Recent years have seen burgeoning publication on veterinary education, ranging from microcosms (e.g. individual curriculum items; students’ learning behaviours) to holistic (e.g. degree outcomes; curriculum reviews). This literature is partly driven by recent major changes in medical/veterinary pedagogy, particularly its movement towards student-centred, active, experiential learning. It is also driven by the expectations of international accreditation bodies for evidence-based validation of educational processes. Whilst much literature remains fragmentary, it has already matured to the extent where there are peer-reviewed publications in most areas of veterinary curriculum and learning.

Active, experiential, teaching/learning environments are generally well-received by students, characteristically resulting in improved engagement, better retention and more effective use of knowledge than traditional methods. Parallel focus on achieving higher order cognitive learning outcomes and more effective incorporation of affective (specifically including self-care and self-awareness, commercial acumen and communication) and psychomotor domain outcomes into the curriculum has improved skills in these areas. For these areas in particular, alignment of assessment is challenging, and much literature is devoted to the development and validation of appropriate assessment tools. Criticisms largely relate to less homogenous coverage of material and the requirement for greater staff resources than is required for traditional delivery methods. Significantly, migration of curricula from traditional to active/experiential bases is not a unidirectional trend and, in particular, curricula based entirely or largely on problem-based learning strategies seem difficult to sustain. Consequently, reverse migration back to more didactic methods is not uncommon.

Admissions criteria represent a difficult balance between academic criteria, which are easy to assess, and personality/experience, which are much harder to assess. Publications on the relationship between admissions criteria and degree outcomes are sparse: those on the relationship between either admissions criteria or curriculum delivery modes on career longevity are sufficiently rare to represent a significant area of need for future research.

Keywords: Veterinary Education – Experiential Learning – Curriculum Delivery.