

# CPD at the Royal Veterinary College

## A guide for Webinar Plus courses

This document contains some practical information and advice which will aid you in your participation of Webinar Plus learning with the RVC.

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#### **Continuing Professional Development**

Royal Veterinary College, Hawkshead Lane, North Mymms, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 7TA  
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### Background information

An exciting new development in our online course portfolio for 2012 is the introduction of our Webinar Plus courses. A hybrid of our themed webinar series and e-CPD courses, each Webinar Plus course will provide a rich learning experience over four weeks. Less intense than e-CPD but with greater learning support than webinars alone, each course is worth 16 CPD hours and will involve a mixture of webinars, online case assessment exercises, supplementary reading material and discussion forums involving the tutors and veterinary colleagues from around the world. There will be a two hour webinar each week which participants can attend 'live' or view the recorded version if the day or time does not suit their schedule. In addition, participants will have access to our web-based virtual learning platform where there will be a variety of learning resources available to support the topic of each week including comprehensive course notes, supplementary reading material and cases and/or radiographs to assess. There will be discussion forums for interaction with fellow participants as well as tutor moderated Q&A sessions each week so all of your concerns and queries about the topic can be aired and discussed. Approximately four hours CPD per week should be planned for in your schedule.

Once registered, all participants are issued with a unique ID, which will allow them to access our web based virtual learning environment (VLE) and their particular course. Participants will be given detailed guidelines on how to navigate within the VLE and advice on how to participate effectively in an online course. The resources delivered via the VLE can include course notes, published papers, cases, images and radiographs if relevant, and useful Web links. There will also be a discussion board and various online tasks.

The Webinar Plus courses are run completely online, so there is no need to travel to a distant venue or take time off work. No advanced computer skills are required to take the course apart from a basic confidence in working on the Internet. Each week you can listen to a lecture being given, as well as watch the PowerPoint presentation, view images or video, ask questions, draw on a 'whiteboard', and interact with your fellow students. For these sessions, which are run using an online classroom, participants will be issued with detailed instructions on how to join and participate in the online session. You will need to make sure you are an administrator on your computer and can install the required small software component. If you are unsure, please contact your system administrator.



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## Computer requirements

Hard disk space	At least 2 GB
CD-ROM drive	Double speed or faster (recommended)
Operating systems	Windows Client: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windows 2000/XP/Vista/7</li> <li>• Pentium III 500 MHz processor</li> <li>• 256 MB RAM</li> </ul> Mac Client: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mac OS X 10.2.8, 10.3.9, 10.4 or 10.5</li> <li>• G3, G4, G5 or Intel Processor</li> </ul> Solaris Client: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solaris 10 (SPARC only)</li> <li>• UltraSPARC IIc 30</li> </ul> Linux Client: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red Hat Linux (RHEL4), Novell SUSE 9 or 10</li> <li>• Pentium III 500 MHz processor</li> <li>• 256 MB RAM</li> </ul>
Display	Resolution 600 x 800 (minimum) 1024 x 768 or higher (recommended) 256 colours (minimum), 65536 colours or higher (recommended)
Modem	Minimum 56 K dial-up or broadband connection (strongly recommended)
Audio	Soundcard with speakers and microphone or headset
Software	Essential: Internet browser such as Internet Explorer 7 or above, Mozilla Firefox 3.5 or above or Safari 3 or above. Java (this can be downloaded from <a href="http://www.java.com">www.java.com</a> )  Suggested: Adobe reader (for reading PDF documents); Word processing programme (such as Microsoft Word or Pages for Mac)

## English language requirements

You should have an advanced level ability to work in English to participate in a Webinar Plus course. It is necessary to express your ideas efficiently and effectively, therefore your ability to read, write and understand the English is essential. If English is not your first language and if you require further guidance regarding the level of language proficiency required please contact the CPD office for guidance before registering.

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### Essential information

You may find it useful to keep a record of some details relating to your course. We have created a simple form below where this information may be stored if you wish. We have filled in some contact details for your reference.

Website address for course	<a href="http://learn.rvc.ac.uk">http://learn.rvc.ac.uk</a>
My username ( <i>this will be sent via email to you approx. one week before the course starts</i> )	
My password ( <i>this will be sent via email to you approx. one week before the course starts</i> )	
Email address I have stated as my contact during this course	
Course tutor(s)	
Technical help	<a href="mailto:ecpdhelp@rvc.ac.uk">ecpdhelp@rvc.ac.uk</a>
CPD office	<a href="mailto:cpd@rvc.ac.uk">cpd@rvc.ac.uk</a> Tel: 01707 666865 Fax: 01707 666877

### Before the course starts

If you have not received an email with your username and password details by 5 days before the course is due to start, please check your spam/trash folder and if there is no email with these details please contact the CPD office. If you find emails from CPD are going in to your spam/trash folder please change your email settings to allow emails from the 'rvc.ac.uk' email addresses so further course correspondence may reach you.

Please check that you have everything you need to participate on the course, and that your computer is ready.

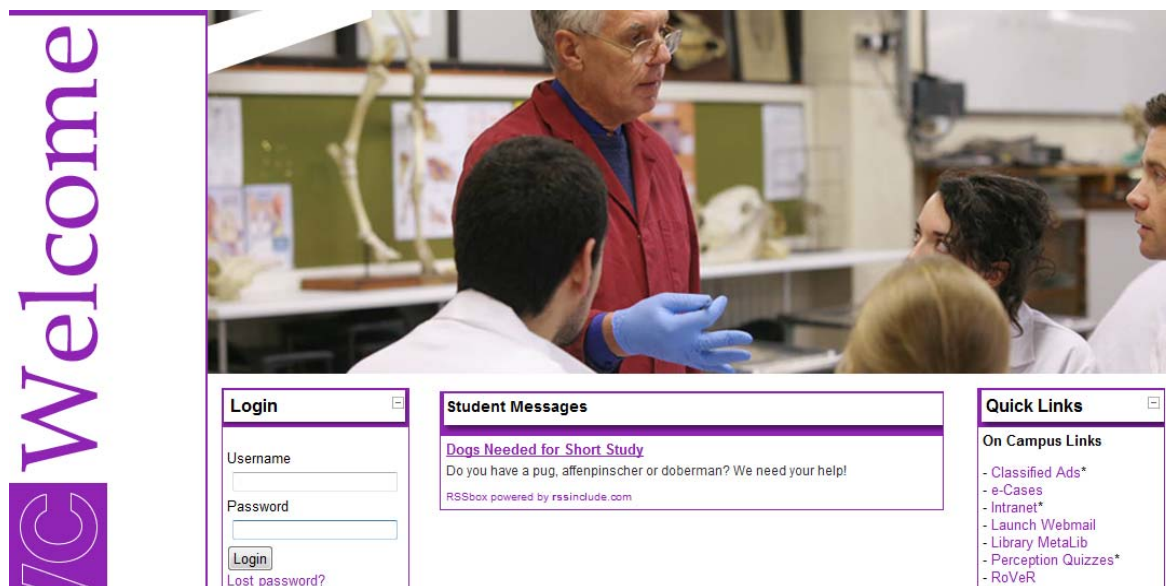
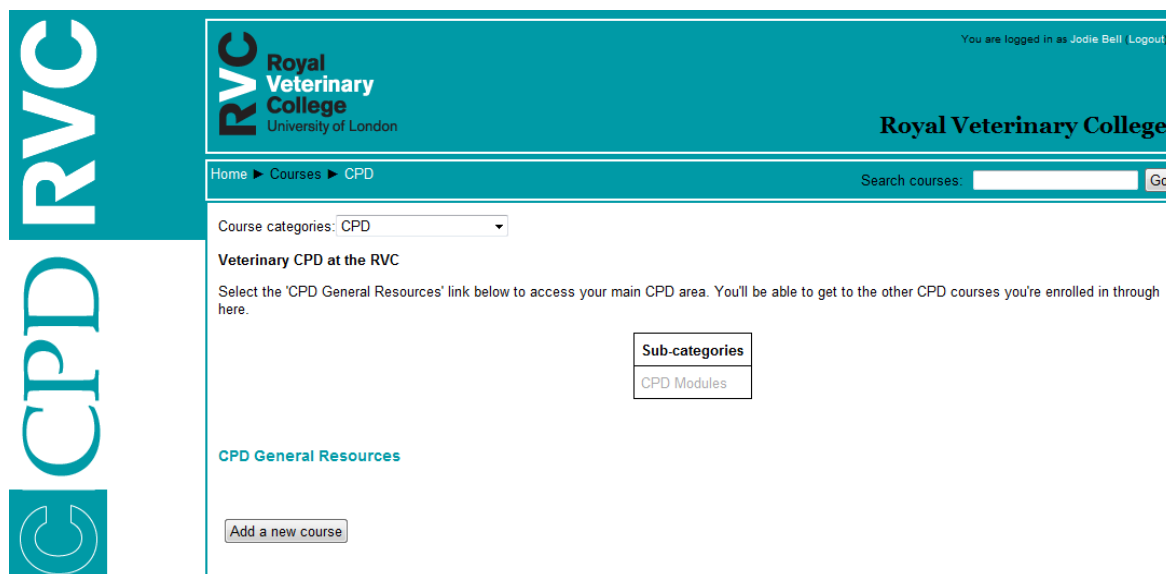
Please log in to the course site at <http://learn.rvc.ac.uk> to familiarize yourself with the layout and structure of the course you are enrolled in. The course tutors will invite you to post a message to introduce yourself once the course is about to begin. You will find details of the tutors for each course within the course information.

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## Course website

You can access your Webinar Plus course from any computer with an internet connection, just use <http://learn.rvc.ac.uk> and enter your username and password.

Once logged in to the site you will see a list of the courses you are enrolled in on the right hand side of the screen. Any announcements are also listed. On the left hand side of you will see some contact details at the RVC.

It is a good idea to visit the site regularly each week of the course. You will find regular announcements (these may also be emailed to you), general course information, discussion board forums and other relevant resources.

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## Netiquette

When participating in discussion boards and emails during the course it is important to be aware of 'netiquette';

- Please use a descriptive subject line in your postings so people know what your message is about.
- Try to avoid sending large attachments to people without warning them first.
- Avoid block capitals and obscure fonts as this can make messages harder to read and possibly misinterpreted.
- Don't expect to always receive an immediate answer to your message – it may be that people are able to respond quickly but time is often needed to consider appropriate answers, and of course not everyone is online all of the time.

## Getting the most out of Webinar Plus courses

Many people find they participate far more in an online course than they first expected. To get the most out of a course try to join in with all activities, view all the webinars (live or recorded), read other participant messages and respond as suggested by the course tutor, and have a go at quizzes and assignments. For some very busy courses the core work will not require you to read every posting as the course can become overwhelming. Your course tutor will advise you about this.

You may find it useful to save notes on your computer or with your hard copy course notes for future reference once the course access is closed on the website.

Work safely and comfortably. Make sure you take regular breaks from the screen and are aware of how you are sitting.

## Further guidance

- **Downloading and reading a PDF file**

It is useful to set up a folder on your computer e.g. in 'My documents' before you start downloading any files. To save a PDF file to your computer: Right click on the document name, then choose 'Save target as' from the pop-up menu. A download box will appear briefly, followed by the 'Save as' dialogue box. This will ask you to indicate where you want to save the document and what you want to call it. Click on 'Save' to complete the download.

## The end of the course

At the end of a Webinar Plus course there is usually an extension of access for two weeks. This is to allow time for participants to finish off any assignments and access the course material.

An email will be sent to ask for feedback via a brief online survey. This is usually sent during the two week extended time, or at the end of that period.

CPD certificates are posted to you once participation in the course and completion of assignments has been assessed. We aim to do this during or at the end of the extended access time and post these out to you as soon as possible. We hope to 'see' you on another online course in the future!

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