

Are new veterinary graduates 'job ready'?

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Quality, or fitness for purpose, in veterinary education is the result of 'program-process-evidence' interaction. Therefore mechanisms must be in place to gather data to demonstrate that veterinary schools' educational objectives are being met. To assist in meeting this objective, new veterinary graduates (n=75) and employers (n=33) of new graduates were surveyed to help determine what knowledge and abilities (based on RCVS Day-One Competences) the graduates acquired from their course of study at James Cook University (JCU). JCU veterinary undergraduate teaching commenced in 2005 and has a particular focus on tropical and rural veterinary practice including tropical animal production. These themes are reflected in the selection of students, curriculum, and clinical placements. Survey results indicated that perceptions of competence were high in both the new graduates and the employers. Graduates either agreed (39%) or strongly agreed (61%) with the statement "Overall, I am satisfied with the knowledge and skills I have as a JCU graduate", and employers strongly agreed (70%) or agreed (30%) that they were satisfied with their employees' knowledge and skills. But, what do these results mean? This presentation discusses the findings of this assessment tool, and other means, to help ascertain how veterinary education prepares graduates to be 'job ready'.