

# AVS/BVA Student Market Research Results 2020

Sponsored by  
**Vets4Pets**  
*Putting your pet first*



# Contents



**Project background, methodology and profiles**



**Cost of being a vet student**



**EMS placements**



**Career aspirations**



**Mental health and wellbeing**



**Engagement with AVS and BVA**



# Project background and methodology



Survey takes place every  
4 years (since 1996)



65 questions, majority  
same as 2016

965 completed responses

- good representation across  
all nine universities and  
core years 1-5

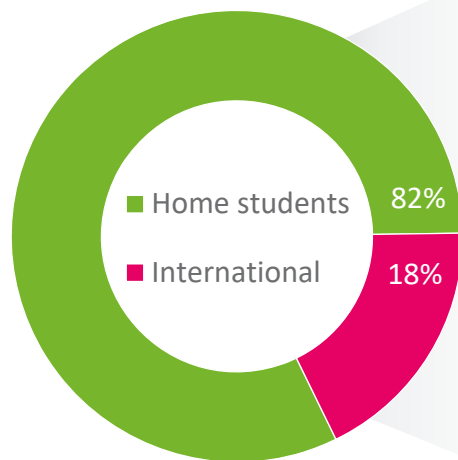


Online survey methodology, live in  
November/December 2019

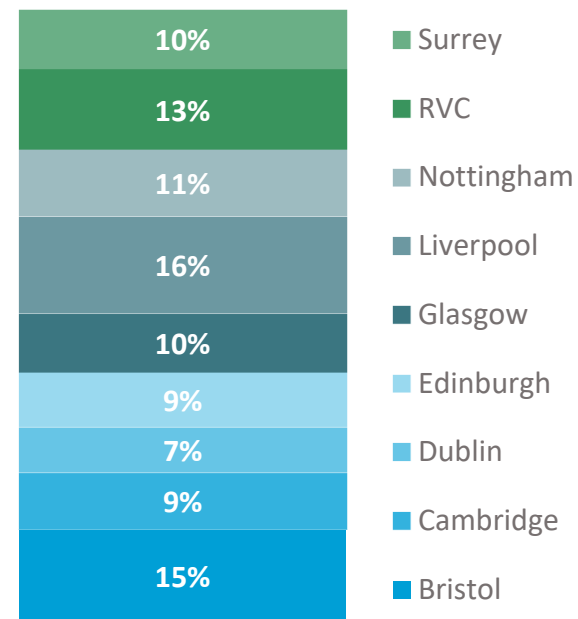
- Promoted to students via BVA emails,  
AVS rep emails and social media
- Sponsored by Vets4Pets



## Profile of respondents



Respondent profile 2020: by university

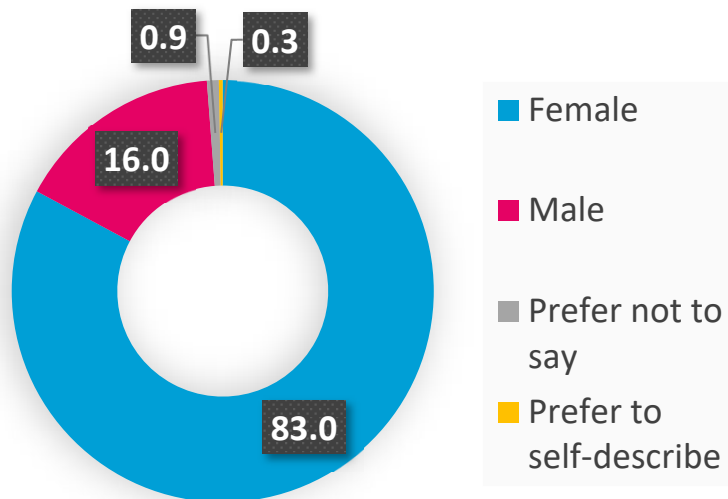


Base: 964, all students (one declined to give university).

Q1. Which veterinary school do you attend? Q4. For funding purposes, which of the following applies to you?



### Gender of respondents - % of total



### Ethnicity

8% of home students are non-white (92% white)

42% of overseas students are non-white (58% white)

#### ETHNIC BACKGROUND

RESPONDENTS FROM BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS

**NOW: 3.5%**

**2014: 2%**

Taken from the Summary of findings from 2019 Survey of the Veterinary Profession

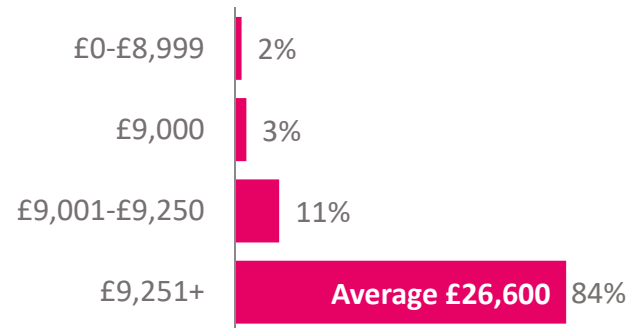


The cost of being a  
vet student in 2020

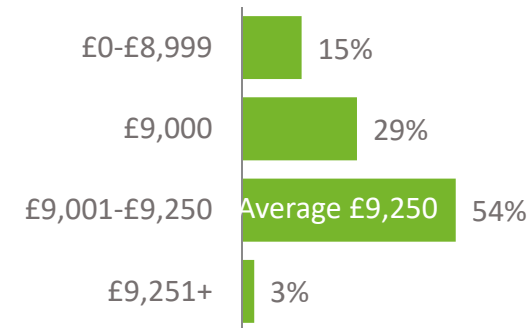
# How much do vet students pay for their studies?

## Tuition fees for academic year 2019-20

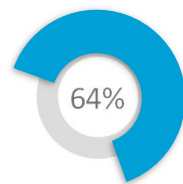
### International students



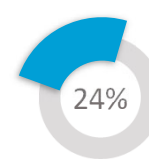
### Home students



A majority of students (64%) fund their tuition fees **via loans** – similar to 2016.

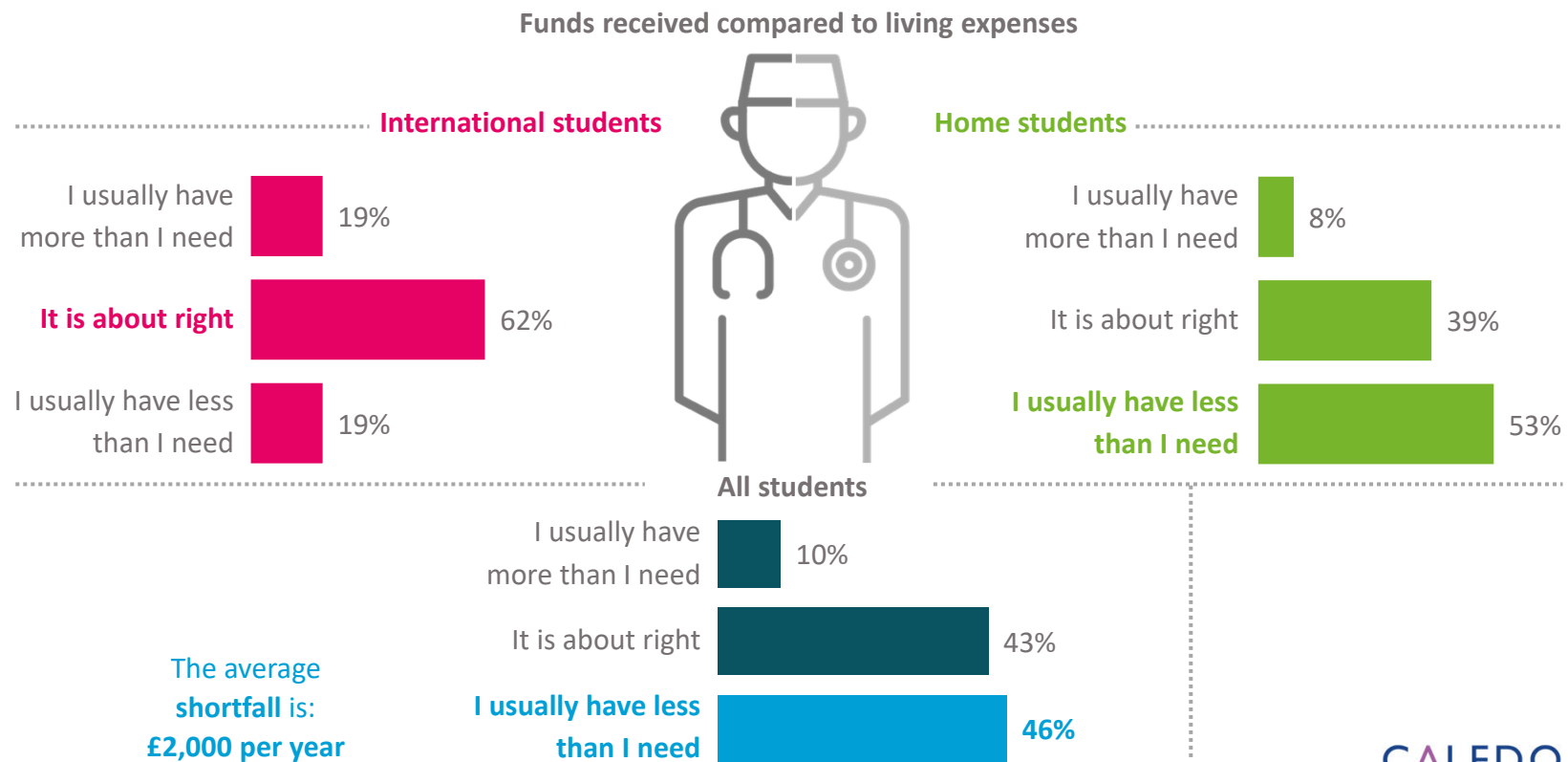


Proportion funded by parents/family has increased to almost a quarter (24%).



**CALEDONIA**  
MARKET RESEARCH

## Almost half of students feel they don't have enough to live on



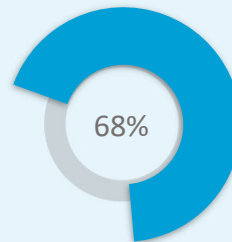
CALEDONIA  
MARKET RESEARCH



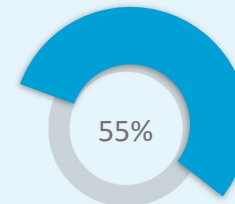
## How do vet students fund their living expenses?

Main funding sources for maintenance/living expenses this year are:

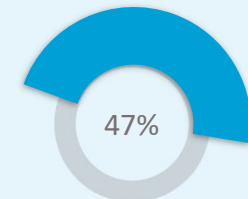
- SLC (Student Loans Company)
- Parental/family **donation**
- Personal **savings**



SLC



Family donation



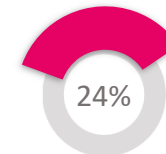
Savings

A third also have a **part-time job** to help fund their living expenses

up 8%  
since 2016



Home



International

Average SLC loans:

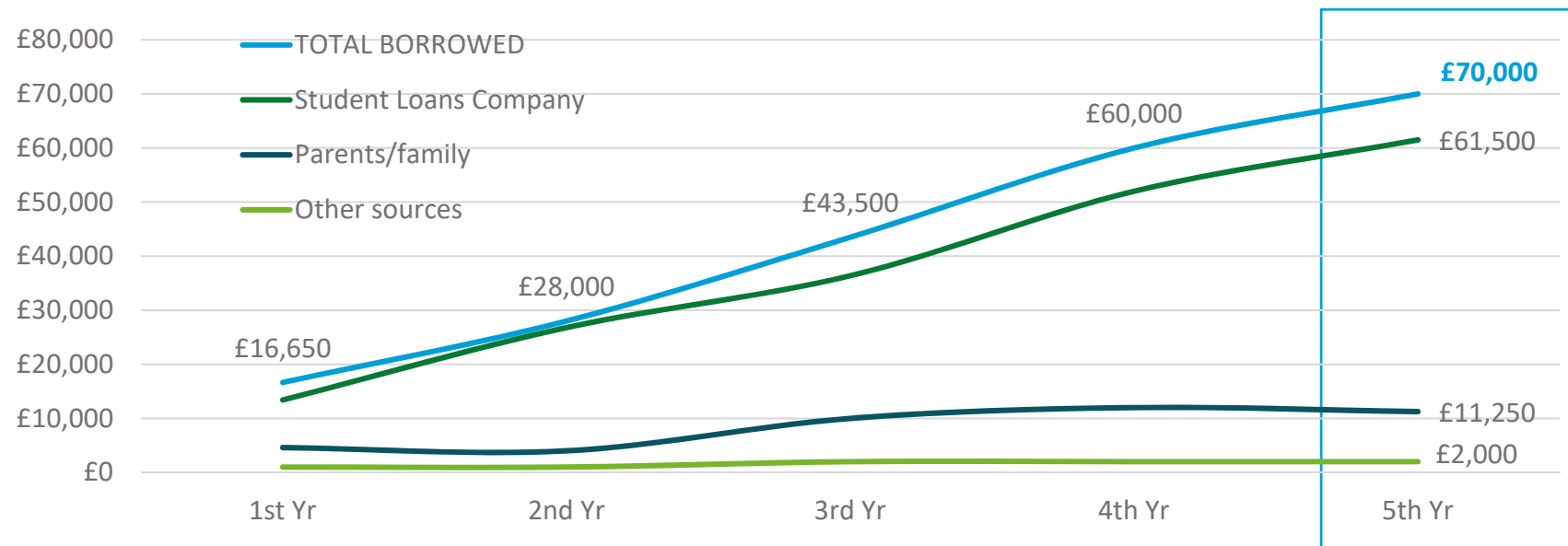
Loan of £4000+  
(v. 53% in 2016)



CALEDONIA  
MARKET RESEARCH

# Overall levels of debt for vet students

Students' borrowing up to this academic year  
Home students



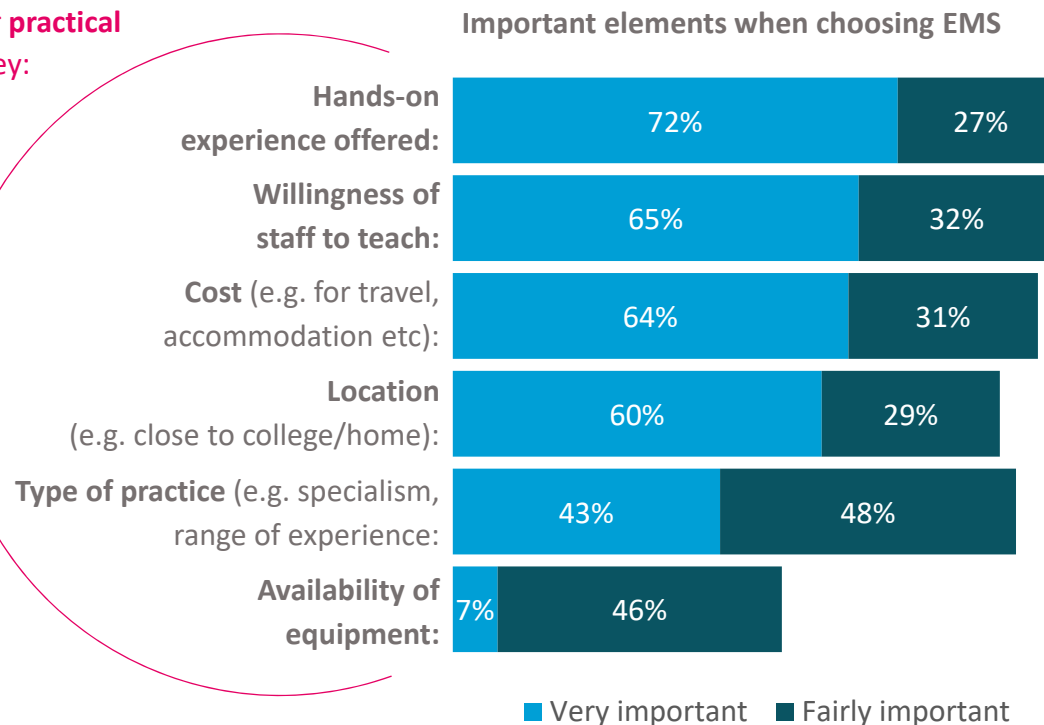
Base: SLC-557, Parents/family-336, other sources-70, total borrowed-571: home students only. Q15a-d. Approximately, how much have you borrowed from each of the following sources, up to and including this academic year of your veterinary studies? (Please round to the nearest pound.) Figures represent the average (median) for anyone with debt.



How do students feel  
about EMS placement?

# What's important when choosing EMS placements?

Opportunity for **practical experience** is key:



**BUT, in reality, only 40%** feel they have had sufficient opportunity (all or most of the time) to undertake tasks on EMS placements.

**Top 3 barriers when considering EMS placements:**

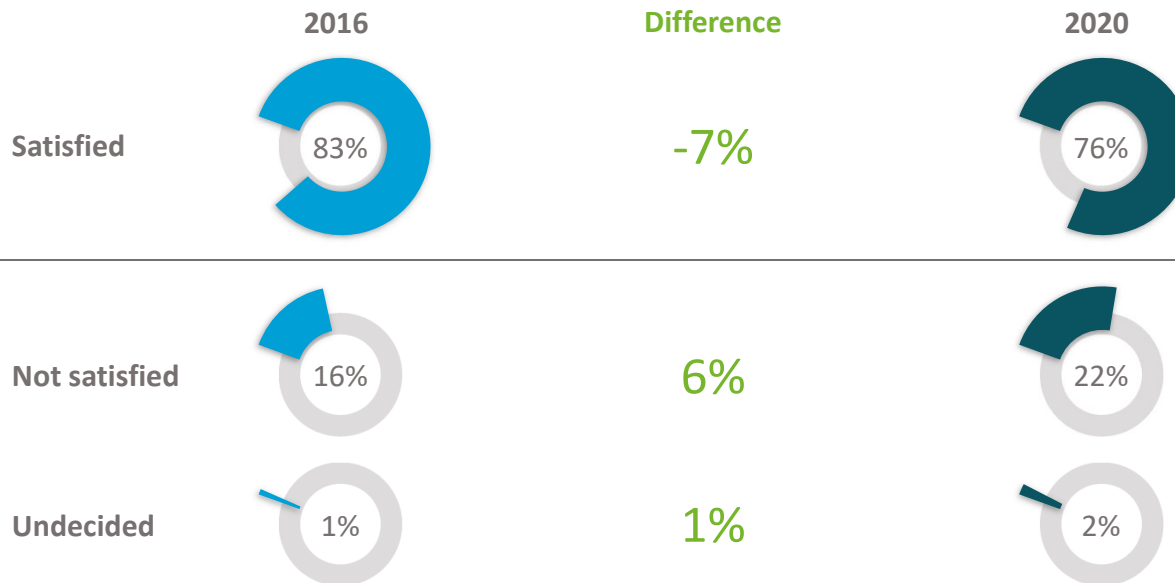
- **Cost: 37%**
- Location: 17%
- Distance to travel to placement: 14%

Base: 766, those who are on/have been on clinical placement. Q23. How important are the following when choosing where to do your EMS?  
Q24. What is the biggest barrier you face when considering your EMS placements?



## Satisfaction with EMS structure

Over three quarters are satisfied with EMS structure and system BUT satisfaction **down 7% compared to 2016**.

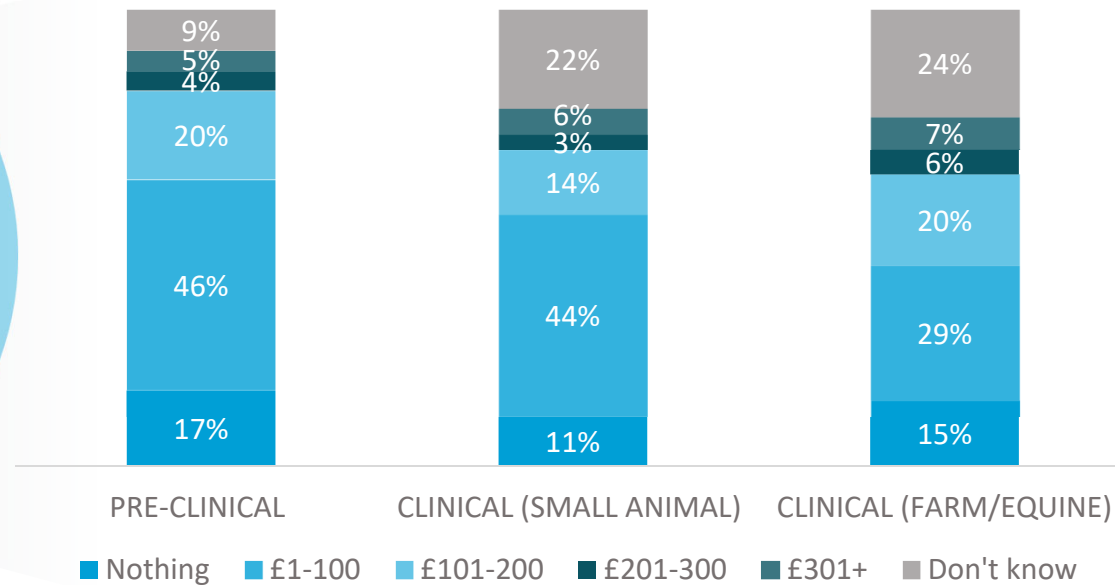


However, **71%** do feel EMS allows them to **explore a broad range of careers** in veterinary medicine

# How much does a two week EMS placement cost?



Actual or expected expenditure per two week EMS placement – 2020



Base: 965. Q28. Approximately how much have you spent (or do you expect to spend) per two week pre-clinical, clinical (small animal) and clinical (farm/equine) EMS placement this academic year? (Please take into consideration all costs including travel, accommodation and living expenses).

## How to improve EMS

A majority feel the solution would be to **have fewer than the current 38 weeks** of EMS to complete:

**Fewer weeks** to complete over the entire degree

**Greater diversity** of placements

**Shorter length** of each individual placement

**Longer length** of each individual placement

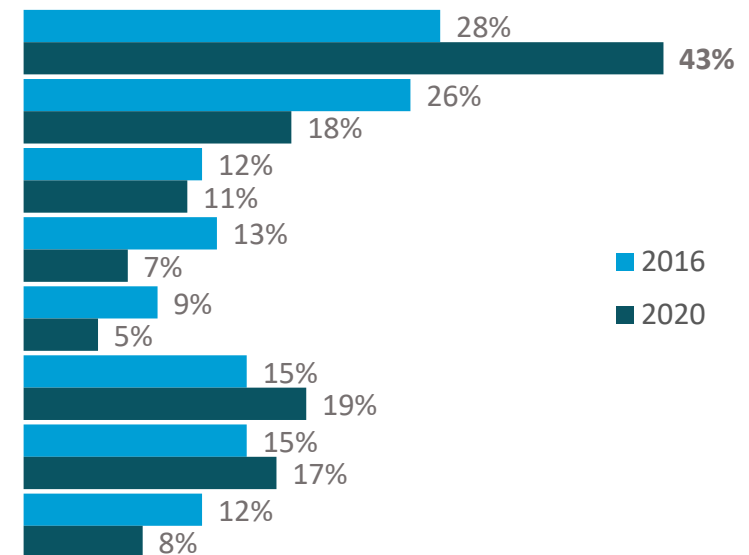
**More weeks** to complete over the entire degree

Undecided

Other

Nothing would improve my experience

Suggestions to improve EMS experience 2020





Students' career  
aspirations

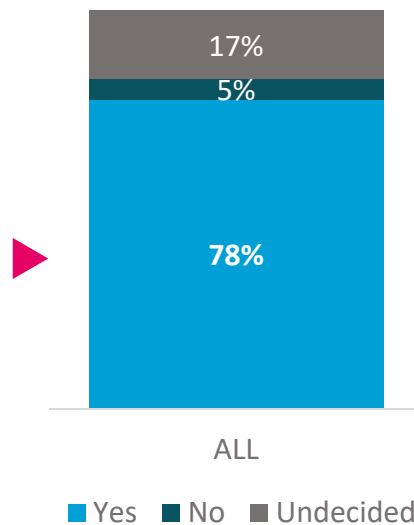


## Are universities preparing vet students for their careers?

► In the main, **YES**. Almost identical results to 2016.

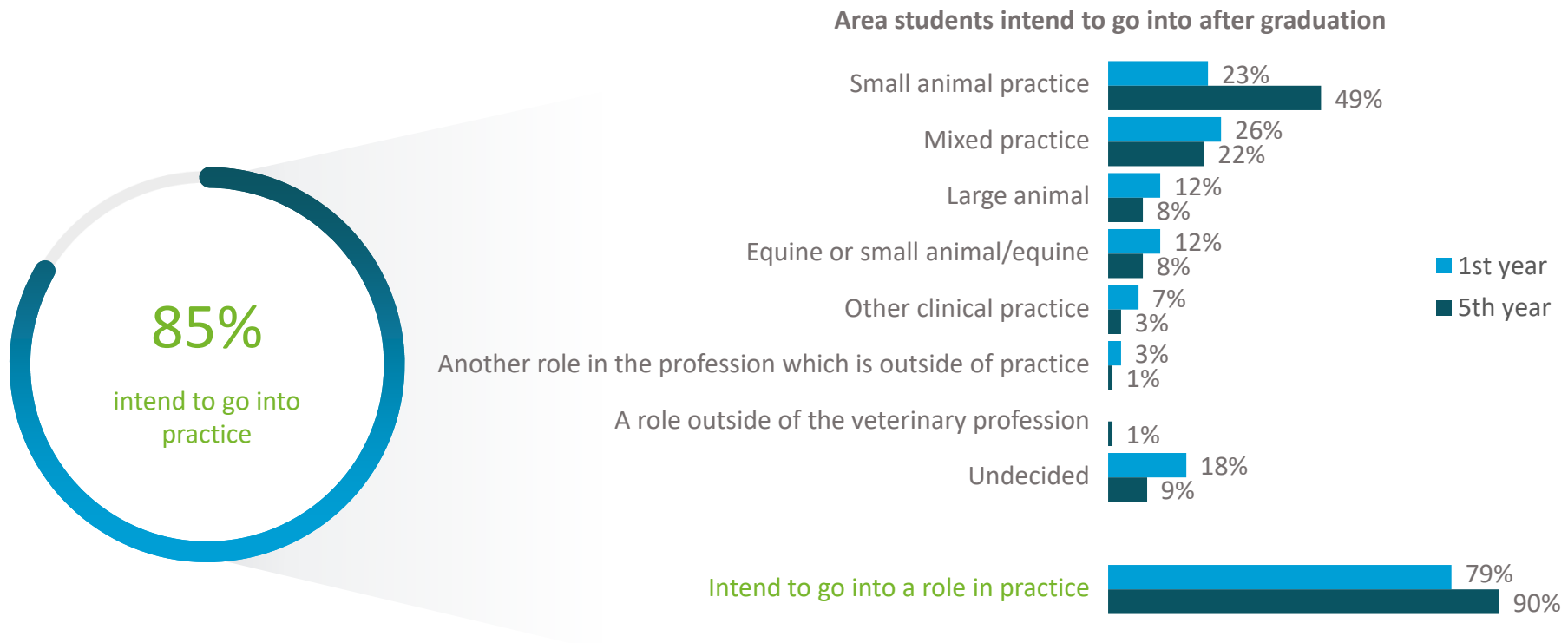
► What else could universities provide?

If course is preparing students for their career – 2020, by university



- More work/practical experience (43%)
- Opportunities to specialise (42%)
- Additional optional modules (41%)

## Students' intentions after graduating





NEH Internships – Why

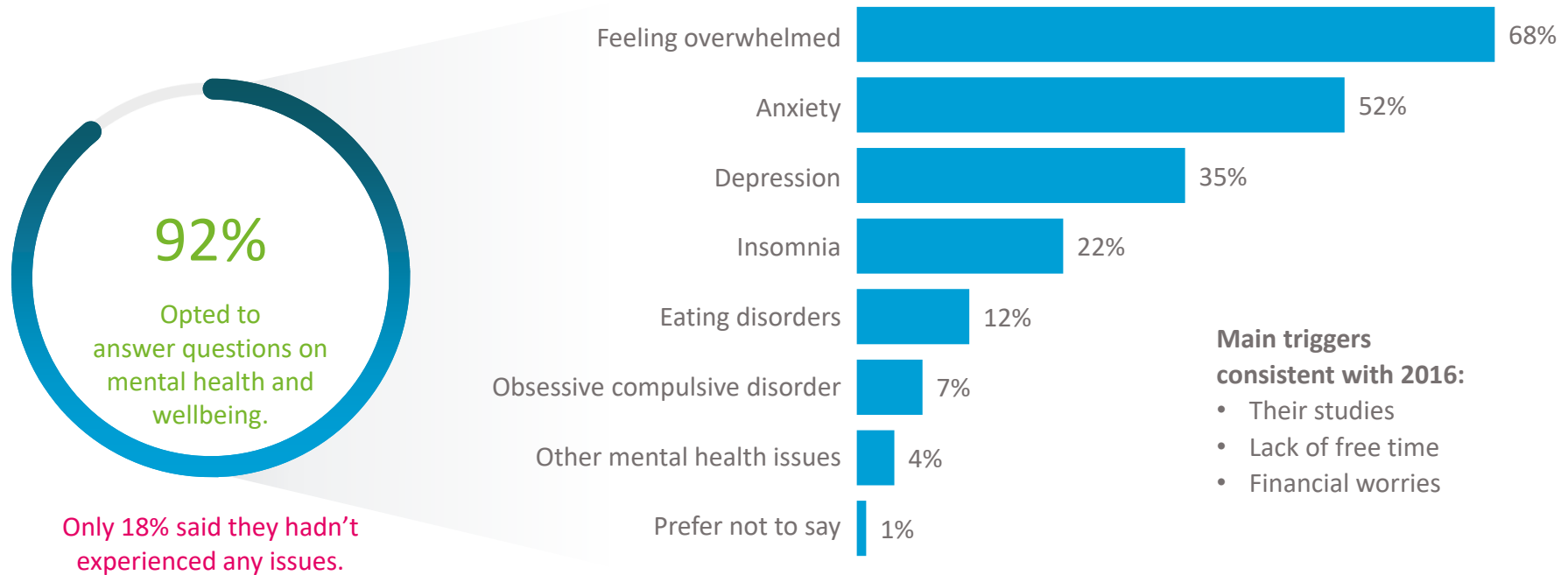
- "on-the-job training"
- Paid?
- Environment
  - University
  - Hospital
  - Industry
  - Research
- Future job opportunity

[www.nvh.ac.uk/internships](http://www.nvh.ac.uk/internships)

The slide also features two photographs: one of a person working in a laboratory setting and another of a group of people standing together outdoors.

Student welfare

## Mental health and wellbeing issues at university





## Support available to you



**vetlife**

Supporting the veterinary community  
Call **0303 040 2551**



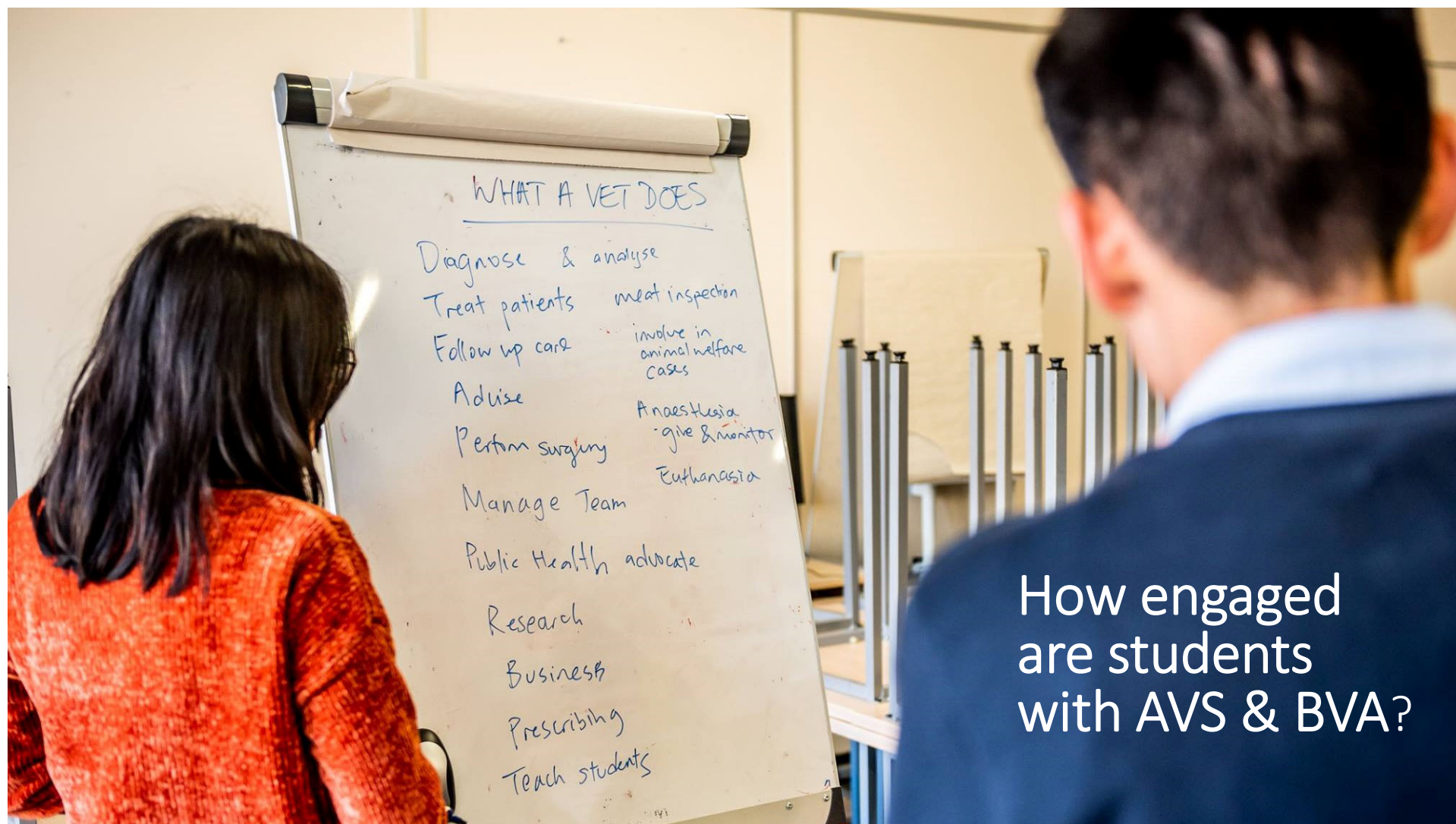
**Young Vet  
Network**

**SUPPORT**

Pastoral support team at your vet school

Your Vet School's VetSoc

**CALEDONIA**  
MARKET RESEARCH



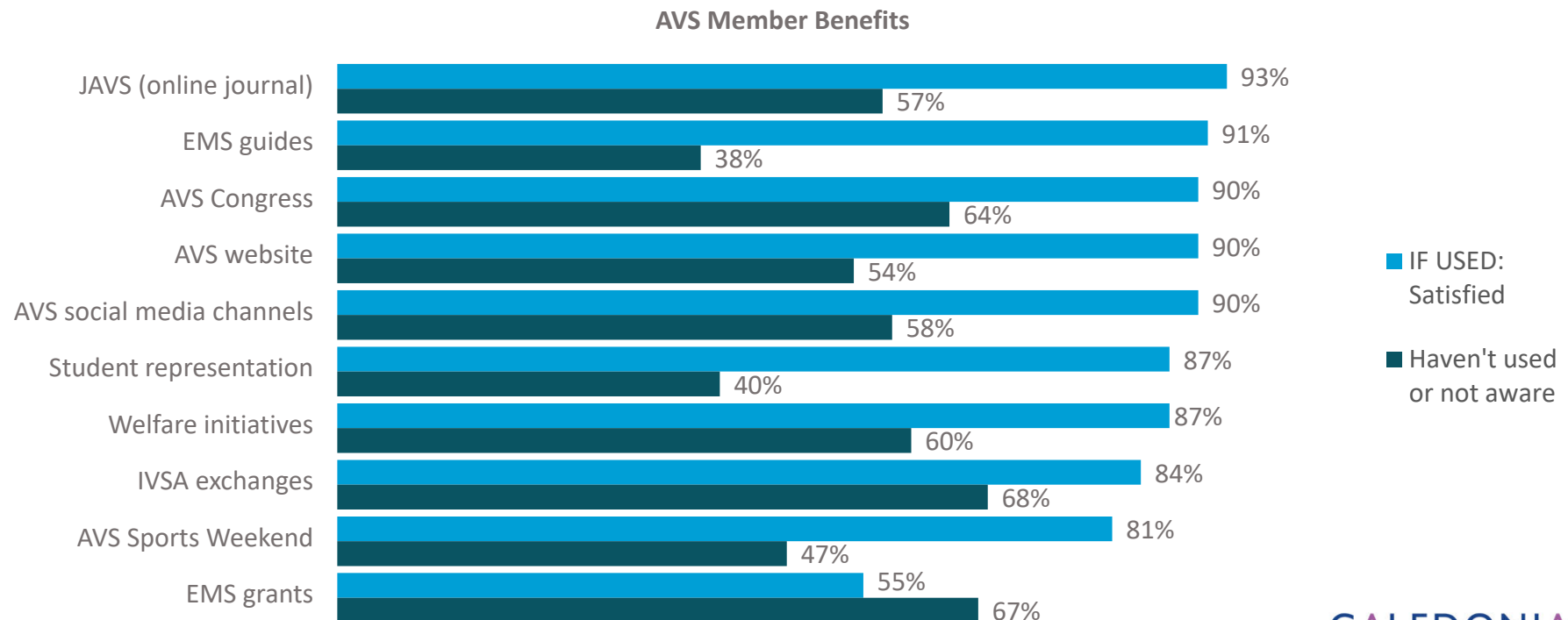
## WHAT A VET DOES

Diagnose & analyse  
Treat patients meat inspection  
Follow up care involve in animal welfare cases  
Advise  
Perform surgery Anaesthesia - give & monitor  
Manage Team Euthanasia  
Public Health advocate  
Research  
Business  
Prescribing  
Teach students

How engaged  
are students  
with AVS & BVA?

## Satisfaction with AVS membership benefits

**Satisfaction levels are high** for member benefits BUT so also is lack of awareness/usage



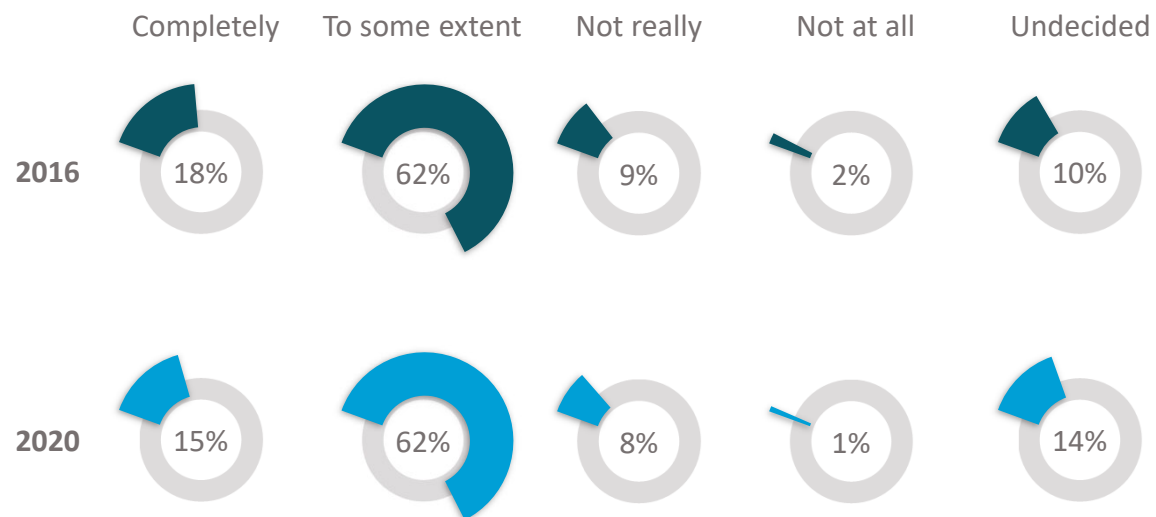
## Extent to which AVS fulfils its mission

**Very positive view from students:** over three quarters feel AVS fulfils its mission

**AVS mission:**  
*'to holistically **support** veterinary students through their studies, **represent** their views and interests and **engage** them in the wider issues facing the profession'*



AVS mission: Extent to which it is fulfilled 2016 versus 2020





# Views on BVA membership

## ► Why be a student member?

EMS insurance

Main reason for 40-50%  
of BVA student members

**76%**  
are BVA student members



40+  
guides



- World-class journals and guides
- BVA legal helpline
- Free personal accident insurance as a graduate
- BVA new graduate guide
- Free webinars from The Webinar Vet
- Graduate representation
- Young Vet of the Year Award
- VDS videos on topics such as handling complaints and personal resilience
- Access to exclusive partner discounts

Lloyd &  
Whyte



**CALEDONIA**  
MARKET RESEARCH

Base: 379 respondents, 392 coded responses. Q51. How could BVA student membership be improved? [Open text responses.]

25 Note: topics representing >5% of coded responses detailed in the table.

# Summary and conclusions



# Conclusions

## Average tuition fees

- Almost two thirds fund the fees via loans
- Family also plays a big part in funding of fees: 46% of international v 19% of home students

## As in 2016, almost half feel they have less money than they need for living expenses

- Average shortfall is £2,000
- Main funding sources for living expenses are: SLC, family donation, personal savings

## Part-time jobs are on the increase for vet students

- Big increase in proportion who work part-time to help fund all their costs – 50% in 2020, 38% in 2016, 25% in 2012

## Overall student debt stands at £70,000 for 5<sup>th</sup> year students

- Average debt for 1<sup>st</sup> years is £16,650

## Over three quarters of students feel their university is preparing them for their career

- Additional suggestions include: more hands-on experience, opportunities to specialise and additional optional modules

## AVS/BVA membership

- EMS insurance is the main reason for BVA student membership
- Over three quarters believe AVS fulfils its mission, completely or to some extent