 'assessment-only' basis. You will then not be required to take the whole VMG taught module, but can instead demonstrate your knowledge and skills by completing and passing the required assessment only. The current policy and list of qualifications accepted for RPL is available from the VMG Office.

How is your course different from other providers right now?

As well as our fundamental principles of flexibility and accessibility, we are the only veterinary association accredited as an ILM Approved Centre in our own right, which means we can award ILM qualifications ourselves rather than having to rely on outside providers or generic teaching and resources. This also means that our graduates are dual qualified, with a sector-specific VMG qualification in *veterinary* leadership and management, as well as the ILM Level 5 qualification in leadership and management. These are internationally recognised and transferable so, should you decide to diversify your career, you can take it with you. You get the best of both worlds.

I'm self-funding, can you help me afford the course?

Yes! Firstly, we have robust evidence of the personal, professional, financial and operational benefits that the completing the course brings to organisation if you need to make a case to whoever holds the purse strings. If you are a VMG member, you will receive a substantial discount on your course fees, so that's always something we would recommend. You can also choose to pay your fees in instalments or pay-as-you-go to help spread the cost. Plus, there are various sources of funding available to help with course fees that we would be happy to signpost you towards.

It is quite challenging at the moment in the profession. I'm not sure that now's the right time for me to start a qualification?

It is a challenging time and we absolutely appreciate that. However, investing in professional development demonstrates that yours is a positive and supportive practice, which will boost

motivation and engagement when things are tough. You will inject new skills, new ideas and new inspiration! We know what it's like on the ground, so we make sure that everything that we cover in the course is useful and practically applicable on the shop floor so that a CVLM is valuable for both the person and the practice.

I'm keen to do the course but my employer is not very supportive. Is that a problem?

We do recommend that you have the support of your employer – partly in terms of using your CPD budget and allowing study time, but also so that you can get access to your organisation's operating processes and data such as financial statements or media reach statistics. However, if you cannot access these, we have things like mock practice accounts that you can use to ensure that you do not miss out.

Can I specialise?

Yes! All CVLM participants take two compulsory modules, then two options. If you choose to study specific combinations, you can earn a Designated Certificate in a particular area such as Finance or Mental Health. There are no named Diplomas as the DVLM is designed for you to demonstrate understanding of a breadth of topics.

How do I choose which modules to take?

After the compulsory modules, it's up to you. We generally find that participants pick their modules based on three criteria: (1) The topics they are most interested in; (2) The topics their practice/organisation would benefit most from; and (3) The topics they are less familiar/comfortable with and feel that they ought to be more so! The Course Director and/or your tutor will be very happy to provide advice.

When can I start?

We have four intakes per year: Autumn (starting in September), Winter (starting in December), Spring (starting in March) and Summer (starting in May). We take a little breather during August!

Where can I find out more?

All the information is on our website: www.vetmg.com/cvlm; and Course Director Dr Hannah Perrin is always happy to chat to prospective participants. You can get in touch with her via hannah.perrin@vetmg.com; or book a 'virtual cuppa' with her here: <https://calendly.com/hannah-perrin-vmg/15min>.