

Becoming a Veterinary Para-Professionals (VPP) as a stepping stone to a Veterinary undergraduate degree

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- 140 years old
- 395 000 students
- 6 000 staff members
- 12.8% of all degrees conferred by SA's 23 public universities and universities of technology.
- Students from beyond South Africa's borders make up 9% of enrolments.
- Annually, close to 35 000 students obtain degrees and diplomas from Unisa.
- Invested recently R600 mil into the new laboratory project
- Signed a MOU with Harper Adams University in the UK – VPP qualifications
- Opportunity for all to study through a distance education University of excellence

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Department of Agriculture and Animal Health

Diploma in Animal Health - 3 years

B Tech in Animal Health - 1 year

Masters in Animal Health - 2 years

PhD - 3 years

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Diploma in Animal Health

Entry Requirements

A National Senior Certificate (NSC) with at least 50% in the language of teaching and learning and with at least 50% in Mathematics. In addition, at least 40% in one of the following: Physical Science or Life Sciences or Agricultural Science,

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Diploma in Animal Health

Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of animal health and the practical application of animal health disease prevention in the field.
2. Provide primary animal health care to emerging livestock farmers and semi-commercial farmers in rural communities.
3. Perform general epidemiological surveys and minor related procedures as prescribed by the South African Veterinary Council.
4. Develop new skills in the field of animal health, veterinary science and other related agricultural disciplines.
5. Demonstrate professional conduct as prescribed by the South African Veterinary Council in areas such as ethics in animal handling, honesty, punctuality and good client relationships.

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Diploma in Animal Health Curriculum (360 credits)

Anatomy & Physiology AH I

Zootechnology I

Agricultural Economics

Community Extension Practice

Management AH (1)

Pasture & Nutrition AH

End-user computing theory

Animal Diseases II, III

Epidemiology AH I, II, III

Pharmacology & Toxicology AH I

Laboratory diagnostics AH I

Management AH (2)

Veterinary Public Health

Legislation AH

Environmental Awareness

Animal Health Practice Laboratory Diagnostics (WIL)

Animal Health Practice Reproduction Management (WIL)

Animal Health Practice TB/CA (WIL)

Veterinary Public Health Practical

Animal Health Practice Projects (WIL)

Animal Health Practice Portfolio (WIL)

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- It is compulsory for all Veterinary Para-Professionals (VPP) in SA, for registration purposes, to comply with regard to the approved prescribed qualifications as described in the act.

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- These qualifications are however not presented at a single University and as such a similar foundation phase or outcome does not exist.
- Currently the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the Northwest University (NWU) offer the approved Animal Health qualifications with the University of Pretoria (UP) offering the Diploma in Veterinary Nursing and Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) offers the 3 year Diploma in Veterinary Technology.

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- Currently no institution in South Africa is offering a qualification in Lab Animal Technology for the Lab Animal Technicians.
- The new 1 year certificate for Veterinary Welfare Assistants will be introduced by Unisa in 2017.

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- Most of the VPP qualifications were developed in collaboration with the specific VPP group and for their specific needs with some generic modules and or subject content between the different groups.
- These were amended over time to adhere more to the countries needs

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- The generic modules include Anatomy and Physiology,
- Animal Diseases,
- Pharmacology,
- Laboratory Diagnostics etc with different outcomes levels according to specific needs of the VPP group.

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- The ideal situation will be to have a common outcome with certain modules being generic at 1st and 2nd year level with specialization being introduced only as from 2nd and or 3rd year onwards.

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- This will pave the way for VPP to either articulate into the undergraduate veterinary degree and or being able to come back and enter the undergraduate veterinary degree at 2nd or 3rd year level after completing an approved VPP qualification.

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- VPP's entering the undergraduate veterinary degree, after being exposed to the work field for a number of years, will definitely be more practical veterinarians after qualifying as veterinarians.

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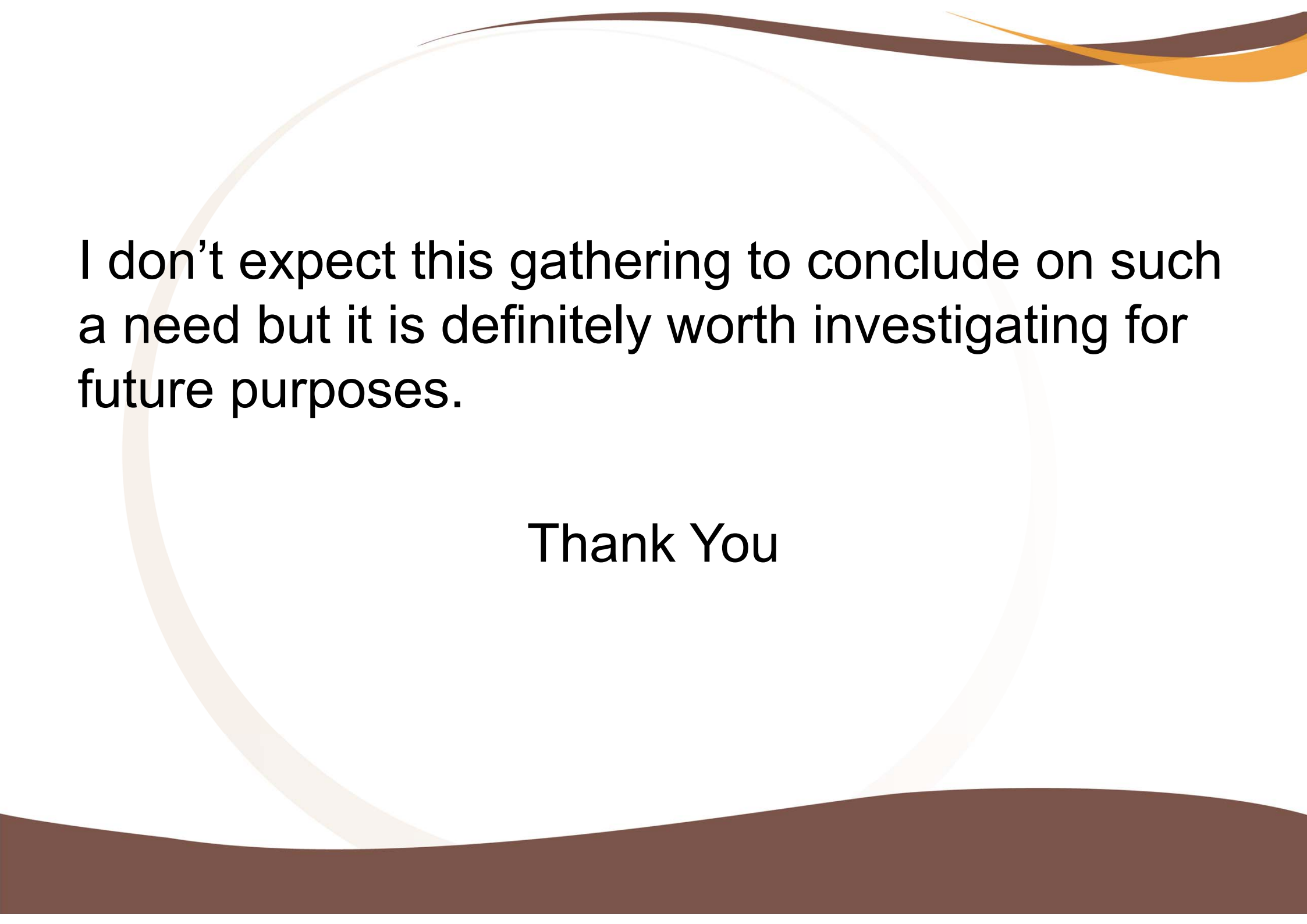
- Further to the above, qualified VPP must be allowed the opportunity to get Recognition for Prior Learning (RPL) after a certain number of years if they were actively involved in the related work field.

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- This entails that duly qualified VPP practising for at least 5 years be given RPL and admission to re-enter the veterinary degree at a 3rd year level.
- If a pre-agreed method of articulation can be implemented within all African countries it will most definitely contribute towards the relief of the shortage of veterinarians on the continent.
- People from a community tend to be more willing to work and stay in their community as is the case with outside people coming in.

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- Notwithstanding numerous efforts in the past within South Africa an agreement could not be reached in bringing together all the above qualifications at a single academic institution or having a generic outcomes level.



I don't expect this gathering to conclude on such a need but it is definitely worth investigating for future purposes.

Thank You