Validation and evaluation of a virtual slaughterhouse simulator for training and educating veterinary students
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Background
An essential part of Veterinary Public Health (VPH) undergraduate training involves students undertaking placements within abattoirs. The goals of this project are twofold:
- To evaluate students’ acceptance and potential use of the Virtual Slaughterhouse (VS) as a teaching tool.
- To validate the VS simulator to teach basic abattoir procedures at veterinary schools as part of the VPH course.

Methods
Veterinary students engaged with two tasks on the prototype Virtual Slaughterhouse (VS) programme and then we evaluated the impact on their knowledge and behaviour when engaged with the same tasks in ‘real-life’ abattoir situation (figure 1).

Results
In all three surveys, students strongly agreed that the use of the simulator will be a useful teaching tool (Figure 2).

Conclusions
The preliminary results of this investigation show that there is the potential for the VS simulator to enhance the student learning experience in basic abattoir procedures. It also confirms that students are interested in new forms of teaching and learning and in particular the virtual simulator.

Acknowledgements
The Principal’s Teaching Award Scheme (University of Edinburgh) and The Moray Endowment Fund are gratefully acknowledged for funding this project. The Final Year Students of the BVM&S 2011/12 course that agreed to participate to this project.