University of Portsmouth Accreditation Event

University Centre Sparsholt April 2021

Report to the Veterinary Nurses Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)

Contents

List of RCVS Panel Members

Sally Bowden RVN, Educator Representative

Shirley Gibbins RVN, RCVS VN Qualifications Manager (Chair)

Victoria Hedges RVN, RCVS VN Examinations Manager

Carla Husband RVN, Student Representative

Kathy Kissick RVN, Employer Representative

Key Staff met

Emma Anscombe-Skirrow RVN, Veterinary Nursing Programme Lead University Centre Sparsholt

Jacquie Dowrick RVN, Internal Quality Assurer University Centre Sparsholt

David Franklin, Associate Dean Academic University of Portsmouth

Jo Garroway RVN, Veterinary Nursing Course Lead University Centre Sparsholt

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Caroline James, Dean of Higher Education University Centre Sparsholt

Sarah Jones MRCVS, Veterinary Nursing Academic Tutor University Centre Sparsholt

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India Shaw RVN, Internal Quality Assurer (HE) University Centre Sparsholt

Jess Watson MRCVS, Veterinary Nursing Academic Tutor University Centre Sparsholt

Anne Whitworth, Finance Director University Centre Sparsholt

Summary of the Panel's findings

- The University of Portsmouth (UoP), in conjunction with University Centre Sparsholt (UCS), submitted an application for re-accreditation of the following programme:

  FdSc Veterinary Nursing Science

- An online meeting took place on 28 & 29 April 2021 between the RCVS panel and representatives of both the University of Portsmouth and University Centre Sparsholt. It was not feasible for a site visit to take place due to the ongoing health and safety risk of Covid-19.

- The online accreditation process was well facilitated, with all relevant personnel available as required, and virtual tours prepared to assist with understanding of the facilities and resources.

- University of Portsmouth, in conjunction with University Centre Sparsholt, is to be **commended** for its ongoing commitment to the development of the above-named programme.

- University Centre Sparsholt is to be **commended** for its consideration of improvements made to delivery and assessment during the Covid-19 pandemic and how these changes can continue to improve provision.

- University of Portsmouth, in conjunction with University Centre Sparsholt, is to be **commended** for its commitment to improving diversity across its provision, and specifically the increase in diverse veterinary nursing students which is already evident.

- University Centre Sparsholt personnel are to be **commended** for their proactive and supportive approach to communication with all stakeholders during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- University of Portsmouth, in conjunction with University Centre Sparsholt, is to be **commended** for the innovative assessment methodologies incorporated into the above-named programme.

- The Internal Quality Assurance personnel at University Centre Sparsholt are to be **commended** for their ongoing development of policies and procedures following stakeholder feedback.

- There were no significant areas for improvement identified by the RCVS panel.

The findings in this report are based on the RCVS panel's review. The panel are not the decision makers, and their commendations, suggestions and actions may be subject to amendment during the committee process.

Programme details

Requirements	Details
Name of organisation awarding the licence to practise qualification	University of Portsmouth
Main address and contact details for the above organisation	University House Winston Churchill Avenue Portsmouth Hampshire PO1 2UP
Name of Principal or Chief Executive Officer	Professor Graham Galbraith
Name of Programme Lead	Emma Anscombe-Skirrow RVN
Proposed programme title	FdSc Veterinary Nursing Science
Address and contact details of proposed site/s for delivery of licence to practise qualification	University Centre Sparsholt Westley Lane Sparsholt Winchester SO21 2NF
Pattern of delivery	Three year programme with one year block release for placement, from January of year two to January of year three.
Intakes and student numbers	Approximately 40 per annum.

Standard 1 – Learning culture

The learning culture prioritises the safety of people, including clients, students and educators, and animals enabling the values of the Code of Professional Conduct to be upheld.

Education and training is valued and promoted in all learning environments, with diversity and inclusion at the forefront.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:		
Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
Demonstrate that the safety of people and animals is a primary consideration in all learning environments. *Evidence reviewed:* *Health and Safety Policy* *Risk assessments* *Staff Induction checklist* *SCH WP3 form* *Safeguarding Learners Policy and Procedures* *E-Safety and Online Communications Policy (Staff)* *Learner e-safety policy* *Staff e-safety policy* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* *IT Acceptable Use Policy* There are comprehensive induction processes in place for staff and students that address all aspects of health and safety, including e-learning updates. All risk assessments are up to date, although some need signing and dating. A lone working policy needs compiling to ensure that staff and students are aware that training practices (TP) and auxiliary training practices (aTP) must comply with Schedule 3 when allocating students onto practice rotas and OOH rotas. Under Schedule 3 students must be always be under delegated supervision and guidance. Additionally, the WP3 form needs updating to enable the staff to identify if students are expected to work as lone workers in the TP or aTP. It was unclear how risk assessments are provided to OSCE examiners; this process must be reflected within the relevant paperwork.		✔
Prioritise the wellbeing of people. *Evidence reviewed:* *Staff appraisal tracker* *Staff wellbeing hub screenshots*	✔	

Student wellbeing Ledge page screenshots *Wellbeing Information for Students Nov 2020* *Provision of dedicated study space during lockdown* *Hardship funding request form* *Staff Charter and Code of Conduct* *HE Student Charter* Comprehensive opportunities are available for both staff and students to engage in wellness, wellbeing, mental health support and mindfulness sessions. There are clear links within the teaching sessions to Mind Matters and opportunities timetabled where TPs and Clinical coaches (CC) are assisted with work/life balance/ resilience and sustainability training within the CC training days.		
Ensure that facilities and physical resources, including those used for clinical learning, comply with all relevant legislation including UK animal care and welfare standards. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP lists with risk assessments* *Inventory of clinical equipment and consumables* *Risk assessments* *SCH WP3 form* *Student feedback* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* The recently renovated and expanded Veterinary Nursing Centre will enable timetabling to embrace split groups for practical sessions, and some theory sessions, and will enable the students to take ownership of their teaching resources and facilities. New equipment and consumables have been budgeted for, ensuring that the practical teaching sessions are up to date. POM-V guidance/risk assessments need to be completed, where intravenous fluids and other POM-Vs are used, to ensure clarity for all staff and examiners.		✓
Ensure clients have the opportunity to give, and if required withdraw, their informed consent to students being involved in the care of their animals. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* Students, staff, and TPs are all aware of the need to keep clients informed about the student involvement in the care of their animals.	✓	
Promote client, public and animal safety and welfare and maintaining confidentiality. *Evidence reviewed:* *Data Privacy Statement for Veterinary Practices v2* *Confidentiality GDPR students to sign* *Data Protection Policy March 18*		✓

Content		
TP Approval form *Job descriptions* *Data Privacy Policy for Veterinary Practices* This requirement was well covered within the TP Approval form. Job descriptions were presented for all staff but were generic rather than pertinent to the individual role within the Veterinary Nursing teaching team, thus not demonstrating this specific requirement.		
Ensure students and educators understand how to raise concerns or complaints and are encouraged and supported to do so in line with local and national policies without fear of adverse consequences. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement Handbooks* *Programme handbook* *Complaints and other Feedback Management Policy Higher Education* *Duty to Act Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure* *Safeguarding Learners Policy and Procedures* *HE Student Rep meeting minutes 2020-21* An excellent 'Welcome to HE Vet Nursing' PowerPoint was provided demonstrating a clear approach to undergraduate veterinary nursing training. The complaints policy covered generic aspects of raising a complaint, however, a more detailed section in the student handbook regarding help and support from the University would further support the student if they needed to make a complaint.	✔	
Ensure any concerns or complaints are investigated and dealt with effectively, ensuring the wellbeing of people and animals is prioritised. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Fitness to Practise meeting minutes 250220* *Complaints and other Feedback Management Policy Higher Education* *Safeguarding Learners Policy and Procedures* *HE Student Rep meeting minutes 2020-21* Good evidence that complaints and concerns are investigated promptly and dealt with effectively as well as disseminated to the relevant staff. Fitness to practise is incorporated into teaching and learning and discussed during tutorials annually.	✔	
Ensure mistakes and incidents are fully investigated and learning reflections and actions are recorded and disseminated. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Academic Performance Policy* *Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy* *Examination and Assessment Regulations- UoP Collaborative courses*	✔	

Complaints and other Feedback Management Policy Higher Education *Safeguarding Learners Policy and Procedures* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Fitness to Practise meeting minutes 250220* Mistakes and incidents that may occur in practice are discussed and reflected upon in weekly team meetings. Actions are recorded and disseminated to relevant staff and TP staff.		
Ensure students are supported and supervised in being open and honest in accordance with the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement handbooks* *Teaching and Learning Observation (TALO) examples* *Programme Handbook* Practices of concern are discussed in weekly team meetings and students are signposted, in their placement handbooks, on how to raise a concern that they may have with their practice placement. Tutors and College staff are available to support students.	✓	
Ensure the learning culture is fair, impartial, transparent, fosters good relations between individuals and diverse groups, and is compliant with equalities and human rights legislation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Single Equality Scheme* *HE Freedom of Speech Code of Practice* *SEND policy Current at time of submission but outdated* *SEND Policy – subject to approval by Governors March 2021* *Access and participation plan* *TALO example* *Evidence of DSA availability* Some excellent work has been undertaken by the senior management team at UCS to meet agreed targets for underrepresentation on the veterinary nursing courses. The trend indicates that they are becoming role models in fostering effective methods of managing underrepresentation of diverse groups, for which they are to be commended.	✓	
Advance equality of opportunity through effective use of information and data. *Evidence reviewed:* *RCVS HEI Report FdSc VNS 2021 FINAL* *FdSc VN EE Report 2019-20* *EV FdSc VN RCVS Audit 2019-20* *VN BOS Cribsheet Dec 2020* *ASQER FdSc VNS 1920*	✓	

VN Weekly team meeting minutes (HE standardisation specifically) *Student feedback* *TP feedback* *UCS ASQER 201920* *UoP ASQER Sparsholt-UoP 2019-20* *APP report to Governors Feb 2021* *Access and Participation plan (APP)* *Module Evaluation Report template* HE meetings and weekly team meetings ensure that the loop is closed when work placement response feedback is collated. Responses are reflected upon and feedback is initiated and disseminated to the students and staff in work placement.		
Work to promote inter-professional education and inter-professional practice and support opportunities for research collaboration. *Evidence reviewed:* *Ethical Review Policy* *Guest speaker list* *Guest speaker form* *Copy of AIR ethics tracking sheet and project titles* The veterinary nursing team promotes the attendance of relevant CPD that will advance each member of staff. There are direct links between the veterinary nursing team and the animal science team for research collaboration. There is some evidence of scholarly activity and published papers, articles, and chapters by members of the veterinary nursing team.	✔	
Promote evidenced-based improvement in education and veterinary nursing practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Evidence of Scholarly activity* *HE Quality Enhancement Policy* *HE Scholarly Activity Policy* *Guest speaker list* *Guest speaker form* *Copy of AIR ethics tracking sheet and project titles* *Module handbooks* Evidence based improvements and evidence-based practice are referenced within the timetabled teaching and the assessments. New modules reflect the modern advances in veterinary nursing and the research assessments will enable students to progress to publishing articles and speaking at veterinary nursing conferences.	✔	
Conclusion:		

Education and training is valued by all the stakeholders and students and placement providers are supported with enhanced communication via blogs, NPL updates and tutorials. A placement conference day has been arranged to further support the clinical coaches and placement staff with the emphasis on wellbeing and sustainability. Remote teaching and engagement with students has allowed the staff to be innovative in their approach to teaching and learning and it is commendable that many of the additional communication strategies and increased feedback opportunities will continue post – Covid.

Pre study weeks and student interviews ensure that the students are supported and supervised from the beginning of their veterinary nursing training.

This standard has been met.

Suggestions:
    a. Review the student handbook to reference where student support for making complaints can be provided.

Actions:
    a. All risk assessments to be signed and dated.
    b. Detail how OSCE examiners are provided with risk assessments within relevant paperwork.
    c. Provide a policy and procedure for the procurement, storage and use of POM-Vs on campus, which must include a risk assessment.
    d. Lone working policy to be developed to ensure that students are always working under delegated supervision and guidance when undertaking Schedule 3 procedures.
    e. Update the WP3 form to identify if students will be expected to work on their own in training practice placements.
    f. Job descriptions to be updated and made specific to the roles within the veterinary nursing team.

Standard 2 – Governance and quality

There are effective governance systems that ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements and clear lines of responsibility and accountability for meeting those requirements.

All learning environments optimise safety and quality, taking account of the diverse needs of, and working in partnership with, students and all other stakeholders.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:		
Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
Comply with all relevant legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements. *Evidence reviewed:* *QAA report* *RCVS UoP Actions Jan 2021 COMPLETE* *Governors Report on Current HE performance (Nov 2020 version and Feb 2021 version)* *OfS Registration decision 2018* *TEF Gold Statement of Findings* *HE Strategy 2020-2025* *MoU AssocCollAgrmnt Sparsholt College 2016-2021* *Student Protection Plan 2020/21* *OSCE Action Plan UCS Response 18 Feb 21* *RCVS HEI Report FdSc VNS 2021 FINAL* *Fdsc VN EE Report 2019-20* *EV FdSc VN RCVS Audit 2019-20* *ASQER FdSc VNS 1920* *Access and Participation plan (APP)* Evidence shows that UCS is maintaining currency in all key aspects of the programme management. Evidence does not fully reflect the commitment to address underrepresentation, but upon further exploration at the event the commitment to this policy is evident via ambitious targets that are being met, cohort profiles and the integration of the policy at every level of management.	✔	
Provide all information and evidence required by regulators in a timely manner i.e. within published timescales. *Evidence reviewed:* *RCVS HEI Report Fdsc VNS 2021 FINAL* *RCVS UoP Actions Jan 2021 COMPLETE* *OSCE Action Plan UCS Response 18 Feb 21*	✔	

Application for Accreditation UCS April 2021 UCS has demonstrated commitment throughout the accreditation process. It has maintained regular contact with the RCVS and has completed relevant actions in a timely manner.		
Ensure programmes are designed to meet RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA Veterinary Nursing Benchmarks and outcomes relevant to the programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Mapping of DoS DoC to modules* *R0326F Vet Nursing Consolidated Mapping Document* *R0326F Vet Nursing Hallmarks checklist* Mapping documents provided with the application are clear and demonstrate compliance. The course structure enables appropriate time allocation to fulfil requirements relevant to the programme.	✔	
Comply with the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *Module handbooks* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *TALO examples* There is a link to the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct in each placement handbook, however, it was felt that the reference to this key document was somewhat superficial and could be integrated further through the documents to encourage awareness and development of good professional practice. There is no guidance or signposting for students or clinical coaches in their respective handbooks regarding clinical governance, reflection on cases or protocols in the event of making errors in practice.	✔	
Comply with the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules. *Evidence reviewed:* *R0326F Vet Nursing Course Specification* *Course structure* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *Mapping of DoS DoC to modules* *Module handbooks* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* The programme facilitates a sufficient number of training hours both on programme and in a Training Practice. There is leeway for "catch up" hours of up to four weeks without disruption to the graduation date. Fitness to practise is repeatedly confirmed throughout the programme.	✔	

Adopt a partnership approach, with shared responsibility, evidenced by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Accredited Education Institution and the delivery site and between the delivery site and the Training Practice. This must be regularly reviewed and clearly stipulate the roles, responsibilities, and regulatory requirements. *Evidence reviewed:* *Memorandum of Understanding* *Approval Doc 2020 Cross Mapping* *MoU AssocCollAgrmnt Sparsholt College 2016-2021* *Placement Handbooks* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* The relevant MOUs were deemed to be clear and fit for purpose, with some minor amendments suggested throughout this report.	✔	
Ensure that recruitment, selection and retention of students is open, fair and transparent and includes measures to understand and address underrepresentation. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Admissions Policy* *RPL Policy* *Access and Participation Plan 2020-2025* *HE Fitness to Study Policy* *Social media video for applicants* *On demand open event Vet Nursing Science* The evidence did not fully reflect the commitment to address underrepresentation, but upon further exploration at the event the commitment to this policy is evident. Recent adaptations to protocol have proven successful including cessation of routine face-to-face individual interviews, given the difficulty of such events in recent times with Covid-19 and the fact that experience has shown such events serve no useful purpose. Irrespective of this, there remains sufficient information available in a variety of platforms and in a range of formats to enable prospective students to access information. Individual interviews are still available should that be appropriate. This approach must be reflected within the HE Admissions Policy. At present, the RCVS Guidance for Admission of Students with Disabilities is referenced within programme documentation, however, this guidance is no longer current and is not available from RCVS. The relevant documentation must be updated to reflect this.	✔	
Have entry criteria for the programme that includes evidence that the student has capability in numeracy, literacy and science, written and spoken English and mathematics to meet the programme outcomes. *Evidence reviewed:* *College website*	✔	

Current prospectus *R0326F Vet nursing Course Specification* Whilst the academic requirements for entry criteria are fit for purpose, there is currently no mention of work experience on the website. It is understood this is related to the Covid-19 pandemic, where more leeway and flexibility have been necessary, and the requirements are negotiated and explained to applicants on an individual basis.		
Provide students with the information and support to enable them to demonstrate fitness to practise including the disclosure of any criminal convictions that may affect registration with the RCVS as qualified veterinary nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *HE Admissions Policy* *Termly individual tutorial schedules* This requirement is confirmed upon initial admission and checked again upon return to campus following the placement year. It is suggested that this could be discussed more regularly with students throughout the programme.	✔	
Demonstrate a robust process for recognition of prior learning (RPL). *Evidence reviewed:* *RPL application form* *RPL application completed example* *RPL Policy* The RPL policy is robust and fit for purpose, with an example referenced, demonstrating its effectiveness.	✔	
Provide students with the information and support they require in all learning environments to enable them to understand and comply with the relevant governance processes and policies. *Evidence reviewed*: *Course Handbook* *Placement Handbooks* *Module handbooks* *Welcome to HE Vet Nursing with recordings* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Student code of conduct* There was evidence of vastly improved communication and support from the IQA team, which was affirmed during the student interviews, and had previously been determined an area for improvement. However, strengthening of the advice for	✔	

students wishing to raise concerns, or those who have made an error should be considered.		
Have robust, effective, fair, impartial and lawful fitness to practise procedures to swiftly address concerns, and where appropriate notify the RCVS, as Regulator, about the conduct of students that might compromise public and animal safety and protection. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course Handbook* *Fitness to Study* *Placement Handbooks* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Student Code of Conduct* *Exit award* *HE Academic Performance Policy* *Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy* *Examination and Assessment Regulations UoP Collaborative courses* The academic policies and procedures are clear and fit for purpose. Whilst this requirement is mostly met, the Fitness to Practise Policy does not reference the requirement for disclosure to the RCVS in the event of an adverse finding by the AEI's own process. This must be addressed.		✔
Confirm that students meet the required programme outcomes in full and are eligible for academic and professional award. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Student Code of Conduct* *Exit award* *Placement handbooks* *Programme Handbook* *HE Academic Performance Policy* *MAB and BOE minutes* This requirement was well evidenced with clear mapping of the RCVS Day One Skills and Competences (DOC/DOS). The exit award has now been retitled to reflect the non-registerable nature of the qualification.	✔	
Regularly review all learning environments and provide assurance that they are safe, effective and fit for purpose. *Evidence reviewed:* *Health and Safety Policy* *Risk assessments* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* *Student feedback*		✔

University of Portsmouth has been unable to carry out on-campus reviews of the site and facilities at University Centre Sparsholt following the normal cycle, due to Covid-19 restrictions. This was discussed during the accreditation event and it has been confirmed that this will shortly be resuming.		
Appoint appropriately qualified and experienced people for programme development and delivery. *Evidence reviewed:* *Staff CVs and CPD records* *Generic job description head of centre* *Generic job description IQA* *Generic job description lecturer* *Recruitment Guidance* *Shortlisting Protocol* The recruitment approach is clear and well managed, with an effective methodology utilised for ensuring only appropriate candidates are interviewed. There have been ongoing difficulties with recruiting appropriate External Examiners, which is not unique to this provision. UoP is currently reviewing its recruitment criteria for this post and is required to submit the approved document.	✔	
Where an Accredited Education Institution is not yet fully accredited, or at the discretion of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee, facilitate the attendance of the RCVS at the trial/mock OSCE/practical assessment at least one year in advance of the final summative assessment taking place for the relevant cohort of students. *Evidence reviewed:* *OSCE Action Plan UCS response 18 Feb 21* The programme is fully accredited and the OSCEs have been audited in line with normal procedures.	✔	
Where an Accredited Education Institution plans to make any changes to its provision, including assessment, the RCVS must approve all changes prior to implementation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Module delivery feedback* *Module Evaluation Report Templates* Extensive discussions and action planning with the RCVS have taken place over the past 24 months to demonstrate the AEI's commitment to ensuring due and proper process.	✔	

Provide evidence that adequate market demand and finances are in place and are sufficient to sustain and develop the programme and have been approved by the Higher Education Institution or Awarding Organisation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Annual report and accounts 2019-20* *FdSc Vet Nursing costing and contribution model* *Sparsholt VFM 2019-20* *HE Strategy 2020-2025* Initiatives and research across various educational providers, pertaining to market research and recruitment, were discussed at length during the event. Increasing student numbers and healthy application numbers demonstrate demand and the evidence thus far from the AEI's modelling strongly suggests this will continue. Feedback from current Training Practices during standardisation events suggests satisfaction levels are sufficiently high for them to continue to accept students. A significant amount of financial resource has been utilised to continue to develop the veterinary nursing provision and the panel were reassured that the programme remains financially viable.	✓	

Conclusion:

Evidence provided, and further discussions during the accreditation event, suggest that compliance with legal, regulatory, professional, and educational requirements is very good. Where there are weaknesses, such as the embedding of the Code of Professional Conduct and related procedures, there are relatively straightforward solutions. The panel felt the programme representatives showed openness and positivity to changes from all involved across the areas and levels of and responsibility for instigating these changes.

Overall, there was good evidence that the safety and quality of learning environments has been steadily improving. Monitoring and quality systems have of course been compromised somewhat by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, but it was felt by the panel that this has been managed extremely effectively. In fact, some processes have improved as a result, notably remote communications with the Training Practices.

This Standard has been met.

Suggestions:
   a. Review handbooks to further embed the Code of Professional Conduct, guidance on clinical governance and error handling.
   b. Continue to maintain and strengthen the communication links built up during the Covid-19 protocol between the University and the Training Practices.
   c. Take opportunities throughout the programme to reiterate the importance of declaring criminal convictions at the earliest opportunity.

Actions:

    a. RCVS Guidance on admission of students with disabilities must be removed from all documentation as this is no longer current.

    b. Update HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students to reference disclosure to RCVS.

    c. Update HE Admissions Policy to reflect the change regarding interviews and recruitment approaches.

    d. Report of University of Portsmouth on-campus review of University Centre Sparsholt campus and facilities to be provided as soon as this process has resumed.

    e. External Examiner Recruitment Criteria to be provided once approved.

Standard 3 – Student empowerment

Students are provided with a variety of learning opportunities and appropriate resources which enable them to achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses and programme outcomes and be capable of demonstrating the professional behaviours in the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses.

Students are empowered and supported to become resilient, caring, reflective and lifelong learners who are capable of working in inter-professional teams.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure that all students:		
Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
Are well prepared for learning in theory and practice having received relevant inductions. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE WP4 Form- Student Induction* *UCS Guide 2020-21 MAR* *VN FdSc Induction/Pre-study outline* *Programme Step Up to HE- Sept 2021 draft* *Flying start assignment 2020-21* *Placement Handbooks* New handbooks have been developed in order to provide students with all of the necessary information and guidance they need for the course and placement. The use of the 'Flying Start' assignment facilitating the step up to HE and the	✔	

development of scientific writing capabilities was agreed to be an excellent feature of the induction process. Students are provided with comprehensive information in relation to the final OSCE including entry criteria, timetables and access to scenarios and marking schemes.		
Have access to the resources they need to achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks, and programme outcomes required for their professional role. *Evidence reviewed:* *Inventory of clinical equipment and consumables* *Sparsholt College Library Veterinary Resources 2021* *AMC Inventory Summary* *Ledge homepage* *Example Ledge page* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* The TP approval report assesses whether the TP provides resources for the students including relevant textbooks. Students have good access to some supporting texts, e-books, and journals via the library. UCS is also investing in models for clinical learning, to help with practical teaching and OSCE examinations. The Veterinary Nursing Centre is a well-equipped space, providing students with the facilities and resources to develop their skills whilst not in practice.	✔	
Are provided with timely and accurate information about curriculum, teaching, supervision, assessment, practice placements and other information relevant to the programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Student Communications Covid* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *Welcome to HE Vet Nursing with recording* *Placement Handbooks* *Weekly timetables* Communication had been noted as an area for improvement during previous accreditations and during discussion with students, however, it is evident that the communication has improved throughout the years, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. TPs and CCs have access to information in the handbooks provided and evidence of communication has improved after feedback. The delivery team are to be commended for their ability to communicate in a timely and effective manner during the pandemic and are encouraged to maintain the approaches adopted.	✔	
To work with and learn from a range of people in practice placements, preparing them to provide care to a range of animals with diverse needs.	✔	

Evidence reviewed: *TP Annual Report 2021 V2.1* *Placement Handbooks* A range of guest speakers are utilised to encourage inter-professional learning. The programme team also make use of external learning opportunities, such as pet crematoria and veterinary hospitals, which are visited in conjunction with the relevant theory. The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) team have developed an excellent witness statement proforma, allowing students the opportunity to learn from a variety of professionals in practice.		
Are enabled to learn and are assessed using a range of methods, including technology enhanced and simulation-based learning appropriate for their programme as necessary for safe and effective practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement Handbooks* *Assessment Schedules* *Module Handbooks* The use of technology enhanced and simulation-based learning and assessment has increased dramatically due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which UCS is keen to continue. UCS is commended for its ongoing review regarding which adaptations will remain within the delivery and assessment methodology.	✔	
Are supervised and supported in clinical placement learning in accordance with RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement handbooks* *Evidence of placement support* *TP lists with risk assessments* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* The evidence provided clearly demonstrated compliance with this requirement.	✔	
Are supervised according to their individual learning needs, proficiency and confidence. *Evidence reviewed:* *Tutor and exams summary form* *Example Student Group Profile* *Supporting Veterinary Nursing students with 'hidden disabilities' and learning differences.* *HE Academic Performance Policy* *Placement Handbooks* *DSA Availability*	✔	

Considerable effort is put into tailoring students' needs to the most suitable TP; if there are any students with specific learning needs this is always taken into account. CCs have extra support available as necessary, and the inclusive approach demonstrated by UCS is to be commended.		
Are allocated and can make use of supported learning time including blended learning and recording completion of RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nursing when in practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement Handbooks* *MOU* *Weekly timetables* The blended learning provision is another element of the programme which has improved due to the Covid-19 pandemic; this is another area which will persist moving forward. Some TPs do make allowance for recording of the DOS in practice, however, this is neither encouraged nor monitored by UCS at present. TP paperwork must be amended to fully reflect this requirement.		✓
Are assigned and have access to a nominated academic tutor/lead for each part of the education programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *VN Staff list 20-21* *Termly individual tutorials* *Weekly timetables* Students have access to a dedicated tutor for each academic year. Each tutor has time factored into their contact hours for tutorials and student support.	✓	
Have the necessary support and information to manage any interruptions to the study of programmes for any reason. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Student transfer Policy* *HE Regulations for Withdrawal and Suspension of study* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Course Handbook* The process for this was not entirely clear based on the review of the documentation, however, during the event it became clear that a stringent process is in place. It is therefore recommended that the relevant policies be reviewed in order to ensure students have access to the correct advice and guidance during this difficult process.	✓	

Have their diverse needs respected and considered across all learning environments. *Evidence reviewed:* *Single Equality Scheme 2020-24* *Student feedback* *Disability guidance for TPs* *Evidence of DSA availability* *Examination and Assessment Regulations- UoP Collaborative courses* A proactive approach is taken by all personnel in order to accommodate this requirement.	✓	
Are provided with support and adjustments in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Examination and Assessment Regulations- UoP Collaborative courses* *Single Equality Scheme 2020-24* *Student feedback* *Disability guidance for TPs* *EC Criteria* *Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) guidance* *Evidence of placement support* *Evidence of DSA availability* This requirement was mostly well evidenced, however, the OSCE policy referenced reasonable adjustments as extra reading time only, without consideration of other reasonable requests. This policy needs to be reviewed to ensure that other requirements and learning needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.		✓
Are protected from discrimination, harassment and other behaviour that undermines their performance or confidence. *Evidence reviewed:* *Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure* *Complaints and other Feedback Management Policy Higher education* *Single Equality Scheme 2020-24* *Student Code of Conduct* *Student feedback for end of placement support* The University culture is clearly one of support and inclusion. Whilst out in the TPs, students are provided with opportunities to disclose concerns relating to this requirement, which would allow the programme team to support the student, as necessary.	✓	

Are provided with information and support which encourages them to take responsibility for their own mental and physical health and wellbeing. *Evidence reviewed:* *Promonitor screen shot* *Wellbeing Drop-in Sessions example emails to students* *Wellbeing Top-tips example emails to students* *Student wellbeing Ledge page screenshots* *Student feedback* UCS makes an exceptional effort to try and empower students to look after their own mental health and wellbeing.	✔	
Are provided with the learning and pastoral support necessary to empower them to prepare for independent, reflective professional practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Programme Step Up to HE Sept 2021 draft* *Flying start assignment 2020-21* *Study Coach lesson outline plan* Whilst it was agreed that this requirement is already well met, further suggestions were made by the RCVS Student Representative which the programme team agreed would add further opportunities for development in this area.	✔	
Have opportunities throughout their programme to collaborate and learn with and from other professionals, to learn with and from peers, and to develop supervision and leadership skills. *Evidence reviewed:* *Guest speakers* *Assessment examples* *Placement Handbooks* The current approach of utilising enrolled students as study coaches was commended; these students are generally in their third or fourth year and thus have the experience to help new students. Additionally, students have opportunities to develop these skills through formative and summative assessment methodologies.	✔	
Receive constructive feedback throughout the programme to promote and encourage reflective learning. *Evidence reviewed:* *Student feedback* *TP Feedback* *Flying Start Assignment* *Assessment examples* *Examples of Post IV samples*	✔	

Students are provided with various feedback opportunities, assessment support and group tutorials which all promote this aspect of the Standards. Whilst it was discussed that formative feedback decreases across the duration of the programme, the delivery team have determined that this promotes independent learning.		
Have opportunities throughout their programme to give feedback on the quality of all aspects of their support and supervision in both theory and practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Student feedback* *Minutes of the HE Student Association meetings 2020-21* Robust evidence was provided to demonstrate the approaches taken for this requirement, as well as evidence of actions being implemented where possible.	✔	
Are empowered to develop their professional behaviours in line with the RCVS Professional Behaviour Evaluation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement Handbooks.* *NPL sampling* This aspect of the DOS is already embedded; however, the RCVS panel suggested the rationale and requirement for this is explained in more detail to both CCs and students.	✔	

Conclusion:

Overall, this Standard was well evidenced and is considered a key part of provision. It was very clear that all UCS staff consider students' wellbeing and the learning culture.

The support from the IQA team has been outstanding, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the students have seen an improvement in communication. The teaching team have shown real dedication to providing students with the most up to date and relevant teaching pedagogies, as well as utilising innovative assessment methodologies. Stakeholder feedback is actively sought and actioned where possible, and it is clear that this programme is providing an opportunity for future veterinary nurses to feel empowered in the profession and develop the necessary skills to succeed.

This Standard has been met.

Suggestions:
a. Maintain improved approach to communications to students whilst on placement and throughout the course.
b. Review the wording of the withdrawal and suspension policy.
c. Encourage students to lead the tutorial sessions and use the GROW model to reflect and become independent practitioners.
d. Encourage the use of the professional behaviour evaluation more in tutorials. This can be discussed in CC training and the NPL clinic.

Actions:

    a. Amend the paperwork provided to TPs to reflect the requirement of recording DOS whilst in practice, including MoU, handbooks, and TP approval documents.

    b. Review OSCE policy referencing reasonable adjustments for specific learning requirements on a case-by-case basis.

Standard 4 – Educators and assessors

Theory and clinical learning, and assessment are facilitated effectively and objectively by appropriately qualified and experienced professionals with necessary expertise for their educational and assessor roles.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure that all educators and assessors:		
Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
Are appropriately qualified and experienced and always act as professional role models. *Evidence reviewed:* *Staff CVs and CPD records* *Staff Charter and Code of Conduct* *TALO Protocol* *TALO tracker* *TALO examples* Peer lesson observations are encouraged and monitored, ensuring that good practice is shared, and the correct clinical content is incorporated into the sessions. Staff CPD requirements are discussed at staff performance interviews and staff are supported by the College with their RCVS registration and professional CPD requirements.	✔	
Receive relevant induction, ongoing support, education and training which includes training in equality and diversity.		✔

Evidence reviewed:	✔	
OSCE examiner training with notes		
Staff Induction Checklist		
Vet Nursing Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) Induction Process		
Appraisal- academic staff pre-appraisal form		
Appraisal form		
Probationary review 3 and 6 month		
Probationary Final report		
Staff appraisal tracker		
Staff CVs and CPD records		
Staff are fully supported in their first months of teaching with adequate time given for lecture preparation, to shadow other staff and to access their mentor. The Code of Professional Conduct is incorporated into the modules and learning outcomes, but further examples of how it is embedded into teaching and learning through lesson observation feedback would further enhance compliance with this requirement. Staff performance interviews are evident, however the staff appraisal tracker needs updating.		
CPD provision is exemplary, and staff are encouraged to submit personal CPD requests to meet professional and personal needs and aspirations. In preparation for the need to reflect on their professional CPD it is recommended that staff are encouraged to formally reflect on all their CPD.		
UCS also detailed plans for a Coaching Conference later in the academic year, providing an opportunity for ongoing support and development from UCS staff as well as experienced CCs.		
Have their diverse needs respected and considered and are provided with support and adjustments in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Health and Safety policy* *Staff Induction checklist* *Staff wellbeing hub screenshots* *Single Equality Scheme 2020-24* Staff are well supported by the College and University and it is clear that they will be supported post Covid with flexible working opportunities to ensure a good work / life balance.	✔	
Have supported time and resources to enable them to fulfil their roles in addition to their other professional responsibilities. *Evidence reviewed:* *Staff timetables*	✔	

Staff time allocations *Memorandum of Understanding* *Termly individual tutorial schedules* Senior management team have supported the VN team with additional staffing appointments and are considering a proposal submitted by the team for a VN technician / instructor. This would further enhance the team by giving additional support in the VN clinical building, support with resource management within the VN building and with some administrative work.		
Respond effectively to the learning needs of individuals. *Evidence reviewed:* *Evidence of DSA Availability* *Student wellbeing Ledge page screenshots* *Minutes of HE Student Association meetings 2020-21* *Student feedback* *Termly individual tutorial schedules* *Clinical Placement Records* *Example Group Student Profile* Individual learning plans are implemented for all learners and are regularly reviewed and actioned by the VN team. Learning styles are reviewed at the beginning of each academic year with all groups but it is recommended that this could be further improved with a review of updated learning styles and emotional intelligence methodologies.	✓	
Are supportive and objective in their approach to student supervision, assessment and progression and appropriately share and use evidence to make decisions on student assessment and progression. *Evidence reviewed:* *Promonitor screen shot* *Copy of VN1 Assessment Schedule (for 2021-22)* *Copy of VN2 Assessment Schedule (for 2021-22)* *Copy of VN3 Assessment Schedule (for 2021-22)* *Termly individual tutorial schedules* *RCVS HEI Report FdSc VNS 2021 FINAL* *VN weekly team meeting minutes* *OSCE documents for Procedure document* *Examples of Post IV samples* *Covid assessment documents* *Placement Handbooks* Weekly team meetings ensure that decisions can be made on individual student progress for both classroom and clinical placement requirements.	✓	

Liaise, collaborate and action constructive feedback generated by colleagues, students and stakeholders to enhance their teaching assessment and to share effective practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *EE reports and responses 2016-2019* *RCVS UoP Actions Jan 2021 COMPLETE* *OSCE Action Plan UCS response 18 Feb 21* *Exam Questions Guiding Principles* *Level 4 & 5 Grading Criteria* *Student feedback* *TP feedback* *Feedback from external consultant* Feedback from placement providers, the external examiner and a VN consultant has been discussed and actioned to ensure continuous improvement to teaching and assessment and the resources. Good practice has been actioned following feedback from the external examiner and the VN consultant.	✔	
Are expected to respond effectively to concerns and complaints about public protection, animal welfare and student performance in learning environments and are supported in doing so. *Evidence reviewed:* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Fitness to Practise example* *Safeguarding Learners Policy and Procedures* *Complaints and other Feedback Management Policy Higher Education* Responses are timely and effective with thorough documentation. Termly newsletters and an active Facebook page also disseminate information to the practices which support students on placement.	✔	
Ensure the programme lead is a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) who has substantial experience of veterinary nurse education and training at a suitable level for the qualification(s) being delivered and holds a recognised teaching qualification. *Evidence reviewed:* *CV & CPD records* The programme lead is well supported by the senior management team and colleagues, and is professionally qualified and supported with the opportunity to engage in additional leadership and management CPD. It is suggested that the University Centre Sparsholt develops a succession plan to ensure that it identifies and develops future leaders at all levels for the VN programmes.	✔	
Conclusion:		

University Centre Sparsholt, as validated by the University of Portsmouth, facilitates effective and objective theory and clinical learning and assessment. The VN team are appropriately qualified and experienced professionals and the team have the necessary expertise for their educational, assessor and leadership roles.

This standard has been met.

Suggestions:
   a. Encourage staff to reflect on all CPD.
   b. Review learning styles and emotional intelligence methodologies and develop an updated coherent framework to disseminate to all staff.
   c. A succession plan is developed for the VN team to ensure that the University of Portsmouth is prepared for all contingencies in the future by preparing high potential workers for advancement.

Actions:
   a. Provide further TALO examples to demonstrate embedded CoPC across a range of modules and tutors.
   b. Provide an updated appraisal tracker.

Standard 5 – Curricula and assessment

Curricula and assessments are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and validated to ensure that students achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks for Veterinary Nurses (for HE) and outcomes for their approved programme.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure:		
Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
Curricula are mapped and fulfil the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks for Veterinary Nurses and programme outcomes. *Evidence reviewed:* *Mapping of DoS DoC to modules* *R0326F Consolidated Mapping Document* *R0326F Vet Nursing Hallmarks checklist* *R0326F Vet Nursing Course Specification* The curricula are fully mapped to the DOC/DOS and the programme outcomes; however, an outdated version of the QAA Benchmarks has been referenced. This must be reviewed and amended, as necessary.		✔
Programmes are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and improved based upon stakeholder feedback. *Evidence reviewed:* *RCVS HEI SAR previous years* *Periodic Collaborative Partnership and Programme Review Report 2020* *UoP validation confirmation Oct 2020* *Module Evaluation Report template* *RCVS HEI Report FdSc VNS 2021 FINAL* *FdSc VN EE Report 2019-20* *EV FdSc VN RCVS Audit 2019-20* *VN BOS Cribsheet Dec 2020, March 2021* *ASQER FdSc VNS 1920* *VN weekly team meeting minutes* *Student feedback* *TP feedback (for programme changes)* *UCS ASQER 201920* *UoP ASQER Sparsholt UoP 2019-21* *Feedback from external consultant* *RCVS UoP Actions Jan2021 COMPLETE*	✔	

OSCE Action Plan UCS response 18 Feb 21 *Module delivery feedback* *EE reports and responses 2016-2019* There was clear evidence of stakeholder feedback which has been actioned to continue to improve this programme, particularly with reference to the updated modules. OSCE stations are developed by the veterinary nursing team. There is some input from students, although it is also advisable to involve CCs to ensure that the skills assessed, and equipment used remain relevant to contemporary veterinary nursing practice.		
Curricula remain relevant in respect of contemporary veterinary nursing practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Mapping of DoS DoC to modules* *Module handbooks* *FdSc VN EE Report 2019-20* The RCVS panel were in agreement that the updated programme was current and relevant, with excellent facilities available to practise nursing skills in a safe way. UCS has invested in clinical models to aid this. However, some equipment, such as the X-ray machine, is outdated, and consideration should be given the replacing it with a digital X-ray machine. Additionally, it was suggested that the module reading lists could be updated to reference relevant journals.	✔	
Curricula and assessments weigh theory and practice learning appropriately to the programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course structure* *Mapping of DoS Doc to modules* *Module handbooks-* *Vet Nursing Course Specification* There is sufficient theory and practical training demonstrated within this programme.	✔	
Curricula provide appropriate structure and sequencing that integrates theory and practice at increasing levels of complexity. *Evidence reviewed:* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *Mapping of DoS DoC to modules* *Module handbooks- industrial experience* *Course structure* *Weekly timetables*	✔	

This programme clearly demonstrates learner progression through increasingly complex assessments, which fully assess the intended learning outcomes.		
Curricula and assessments are structured and sequenced to enable students to manage their theory and practice learning experience effectively, with progression determined at appropriate points. *Evidence reviewed:* *Assessment schedules* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *Mapping of DoS Doc to modules (including assessments)* *Module handbooks* *MAB and BOE minutes* *Placement 2021 Record of Sampling* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Handbook appendices and forms 2021* The planned delivery for this programme is appropriate and should enable students to manage all requirements effectively.	✓	
A range of appropriate assessments are delivered, within the educational setting, to accurately measure the knowledge, skills and understanding outlined in the programme. At least one summative assessment must be in the form of an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) or similarly robust, objective and evidenced-based form of practical examination to test the safe and effective acquisition of a broad range of skills and competences outlined in the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *Examples of assessment material* *OSCE documents* *Student Examination Guidelines Covid 19 2021* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *Student feedback* *Mapping of DoS and DoC to modules (for assessment strategy and rationale)* *Consolidated Mapping Document* *Module handbooks* *Covid assessment documents* All of the assessments were deemed to be fit for purpose, with the programme team being commended on the innovative approach they have taken. UCS delivers a ten-station OSCE circuit as the summative assessment within the Veterinary Nursing Industrial Placement Module. Students must complete each station within 6 minutes.	✓	
Students are assessed practically across clinical placement settings and learning environments as required by their programme.	✓	

Evidence reviewed: *Placement 2021 Record of Sampling* *NPL HE QA Validation Form 2021* *Sampling Mapping 2020 Placement* *Examples of assessment material for ADT ICA and STPA portfolio* *NPL sampling* Practical assessment is well facilitated on campus and is robustly monitored in the TP setting.		
Processes are in place to establish a high degree of validity and robustness to support the decisions made based on the results of the assessment. *Evidence reviewed:* *Level 4 grading criteria FINAL* *Level 4 Presentations grading criteria FINAL* *Level 5 grading criteria FINAL* *Level 5 Presentation grading criteria FINAL* *Examination assessment protocol* *Examination and Assessment Regulations- UoP collaborative courses (including appeals procedure)* *Examples of Post IV samples (including feedback to students)* Policies and procedures are in place demonstrating the validity and reliability of the assessments, including those required for the OSCE. RCVS carried out a quality monitoring visit in 2020 to view the OSCEs. UoP is currently working through an action plan in relation to that visit. There was a minor concern over the approach taken to sampling the Nursing Progress Log (NPL), which did not demonstrate the rationale for increased sampling of some students. Whilst it was discussed that this approach had occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and it therefore only appeared that some students had been sampled more frequently, there was no reference to this approach in any of the documentation. The rationale for this approach, including a plan for future contingencies as necessary, must be provided.		✓
Moderation processes are in place and demonstrate that assessment is fair, reliable and valid. *Evidence reviewed:* *Internal moderation documents* *Examination and Assessment Regulations- UoP collaborative courses (for moderation protocols)* *FdSc VN EE Report 2019-20* *MAB and BOE minutes* *Exam Questions Guiding Principles* *Examination assessment protocol* *Placement 2021 Record of Sampling*		✓

There were minor discrepancies identified in the moderation paperwork provided for review; it is suggested that a standardised formatting is utilised to avoid confusion. Additionally, a variety of referencing methods were utilised and accepted within different assignments, however, this allowance was not indicated within the briefs, which must be rectified.		
Mechanisms are in place to minimise bias in all assessments. *Evidence reviewed:* *Examination assessment protocol (for invigilator not of own modules)* *OSCE Documents.* *Examples of Post IV samples (including feedback to students)* Mechanisms are in place to minimise bias within all assessments.	✓	
Adjustments are provided in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation for assessments in theory and practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *ECCriteria* *HE Fitness to Practise Policy for Veterinary Nurse Students* *Examination and Assessment Regulations- UoP collaborative courses* *Single Equality Scheme 2020-24* *SEND Policy Mar20-1* This requirement was well evidenced, although, as detailed previously in this report, further consideration must be given to a variety of reasonable adjustments.	✓	
Clinical placement assessment is facilitated and evidenced by observations and other appropriate methods. *Evidence reviewed:* *Evidence of placement support* *Sampling Mapping 2020 Placement* *Placement 2021 Record of Sampling* *NPL HE QA Validation form 2021* *NPL sampling* *HE CC Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Handbook appendices and forms 2021* There was clear evidence that this requirement is met, however, no evidence was provided of CCs being observed in the placement setting. The panel therefore questioned how the IQA team were satisfied that those observing the students on a regular basis, i.e., the CCs, were themselves clinically competent. Evidence of effective observations of CCs must be provided.		✓

Students' self-reflections contribute to, and are evidenced in, assessments. *Evidence reviewed:* *Module handbooks* *HE CC Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Handbook appendices and forms 2021* *NPL samples* This requirement was well evidenced across a variety of assessment methodologies.	✔	
There is no compensation between assessments that address the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *Module handbooks* *R0326F Vet Nursing Course Specification* *MAB and BOE minutes* None of the assessments covering the DOC/DOS are compensated.	✔	
Ensure modules/units that address the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses include unseen examination as an element of the assessment strategy. *Evidence reviewed:* *Mapping of DoS and DoC to modules* *Module handbooks* All modules covering the DOC include an element of unseen assessment.	✔	

Conclusion:

The programme has been extensively redeveloped during the last academic year and the new programme looks to be contemporary, effective and will truly train students to become competent, independent, reflective practitioners. The variety and innovation of assessment methodologies is to be commended, as these approaches will provide students with relevant experience to draw upon once qualified.

In relation to the OSCE, UCS has in place policies and procedures to ensure the validity and reliability of the OSCE. The team intend to review the current processes to ensure that they are relevant remain relevant to contemporary veterinary practice.

This Standard has been met.

Suggestions:

a. Include CCs in the ongoing development and review of the OSCEs.

b. Reference current journal within reading lists.

c. Standardise moderation/IV paperwork, to include font, spacing and amount of feedback.

Actions:

a. Review currency of QAA Benchmarks and amend, as necessary.

b. Provide a rationale and policy for increasing the sampling of a student's NPL.

c. Provide clarity in assignment briefs regarding referencing requirements, including the accepted methods and validity timeframe.

d. Generate a plan to complete observations of CCs in practice and provide evidence of completed examples.

Standard 6 – Effective clinical learning

All students are provided with safe, effective and inclusive clinical learning experiences. Each clinical learning environment has the governance and resources needed to deliver education and training. Students actively participate in their own education, learning from a range of people across a variety of settings.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:		
Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
Ensure clinical learning facilities are adequate to support and deliver the RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1 (for approval and monitoring due to lack of visits)* *Clinical placement records* *TP lists with risk assessments* *Inventory of clinical equipment and consumables* Following recent investment and regeneration, clinical learning facilities on campus are very good. However, it was felt by students that there was some room for improvement for preparation for practice placement, with regard to confidence with handling dogs and cats and basic clinical skills such as preparation for blood sampling, cannulation, and fluid therapy.	✔	
Ensure students are enrolled with the RCVS prior to undertaking clinical placement (in order to comply with legislation). *Evidence reviewed:* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* All students are enrolled with RCVS prior to undertaking clinical placement.	✔	
Ensure students are actively learning and adequately supervised in all clinical learning environments. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP Approval Report* *Clinical Placement records* *NPL Sampling* *HE CC Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Handbook appendices and forms 2021*	✔	

Placement 2021 Record of Sampling Protocols and policies are in place and the information supplied in the Handbook and at standardisation events ensures CCs are well aware of their role and requirements. The number of hours per week to enable students to learn, reflect and track their NPL in practice is not recorded anywhere, although anecdotally, the IQA staff find that time is allocated to students in any case. The requirement to address this inconsistency has been indicated previously within this report.		
Ensure clinical learning environments are provided for every student, within a RCVS listed training practice or auxiliary training practice, for a minimum duration of hours as stipulated in the RCVS Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP Approval Report* *Clinical Placement records* *HE CC Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Handbook appendices and forms 2021* *Placement 2021 Record of Sampling* Attendance records were provided for the students and clinical coaches to evidence numbers of hours. It was noted that there were no written secondment agreements in place, which must be rectified.		✓
All students must have sufficient time within the programme to achieve the Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules hours requirement. *Evidence reviewed:* *Veterinary Nursing Programme Handbook* *Programme Specification* *Course structure* The programme facilitates a sufficient number of training hours both on programme and in a Training Practice. There is leeway for "catch up" hours of up to four weeks without disruption to the graduation date. In the event of extended absence, this is dealt with on an individual basis at the time, in conjunction with all parties involved. Additionally, the UCS team have made extra time available, within the academic year, to students whose placements have been disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which will not affect progression to graduation.	✓	
Ensure all students are allocated a clinical supervisor responsible for confirming competency of RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses. All clinical supervisors must be RVN or MRCVS (UK practising), be experienced and able to demonstrate an experienced level of clinical skills and ongoing professional development.	✓	

Evidence reviewed: *TP lists with risk assessments* *Memorandum of Understanding (for providing a clinical supervisor)* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1 (for CC details, CV and CPD)* *HE CC Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* This requirement was well evidenced and clearly communicated to all CCs.		
Maintain accurate records of student clinical learning environment attendance and provide these to RCVS upon request. *Evidence reviewed:* *Clinical placement records* Student attendance was well documented.	✓	
There must be sufficient TP support available for all recruited students. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP lists with risk assessments* *Memorandum of Understanding* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* Currently there is a sufficient number of TPs to support the student numbers, however, there was extensive discussion at the event regarding the future plans to increase student numbers and the ability to recruit further TP support. UCS have factored this into their planning for the provision. TP reviews have been disrupted during the past year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but there is good evidence of increasing support being provided to TPs and it was felt by the panel that the IQA and tutorial team had managed this very difficult situation well. The panel was confident that live visits to the practices will resume and any delays will be managed appropriately as soon as the situation allows.	✓	
Ensure that training practices either hold a primary affiliation with the Accredited Education Institution itself or its delivery site, or, where the training practice is to hold a secondary affiliation, that the training practice also holds a primary affiliation elsewhere and is an RCVS listed practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP lists with risk assessments* *Memorandum of Understanding* All TPs being utilised are RCVS listed TPs and are monitored appropriately.	✓	

Ensure that where a secondary affiliated training practice is used there is a Memorandum of Understanding and robust communication between the Centre responsible for the secondary affiliated training practice and the Accredited Education Institution. *Evidence reviewed:* *Communication template with centres* *Placement document tracker* *Memorandum of Understanding* There was insufficient evidence of requests for placement in secondary affiliated TPs and it was not clear that the suitability of the TP is checked in a robust way. This must be addressed.		✔
Be compliant with the RCVS standards framework for veterinary nursing education, including clinical requirements for all periods of learning undertaken outside the UK and comply with all relevant legislation and UK animal care and welfare standards (including the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966). *Evidence reviewed:* **N/A**		
Ensure clinical learning experiences are tailored to the student's stage of learning, competences and programme outcomes. *Evidence reviewed:* *CC training and standardisation* *HE CC Industrial Placement Handbook 2021 for progress indicators* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* Students are well supported across the duration of the provision with clear guidance on suggested targets and progress dependent on their specific level of ability.	✔	
The veterinary team contribute to learning in the clinical environment in accordance with the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct. *Evidence reviewed:* *CC training and standardisation* *HE CC Industrial Placement Handbook 2021 for progress indicators* *HE IQA Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *HE Student Industrial Placement Handbook 2021* *TP Approval Report 2021 V2.1* There is clear encouragement for TPs to use the wider practice team when training students, with effective witness statements available to document this	✔	

support. As detailed previously, the RCVS panel were in agreement that the link to the Code of Professional Conduct could be embedded in a more robust way.

Conclusion:

Evidence supplied and discussion at the event demonstrated to the panel that students are provided with a variety of learning opportunities and appropriate resources facilitating achievement of the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses.

Student support has improved dramatically, which has in part come about due to the increased requirement for remote contact during the Covid-19 pandemic. The panel felt strongly that this improvement should be sustained when working practices become more normalised, especially as the students themselves report a vast improvement. The AEI has already recognised this and plans to continue the current protocol.

Students appeared relaxed and happy in their respective practice teams and reported feeling confident once settled. Some indicated that they would be interested in becoming clinical coaches, which points to good modelling by their own mentors. However, the common theme amongst them regarding weaknesses in the programme was focussed on practical preparation for their placements, specifically handling dogs and cats and commonly encountered clinical skills. Consideration should be given to this finding with a view to strengthening this and making more meaningful use of the excellent animal and clinical facilities available on campus.

Overall, the current system supports and encourages students well, with the team driving some positive changes to improve it further.

This Standard has been met.

Suggestions:
   a. Identify ways to strengthen practical preparation for placement.
   b. Embed the use and integration of the Code of Professional Conduct more formally at checkpoints like audits and tutorials. Consider including this as subject matter for standardisation events.

Actions:
   a. Provide evidence of requesting student placements in non-affiliated TPs, as well as the checks conducted in this scenario.
   b. Provide secondment agreements for all auxiliary TPs accommodating students on this programme.