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DUNDEE AND ANGUS  
COLLEGE

# Bryan Cameron

A D&A Spotlight Interview

## Resilience Rewarded: Bryan's Journey from Retail to Veterinary Nursing

Meet Bryan Cameron, an Animal Care student whose transition from the world of retail to achieving his dream of becoming a Veterinary Nurse, showcases resilience, perseverance and overcoming obstacles along the way.

### When you were younger? What did you dream of doing as a job?

*"I always knew I wanted to do veterinary nursing from a very young age. I did a week of work experience with Wallace Veterinary Centre in fourth year at school.*

*"During this time and having witnessed the care and compassion showed by the nurses, this made me keener to pursue my career in this field. I chose veterinary nursing as I felt I could bring a great deal of care and compassion to both pets and owners alike."*

### Can you share a bit about yourself and what you were up to when you first joined D&A?

*"I first joined Dundee and Angus College whilst working part time in retail. I worked in the same retail job for 12 years prior to joining the Animal Care course as a student. Working in retail gave me a lot of transferrable skills which I can now take on into my future career."*

### Thinking about your time at D&A, what are some standout moments or experiences that you still carry with you?

*"I have many stand out moments and experiences from my time at Dundee and Angus College that I carry with me. Academically my proudest achievement was when I was awarded my HNC Animal Care and that I am now on track to achieve my HND.*

*"A general stand out for me is the amount of support that has been given to me by all the Animal Care department. Having mild cerebral palsy has meant that I have had to find ways to adapt and change certain aspects of life. I always wondered how I would find College with this in mind, but I have*

*always been given the best support from the entire team whilst being given the same treatment academically as any other student at the College.*

*"They have really created the most inclusive and supportive learning environment to all their students. The inclusion and support have really made me feel that despite my challenges, I am able to achieve my dreams and work within an industry that I love a lot."*

**"Being here has made me want to advocate and support everyone I can in my future career, whether students are able bodied or otherwise. I believe the support at the College really does shape a student's confidence and self-belief."**

### How did your experiences at D&A lay the pathway for your career? Are there any classes or staff that set you on your path?

*"The courses cater to a wide range of areas within Animal Care, and they show a clear link between each level. This means that it can support a wide variety of students whether they want to pursue a career such as veterinary nursing or start a self-employed business.*

*"The main part of the course which has gone towards making my experience a positive one, is the support offered. The entire department make it possible for students to work towards both academic and personal growth goals, how they teach and treat their students really does contribute to the experience.*

*"The experience that I have had at D&A has inspired me to go onto study the BSc Hons Veterinary Nursing with SRUC in Aberdeen, and after some*

*time in practice, I would like to go into lecturing.*

*"This all comes back to the environment created by the Animal Care team; they really have inspired me with their passion and knowledge and made me want to pass my knowledge onto others after I have completed my degree and gained some experience.*

*"The staff that have really set me on my path are Craig for his continued support throughout College, Chris, Jade, and Kirsty have also really made me feel like I can achieve anything I set my mind to. Kirsty has supported me in finding small adaptations to my practice where my cerebral palsy is concerned. This allows me to still become a strong RVN in the future, whilst still having challenges. I carry these experiences and adaptations with me every day."*

**What were the first steps you took after finishing your course, and how did your time here shape your career choices?**

*"I am still in Animal Care now. I always knew I wanted to do veterinary nursing so I would need to complete each of the levels to get there, such as HNC and HND in Animal Care.*

*"As part of the requirements from university to gain 140 hours of clinical placement, the College has enabled me to keep my learning up-to-date and in line with what is required today for veterinary nursing.*

*"They have supported me to understand and see where I would fit into a clinical team. This has also given me the opportunity to take my in-class learning and see how that fits into a practical setting, as well as understanding what adaptations I would need to make whilst working as a veterinary nurse."*

**Where has your career taken you since those early days?**

*"My College career has taken me into an industry I would say I was never brave enough to jump into before.*

*"The support from the team has also played a massive role in my self-belief and kept my passion and fire alive.*

*"I will be forever grateful to Animals, Land & Environment even in years to come as I am now."*



**Looking at your journey so far, what are some moments or accomplishments that make you particularly proud?**

*"One day in practical, I had to clip a guinea pigs nails, but due to how my body can be at times with my cerebral palsy, I was struggling to position myself correctly and Kirsty Crouch helped me to adapt and find a way that meant I could still carry out the task.*

*"This simply involved adapting my stance, even though it is something small that I changed, I think of it every day. Especially due to the boost to my confidence it gave me. I still smile to this day when I think of it, so I will always be grateful to Kirsty for that."*

**If you could share a piece of advice with current students based on your experiences, what would it be?**

*"The one piece of advice that I would share would be to always believe in yourself, you can achieve anything you set your mind to, so long as you're willing to work hard despite any challenge.*

*"For me, my biggest critic is myself, but to other students it would be when things get difficult. Keep going and be kind to yourself in those moments where academic life can be taxing. Don't give up as you will always feel a massive sense of achievement in the end, and all the stress will be worth it.*

*“Use the support services and communicate openly with your lecturers as the Animal Care team are fantastic and always willing to support students where they can.”*



**“Anyone who is hesitant to take the leap into Animal Care, I would say 100% go for it. It has been the best experience of my life and shaped me in so many ways.”**

**What are your hopes for the future?**

*“I cannot thank Animal Care enough for giving me the passion to inspire the next generation of nurses.”*

*This is all down to the environment that has been created by the entire team. I would do it all again and would always be willing to teach back at the College in Animals, Land & Environment after I have qualified should the opportunity present itself.”*

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