

Vets make history after achieving Doctorates

A group of vets are celebrating making history for the profession after becoming the first to achieve Doctorates in Advanced Veterinary Practice.

The four, including Paul Manning, Sue Shuttleworth, Bradley Viner and Graham Duncanson (pictured), have passed their Professional Doctorates (DProf)) with flying colours. One of their fellow students on the Middlesex University course is also continuing his research to achieve his Doctorate.



Their achievement comes after many years of campaigning by SPVS for a modular post-graduate qualification with a greater focus on GP skills. The Doctorate research has helped to inform and support the new Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice, which is also supported by the Professional Development Foundation. This is the first of a series of new qualifications that will completely replace the existing modular system of certificates from November 2007.

Students taking the new Vet GP qualification will work from a syllabus that firmly complements the experience of the practising modern vet.

Dr Paul Manning explained: “While thirty years ago, GPs mostly had a workload that consisted of at least 50% farm and larger animals, now it is only about 8% farm and overwhelmingly focused on small animals. VetGP incorporates the shift in the balance so that modules on bovine, equine and small animal care are more representative of the relevant areas of study for practitioners.

“Importantly, a large part of the new focus is on an incredibly important area that has been sadly neglected over the years. Good consultation skills can separate a good GP from a bad one, and rightly so. It is not just about being approachable but about explaining things clearly and making sure that the owner is made fully aware of all the options and the recommended course of treatment.”

He added: “It has been a long road to achieving this, but now we have, I firmly believe that it will change the system of postgraduate education in the veterinary profession and may act as a model for other professions in the future.”