

# Welfare teaching – an RVC perspective

Mandy Nevel



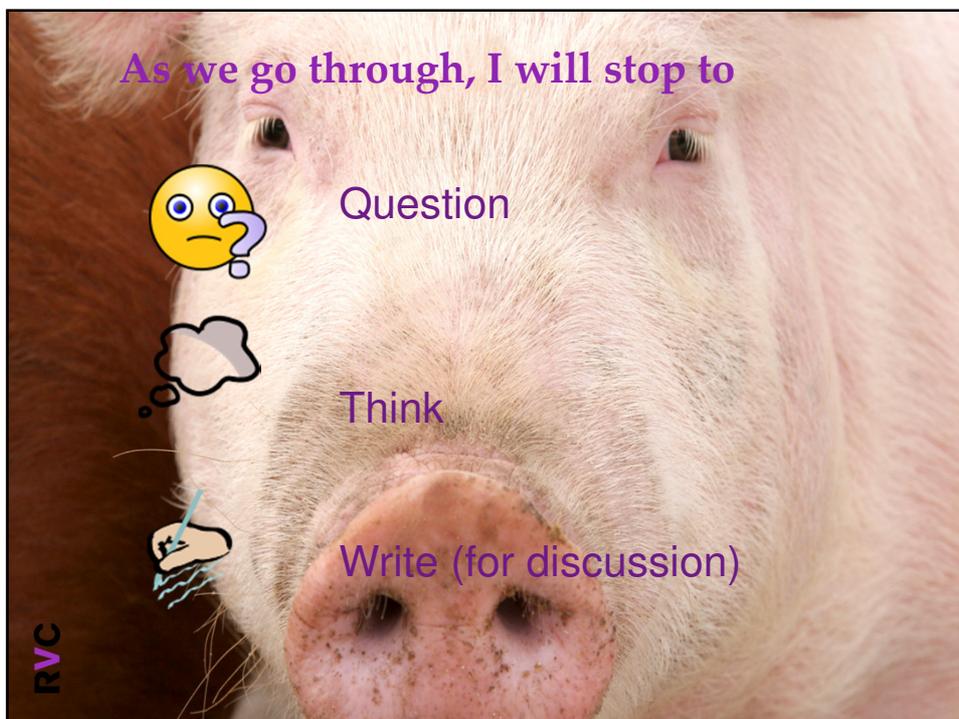


The next 20 minutes....

- Our courses
- Our curriculum
- Methods of teaching
- The future

Are we improving animal welfare?

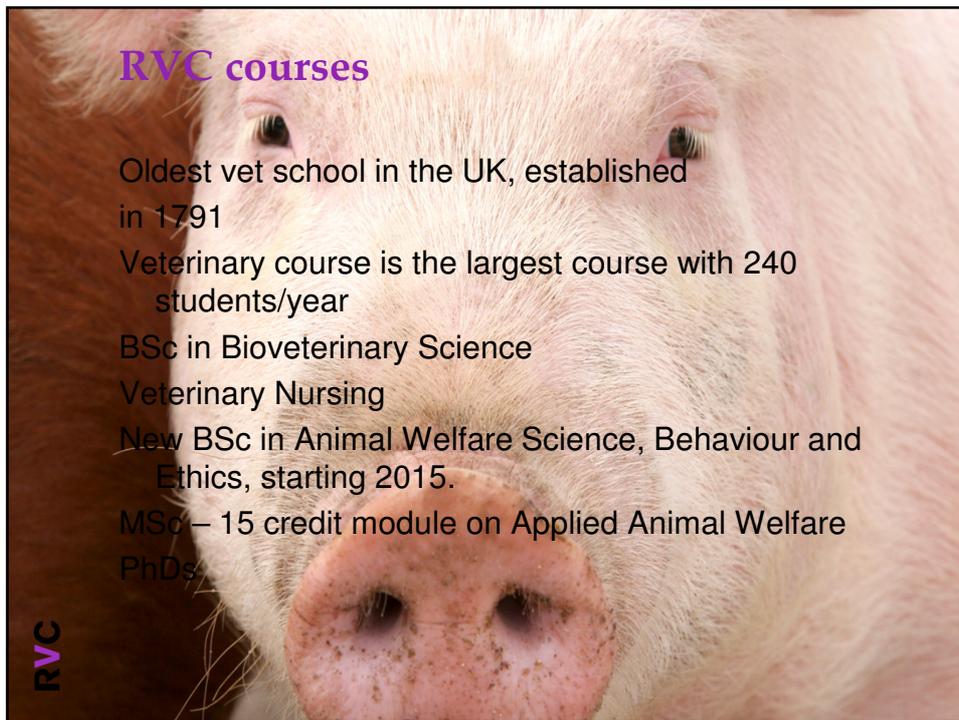
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As we go through, I will stop to

- Question
- Think
- Write (for discussion)

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**RVC courses**

Oldest vet school in the UK, established in 1791

Veterinary course is the largest course with 240 students/year

BSc in Bioveterinary Science

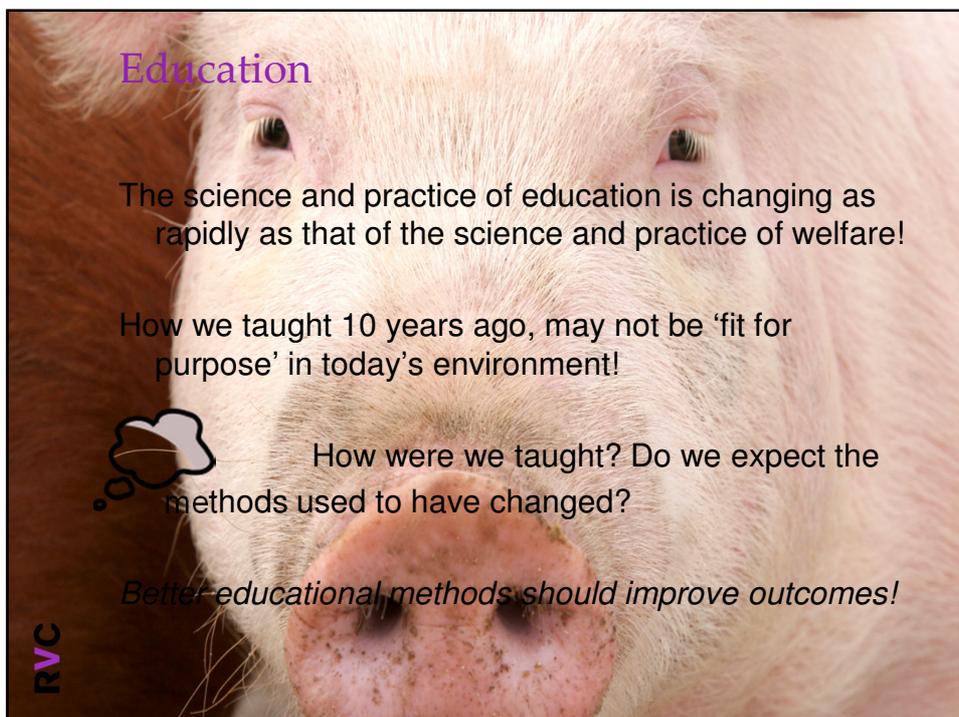
Veterinary Nursing

New BSc in Animal Welfare Science, Behaviour and Ethics, starting 2015.

MSc – 15 credit module on Applied Animal Welfare

PhDs

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**Education**

The science and practice of education is changing as rapidly as that of the science and practice of welfare!

How we taught 10 years ago, may not be 'fit for purpose' in today's environment!

How were we taught? Do we expect the methods used to have changed?

*Better educational methods should improve outcomes!*

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## MSc in Veterinary Education






- Do you want a career in teaching and training?
- Understand how we learn and how best to teach and assess
- Aimed at educators and para-veterinary professionals working in education and work-placed training
- Unique programme delivered by the NTF award-winning team at the Royal Veterinary College
- Various entry and exit points to suit your career aspirations, experience and qualifications
- Face to Face, Distance Learning and Residential Options
- Become an Associate or Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK)
- Study while you work
- Courses start September 2015



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## Oldest and biggest.....





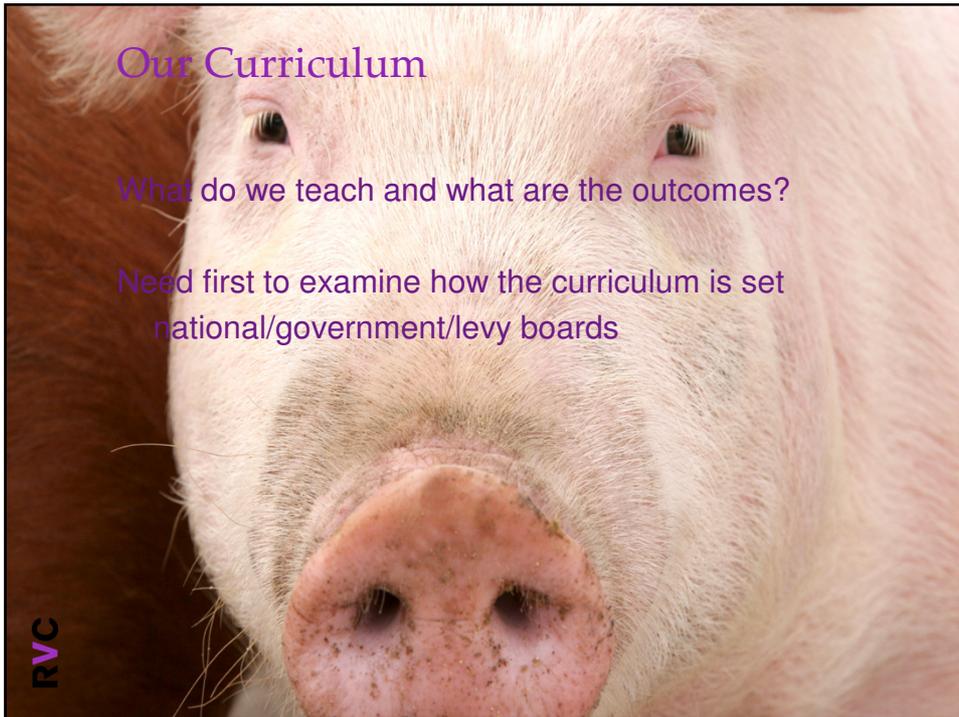
Are our methods actually improving animal welfare?

Who takes our courses? Are we targetting correctly? Who does the marketing? What to learn and can it be learned better? (better outcomes)

But who should we be recruiting to our courses?

*Who do we want leading the field of animal welfare in the future?*





**Our Curriculum**

What do we teach and what are the outcomes?

Need first to examine how the curriculum is set  
national/government/levy boards

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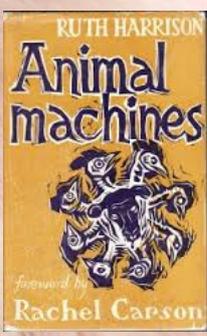
**Who sets the agenda in the UK?**

Historically, 50 years ago, Ruth Harrison and Animal Machines

UK Government's response to this -  
Eramble report, 1965

FAWC established – inform government,  
publish reports to inform the agenda

In 2009, highlighted a need for 'Skilled  
and conscientious stockmen' (FAWC  
report)



Have we achieved this?

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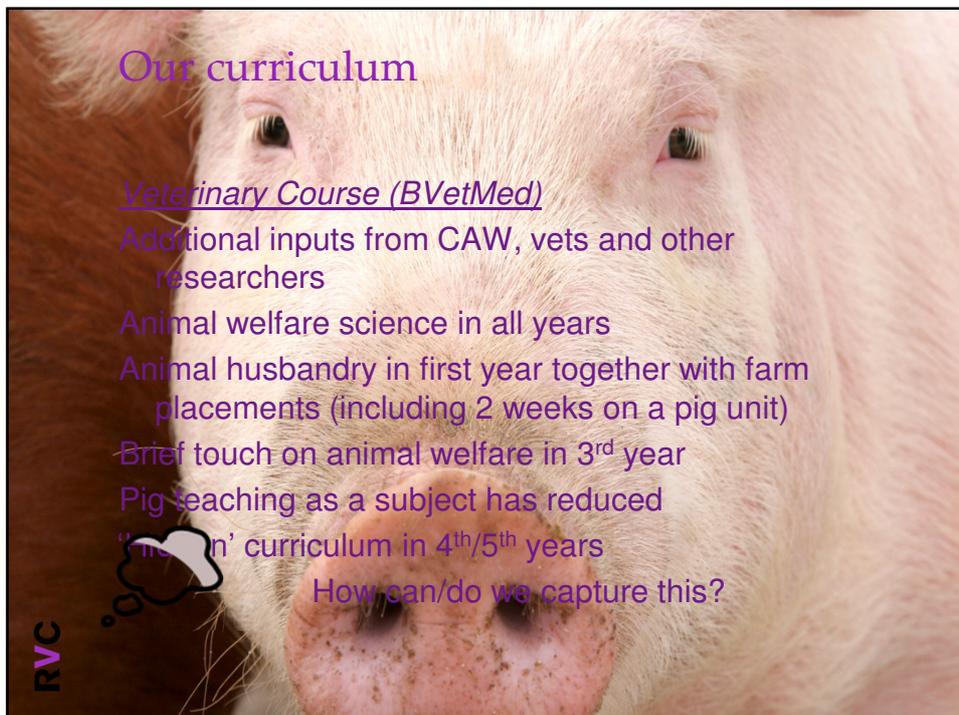


## BPEX – Pig Health and Welfare Council 2003 strategic aims

- Achieve consensus on the key pig welfare issues to be investigated and on the ultimate aims for each issue. It is expected these will include, tail biting/docking, teeth clipping and indoor free farrowing.
- Gather and analyse all relevant information on all aspects of the welfare issues to be addressed
- Facilitate cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders
- Facilitate on-going activities and set measurable milestones and objectives for each issue being addressed.

Feed directly in to Defra

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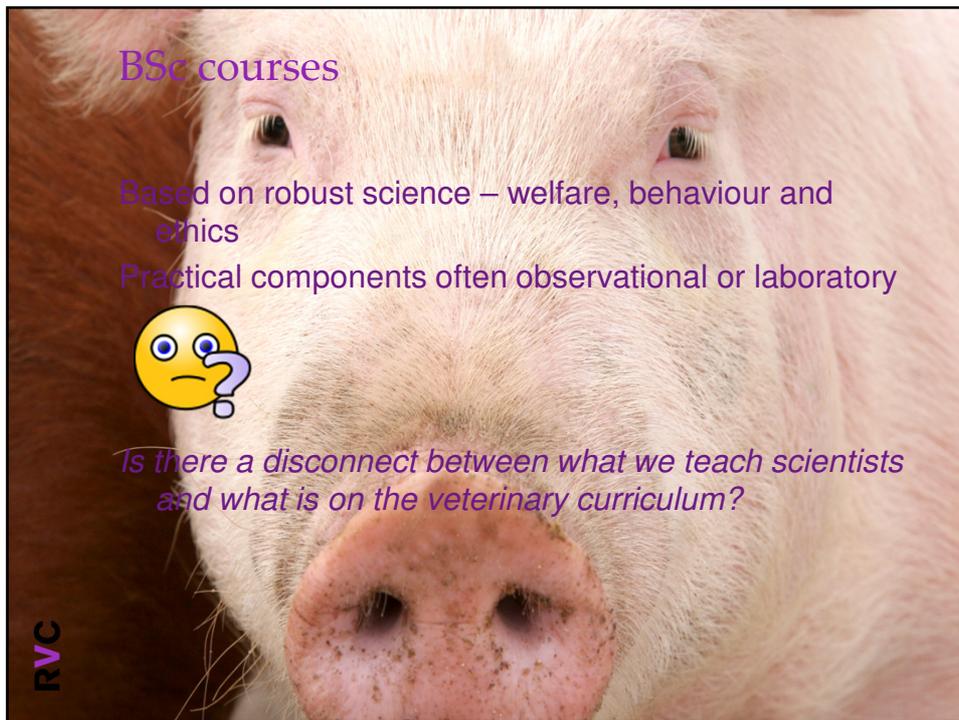
## Our curriculum

Veterinary Course (BVetMed)  
Additional inputs from CAW, vets and other researchers

- Animal welfare science in all years
- Animal husbandry in first year together with farm placements (including 2 weeks on a pig unit)
- Brief touch on animal welfare in 3<sup>rd</sup> year
- Pig teaching as a subject has reduced 'time in' curriculum in 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> years

How can/do we capture this?

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BSc courses

Based on robust science – welfare, behaviour and ethics

Practical components often observational or laboratory



*Is there a disconnect between what we teach scientists and what is on the veterinary curriculum?*

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What have been the main 'welfare' topics taught for pigs?



Husbandry

Tail docking, teeth clipping, crates, castration would all be mentioned by students



Is this right? What should we be teaching?



Has the correct balance of input in directing the curriculum been achieved? (Who?)

*Is this just reactive? Should our aim to be proactive and drive the agenda? What are the issues? Or are we doing this?*

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### 3.1 BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Measure the dimensions of the pen housing the assessed pigs. Check the condition of the building and pen being assessed, then establish how old the building containing the pen is.

Using a tape to record the dimensions of the building in which the pen is housed (if you cannot measure these directly the farmer or stockperson may be able to provide the information). Measure the dimensions of the pen housing the pigs you assessed.

For outdoor pigs, measure the dimensions of the Paddock instead of the building and the ark as the PEN.

Height to ridge  
*(illustrated in blue)*  
An ark will not have eaves

a = height to eaves  
b = height to ridge

### 3.2 FLOORING

Record the type of flooring in the assessed pen.

Observe the flooring of pen. The diagrams below illustrate different types of slats.

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Record the presence and type of bedding, if any, in the assessed pen. (There is no legal requirement for pigs to be provided with bedding, so do not worry if your farm does not provide any). For pigs kept outdoors this question should be answered with respect to the assessed groups ark.

Observe the pen that the pigs you assessed in sections 1 & 2 inhabit, ideally on the same day as you do the animal observations.

Sew & litter on deep litter (>100 mm) wood shavings    Sews in deep litter (>100mm) straw    Growing pigs on a solid floor

### 3.4 TEMPERATURE & THERMOREGULATION

Record whether & how temperature is monitored in the pig unit. Record any behavioural indicators the pigs may be giving on the suitability of the temperature. Cold pigs will huddle closely together – or on top of one another, hot pigs will find a damp area to lay in, and thermally comfortable pigs will lay near one another for companionship purposes. (It is not unusual for piglets to lay under heat lamps).

You may need to ask the farmer about the location of thermometers or sensors as they may not be very obvious. Choose the sensor/thermometer closest to the pen containing the assessed group. It is unlikely that temperatures are recorded for outdoor pigs.

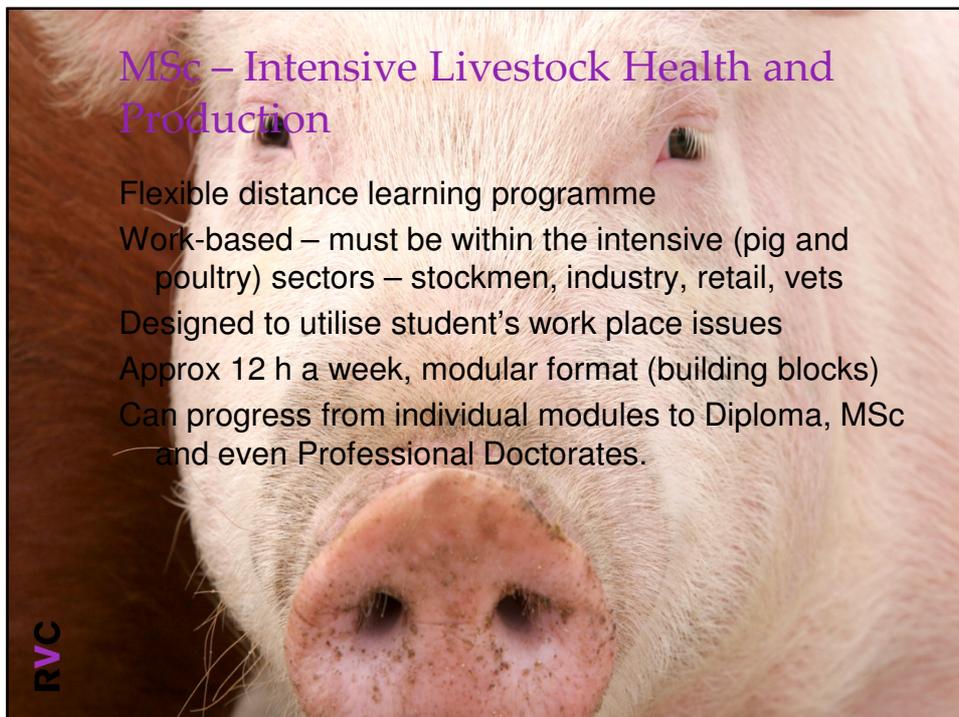
A min/max thermometer

Clockwise from top:  
thermally comfortable pigs:  
cold huddling pigs & a hot pig wallowing

AH: PAAS Animal Husbandry Extra-mural Studies – Animal Assessment Results Sheet

Farm id:		Observer:	Group id: .....	
Date:	Time:	Production stage: NLSow/Weaner/Grower-Finisher	No. in group: .....	
SECTION 3: RESOURCE PROVISION			Total no. of production stage: .....	
Parameter		Results	Results	Comments *
3.1 Building	Age of building		Internal height of building eaves (m)	
	Internal height of building/ark ridge (m)		Dimensions of pen/farrowing crate/ark Length: m Width: m	
3.2 Flooring	Fully slatted? (Y/N) Material?		Completely solid? (Y/N) Material?	
	Mixed? (Y/N) Material?		If YES to MIXED, estimate % of slatted	
3.3 Bedding	Clean, dry lying area? (Y/N)		Bedding present? (Y/N)	
	Type of bedding material if present		Bedding deep-litter (>100mm) if present? (Y/N)	
	Estimate % cover of bedding if present		Frequency of bedding replenishment if present	
3.4 Temperature	If NO bedding, is floor stable, rigid & even? (Y/N)		Manipulable material provided in crate/pen for farrowing sows? (Y/N)	
	Temperature monitored? (Y/N)		Record temperature and time taken if YES	
	Records kept? (Y/N)		Cooling mechanisms available? (Y/N). Describe.	
	Does pig behaviour suggest thermal comfort? (Y/N) Describe.		Shades/allows for outdoor pigs? (Y/N)	
3.5 Lighting	Adequate lighting levels? (Y/N)		Rest period from artificial lighting provided? (Y/N) How long?	
3.6 Ventilation	Natural or mechanical ventilation?		Is a thermostat used to control ventilation rate? (Y/N)	
3.7 Feed	Trough space per pig (mm)		Manual or automatic feeding?	
	Feeding frequency		Food form (pellets/mash etc.)	
3.8 Water	Continuously available water supply? (Y/N)		How is water provided? (e.g. nipple drinkers, trough etc.)	
3.9 Enrichment	Material types available for manipulation/investigation (e.g. straw/wood shavings etc.)		Any novelty enrichment (NE) provided? (football, chains etc.) (Y/N)	
	Frequency of NE replacement, if present		Minority/half/majority of pigs manipulating NE, if present?	

\* use back of sheet for additional comments if necessary – please record question number against comment  
Information not available = NA; Question not applicable = line through box



**MSc – Intensive Livestock Health and Production**

Flexible distance learning programme  
 Work-based – must be within the intensive (pig and poultry) sectors – stockmen, industry, retail, vets  
 Designed to utilise student’s work place issues  
 Approx 12 h a week, modular format (building blocks)  
 Can progress from individual modules to Diploma, MSc and even Professional Doctorates.

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**INTENSIVE LIVESTOCK HEALTH AND PRODUCTION**

[www.rvc.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/intensive-livestock-health-and-production](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/intensive-livestock-health-and-production)

**ILHP**  
Intensive Livestock Health and Production

**FIND THE BEST OPTION FOR YOU**

- A range of study options available
- Short courses and standalone modules
- Formal degrees including:  
MSc and Professional Doctorate

**Providing training to the intensive livestock sector**

We provide training to the intensive livestock agri-food sector. This includes animal production through to retail outlets, as well as animal scientists, veterinary surgeons and other veterinary para-professionals supporting intensive livestock health and production

**Flexible, Part-time Distance Learning**

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

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**RVC teaching methods**

- Move away from lectures (rote learning, increases superficial learning)
- Integrated curriculum from day 1
- Problem based/problem solving (Lecture free final year)
- Not species driven, but systems (e.g. respiratory, enteric)
- Directed learning (large group, problem based)
- Computer aided learning (self driven)

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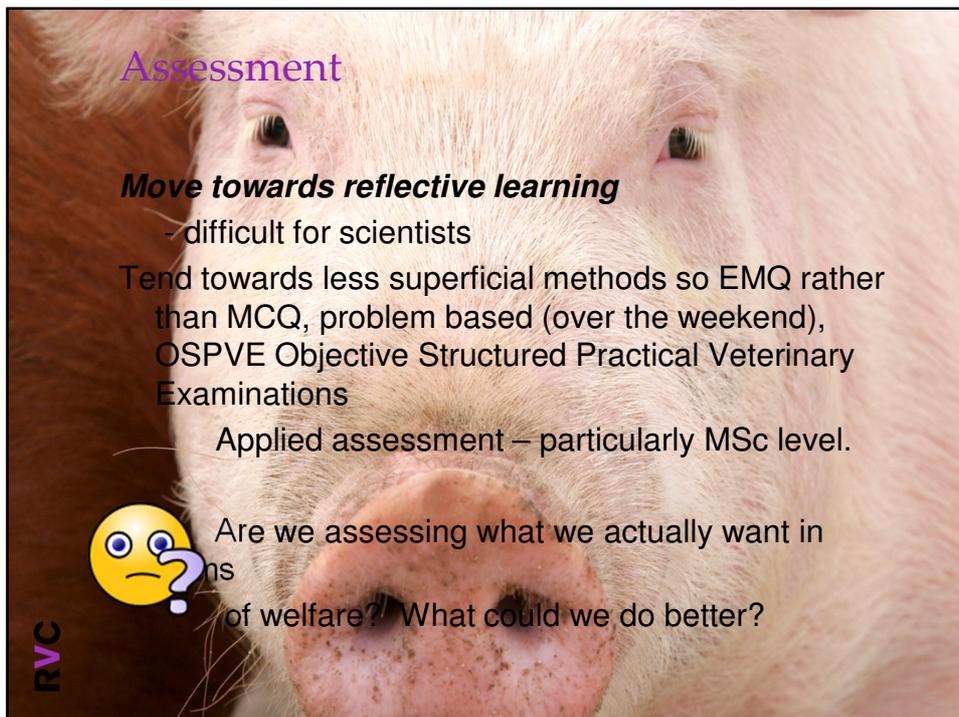


**RVC teaching methods**

- Distance learning for professionals
- Modular/short courses MOOCs SPOCs
- Part-time
- Not just lectures online!

[Example of a short learning and assessment method](file:///Volumes/Untitled/AssuranceDemo1/index.html)

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**Assessment**

***Move towards reflective learning***

- difficult for scientists

Tend towards less superficial methods so EMQ rather than MCQ, problem based (over the weekend), OSPVE Objective Structured Practical Veterinary Examinations

Applied assessment – particularly MSc level.

 Are we assessing what we actually want in terms of welfare? What could we do better?

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A close-up photograph of a pig's face, showing its eyes, snout, and pink skin. The pig is looking directly at the camera.

**What has worked well and not so well?**

- Reflective learning – for those that can!
- Applied nature of some components
- On farm assessment
  - poor communication to students lead to misunderstandings with farmers
  - Lack of 'hidden curriculum' and difficulty in assessing*

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A close-up photograph of a pig's face, showing its eyes, snout, and pink skin. The pig is looking directly at the camera.

**How can our education improve animal welfare in the future?**

- Robust core of scientific principles and evidence
- Align our assessments with learning outcomes
- Balanced and proactive agenda
- Training individuals with sound practice, who are confident in their views and will inform future agenda
- Technological advances
- Beware of information overload – poor quality

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**Summary**

We have improved:  
Education has improved with new technologies able to reach a wider audience  
More robust methods for assessing desired outcomes  
*but*  
Tendency to be reactive rather than proactive, which has driven part of the agenda  
Targetting key people in the industry

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**Acknowledgements**

- 🐷 Colleagues at RVC

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