

VETERINARY TECHNICIAN

The Veterinary Technician Program prepares students for a career in the animal care industry. Students will develop skills to assist Veterinarians with the treatment of animals by administering medications, testing blood and other samples, administering anesthesia and monitoring patients during and after surgery. Students will learn ways to work with, and educate, clients and pet owners on how to improve the health and welfare of their animals.



APPLY NOW!

www.spcacollege.ca

Starting May 2026 - 2-year full-time program*

Classes are regularly scheduled from Monday to Thursday. Fridays are reserved for make-up days and instructor office hours for students to book appointments for individual help.

Prerequisites

- Applicants are required to have a Grade 12 Diploma, Adult Diploma, or GED, as well as a recommended average of 75% or higher in each of the following courses: Grade 12 English, Grade 12 Academic Math or Pre-Calculus, Grade 11 or 12 Biology, and Grade 11 or 12 Chemistry.
- 20 hours of volunteering in an animal hospital, shelter or refuge
- Interview with the program director
- PI cognitive and aptitude tests
- Three dose series of rabies vaccines and proof of current tetanus vaccination during or before first semester.

Admission to the Veterinary Technician program at the Nova Scotia SPCA College of Animal Welfare is competitive and is not guaranteed by meeting the minimum average.

*Pending approval from the Department of Advanced Education.

Graduation Requirements

- 70% or higher grade in each module
- Successful completion of required certifications
- Attendance of 90% or higher

Program Benefits

- **Tuition Scholarship Available:** Qualified students will receive scholarships for the 2026 VT Program
- **Hands on Training:** Students will have hands on training during the program both on and off campus at different facilities.
- **Build strong working relationships** in the animal care community.

Instructors

Instructors are experienced industry professionals and are approved and regulated by the Department of Advanced Education, Private Career College Division.

Modules

Office Procedures - 117 hours

This module provides an overview of the veterinary industry including regulations, ethics, and occupational health and safety procedures. It also teaches how to communicate effectively and professionally to ensure excellent customer service and patient care. Students will learn the structure and importance of medical records, the basics of veterinary medical terminology, how to use Microsoft 365 and an introduction to veterinary software.

Animal Handling - 111 hours

This module teaches the basics of animal behaviour, including both normal and abnormal behaviour and body language of cats and dogs. Students will learn details for specific breeds and how this knowledge is applied to ensure good animal welfare and safe animal handling. Students will become Fear Free Veterinary Professional certified. This module includes teaching essential skills using live animals.

Anatomy and Physiology 1 - 66 hours

This module teaches cell anatomy and physiology & introductory biochemistry. This module teaches comparative anatomy and physiology of the integument, the skeletal and muscular systems of the dog, cat and other species.

Clinical Pathology 1 - 60 hours

This module is an introduction to the diagnostic laboratory. Students will learn about lab safety, and the use and maintenance of laboratory equipment. Students will learn about and be able to identify internal and external parasites, collect samples, and perform fecal analysis.

Anatomy and Physiology 2

- 66 hours

This module is a continuation of the material learned in Anatomy and Physiology 1. The students will continue to learn about the comparative anatomy and physiology of the nervous, digestive, immune, urinary & reproductive systems. The anatomy and physiology of avian, reptilian and amphibian species are discussed.

Clinical Pathology 2 - 102 hours

This module builds on the skills and knowledge learned in Clinical Pathology level 1. Students will learn to identify normal blood cells and what their functions are. Students will learn normal urinalysis findings and species differences will be discussed. This module also introduces cytology, microbiology and biochemistry. Identification of internal and external parasites will continue.

Common Diseases - 99 hours

This module will teach students the typical presentation, pathology, diagnosis, treatment, prevention and nursing care for the common diseases seen in cats and dogs.

Small Animal Nursing 1 - 87 hours

This module teaches the basics of genetics, reproduction, and embryology. It will also teach basic restraint techniques, methods of sample collection, bandaging, history taking, and performing physical examinations. Students will learn how to give SQ, IM and IV injections, apply ophthalmic, otic and topical medications. The focus will be on canine and feline nursing techniques. Students will become familiar with various units of measuring, conversion between units, and other necessary calculations required in a veterinary setting. This includes teaching essential skills using live animals.

Pharmacology - 90 hours

The use of drugs and medications is central to veterinary medicine. This module teaches how major drug classes work in the body and how to identify expected and unexpected reactions to medications. Students will learn how to accurately calculate drug doses and safely dispense medications. The legal aspects of veterinary pharmacology will be taught.

Animal Nutrition - 54 hours

This module teaches the basics of nutritional science. The nutritional needs of dogs and cats during different life stages are taught. Students are instructed to recognize common diseases that respond to diet therapy and to perform a nutritional assessment on patients. Students are trained to formulate feeding plans for patients.

Small Animal Nursing 2 - 108 hours

This module builds on the basics taught in Animal Nursing 1. Subjects include sample collection for diagnostic testing, intravenous catheterization, and advanced patient care. This includes teaching essential skills using live animals.

Surgical Nursing - 84 hours

This module includes an in-depth study of the equipment, drugs, protocols and procedures used to safely perform anesthesia on feline and canine patients. Identification, cleaning, disinfection, and sterilization of surgical instrumentation is taught. Cleaning and disinfection of surgical suites is taught. Aseptic technique, including preparation of patients for surgery, the care and use of surgical attire and behavior in the preparation and surgical areas is taught.

Radiology and Advanced Imaging

- 60 hours

This module teaches the theory of x-rays, radiation safety, and the legal aspects of radiology use. The theory and application of ultrasonography, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging and nuclear scintigraphy are also covered. The production of diagnostic radiographic images in dogs, cats, horses and small animals is taught. The use and care of endoscopic equipment is taught.

Clinical Rotations 1 - 292.5 hours

Students will apply what they have learned to date in a clinical setting. Nursing skills, surgical nursing skills, pharmacology, nutrition and diagnostic imaging skills will be practiced in a hospital setting using live animals.

Clinical Pathology 3 - 78 hours

This module builds on what students have learned in Clinical Pathology 2. Students will be introduced to virology and mycology, learn to identify abnormal cells, perform lab tests for other species, and troubleshoot lab errors. Students will also learn about commonly referred laboratory tests including histological examinations and bacterial culture and sensitivity testing.

Exotics, Wildlife and Laboratory Animal Medicine - 69 hours

This module covers husbandry, handling, sample collection and common diseases in different species. Ethics and animal welfare issues are discussed. This includes teaching essential skills using models and live animals.

VTNE Preparation - 45 hours

This module prepares students to take the national licensing exam for Veterinary Technicians.

Large Animal Nursing - 69 hours

This module introduces the equine, dairy, beef, swine, sheep and goat industries. Husbandry, animal behavior, common diseases, preventative care, public health and regulatory medicine, nursing care and associated technical skills are taught for the main large animal species. This includes teaching essential skills using models to prepare for performing those skills on live animals in the second clinical rotation.

Emergency and Critical Care

- 72 hours

This module provides knowledge and training in the technical and personal skills required to thrive in an emergency critical care setting. Common emergencies of major body systems are discussed. Recognition and preparation for emergencies, diagnosis, treatment, nursing care and monitoring are discussed.

Dentistry - 63 hours

This module teaches dental anatomy, nomenclature & pathology. Preventative dental home care is discussed. Professional dental care based on the COHAT approach (Comprehensive Oral Health Assessment and Treatment) including dental radiographs, scaling and polishing of the teeth above and below the gumline, assistance with extractions and client communication. The use, care and maintenance of hand and powered dental instrumentation is taught

Clinical Rotations 2 - 420 hours

Students will apply what they have learned to date in a clinical setting. Nursing skills, surgical nursing skills, dentistry skills, pharmacology, nutrition and diagnostic imaging skills will be practiced in a hospital setting using live animals. Essential skills in the care of horses, cattle, goats and rodents will be taught in this rotation.

Internship - 240 hours

This module is a 240-hour unpaid internship at an accredited veterinary hospital of the student's choosing. This module allows the students to experience working in a real veterinary hospital still having the guidance and support of a mentoring structure. Students will practice and gain further proficiency in the skills taught throughout this course.

