Veterinary Nurses Council
Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 10.00am to be held remotely by Microsoft Teams

Agenda	Classification[1]	Rationale[2]
1. **Apologies for absence**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2. **Declarations of interest**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3. **Obituaries**	Unclassified	n/a

4. **Minutes of meeting held on 28 February 2024**
    i.   Unclassified minutes
    ii.   Classified appendix
	Unclassified
	Confidential
		n/a
		1,2,3,4

5. **Matters arising**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
6. **CEO update**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
Matters for decision by VN Council and for report (unclassified items)		
7. **Review of the RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training**	Unclassified	n/a
8. **VN Education Committee**		

8.01 Minutes of meeting held on 14 February 2024
    i.   Unclassified minutes
    ii.   Classified appendix
	Unclassified
	Confidential
		n/a
		2,3

8.02 Minutes of meeting held on 16 April 2024
    i.   Unclassified minutes
    ii.   Classified appendix
	Unclassified
	Confidential
		n/a
		2,3

9. **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)** Minutes of the meeting of the CPD Policy and Compliance sub-	Unclassified	n/a

	committee held on 15 April 2024		
10.	**Report on registration of VNs educated outside the UK**	Unclassified	n/a

Matters for note

11.	**Report on temporary student enrolments**	Unclassified	n/a
12.	**Reports from RCVS Committees**		
	12.01 RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual Report	Unclassified	n/a
	12.02 Standards Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
	12.03 Advancement of the Professions Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
	12.04 RVN Disciplinary Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
13.	**Communications report**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
14.	**Policy and Public Affairs update**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
15.	**VN Council membership** 15.01 Confirmation of membership 15.02 Thanks to retiring members	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
16.	**Any other business (unclassified)**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
17.	**Date of next meeting**	Oral report Unclassified	n/a

	Confidential and private items (closed session)		
18.	**Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2024/2025**	Oral report	
19.	**Continuing Professional Development (CPD)** Update from CPD Policy and Compliance sub-committee	Confidential	4
20.	**VN Education Committee (VNEC) confidential items**		
	20.01 Confidential items from meeting of 14 February 2024 (see item 8.01 classified appendix)	Confidential	2,3
	20.02 Confidential items from meeting of 16 April 2024 (see item 8.02 classified appendix)	Confidential	2,3
	20.03 Appointment of Educator member of VNEC	Confidential and Private	1,5
21.	**Risk Register** 21.01 Update on changes since the previous meeting 21.02 Items identified from the meeting to add to Risk Register	Confidential Oral report	1,2,3,4
22.	**Items for RCVS Committees**	Oral report	
23.	**Strategic Focus discussion**	Oral report	
24.	**Any other business (confidential items)**	Oral report	
	Annette Amato Secretary, VN Council 0207 202 0713 / a.amato@rcvs.org.uk /		

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
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Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

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	2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation
	3. To protect commercially sensitive information
	4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council held on 28 February 2024
Summary	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 28 February 2024
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes and classified appendix
Attachments	Classified appendix **(confidential)**
Author	Annette Amato

Secretary

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Classifications

Document	Classification[1]	Rationales[2]
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	**Confidential**	1,2,3,4

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Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held at the Royal College of Nursing, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN, on Wednesday 28 February 2024

Members:

Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	Chair
Miss Jessica Beckett	
Miss Linda Belton	Officer Team observer (non-voting)
Mrs Anita Bickerdike	
Miss Alison Carr	
Mrs Susan Howarth	Vice-Chair
Mr Tim Hutchinson	
Mrs Katherine Kissick	
Mrs Donna Lewis*	
Mr Matthew Rendle	Vice-Chair
Ms Stephanie Richardson	
Mr Simon Williams	
Miss Holly Witchell	
Professor James Wood*	

*Denotes absent
^Denotes remote

In attendance:

Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
Mr Luke Bishop	Media and Publications Manager
Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
Miss Shirley Gibbins	VN Qualifications Lead
Mrs Tash Goodwin Roberts^	Veterinary Nursing and UK Graduation Lead (open session only)
Ms Abi Hanson	Media and Publications Officer
Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead
Ms Lizzie Lockett	Chief Executive
Mrs Jill Macdonald	VN Futures Project Lead
Mr Ben Myring	Policy and Public Affairs Manager

Guests: *(open session only)*

Mr Josh Loeb	*BVA Publications*
Ms Charlotte Lai	*Student observer*
Miss Lacey Pitcher	*VN Times*

Apologies for absence

1.   Apologies for absence had been received from Donna Lewis and James Wood.

Declarations of interest

2.   There were no new declarations of interest.

Obituaries

3.   No written obituaries had been received. Council, staff and guests stood to observe a minute's silence for all members of the professions who had passed away since the last meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2023

4.   The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising

5.   There were no matters arising on the previous Minutes.

CEO update

6.   Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) had been provided with a paper from the CEO that offered a summary of activity against the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, as submitted to RCVS Council 18 January 2024. The CEO drew attention to further activities that had taken place since the report had been completed.

7.   The RCVS had now moved premises to another WeWork co-working office, following the closure of the Cursitor building, and the digital and services teams had done a wonderful job in carrying out the move as seamlessly as possible. The new premises at Waterhouse Square were just a few minutes away from the former workspace, and it was hoped that the RCVS would remain there until the permanent headquarters at Hardwick Street were ready later in the year. The Employer's Requirement document (brief for those tendering for design and build work) for Hardwick Street was currently being drawn up to provide the full details of the works required.

8.   Another major project being undertaken was the update to the Customer Relation Management system (CRM), which was currently in the discovery phase, involving a series of workshops. The Chief Digital Officer would be happy to provide an update on the project to VN Council if required.

9.   The RCVS had received the highest number of nominations (14) for the VN Golden Jubilee award since it was introduced in 2011. A paper with details of the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for the 2024 recipient would be considered in the confidential session of the meeting,

10.   The annual fee renewal process for veterinary nurses had gone well.

11.   Since the previous meeting of VNC, the second meeting of the Public Advisory Group (PAG) had taken place to continue to develop advice for animal owners, to be placed on the RCVS website, on how to get the best out of interactions with vets and veterinary nurses in the practice. The third meeting would be held towards the end of March.

12.   The Mandatory Practice Regulation Working Group had been formed, with Jessica Beckett and Anita Bickerdike from VNC joining the group, as well as Belinda Andrews-Jones in her capacity as Chair of the Practice Standards Committee. The group also included vets and veterinary nurses from other areas and external stakeholders including the British Veterinary Association (BVA). The date for the first meeting would shortly be set.

13.   The 2024 Surveys of the Veterinary and Veterinary Nurse Professions had recently closed, and the initial analysis would prioritise workforce-related data.

14.   The process of developing the new Strategic Plan was now underway. The first section of work would involve gathering data and ideas, followed by refining and prioritising the ideas, and ensuring the necessary legal framework was in place. Committees and VNC would be invited to participate in the process at their May meetings. Actions were still ongoing in the last year of the current plan.

VN Council – Governance reform

15.   The Policy and Public Affairs Manager presented a paper on the reform of Veterinary Nurses Council governance, which had been developed based on discussions by VNC at its November meeting. The paper outlined a number of detailed options for the reform of VNC's governance, in tandem with the discussions on governance of RCVS Council.

19.   At its November meeting, VNC had indicated its preferences on a number of key questions related to the reform of its governance. It had agreed that:
      a) There should be a greater use of independent appointment rather than election.
      b) There should be a move towards closer parity between professional and lay members of VNC.
      c) Options to reduce the size of VNC should be considered.
The paper set out specific models based on these areas on which decisions could be made, which would ultimately lead to the choice of a single model by VNC to put forward for recommendation.

20.   It was noted that the proposed reform models did not include a mix of appointed and elected members. RCVS Council had made the decision in principle to replace elected members with appointed members, and the paper suggested that it would therefore arguably be inappropriate for RCVS Council to continue to have veterinary nurse members who had been originally elected to VNC. For the purposes of the paper the assumption had been made that all members would be appointed. One member queried this assumption and urged that the consultation document should include the options for some elected members as well as appointed members.

21.   There was further discussion around the points covered in the paper, with views expressed and reiterated around the main subject areas. Points made included:

22. **Appointments**

- Engagement with the current election system was very poor, with misconceptions about the role. It was felt that the appointment system would help to achieve better engagement, as the criteria would be clear. Applicants would be aware of what would be expected of them, whereas the election process was for a general role.

- If the move towards appointed rather than elected members was publicised correctly, with the rationale for different areas of representation being clearly explained, it was felt that this would not be viewed negatively by the profession.

- The appointment system would help to clarify the profession's vision of what was expected, and increase engagement, by pointing out the value of bringing a range of skills and experiences to the table. Clear communication would be key.

- The importance of targeting the correct skills and experience was reiterated by many members, and to publicise widely and encourage applications. The wording would need to ensure that all relevant groups were targeted. The appointment criteria and role requirements would need to be very clearly set out.

- Council should be very much involved in working out the skills that were needed.

- The DoVN reassured Council that the previous appointment process for the two current appointed RVN members had been rigorous. Posts had been advertised, with clear criteria. There had been 23 applicants. The process had been conducted independently.

23. **Size.** It was noted that regulatory boards usually consisted of 10-12 members, with the most recent model (for social workers) having only six members. The current membership of VNC was 14 members. Comments on size and balance of members (professional and lay) included:

- The size needed to be sufficient that all members could be fully engaged, and their skills and experience could be utilised. If this could be achieved the size could be reduced.

- The size needed to be such that all bases of the profession were covered.

- It was important that any regulatory body should be diverse, including both occupational and locational diversity. The Council size needed to be sufficient to ensure this diverse representation and proper discussion, bearing in mind that full attendance at each meeting cannot be guaranteed.

- If the size of Council was reduced with a consequent reduction in the number of professionals, there was a concern that in order to maintain VN numbers, the number of vets would be reduced from two to one. However, as VNC also had an RCVS Council Officer team observer, and VNC worked in a collaborative way, there would still be the veterinary surgeon input and perspective.

- If the number of members was reduced, as pointed out in previous discussions, the relevant expertise required for specific projects could be provided through subcommittees and working groups.

24.   At the conclusion of the discussion Council voted on the following questions:

a. On the question of whether to introduce lay parity (50% of the membership being lay, and 50% professional) – seven votes in favour, four votes against.

b. On the question of whether the number of veterinary surgeons on VNC should be reduced from two to one (plus one RCVS Council observer) – nine votes in favour, one vote against, one abstention.

c. On the number of members of VNC:
- To retain the number of members at 14 – no votes

- To reduce the size to a 12-member Council – ten votes in favour, one abstention

- There was no support for the remaining option of a ten-member Council

25.   It was therefore agreed to recommend the following model to RCVS Council as set out in the discussion paper:
Option 5: Lay parity with five veterinary nurses, one veterinary surgeon, six lay members.

26.   It was confirmed that RCVS Council would review the recommendations, which would then be included with the consultation on proposed governance changes for RCVS Council.

Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC)

27.   Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the minutes of the meeting of the VNEC held on 11 December 2023 and highlighted a few key points.

28.   The Committee had been updated on the review of the *Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training*, initiated by Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC). It was reported to VNC that the review group, chaired by Simon Willliams, had held its initial meeting in early 2024. A consultation on the new draft framework had been launched on 22 February 2024, with all members of the veterinary team being invited to comment. The consultation survey was available on the RCVS website and would close on 3 April 2024. Feedback would be provided to the next meeting of VNC.

29.   The Educator Forums which had been planned for autumn 2023 had been postponed for staffing reasons and would be likely to take place in spring 2024.

30.   The Committee had reviewed accreditation reports and had agreed the following:

- **University of South Wales -** Full accreditation for five years for University of South Wales FdSc in Veterinary Nursing.

- **Aberystwyth University** - Provisional accreditation for the Aberystwyth University FdSc Veterinary Nursing.

- **Lantra Awards** - Change of status from Provisional accreditation to Full accreditation for the following programmes:

  - Lantra Awards Level 3 Work Based Diploma in Veterinary Nursing - Small Animal
  - Lantra Awards Level 3 Work Based Diploma in Veterinary Nursing - Equine

31.   The Committee had been provided with many reports on quality monitoring and action plan monitoring carried out by the VN Qualifications team.

32.   The VN Examinations Quality Lead had provided an update on the agreement with TestReach to deliver the pre-registration knowledge examination, and the first examinations would be delivered in March 2024.

33.   The review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) on the Subject Benchmark Statements for Veterinary Nursing had now been completed. The revised Benchmark statements would be issued in April 2024 and would incorporate the level 7 (postgraduate) qualifications for the first time.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

24.   Council noted the report of the work of the RVN PIC since the last report in November 2023.

Standards Committee

25.   Matthew Rendle provided a brief update on items discussed by the Standards Committee meeting held on 14 February 2024. Discussions had taken place around maintaining professional boundaries and relationships with clients and other professionals. The Committee had reviewed the case studies that had been under development over the past year and had agreed these would be put on hold in their current form for the time being, although the material was likely to be used in a different format in future publications. The Committee had been updated on the work which had been carried out with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) on the 'Under care' guidance which had now been incorporated into the supporting guidance to the *RCVS Code of Professional Conduct.*

Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)

26.   Matthew Rendle reported on matters covered at the APC meeting which had taken place the previous day, at Battersea Cat and Dogs' Home. There had been interesting discussions on measuring impact and the use of metrics, and how to maximise the output of the committee, which was very diverse, including stakeholders from many different areas.

VN Disciplinary Committee

27.   There had been no meetings of the VN Disciplinary Committee since the last VN Council meeting.

Policy and Public Affairs update

28.   The Policy and Public Affairs Manager provided a brief update.

29.   The initial analysis of the Surveys of the Veterinary and Veterinary Nurse Professions 2024 was still in progress, and an early draft summary was likely to be available in a few weeks, with the full report being published in a few months' time.

30.   It was confirmed that the survey had been open for six weeks and was now closed. Several reminder emails had been issued, although there had initially been some technical issues with certain email providers. There was disappointment at the reported lower proportion of responses than the previous survey, and suggestions were made as to why this might have been the case. It was commented that the survey had been easy to complete and had flowed well.

Communications report

31.   The Media and Publications Manager reported on recent veterinary nursing related activities.

32.   The Veterinary Nurses Council election period would run from mid-March to Friday 26 April. There were three candidates standing for the two places. The profession had been invited to submit questions for the candidates by the end of the month, and each candidate would be invited to answer two questions of their choice, to be included with their election profiles.

33.   As previously mentioned by the VNEC Chair, the consultation on the revised VN Standards Framework had been launched on 22 February, and this would continue to be promoted in *RCVS News* and social media. There had been 330 responses to date.

34.   Forthcoming work of the Comms team would include the promotion of the VN Futures roadshow, which was due to would be discussed in the afternoon workshop of VNC. The next edition of the *VN Education* e-newsletter was under development and would be issued in early April.

35.   The next Veterinary Nurses Day would take place on 28 June 2024 in Edinburgh, to welcome newly qualified VNs to the Register.

36.   There would be a session at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Congress in March, on the veterinary nursing profession, past present and future.

37.   The written report of the Mind Matters Symposium 2023 had been published earlier in the day, as well as the accompanying videos.

VN Register report

38.　　　Council noted a report showing statistics on the total number of registered veterinary nurses, including the number of new registrations annually for the calendar years 2018 – 2023, and removals in January 2024 for non-payment of the annual fee. Data was also provided for the number of student enrolments for the past six academic years, and the number of those enrolling for a Period of Supervised Practice, having been unregistered for a period of five years or more.

39.　　　It was subsequently reported that an adjustment was required to the breakdown of the figure for new registrations in 2023. The overall figure remained unchanged. There had been 1,684 new registrations, of which 1,045 were by the UK Further Education route, 558 by the UK Higher Education route, 81 with an overseas qualification. The amended paper would be included in the VNC papers on the RCVS website, and in the BoardEffect documentation for VN Council. The number of new registrations, with the breakdown of admission route, would also be included in the *RCVS Facts* publication.

Any other business (unclassified)

40.　　　No items were raised.

Date of next meeting

41.　　　Wednesday 22 May 2024. This would be a remote meeting starting at 10.00am.

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	Review of the RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training
Summary	The RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training (the Standards) has been reviewed based on collated feedback from users and consultation with all stakeholders. Proposed amendments following the review have been considered and agreed by the task and finish working group.
	It should be noted that full guidance will be developed to accompany the Standards and requirements once approved by Veterinary Nurses' Council.
Decisions required	Veterinary Nurses' Council is required to agree the:
	1. Proposed amendments to the RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training
	2. Implementation of the updated Standards from September 2024
Attachments	Annex 1: Collated responses
	Annex 2: Summary of changes
	Annex 3: Standard Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training
Author	Julie Dugmore
	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	j.dugmore@rcvs.org.uk

Classifications

Document	Classification[1]	Rationales[2]
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex 1	Confidential	1, 4
Annex 2	Unclassified	n/a
Annex 3	Unclassified	n/a

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Review of the RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training

Background

1. The RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training (the Standards) sets out the professional values, skills and behaviours required of accredited education institutions (AEIs), delivery sites and training practices responsible for providing education, training and support for student veterinary nurses.

2. The current Standards were ratified by Veterinary Nurses' Council (VNC) in November 2019, for implementation January 2020.

3. Whilst there was a small-scale review in 2021, resulting in some minor amendments, to ensure the Standards remain relevant and fit-for-purpose, they are reviewed, and consulted on every five years. As the current Standards were initially agreed by VNC in 2019, they are now due for review.

4. At its meeting in November 2023, Veterinary Nurses' Council agreed a small task and finish working group (WG), supported by the Director of Veterinary Nursing and the VN Qualifications Lead to undertake the review.

Current position

5. Following feedback gathered from accredited education institutions (AEI) their delivery sites and training practices, along with accreditation panel members and RCVS quality monitoring personnel, the RCVS veterinary nursing team conducted the initial review.

6. Draft proposals on areas for improvement, including the incorporation of sustainability and academic integrity, were considered, and agreed for consultation by the WG at its meeting in January 2024.

7. The six-week consultation was launched on 22 February which gave an opportunity for all stakeholders to provide constructive and specific feedback on the proposals. There were 504 survey responses received, along with further thoughts/ responses from two organisations. Feedback, in the main, was overwhelmingly positive with many stakeholders agreeing with the proposed changes. Please see Annex 1: Collated responses.

Discussion/ issues

8. Following consultation, the initial review of responses was conducted by the Director of Veterinary Nursing and Qualifications Lead and provided to the WG for consideration. Please see Annex 2: Summary of changes.

9. At its meeting on 3 May, the working group reviewed, discussed, and agreed the suggested amendments. It should be noted that, where a suggestion required detailed discussion, this has been included in Annex 2 under 'Working Group discussion'.

10. A final revised version of the Standards has been included at Annex 3.

11. As previously, there will be a grace period for Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs) undergoing accreditation and quality monitoring activities during the academic year 2023. AEIs with accreditation events scheduled in the academic year 2024/25, will be assessed against the updated (May 2024) Standards Framework. This approach will ensure AEIs do not have to re-submit applications or be concerned that they are being assessed against a set of Standards with which they are unfamiliar.

12. Quality monitoring activities which take place prior to 1 September 2024 will be completed against the existing Standards, with all AEIs being reminded that compliance against the new Standards will be expected moving forward.

Financial issues / PR implications

13. Outdated or ineffective accreditation standards can negatively impact the RCVS reputation. These regular reviews identify and address issues and demonstrate a commitment to transparency, accountability, and continued improvement.

14. As the Standards underwent an extensive review in 2019, followed by a smaller review in 2021 the proposed amendments are mainly for clarification purposes however, some time and cost will be required to ensure AEIs are updated with the changes.

15. There are two face-to-face educator forums planned for June 2024, which will be an ideal opportunity to provide AEIs and delivery sites with highlights on the amendments. The costs of these meetings are incorporated in the 2024 budget. There will also be some online meetings scheduled throughout the summer.

16. There will of course be costs incurred with producing the revised versions for the website and in communicating the updates.

Conclusions

17. In order to ensure that the Standards remain relevant, effective and fit for purpose, and to meet RCVS VN quality assurance processes, a review of the current Standards, requirements and supporting guidance has been completed. The revision of the Standards also ensures they are aligned with the evolving needs of the education landscape. The proposed amendments are provided to Veterinary Nurses' Council for ratification.

Decision

18. Veterinary Nurses' Council is asked to agree the:

    a) Proposed amendments to the RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training

    b) Implementation of the updated Standards from September 2024

Annex 2: Summary of changes

Standard 1: Learning culture

	Proposed changes and amendments	Working Group to consider	Working group discussion	Working Group Decision
				Add equity definition / consideration with equality into guidance for 1.1, and into glossary.
Standard 1	Added 'civility' to paragraph 2			Agree
1.1	Added Equality, diversity and inclusion policy to the evidence list			Agree
1.2		Line 11 – Would peer review be better worded as Peer observations and feedback	Peer review can take many forms and using a term that is broader allows providers to submit a variety of evidence. E.g. Reflective logs, peer critique.	Add examples etc into the guidance
1.3	Added 'secondment agreements' to the evidence list			Agree
1.6		Line 2 – should also consider: A just culture policy so that institutions can aspire to	Culture query. A policy on culture may not provide evidence of a positive culture. Multiple pieces of evidence that are gathered across the	Added Staff Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct into evidence examples.

		and implement in line with the updated measures	standards informs the institutional culture. Staff surveys and forums would provide stronger evidence of culture. Blame etc may be embedded into a staff code of conduct/harassment/vexatious claims policy.	Future consideration of adding culture piece to guidance.
1.7		Line 2 – Whilst we understand this requirement relates to all learning environments, it would be helpful to the reader to split the required evidence into AO, VNAC or TP requirements. Including , Critical Incident Reporting and learning discussions as a requirement	Would TP be picked up in S6? Currency in VNAC query.	Do not amend
1.8	Added 'CPD plans and records' to the evidence list	Line 4 – suggest in addition Malpractice and maladministration policies and procedures	These very much align to assessment and FE AO processes. Would be embedded as part of the Ac Regs for HE so may need to add both. Doesn't feature in S4.	Agree evidence example Added malpractice/maladministration policy to 1.6 and 1.7
1.10		Line 9 – The evidence list could include fitness to practice policy	Not sure this provides evidence of learning culture?	Do not amend

1.12	Added 'Clinical supervisor training and standardisation' to the evidence list	Line 2 – The word collaboration has been omitted from the original version. Suggest that the word research be replaced with collaboration to read: 'work to promote inter-professional education and inter-professional practice and support opportunities for collaboration'. This is then reflective of all programme levels 3-6 as this could include research. If the word research is included then should be clarified.	Doesn't inter-professional denote collaboration? Research should feature as ways of working should be evidence based at all levels.	Agree to evidence example Do not amend collaboration versus research.

Standard 2: Governance and quality

	Changes	Working Group to consider	Working Group discussion	Working Group decision
Standard	Succession planning added to Standard 4, requirement 4.4 and 4.9			Agree
2.1	Amended typo evidence g Added 'IFATE' and RCVS annual self-assessments' to the evidence list			Agree
2.2	Amended typo evidence a			Agree
2.3	Added 'tutorial reviews' to evidence list			Agree
2.6	Amended evidence h to include 'strategy and plan'			Agree
2.8	Removed APL reference in evidence list and will add to guidance along with APEL and RPEL			Agree
2.10	Added 'Annual criminal conviction, whistleblowing' and 'fitness to practise' to the evidence list	Line 2 – should consider using the term "just culture" in place of "fair" due to its stronger connotations	The criteria relates to process and not to the culture. The absence of those processes may provide indication of the culture. Think they are two different things.	Agree to evidence examples, do not change fair to just.

Standard 3: Student empowerment

	Changes	Working Group to consider	Working Group discussion	Working Group Decision
Standard		Line 4 – is 'resilience' the wrong word? Should we use 'emotional intelligence'? Please see feedback spreadsheet for exact feedback.	I think these are different things. Both really positive skills for a student to develop during their programme. We want people to be retained in the industry, emotional intelligence, although great, won't help this. There would be lots of soft skills we could list…..	Do not amend
3.3	Added 'Assessment schedules' to the evidence list			Agreed
3.9	Removed 'redacted' evidence g as will go in the guidance Added 'Confirmation of suspension/withdrawal' and 'exit award details' to the evidence list			Agree
3.10	Add 'inclusion' to evidence a			Agree
3.11	Added 'incivility' to the requirement Added 'inclusion' to evidence a			Agree
3.12		Line 2 – There is an inference that someone is mentally unhealthy and	No strong opinion. I think this is someone's preference. Do	Do not amend

		therefore, consider removing the use of physical and mental and just use health and wellbeing	we use mental and physical throughout? We may need to standardise if we omit.	

Standard 4: Educators and Assessors

	Changes	Working Group to consider	Working Group discussion	Working Group Decision
4.2	Added 'inclusion' to the requirement Added 'unconscious bias training' to the evidence list			Agree
4.3	Added 'inclusion' to evidence a Added 'Menopause policy' to the evidence list			Agree
4.4	Added 'succession planning' to the evidence list	Line 7 – would like this expanded to consider 'contracted hours' accommodating AEI assessments outside of usual working day i.e. contact for OSCE to safeguard learners is 'contractual agreement' better?	No strong opinion and changing it doesn't improve reading. Although 'contractual arrangements' may be clearer HR terminology.	Do not amend

4.6	Added 'Student progression' and 'academic board meeting minutes' to the evidence list			Agree
4.9	Added 'succession planning' to the evidence list			Agree

Standard 5: Curricula and assessment

	Changes	Working Group to consider	Working Group discussion	Working Group Decision
5.1	Removed 'Statement' from evidence f			Agree
5.3		Line 3 – Relevance can be subjective – suggest this could be strengthened, and also expanded to veterinary nursing communities. Please see spreadsheet for full feedback	Typo - profession. Agree to add nursing to communities. Do we need relevant?	Amend to 'consideration of ongoing developments within the veterinary professions and international healthcare communities'. Leave relevant in the wording.
5.5	Added 'Assessment blueprint' to evidence list			Agree
5.6		Line 9 and 10 - Consider splitting in to two requirements. please see feedback	Yes, agree with splitting out the requirements into two would support the provider into submitting evidence and reporting.	Amended as per the suggestion.

		spreadsheet for full feedback.		
5.7	Added 'Witness statements' to evidence list			Agree
5.8	Added 'External examiner/advisor feedback' to the evidence list			Agree
5.11	Added 'ED&I' to evidence list			Agree.

Standard 6: Effective clinical learning

	Changes	Working Group to consider	Working Group discussion	Working Group Decision
6.3	Added 'MoU' to evidence list			Agree
6.6	Added 'RCVS registration checks' and 'clinical supervisor succession planning' to evidence list			Agree

Standard 1

Learning Culture

Standards

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, inclusion and civility at the forefront and a clear commitment to sustainability.

Requirements

Accredited education institutions, together with delivery sites and training practices, must:

1.1 demonstrate that the safety of people and animals is a primary consideration in all learning environments.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Health and safety policy
b. Clinical and delivery site audits
c. Staff induction policy
d. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
e. Standard Operating Procedures
f. Risk assessments
g. E-safety policy
h. Safeguarding policies and procedures
i. Student inductions
j. Policy for onsite animals utilised for veterinary nurse education
k. Fire safety protocol
l. Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA) reports
m. Compliance with IRR 2017

1.2 prioritise the wellbeing of people.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Peer reviews
b. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy
c. CPD records

d. Staff inductions
e. Staff reviews
f. Nominated staff members for wellbeing
g. Pastoral support
h. Staff Code of Conduct
i. Wellbeing policy
j. Wellbeing information (physical and online)
k. Wellbeing initiatives
l. Mental Health First Aider Training
m. Mental health support procedures
n. Risk assessments for display screen equipment/workstations

1.3 ensure that facilities and physical resources, including those used for clinical learning, comply with all relevant legislation including UK animal care and welfare standards.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Training Practice (TP) and Auxiliary Training Practice (aTP) lists and risk assessments
b. VMD Registration
c. Policy for storage and disposal of POM-V
d. Standard Operating Procedures
e. Policy for onsite animals utilised for veterinary nurse education
f. Facility audits
g. List of locations where qualifications are delivered
h. Schedule of quality monitoring activity
i. Inventory of clinical equipment and consumables
j. Student feedback
k. Secondment agreements

1.4 ensure clients understand the remit of the student veterinary nurse's involvement in the care of their animals and have the opportunity to withdraw consent.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Standard Operating Procedures
b. Poster regarding consent
c. Consent guidance within pre-operative paperwork
d. Website content
e. Consent forms
f. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records

1.5 maintain confidentiality in all aspects of the provision, ensuring client, public and animal safety and welfare is promoted.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Job descriptions
    b. Staff reviews
    c. Student feedback
    d. Monitoring of teaching and learning
    e. General Data Protection Regulation policy
    f. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records and risk assessments
    g. Social Media policy

1.6 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.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Minutes of student meetings
    b. Minutes of student representative meetings
    c. Programme/qualification handbooks
    d. Induction policy and timetable for students and staff
    e. Complaints procedure
    f. Whistle Blowing policy
    g. Social Media policy
    h. Safeguarding policy
    i. Wellbeing policy
    j. Staff Code of Conduct
    k. Student Code of Conduct
    l. Malpractice/Maladministration Policy

1.7 ensure any concerns or complaints are investigated and dealt with effectively, ensuring the wellbeing of people and animals is prioritised.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Complaints review board
    b. Complaints procedure
    c. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy
    d. Safeguarding policy
    e. Wellbeing policy
    f. Examples of complaints
    g. Malpractice/Maladministration Policy

1.8 ensure incidents are fully investigated and learning reflections and actions are recorded and disseminated.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Minutes of meetings
    b. Clinical audit reports
    c. Complaints procedure
    d. Disciplinary policy
    e. Risk assessment and policy reviews
    f. Accident records
    g. Evidence of outcomes/actions and dissemination
    h. Examples of incidents or complaints
    i. Continuing professional development plans and records

1.9 promote student engagement with the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct to develop open and honest practitioners.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise procedure
    b. Student feedback
    c. Module/qualification handbook
    d. Monitoring of teaching and learning
    e. Day One Skills recording tool
    f. Learning logs
    g. Reflective diaries
    h. Tutorial records
    i. Learner reviews
    j. Student handbook
    k. Clinical practice handbook

1.10 develop a learning culture that is fair, impartial, transparent, fosters good relations between individuals and diverse groups, and is compliant with equalities and human rights legislation.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Monitoring of teaching and learning
    b. Staff training records
    c. CPD records
    d. Self-assessment reports
    e. Student feedback
    f. External examiner reports
    g. Equality, diversity and inclusion policy
    h. Reasonable adjustment policy
    i. Conflict of interest declarations

j. Complaints procedure
k. National Student Survey (NSS) results

1.11 utilise information and data to promote and enhance equality of opportunities and widening participation.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Self-assessment reports
b. External examiner/advisor reports
c. Student feedback
d. Stakeholder feedback
e. Minutes of staff and/or student meetings
f. National Student Survey (NSS) data
g. Office for Students (OfS) data, access and participation plans
h. Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) Conditions of Recognition reports

1.12 work to promote inter-professional education and inter-professional practice and support opportunities for research.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Programme/qualification level intended learning outcomes
b. Module/qualification handbooks
c. Secondment policy and examples
d. Guest (expert) speaker timetables
e. Research committee meetings
f. Expert witness documentation
g. Group project work
h. Knowledge summaries
i. Poster presentation
j. Clinical supervisor training and standardisation

1.13 promote evidence-based improvement in education and veterinary nursing practise.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Research committee meetings
b. Programme/qualification level intended learning outcomes
c. Module/qualification handbooks
d. CPD policy
e. Secondment policy and examples
f. Guest (expert) speaker timetables

g. Journal clubs
h. Clinical audits
i. Clinical governance
j. Quality improvement policies and procedures
k. Inter-professional research opportunities

1.14 demonstrate a reasonable commitment to environmental sustainability, including consideration of the impact of delivering the programme on the environment.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Environment sustainability policy
b. Waste disposal contracts
c. Accreditation with external partners e.g., green credentials
d. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records
e. Sustainably sourced materials
f. Evidence of internal teams/groups promoting environmental sustainability

Standard 2

Governance and quality

Standards

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 equality, taking account of the diverse needs of, and working in partnerships with, students and all other stakeholders.

Requirements

Accredited education institutions, together with delivery sites and training practices, must:

2.1 comply with all relevant legal, regulatory, professional, and educational requirements.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) report and action plans
b. Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) report and action plans
c. Qualifications Wales report and action plans
d. Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) report and action plans
e. Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) report and action plans
f. Office for Students (OfS) report and action plans
g. Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) report and action plans
h. RCVS quality monitoring reports and action plans
i. External examiners reports and action plans
j. Written confirmation of programme validation
k. Minutes of validation/accreditation event and evidence of any conditions to have been addressed
l. Evidence of RCVS pre-accreditation support
m. Quality improvement plan
n. Curriculum mapping to meet RCVS Day One Competences, Skills and Professional Behaviours
o. Curriculum mapping document to QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Veterinary Nursing (HEI)

p. Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE)
q. RCVS annual self-assessment reports

2.2 provide all information and evidence required by regulators in a timely manner, i.e., within published timescales.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Completed action plans from regulatory, professional, and legal bodies

2.3 comply with the *RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses*.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Module/qualification documentation
b. Programme/qualification curriculum
c. monitoring of teaching and learning
d. schemes of work/syllabus
e. Student and clinical supervisor handbooks
f. Day One Skills recording platform sampling records
g. Professional behaviour evaluation records
h. Tutorial reviews

2.4 comply with the RCVS Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Adequate clinical practice provision/employment
b. Documented programme structure
c. Programme/qualification handbook

2.5 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.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Memoranda of Understanding
b. Quality assurance procedures
c. Risk assessments
d. Review meeting minutes
e. TP/aTP handbook
f. Clinical supervisor handbook
g. Delivery site approval and monitoring records and action plans

    h. TP/aTP secondment documents
    i. Written agreement with examination sites (AOs)
    j. Communication regarding changes of accredited AEI

2.6 ensure that recruitment, selection, and retention of students is open, fair and transparent, and includes measures to understand and address underrepresentation.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Selection criteria for admission
    b. Recruitment documentation
    c. Copies of student certificates
    d. Accredited Prior Learning (APL) and Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) policies
    e. Equality of opportunity policy
    f. Interview records
    g. Self-assessment reports
    h. Widening participation strategy and plan
    i. Application process
    j. Interview/selection process

2.7 have entry criteria for the programme that includes evidence that the student has a capability in numeracy, literacy, and science, written and spoken English and mathematics to meet the programme outcomes.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Programme/qualification specification
    b. Prospectus
    c. Website
    d. Social media
    e. Careers leaflets
    f. Equivalence policy
    g. Work experience requirements

2.8 demonstrate a robust process for the recognition of prior learning (RPL).

This may be evidenced through:

    a. RPL policy
    b. RPL documentation
    c. RPL decision recording
    d. RPL guidance on website
    e. Examples of RPL mapping

2.9 provide accurate and accessible information to students enabling them to understand and comply with relevant governance processes and policies.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Student induction processes
    b. Student handbook
    c. Programme/qualification handbook
    d. TP/aTP handbook
    e. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy
    f. RCVS enrolment guidance
    g. RCVS registration guidance
    h. RCVS CoPC references within relevant documentation
    i. Reasonable adjustment policy
    j. Online learning platform

2.10 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. The procedure must include disclosure of criminal convictions that may affect registration with the RCVS.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy
    b. Fitness to study policy
    c. Appeals procedure and policy
    d. Academic malpractice policy
    e. Academic integrity policy and guidance
    f. Student code of conduct
    g. Induction processes
    h. Student interviews
    i. Student recruitment policy
    j. Annual criminal conviction declarations
    k. Whistleblowing policy
    l. Fitness to practise meeting minutes

2.11 confirm that students meet the required programme outcomes in full and are eligible for academic and professional award.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Board of examiners meeting minutes
    b. Student progression meeting minutes
    c. Exit award details

2.12 undertake regular reviews of all learning environments and provide assurance that they are safe, effective, and fit for purpose.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Course reviews
b. Student feedback
c. TP/aTP quality monitoring records
d. Risk assessments
e. Health and safety policy
f. Delivery site sampling policy
g. AEI site visit or site review documentation for delivery sites and TP/aTP
h. Memoranda of Understanding
i. External examiner reports
j. Standard Operating Procedures
k. E-safety policy
l. Student training regarding online safety

2.13 have safe and effective recruitment processes in place to ensure appropriate personnel are recruited to support programme delivery.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Staff development plans
b. Staff in-house training records
c. Job descriptions and/or person specifications
d. Recruitment policy
e. External examiner/advisor recruitment policy
f. Safer recruitment policy

2.14 where an accredited education institution is not yet fully accredited, or at the discretion of the Veterinary Nurse Education Committee, facilitate the attendance of the RCVS at a trial/mock OSCE/practical assessment at least one year in advance of the final summative assessment taking place for the relevant cohort of students.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Proposed dates for trial/mock examination

2.15 where an accredited education institution plans to make any changes to its provision, including assessments, the RCVS must approve all changes prior to implementation.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Correspondence with RCVS regarding proposed changes

b. Process for programme changes

2.16 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 AEI.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Budget
b. Self-assessment reports
c. Institution's annual report containing audited accounts
d. Budgetary forecast for the programme
e. Evidence of actual and/or projected income sources
f. Evidence of demand for the programme (the market)
g. Marketing strategy
h. National Student Survey
i. End of programme evaluation
j. Justification for critical student number e.g., business planning documentation

Standard 3

Student empowerment

Standards

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.

Requirements

Accredited education institutions, together with delivery sites and training practices, must ensure that all students:

3.1 are well prepared for learning in theory and practice, having received relevant inductions.

This may be evidenced through:

  a. Programme/qualification handbooks
  b. Pre-course guidance
  c. Induction timetables
  d. Induction materials for DOS recording platform
  e. Clinical practice induction
  f. Online learning platform induction

3.2 have access to the resources they need to achieve the RCVS Day One Competences, Skills and Professional Behaviours for Veterinary Nurses, and programme outcomes required for their professional role.

This may be evidenced through:

  a. Practical equipment and consumables lists
  b. Onsite animals resource list and policy where utilised for veterinary nurse education
  c. Library resources
  d. Information Learning Technology resources
  e. Timetabled access to resources

    f. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records
    g. TP/aTP risk assessments
    h. Online learning platform

3.3 are provided with timely and accurate information about curriculum, teaching, supervision, assessment, clinical practice, and other information relevant to the programme in an accessible way for student's diverse needs.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Programme/qualification handbooks
    b. Student handbooks
    c. Timetables
    d. Schemes of work/syllabus
    e. Module/qualification handbooks
    f. Module/qualification descriptors
    g. Clinical practice correspondence
    h. Online platform access
    i. Assessment schedules

3.4 work with and learn from a range of people in clinical practice, preparing them to provide care to a range of animals with diverse nursing requirements.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Practice rota
    b. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records
    c. Expert witness forms/statements
    d. Handbooks detailing utilisation of expert witnesses
    e. Secondment agreements and examples

3.5 are enabled to learn and are assessed using a range of methods, including technology enhanced and simulation-based learning appropriate for the programme as necessary for safe and effective practice.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Programme/qualification handbooks
    b. TP/aTP handbooks
    c. Assessment schedules
    d. Programme/qualification assessment strategies
    e. Module/qualification descriptors
    f. Clinical supervisor handbooks
    g. List of clinical skills resources
    h. Artificial intelligence policy
    i. Virtual/augmented reality policy

j. Academic integrity policy

3.6 are supervised and supported according to their individual learning needs, proficiency, and confidence.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Individual learning plans
b. TP/aTP student reports
c. Reasonable adjustment policy
d. Student support services
e. Special educational needs support
f. Clinical practice tutorial records
g. Delivery team meeting minutes relating to student support/progression
h. Personal tutor correspondence examples
i. Professional behaviour evaluations

3.7 are allocated and can make use of protected supported learning time including blended learning and recording completion of the RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses when in practice.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Timetables/schemes of work
b. Audit of blended learning time
c. Audit of Day One Skills recording tool
d. Practice rota
e. Memoranda of Understanding
f. TP/aTP handbook
g. Clinical supervisor handbook
h. TP/aTP annual monitoring records
i. Tutorial records

3.8 are assigned and have access to a nominated academic tutor/lead for each part of the programme.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Tutorial records
b. Student feedback
c. Programme/Qualification specification
d. Student handbook
e. Personal tutor allocations
f. Personal tutor timetables

3.9 have the necessary support and information to manage any interruptions to the study of programmes for any reason.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Student handbook
    b. Programme handbook
    c. Institutional regulations
    d. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy
    e. Student support plans
    f. Return to study plans
    g. Personal tutor records
    h. Withdrawal processes
    i. Suspension of study processes
    j. Confirmation of suspension/withdrawal to RCVS
    k. Exit award details

3.10 have their diverse needs respected and considered across all learning environments, with support and adjustments provided in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Equality, diversity and inclusion policy
    b. Reasonable adjustment policy
    c. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy
    d. Fitness to study policy
    e. Learner support plans
    f. Examples of support/adjustment provided

3.11 are protected from discrimination, harassment, incivility, and other behaviour that undermine their performance or confidence.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Equality, diversity and inclusion policy
    b. Bullying and harassment policy
    c. Complaints policy and reports
    d. Student feedback
    e. Safeguarding policy
    f. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy
    g. Student charter
    h. Student code of conduct
    i. Professional behaviour evaluations
    j. Freedom of speech policy

3.12 are provided with information and support that encourages them to take responsibility for their own mental and physical health and wellbeing.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Student handbook
b. Programme/qualification handbook
c. Personal tutoring system
d. Personal tutorial timetables and records
e. Student support policy
f. Student feedback
g. Wellbeing lectures/sessions
h. Wellbeing resources
i. Induction timetable
j. Meeting minutes from social groups
k. Online resources

3.13 are provided with the learning and pastoral support necessary to empower them to prepare for independent, reflective professional practice.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Personal tutorial records
b. Evidence-based professional practice procedures
c. Module/qualification descriptors
d. Programme/qualification handbook
e. Student feedback
f. Assessment examples
g. Guidance provided regarding the RCVS Day One Skills
h. Professional behaviour evaluation policy
i. Day One Skills moderation reports

3.14 have opportunities throughout their programme to collaborate and learn with and from peers and other professionals, and to develop supervision and leadership skills.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Peer group work and assessment examples
b. TP/aTP handbook
c. Student representative meeting minutes
d. Reflective logs
e. Professional behaviour tool
f. Guest (expert) lecture timetable
g. Mentor programmes
h. Expert witness statements
i. Documentation detailing guidance regarding expert witnesses

j. Co-teaching and cross programme engagement

3.15 receive constructive feedback throughout the programme to promote and encourage reflective learning.

This may be evidence through:

a. Feedback policy and procedures
b. Clinical supervisor records
c. Feedback records
d. Evidence-based professional practice procedures
e. Module/qualification descriptors
f. Programme/qualification handbook
g. Assessment examples
h. Formative assessment procedures
i. Clinical practice tutorial records
j. Learner reviews
k. Professional behaviour evaluations
l. Day One Skills sampling records
m. Clinical practice support records

3.16 have opportunities throughout their programme to give feedback on the quality of all aspects of their support and supervision in both theory and practice with clear outcomes.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Student surveys
b. Student representative meeting minutes
c. National Student Survey results
d. Clinical practice evaluations
e. Personal tutor records
f. Newsletters
g. Delivery team meeting minutes
h. Student feedback policy
i. Examples of feedback disseminated to students
j. Online notice boards
k. 'you said, we did' publications
l. Action plans following student feedback events

3.17 are empowered to develop their professional behaviours in line with the RCVS Professional Behaviour Evaluation.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Completed professional behaviour evaluations

    b. Professional behaviour guidance to students

    c. Professional behaviour guidance to clinical supervisors

    d. Internal quality assurance sampling policy

Standard 4

Educators and assessors

Standards

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.

Requirements

Accredited education institutions, together with delivery sites and training practices, must ensure that all educators and assessors:

4.1 are appropriately qualified and experienced and always act as professional role models.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Curriculum vitae
b. 1CPD compliance where required
c. Policy for recruitment and training of assessment staff/moderators
d. Subject specific development
e. Professional development plans
f. Student feedback
g. Monitoring of teaching and learning, walk through and teaching reviews
h. Staff codes of conduct
i. RCVS registration status of personnel (where required)

4.2 receive relevant induction, ongoing support, education and training which includes training in equality, diversity and inclusion.

This may be evidenced through:

a. CPD records
b. CPD policy
c. Professional development plans
d. Annual appraisal documents
e. Induction procedures
f. Induction records
g. Evidence of clinical supervisor training and standardisation

    h. Completed reviews of clinical supervisor suitability (CV, CPD, registration checks)
    i. Mental health first aid training
    j. Examiner training and standardisation procedures
    k. Unconscious bias training

4.3 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.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Staff induction policy
    b. Equality, diversity and inclusion policy
    c. Recruitment policy
    d. Staff support services
    e. Disability policy
    f. Health and safety policy
    g. Maternity, paternity and adoption policies
    h. Mentoring policy
    i. Menopause policy

4.4 have sufficient time allocation within contracted hours to fulfil all aspects of their roles.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Staff timetables
    b. Workload allocation models
    c. Clinical practice rota
    d. Job descriptions and/or person specifications
    e. Tutorial records
    f. Schedule of planned assessments
    g. Clinical supervisor handbook
    h. Succession planning

4.5 respond effectively to the learning needs of individuals.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Student feedback
    b. Student representative meeting minutes
    c. Personal tutorial timetables/minutes
    d. Clinical practice records
    e. Reasonable adjustment records
    f. Monitoring of teaching and learning

g. Student support services
h. Special educational needs support

4.6 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.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Programme/qualification assessment strategy
b. Schedule of planned assessments
c. Clinical practice records/action plans
d. Day One Skills recording tool meeting minutes
e. Day One Skills internal quality assurance strategy
f. Self-assessment reports
g. Tutorial records
h. Student progression meeting minutes
i. Academic Board meeting minutes

4.7 liaise, collaborate, and action constructive feedback generated by colleagues, students, and stakeholders to enhance their teaching and assessment and to share effective practice.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Practice principal meeting minutes
b. Standardisation meeting minutes
c. External examiner reports
d. Individual learning plans
e. Monitoring of teaching and learning
f. Student feedback
g. Stakeholder feedback
h. Meeting minutes with actions and dissemination plans
i. RCVS or internal action plans and responses
j. Examiner observations
k. Quality improvement plan
l. Self-assessment reports

4.8 respond effectively to concerns and complaints about public protection and animal welfare and student performance in learning environments and are supported in doing so.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Complaints procedure
b. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy

    c. Retention records

    d. TP/aTP risk register

    e. Minutes of meeting, action plans and responses

4.9 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.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Curriculum vitae

    b. 1CPD compliance

    c. Succession planning

Standard 5

Curricula and assessment

Standards

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

Requirements

Accredited education institutions, together with delivery sites and training practices, must ensure:

5.1 curricula are mapped and fulfil the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, regulatory requirements, and programme outcomes.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Programme/qualification specification
    b. Programme/qualification handbook
    c. Programme/qualification level mapping documents
    d. Module/qualification mapping documents
    e. Assessment material mapping/blueprint
    f. QAA HE Subject Benchmark Statements for Veterinary Nursing mapping
    g. Professional behaviour mapping

5.2 programmes are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated, and improved based upon stakeholder feedback.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Self-assessment reports
    b. Annual programme/qualification reviews
    c. Periodic programme/qualification reviews
    d. Regulatory reports
    e. Programme/qualification meeting minutes
    f. Quality and standards meeting minutes
    g. Stakeholder meeting minutes
    h. Action plans following stakeholder meetings

    i. Evidence of implementation of feedback

5.3 curricula and assessments remain relevant in respect of contemporary veterinary nursing practice, with consideration of ongoing developments within the professions and international healthcare communities.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Curriculum meeting minutes
    b. External examiner reports
    c. Stakeholder feedback
    d. Module/qualification documents
    e. Authentic and relevant assessment methodologies

5.4 curricula and assessments are appropriately weighted in accordance with the type and length of programme.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Programme/qualification specifications
    b. Mapping to the RCVS Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules
    c. Module/qualification mapping documents
    d. Timetables
    e. Assessment matrices
    f. Programme/qualification assessment strategies
    g. Learning outcomes

5.5 curricula provide appropriate structure and sequencing that integrates theory and practice at increasing levels of complexity, with due consideration of assessment timings and clear progression points.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Programme/qualification structure
    b. Timetables/schemes of work
    c. Programme/qualification assessment strategies and schedules
    d. Clinical practice model
    e. Curriculum map (include vertical and horizontal integration)
    f. Programme/qualification handbooks
    g. Module/qualification documents
    h. Board of Examiners/student progression meeting minutes
    i. Assessment blueprint

5.6 a range of assessments, which align with the learning outcomes, are delivered, within the educational setting, to accurately measure the knowledge, skills and understanding outlined in the programme.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Academic regulations
b. Student feedback
c. Module/qualification descriptors
d. Moderation policies and processes
e. Moderation meeting minutes
f. Exam Board minutes
g. Examination rules
h. Examination policy and procedure documents
i. Examples of assessment materials for each different assessment methodology
j. Assessment blueprint
k. Programme/qualification assessment strategy
l. Grading criteria and setting pass marks
m. Statement of proposed interpretations and uses of the examination/assessment
n. Assessment rationale
o. Examiner handbook
p. Student handbook
q. Security policies
r. Artificial intelligence policy
s. Academic integrity policy

5.7 at least one summative assessment must be in the form of an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) or similarly robust, objective and evidence-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.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Academic regulations
b. Student feedback
c. Module/qualification descriptors
d. Moderation policies and processes
e. Moderation meeting minutes
f. Exam Board minutes
g. Examination rules
h. Examination policy and procedure documents
i. Examples of assessment materials for each different assessment methodology
j. Assessment blueprint

k. Programme/qualification assessment strategy
l. Grading criteria and setting pass marks
m. Statement of proposed interpretations and uses of the examination/assessment
n. Assessment rationale
o. Examiner handbook
p. Student handbook
q. Security policies
r. Artificial intelligence policy
s. Academic integrity policy

5.8 students are assessed practically across clinical practice settings and learning environments as required by their programme with relevant observations undertaken.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Day One Skills recording tool
b. Monitoring of teaching and learning
c. Student observation records
d. Examination papers and mark sheets
e. Student feedback records
f. Day One Skills sampling plan
g. Witness statements

5.9 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.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Examination policy and procedure documents
b. Rationale for the design of examinations
c. Moderation policies
d. Assessment blueprint
e. Mark schemes
f. Validity data
g. Reliability data
h. Training and standardisation of markers
i. Test and item statistical analysis mechanisms
j. Statistical analysis of item level and question level data such as analysis of question difficulty
k. Grading criteria and setting pass marks

l.   Standard setting documentation

m. Mechanisms to detect plagiarism

n. Assessment appeals policy

o. Invigilation agreements

p. Assessment validation reports

q. Programme/qualification assessment sampling strategies

r. External examiner/advisor feedback

5.10 moderation processes are in place and demonstrate that assessment is fair, reliable, and valid, and the integrity of the assessment is upheld.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Student feedback

b. Moderation meeting minutes

c. Exam Board minutes

d. Moderation protocol

e. Internal verification meeting minutes

f. External examiner reports

g. Responses to action plans

h. Sampling strategy

i. Day One Skills sampling plans

j. Artificial intelligence acceptable use policy

k. Academic integrity policy

5.11 mechanisms are in place to minimise bias in all assessments.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Examination policies and procedures

b. Examiner handbook

c. Rationale for the design of the examination

d. Invigilation arrangements

e. Assessment validation reports

f. Examiner standardisation processes

g. Moderation processes

h. Grading guides

i. Examiner training

j. Anonymous marking processes

k. Grading criteria and setting pass marks

l. Conflict of interest policy

5.12 adjustments are provided in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation for assessments in theory and practice.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Reasonable adjustment policy
b. Mitigating circumstances policy
c. Records of reasonable adjustment
d. AEI/delivery site fitness to practise policy
e. Student support plans
f. Individual learning plans
g. Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

5.13 students' self-reflections contribute to, and are evidenced in, assessments.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Student feedback forms
b. Tutorial reports
c. Clinical practice reports
d. Reflective logs
e. Example assessments
f. Quality assurance reports
g. Professional behaviour evaluations
h. Reflection opportunities
i. Module/qualification descriptors
j. Day One Skills recording tool audits

5.14 there is no compensation between assessments that address the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Module/qualification specifications
b. Candidate handbooks
c. Student programme handbooks
d. Example of a pass list
e. Progression board/student progression meeting minutes

5.15 ensure modules/units that address the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses include unseen (closed book) examination as an element of the assessment strategy.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Module/qualification mapping
b. Assessment methods
c. Assessment compensation policy

Standard 6

Effective clinical learning

Standards

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.

Requirements

Accredited education institutions, together with delivery sites and training practices, must:

6.1 ensure clinical learning facilities are adequate to support and deliver the RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses, across both delivery site and practice settings.

This may be evidenced through:

a. TP/aTP lists including RCVS TP number
b. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records
c. Delivery site approval forms
d. Consumable and equipment lists
e. Memoranda of Understanding
f. TP/aTP risk rating and support approach
g. Secondment agreements

6.2 ensure that students are enrolled with the RCVS prior to undertaking clinical practice to comply with legislation.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Enrolment policies and procedures
b. Student handbook
c. Clinical supervisor handbook
d. Programme specification

6.3 ensure students are actively learning and adequately supervised in all clinical learning environments.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. TP/aTP rotas
    b. Programme/qualification timetables
    c. Clinical practice records
    d. Job descriptions for educators, assessors, and support staff
    e. Student feedback
    f. Quality assurance reports
    g. Clinical practice evaluations
    h. Clinical supervisor risk rating and support approach
    i. Tutorial records
    j. Memorandum of Understanding

6.4 ensure clinical learning environments are provided for every student; these must be allocated for placement students. Clinical training must be undertaken 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.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Clinical practice lists
    b. Clinical practice allocation process for placement students
    c. Clinical practice allocation for placement students
    d. Memoranda of Understanding
    e. Registers
    f. Record of Employment
    g. Programme/qualification specification
    h. Timetables
    i. Programme/qualification structure
    j. Self-assessment reports and action plans
    k. Clinical practice handbook
    l. Internal quality assurance visit strategy

6.5 all students must have sufficient time within the programme to achieve the RCVS Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules hours requirement, with the opportunity for contingencies if required.

This may be evidenced through:

    a. Timetables
    b. Planned clinical practice model
    c. Programme/qualification specification
    d. Module/qualification descriptors

e. Individual learning plans
f. Clinical practice lists
g. Student handbook
h. Clinical supervisor handbook
i. Attendance/absence policy or procedure
j. Interruption to study policy

6.6 ensure all students are allocated a clinical supervisor responsible for confirming competency 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.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Curriculum Vitae
b. Records of co-ordination and continuity of support and supervision
c. Records of CPD to support role
d. Job descriptions and/or person specifications
e. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records
f. Policy for recruitment and training of clinical supervisors
g. Clinical supervisor checks made by the delivery site
h. Process for allocating and changing clinical supervisors
i. Clinical supervisor risk rating and support approach
j. Memoranda of Understanding
k. RCVS registration checks
l. Clinical supervisor succession planning

6.7 maintain accurate records of student clinical learning environment attendance and when applicable, provide these to the RCVS.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Registers
b. Records of Employment
c. Records of Training
d. Records of absence

6.8 ensure there is sufficient TP support available for all recruited students.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Clinical practice allocations
b. TP/aTP lists
c. Memoranda of Understanding
d. Secondment agreements and records

e. Evidence of communication with primary affiliated delivery sites
f. TP/aTP visit strategy
g. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records and action plans
h. Self-assessment reports and action plans
i. Training practice recruitment policy

6.9 ensure the TP or aTP is an RCVS listed practice.

This may be evidenced through:

a. TP/aTP lists with RCVS TP numbers
b. Clinical practice allocations

6.10 ensure that use of TPs not affiliated to the AEI are agreed with the primary AEI, and a robust MoU is in place with the TP.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Communication records
b. Memoranda of Understanding
c. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records

6.11 ensure clinical learning experiences are adapted to the student's stage of learning, competences, and programme outcomes.

This may be evidenced through:

a. TP/aTP rotas
b. Schemes of work
c. Day One Skills recording tool audits
d. Clinical practice records and action plans
e. Individual learning plans
f. Student handbooks
g. Clinical practice handbooks
h. Clinical supervisor training and standardisation
i. Tutorial records
j. Reasonable adjustment policy

6.12 the veterinary team contribute to the learning in the clinical environment in accordance with the *RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct*.

This may be evidenced through:

a. Clinical practice records
b. Staff codes of conduct
c. Staff rotas/timetables

d. Expert witness statements

e. Team meeting minutes

f. TP/aTP approval and monitoring records

g. Memoranda of Understanding

h. TP/aTP risk assessments

i. Day One Skills sampling strategy

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Education Committee held on 14 February 2024
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee held on 14 February 2024
Decisions required	To approve
Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

Classifications

Document	Classification[1]	Rationales[2]
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Appendix	Confidential	2,3,4

¹Classifications explained	
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales	
Confidential	1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Veterinary Nurse Education Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2024 held remotely via Teams

Members:

Mrs Sarah Batt-Williams	HE veterinary nursing provider
Miss Julia Cox*	Employer representative
Ms Sarah Fox	VN Council lay member
Mrs Sarah Holman*	FE veterinary nursing provider
Mrs Susan Howarth	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
Miss Sophia Hoyland	HE student representative
Miss Betsy Malamah-Thomas	Employer representative
Mrs Sarah Parkhouse	FE veterinary nursing provider
Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	HE independent regulatory expert (Deputy Chair)
Mrs Perdi Welsh	Post-registration veterinary nurse provider
Miss Leigh Willson	FE student representative

*absent

In attendance:

Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
Mrs Jasmine Curtis	Qualifications Assessor
Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN)
Miss Shirley Gibbins	Qualifications Lead (QL)
Miss Abigayle Gomez	Senior Qualifications Officer
Mr Matthew Hall	Qualifications Assessor
Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL)
Ms Tori Thornton	Qualifications Assessor

Apologies for absence

1.   Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Holman. Comments had been sent to the Chair on certain items which would be brought into the discussion at the appropriate times.

Declarations of interest

2.   Susan Howarth – Harper Adams University Accreditation report.
Sarah Batt-Williams and Perdi Welsh – items relating to the Royal Veterinary College. The Chair ruled that they would not be required to leave the meeting for these items.
Sarah Reynolds-Golding reported that she was involved with Myerscough College in an advisory capacity.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 11 December 2023

3.   The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2023 as a correct record.

Matters arising

4.   There were no matters arising from the previous minutes other than those which were covered throughout the agenda.

Veterinary Nursing update

5.   The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) provided an update on recent activities and issues of note:

6.   **Standards Review.** The review of the *Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training*, was well under way. The initial draft had been prepared by the DoVN and the Qualifications Lead (QL), taking into account suggested amendments based on feedback from stakeholders.   The review group had held its initial meeting December 2023, and a consultation was being prepared with the comms team, due to be launched on 22 February. The consultation would close on 3 April 2024 and would be reviewed throughout April. The working group would meet again to consider the final amendments, with the aim being to produce a paper for the meeting of VN Council in May, and to introduce the new standards for the next academic year in September 2024.

7.   **Educator forums.** Arrangements were under way for the Educator forums which had been postponed from 2023. Most dates had now been agreed, and these would be published in the next issue of *VN Education and* with direct communications to the providers.

8.   **RCVS Academy.** The Academy now had created 24 courses in total, five of which were specific to veterinary nurses. There were a further three courses under development, one on mentoring which would support the Starting Out and Nurse Return courses, and one, as reported at the previous meeting, aiming to assist student veterinary nurses in better understanding of regulation and registration and provide a resource for training providers. A third course, for external examiners was being developed by the QL, and Sarah Reynolds-Golding was thanked for her input. Committee members commended the development of these courses which would be extremely useful.

9.   **Neurodiversity stakeholder event.** Plans were being made for a project to develop resources support neurodiverse students and their host practices, clinical supervisors and educators. The DoVN and the VN examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) were both involved with this project. A stakeholder meeting would be held, and members who wished to be involved, or knew of any colleagues, students or others with this experience who would like to be involved, were asked to notify the DoVN.

10.   **VN Futures.** It had now been eight years since the launch of the VN Futures project, and during that time the veterinary nursing profession and the landscape as a whole had significantly evolved. VN Futures would be supporting a series of engagement events during 2024 to gain views from the professions and their aspirations and visions for veterinary nursing and team based healthcare. The first workshop would be conducted for the meeting of VN Council at the end of February, to obtain views of the members and feedback on the format of the event.

11.   **Nursing Progress Log (NPL).** Discussions on the updating and development of the Nursing Progress Log (NPL) had now resumed with the IT development team. The discussions were in the early stages.

12.   **VN Education.** Preparation had started for the next edition of *VN Education* e-newsletter and content would include, among other items, articles on the new awarding organisation strategy, 1CPD, VN Futures, neurodiversity, the Academy courses. The publication date would be 8 April, and it would be circulated to all members of VNEC and VN Council at the same time as the educators.

13.   **Student enrolments and registrations.** Since 1 August 2023, 1,563 students had been processed, with a further 142 pending. No applications for veterinary nurse registration had been received since the previous meeting, from students requiring special consideration in respect of the completion of the required 1,800 clinical training hours due to the effect of the Covid pandemic.

14.   **Post-registration qualifications.** Since the last meeting of the committee, the final candidate undertaking the Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing had completed the qualification. A total of 75 candidates had completed a Certificate in Advanced Veterinary nursing (CertAVN) in 2023, with 61 enrolled. Further information on the CertAVN would be presented to the next meeting.

15.   **Clinical Careers pathway.** There had been some confusion in the veterinary profession around the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice (CertAVP) and the Advanced Practitioner status. This had led to the initiation of the clinical careers pathway project. One of the workstreams would be involved in looking at the different roles within the veterinary team, and the working group would include a veterinary nurse who would oversee all the workstreams. This would also provide opportunities to think about enhanced and advanced practitioner status for veterinary nurses.

16.   **Accreditation reports.** As agreed by the committee, the Chair of each accreditation panel would attend the relevant item in the meeting to present the report, and this now had been written into Chair's job role.

17.   The DoVN reported that she was now a member of the Association of Veterinary Technician Educators (AVTE), which has various resources and may provide learning opportunities which could be presented to the committee.

Matters for decision

Licence to practise qualifications

Accreditations / Re-accreditations

18. **Harper Adams University**

   Susan Howarth left the meeting for the discussion of this item (which was rescheduled to the end of the meeting) due to a declaration of interest. The item was chaired by the Deputy Chair (Sarah Reynolds-Golding)

   The committee reviewed and discussed the report and action plan and took the following decision:

19. Full accreditation for a period of five years for the following programmes:
   - BSc Veterinary Nursing
   - BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing
   - BSc Veterinary Nursing with Companion Animal Behaviour
   - BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing with Companion Animal Behaviour
   - BSc Veterinary Nursing with Small Animal Rehabilitation
   - BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing with Small Animal Rehabilitation

Programme Changes

20. **Royal Veterinary College.** Changes to the accredited programme for the FdSc Veterinary Nursing were agreed.

Accreditation panel members

21. The Committee considered and discussed the completed person specifications, Curriculum Vitae and CPD records for three proposed panel members at accreditation events. There was some general discussion around dealing with potential conflicts of interest.

22. After discussion, all three applicants were appointed as educator representatives for licence to practise programmes, one for the Higher Education (HE) and Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) panel, one for the HE panel and one for the Further Education (FE) panel. It was noted that the application forms had been revised and should be easier to complete in the future.

Matters for note

Licence to practise qualifications

Pre-accreditation support

23.   The Qualifications Lead (QL) provided an update report on the current status of the pre-accreditation support package for Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs). The majority of AEIs (18 in total) had now undertaken the support since its introduction. One remaining AEI, due for accreditation in 2024/25, had a meeting booked for March 2024, following which the current round of pre-accreditation support would be complete.

24.   In addition, two support visits had been conducted with new AEIs looking to deliver a HE veterinary nursing qualification, one in July 2023 and one in January 2024.   In cases where the RCVS considered that additional support to an AEI would be beneficial, this was always offered, and was chargeable.

25.   The QL reported that the support package had led to a significant improvement in compliance with the Standards and was now mandatory for all new provision. An article had been prepared for publication in the next edition of *VN Education*. The DoVN added that the Education Quality Improvement Manager obtains feedback from each AEI following the accreditation visit, and prepares a full report which is submitted annually to the Audit and Risk Committee. It was confirmed that this report would also be provided to the VNEC when available.

26.   The Chair commented that her own institution had found the pre-accreditation support to be very beneficial.

Action plan monitoring accreditation/re-accreditation

27.   Full oral updates were provided on the action plan monitoring for the following, and clarification was provided on points raised by the committee:
  - Aberystwyth University
  - Central Qualifications
  - Coventry University
  - Harper Adams University
  - Nottingham Trent University
  - University of Bristol
  - University of Glasgow
  - University of Greenwich (Plumpton College)

Quality monitoring activities

28.   The quality monitoring activities for the three Awarding Organisations (AOs) were presented separately. The QL explained that in future, the quality monitoring for all three AOs would be streamlined and presented in one paper.

Action plan quality monitoring

29.   Oral updates were provided on the monitoring of action plans and future planned actions for the following AEIs and centres:
  - Central Qualifications

- Anglia Ruskin University (College of West Anglia)
- Northumberland College
- University of Plymouth

Post registration qualifications

Matters for note

30.   **Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Programme change.** A programme change for the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing had been accepted.

Items for publication

31.   There were no specific items for publication arising from the meeting. As mentioned in the veterinary nursing update, the next *VN Education e-newsletter* would be a full edition.

Any other business

32.   There were no items raised.

Date of next meeting

Meeting dates 2024

33.   The meeting dates were confirmed as follows:
- Tuesday 16 April
- Thursday 20 June (in person, full day meeting) – this would be held at the Royal College of Nursing, London W1G 0RN, starting at 10.30am.
- Wednesday 14 August
- Tuesday 15 October
- Thursday 12 December

Remote meetings would start at 9.30am.

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Education Committee held on 16 April 2024
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee held on 16 April 2024
Decisions required	To approve
Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

Classifications

Document	Classification[1]	Rationales[2]
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Appendix	Confidential	2,3,4

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Members:

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Miss Julia Cox*	Employer representative
Ms Sarah Fox*	VN Council lay member
Mrs Sarah Holman	FE veterinary nursing provider
Mrs Susan Howarth	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
Miss Sophia Hoyland	HE student representative
Miss Betsy Malamah-Thomas	Employer representative
Mrs Sarah Parkhouse	FE veterinary nursing provider
Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	HE independent regulatory expert (Deputy Chair)
Mrs Perdi Welsh	Post-registration veterinary nurse provider
Miss Leigh Willson	FE student representative

*absent

In attendance:

Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
Mrs Jasmine Curtis	Qualifications Assessor
Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN)
Miss Shirley Gibbins	Qualifications Lead (QL)
Miss Abigayle Gomez	Senior Qualifications Officer
Mr Matthew Hall	Qualifications Assessor
Miss Lisa Hilton	Examinations Assessor
Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL)
Ms Tori Thornton	Qualifications Assessor
Mrs Kirsty Williams	Education Quality Improvement Manager (EQIM)

Apologies for absence

1.	Apologies for absence were received from Julia Cox and Sarah Fox.

Declarations of interest

2.	Susan Howarth – Harper Adams University Accreditation report
Sarah Holman – Central Qualifications (CQ) External Examiner. The Chair ruled that it would not be necessary for Sarah Holman to leave the meeting for items involving CQ as no decisions were required for these items.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 14 February 2024

3.   The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2024 as a correct record.

Matters arising

4.   There were no matters arising from the previous minutes other than those that were covered throughout the agenda.

Veterinary Nursing update

5.   The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) provided an update on recent activities and issues of note:

6.   **Educator forums.** The educator forums had now been booked to take place in Shopshire and Scotland, with an external speaker on GenAI as it related to education. Further educator forums might be held when the RCVS had moved into its new premises in Hardwick Street.

7.   **Registrations**. No applications for veterinary nurse registration had been received since the previous meeting, from students requiring special consideration in respect of the completion of the required 1,800 clinical training hours due to the effect of the Covid pandemic. As indicated previously, the special consideration opportunity would remain in place for a further twelve months, until it was known that no further students would have been affected.

8.   **Clinical Careers pathway.** The working group had held its first meeting in March, looking at workstream one, which was around curriculum development for veterinary general practitioner specialty training. There would also be focus groups for workstreams two and three, looking at the different roles, responsibilities and definitions within the veterinary team. There would be veterinary nursing input to all the workstreams, to ensure alignment with any potential enhanced and advanced practitioner roles for veterinary nurses.

9.   **VN Futures.** VN Futures was supporting a series of engagement events (VN Vision) to gain views from the profession and their aspirations and visions for veterinary nursing and team-based healthcare. The first event had been held at the meeting of VN Council at the end of February, to obtain views of the members and feedback on the format. This had generated considerable discussion. The first scheduled session would take place in Belfast on 8 May, followed by events in Edinburgh and Shropshire, and at the new RCVS premises in Hardwick Street. It was intended to ensure that all areas of the profession would be included. Sessions would also be held at the Veterinary Managers Group (VMG) Congress in April, and at Plumpton College. The British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) would also be running some events. The outcomes would be pooled, and would be fed into projects going forward for 2025, and the RCVS strategic plan.

10.   **Other events**. Other events with RCVS involvement included a half-day stream at each BVNA Congress going forward; sessions this year would cover impact change.

11.   The DoVN and the RCVS Head of Legal Services had participated in a panel session at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Congress in March which had been very well attended, with around 50 delegates. Topics covered had included the history of veterinary nursing, future plans and the RCVS work around 'under care' and Schedule 3.

12.   The RCVS would be hosting an AI round table event on 20 May, with external speakers, looking at what AI means in terms of the veterinary profession from a clinical practice, education and regulatory point of view.

13.   The DoVN and Qualifications Lead (QL) were involved in the Practice Standards review. The Practice Standards criteria were reviewed every five years. The small animal modules were currently being looked at, particularly in relation to Training Practice approvals and monitoring criteria, and whether there was any scope for better alignment with the work of the PSS assessors. Several meetings had been scheduled for the next few months.

14.   **Veterinary Nurses Day.** The next Veterinary Nurses Day would take place on 28 June 2024, in Edinburgh. The guest speaker would be Richard Casey, former President of the Veterinary Management Group**.**

15.   **VN Education.** The *VN Education* e-newsletter had been published on 8 April and the link had been circulated to VN Council and VNEC members. There had already been a considerable level of response regarding participation in the neurodiversity project.

16.   The Subject Benchmark Statements for veterinary nursing had now been published. The link would be circulated to the committee.

Matters for decision

Licence to practise qualifications

Accreditations and Re-accreditations

17.   The committee reviewed and discussed reports and action plans and took the following decisions:

18.   **Edinburgh Napier University**
A one-year extension was agreed, for the accreditation of the BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing programme.

19.   **Hartpury University (HU)**
Full accreditation was granted for five years for the following programmes delivered by HU:
        BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing
        BSc (Hons) Equine Veterinary Nursing

BSc Veterinary Nursing
BSc Equine Veterinary Nursing
Diploma in Professional Studies in Veterinary Nursing
Diploma in Professional Studies in Equine Veterinary Nursing

Post-registration qualifications

20. **Harper Adams University - Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN)**
Susan Howarth left the meeting for the discussion of this item due to a declaration of interest. The Deputy Chair (Sarah Reynolds-Golding) chaired the discussion.

21. The committee reviewed the report and action plan, and agreed to offer full accreditation for five years for the following programmes:
Graduate/Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing - Anaesthesia
Graduate/Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Analgesia and Pain Management
Graduate/Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Surgical Nursing
Graduate/Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Oncology
Graduate/Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Exotics, Zoo and Wildlife
Graduate/Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Rehabilitation
Graduate/Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Behaviour

Pre-registration examination

22. The VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) reported that following the delivery of the first Pre-registration knowledge examination the VN examination team were proposing some major changes to ensure that the assessment outcomes being assessed in each examination paper were aligned to the title of the paper. In addition, it was proposed that section 3 should become an open book examination, with candidates having access to the Code of Professional Conduct, which would sit online with the examination paper. This would bring this examination in line with the RCVS Statutory Examination for Membership and allow more complex questions to be included.

23. The committee was provided with papers setting out the proposed changes to the assessment outcomes for each paper, and the Candidate Assessment Outcomes document showing tracked changes. The main difference for the candidates would be an additional check-in process for the third separate paper. There would be no additional charges involved, either to the RCVS for the delivery by TestReach, or to the candidates.

24. The committee commented that the proposed changes represented a positive move towards testing interpretation and application of the candidates' knowledge, and the changes as set out in the papers were agreed in full.

25.   It was confirmed that if any of the candidates who had taken the recent examination in March 2024 were to fail, they would be offered the option to re-sit the examination under the original format, or to sit the new format.

26.   It was reported that the delivery of the veterinary surgeons' statutory membership examination by TestReach was currently taking place, and there was very close liaison between the Education and VN departments, so feedback would be available to report to the next meeting.

Matters for note

Licence to practise qualifications

Programme Changes

27.   **Nottingham Trent University.** The Committee noted a minor change to the accredited programme for the FdSc Veterinary Nursing, which had been approved by the VN department.

Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training

28.   The DoVN reported that the consultation on the review of the *Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training* had closed on 4 April. There had been 504 responses, which had been mostly very positive, although there had been some misunderstanding around certain areas. The responses had been reviewed and the working group would meet on 3 May to consider the final amendments. The final proposal would be submitted to the meeting of VN Council on 22 May, following which guidance would be developed.

29.   It was reported by a member that a meeting of the VN Educator group had been arranged to discuss the proposals and although the turnout had been low, comments from those that had attended had been positive.

30.   It was noted that the changes to the Standards were comparatively minimal. It was not anticipated that providers would be required to provide documentation to cross map with the revised standards. The qualifications team were arranging online meetings with educators to update them on the changes. It was anticipated that the support processes and routine quality monitoring would also be used to provide advice and guidance.

Thematic analysis – meeting the ENQA standards

31.   The Education Quality Improvement Manager (EQIM) reported that the only standard that had not been fully met at the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) review in 2023, had been standard 3.4 – Thematic Analysis. The RCVS was keen to address this to ensure it was fully compliant with all standards. The EQIM

provided a paper which set out the findings of the ENQA panel with regard to this standard, and how the RCVS could address this issue.

32. It was noted that thematic analysis can be a common area of confusion with other accreditations. The paper included the recommendations from ENQA, and reports on the research carried out reviewing reports of other agencies, to further understand the requirements of the standard. The paper also included a thematic summary report of veterinary nursing degree accreditation events in 2023.

33. The Chair suggested that it would be useful to see if there were themes arising from the accreditation events and the support visits. The EQIM encourages feedback from staff and students at events, although commented this seems to be falling, and guidance from the committee on how to improve feedback levels would be welcomed.

34. A number of suggestions were made and discussed by the committee and would be taken on board. It was noted that already several changes had taken place based on the analysis provided by the EQIM, and these could be documented to provide the necessary evidence to contribute to future thematic analyses.

35. It was confirmed that it was a requirement of ENQA that the analysis should be published.

Pre-accreditation support

36. The Qualifications Lead (QL) provided an update report on the current status of the pre-accreditation support package for Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs) and was pleased to report that the current round of pre-accreditation support had now been completed.

37. In addition, some AEIs had undertaken second support visits. In cases where the RCVS considered that additional (chargeable) support to an AEI would be beneficial, this was always offered but was not mandatory.

38. As reported previously, the support package had led to a significant improvement trend in compliance with the Standards and was now mandatory for all new provision.

39. Moving forward, there would be a change to the process for support visits, which would be conducted by the QL and the VNEQL. This followed on from changes in the make-up of the accreditation panels, with no further RCVS involvement as members of the accreditation panels, as required by ENQA. Those AEIs which had previously not had the opportunity of the support from the VNEQL regarding the OSCEs, due to her involvement as an accreditation panel member, were now being offered remote support sessions so that all AEIs were treated equally. Some sessions had already taken place and others were planned.

40. Recent support visits had been recorded, with the permission of the relevant AEI, in order to use as the grounding for guidance in the handbook which was being developed to accompany the revised accreditation standards.

Action plan monitoring accreditation/re-accreditation

41.   Full oral updates were provided on the action plan monitoring for the following:
- Aberystwyth University
- Central Qualifications
- Coventry University
- Nottingham Trent University
- University of Bristol
- University of Greenwich (Plumpton College)
- University of South Wales

Quality monitoring activities

42.   The Committee was presented with papers summarising the Quality Monitoring Activities undertaken for the following:
- University of Bristol
- Royal Agricultural University (Plumpton College)
- University of Glasgow
- Central Qualifications
- Lantra Awards
- VetSkill Limited

43.   There were no questions raised by the committee on these reports.

Self Assessment reports and risk ratings

44.   The VN qualifications team submit Self Assessment reports (SAR) and templates to all Accredited Education Institutions, comprising the Awarding Organisations, Higher Education Institutions and their Delivery Sites, on an annual basis. The SARs had been reviewed, the data and content of the reports had been analysed and each report had been allocated a level of risk, incorporated into the overall risk rating.

45.   The Committee noted the report, setting out the risk ratings from accreditation and SAR, for each AO, HEI, and the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) qualifications, with notes on changes and actions taken. The QL clarified the approach taken following the allocation of each risk rating.

46.   It was confirmed that there is a rubric provided in the online AEI handbook, which is currently being updated, setting out how the risk ratings are calculated. Following the allocation of risk rating, some AEIs had asked for a more detailed breakdown, and some had asked how they might be able to reduce their rating for the future. This advice had been provided.

Action plan quality monitoring

47. Oral updates were provided on the monitoring of action plans and future planned actions for the following AEIs and centres:
    - Central Qualifications
    - Lantra Awards
    - VetSkill Limited

Post registration qualifications

Matters for note

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN)

48. **University of Glasgow.** The committee noted a paper on the quality monitoring audit for the University of Glasgow.

49. **University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).** It was reported that UCLan had ceased delivery of three of its CertAVN certificates.

50. **CertAVN statistics –** The committee noted a paper setting out the enrolments for the CertAVN in each academic year since the initiation of the qualification, together with the number of certificates issued in each calendar year. The information on certificates awarded would be included in the *RCVS Facts* publication. This information would be provided to the committee on an annual basis.

Pre-registration examination

51. The committee was provided with the minutes of the VN Examination Board which met to ratify the results of the OSCE held in February 2024. Twenty-nine candidates sat the examination, of which two were UK trained and 27 were educated outside the UK. The pass rate for the examination was 86%.

Items for publication

52. The item identified for publication in due course, arising from the meeting, would be the thematic analysis referred to in the discussion on the ENQA requirements.

Any other business

53. The DoVN informed the committee that Lisa Hilton, the Examinations Assessor, would shortly be leaving the RCVS, and thanked her for contribution to the team and the support she had provided.

54. It was noted that the apprenticeship provider ranking results had recently been published for 2022-23, and that there were four veterinary nurse training providers in the top 51 places. Kent School of Veterinary Nursing had been ranked 16th, and Goddard Veterinary Group

23rd. The committee agreed that this was very good news in terms of veterinary nurse education.

Meeting dates 2024

55.   The remaining meeting dates for 2024 were confirmed as follows:

- Thursday 20 June (in person, full day meeting) – this would be held at the Royal College of Nursing, London W1G 0RN, starting at 10.30am.
- Wednesday 14 August
- Tuesday 15 October
- Thursday 12 December

Remote meetings would start at 9.30am.

Summary

Meeting	VN Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	Minutes from the meeting on the 15 April 2024
Summary	Minutes from the meeting of the CPD Policy and Compliance sub-committee on 15 April 2024
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Jenny Soreskog-Turp Lead for Postgraduate Education j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0701

Classifications

Document	Classification[1]	Rationales[2]
Paper	Unclassified	

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
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Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

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Private	5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

**CPD Policy and Compliance sub-committee
Notes of the meeting held on 15 April 2024**

Present:	Linda Ford	Chair
	Jessica Beckett	
	Claire Bloor	
	Danny Chambers	
	Donna Lewis	
	Stephen May	
	Stephanie Richardson	
	Alison Reid	
	Holly Witchell	
	James Wood	

In attendance:	Joanne Stetzel	Head of Marketing and Digital Communications
	Jenny Soreskog-Turp	Lead for Postgraduate Education
	Rebecca Smith	Education Officer

Welcome and Apologies

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of the meeting on the 16 October 2023

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 were received and approved as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising

3. Most actions from previous meeting were covered by the agenda but the committee heard that the Education team is working with colleagues in the IT department to create CPD reports showing the profile of members who do not yet reflect on their CPD.

Comms Update

4. Ms Stetzel provided an update about CPD comms plan and various activities that have taken place over the last six months to promote CPD and reflection, including articles, social media posts and attendance at conferences. She thanked members of the committee that had

shared social media posts with their followers and members confirmed that they were happy to continue to help. It may also be helpful to ask the officer team to share any relevant posts.

5. She also informed the committee that they have a new web content developer in the team and they will review the information on the RCVS website. They have started with the CPD section, so all information is now on one page to make it as easy to understand as possible. The most popular topics viewed were 1CPD access, what counts as CPD and reflection.

6. The Committee felt that campaigns and updates to the website were positive but some members reported that some of the colleagues were still unaware that reflection was part of the requirement. The committee thought it would be useful if we could track any changes either in access to the CPD course/website, logins to 1CPD or activities recorded and reflected on to measure how successful each campaign is.

   Action: Comms to investigate how to measure success of CPD campaigns

7. The committee discussed the balance between comms to raise awareness of the policy and the need to promote improved functionality in 1CPD such as audio notes with the compliance side and contacting members who are non-compliant via emails and letters. It is important that compliance with the CPD policy is closely monitored and acted upon. The committee suggested push notifications via the app as well as email reminders for non-compliance.

8. The committee discussed if non-compliance was most common amongst a particular age group and noted that 1CPD usage is the lowest amongst older male members, but welcome provision of a more detailed report for next meeting.

   Action: Report on profile of non-compliance members at next meeting

1CPD Data/Letter from Rev A Wright

9. The committee received and noted the 1CPD data report and a letter from Rev Wright in regard to CPD obligations and mental health.

10. The Committee felt the author of the letter was not fully informed as to the flexibility of the CPD policy in terms of range of activities that can count as CPD as well as the ability to pause CPD. The committee discussed how difficult it is to debunk the common myths around CPD particularly amongst members who do not read / engage with RCVS comms. The committee reflected that it would be useful to consider a mini re-launch campaign where common misunderstandings such as what can be counted as CPD and ease of recording including voice notes can be explored.

11. The committee felt that it is important that we are transparent in communicating with members about the importance of CPD and recording and that it is part of being a professional and a professional obligation. The communication needs to be straightforward and explain that this is a non-optional part of holding professional status and something that they need to do in order to retain their status as a veterinary surgeon or a veterinary nurse.

12. It was discussed what it means to be a 'compassionate regulator' as this is commonly used by members who are non-compliant who feel that we should not enforce CPD for compassionate reasons. It is important that RCVS as the regulator can uphold standards and protect the public.

13. The committee felt that it is not supportive or compassionate to allow registered members not to do CPD as we need to ensure that each member remains a competent professional, and they need to keep up to date which includes CPD compliance. It is privilege to be part of regulated profession and the committee felt that we need more comms around this topic not just around CPD so it should be considered as part of wider strategic discussions at RCVS Council.

14. The committee discussed options for enforcing CPD through registration renewal but recognised that until we have new legislation that is not possible. It is however one of the priorities of the legislative working group.

15. The committee felt the RCVS should explore what more can be done to promote CPD compliance through the PSS scheme and if there is potential to introduce further requirements or awards around CPD and compliance.

16. The committee also felt being in 'good standing' should only apply to members who were CPD compliant and it should also be a requirement to stand for council election.

Action: Education Team to explore options for compliance with PSS and Prof Con/Registration

17. The committee asked to see a copy of the response sent to Rev A Wight.

Action: Copy of the RCVS response to be circulated to the committee.

Any other business

18. There were no other items of business to discuss.

Follow up of non-compliant members

Alison Reid , Claire Bloor, Holly Witchell and Danny Chambers left the meeting for this item

19. As part of the follow up action from last year 400 letters were sent out to members who were either not using 1CPD or had not recorded enough hours and the outcomes were presented to the committee. A recommendation to refer 80 veterinary surgeons and 49 RVNs who remain non-compliant for 2022 to prof con was approved.

Action: Refer 129 members to prof con for CPD non-compliance

20. The committee also reviewed compliance for 2023 and noted that more than 7000 Veterinary Surgeons and RVNs are non-compliant. They were reassured that the number is likely to slightly lower as many have contacted the RCVS to ask for more time to update records. The

high number was still concerning, and the committee felt that it needs to be highlighted in Education Committee/VN Council and RCVS Council.

21. The committee agreed that we send an email to all non-compliant members advising them that are now non-compliant and the CPD Policy and Compliance Committee are reviewing their records. They have two weeks so update records. Following the deadline letters in groups of 200 will be sent out as a final reminder before the cases are referred to Prof Con.

Next Meeting

22. The next meeting is on the 25 June 2024

Jenny Soreskog-Turp
April 2024
j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	Report on registration of VNs educated outside the UK
Summary	This paper summarises the applications for registration from nurses educated outside the UK. It covers the period between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. Where a number of applications have been received from holders with a certain qualification these have been detailed in order that VNC may consider accepting these qualifications in future without submitting the qualification syllabus.
Decisions required	VNC is invited to i. consider exempting applicants who hold the following qualifications from providing their qualification syllabus/curriculum. - Veterinary assistant/Paraveterinary 97590 – The Netherlands - Veterinary assistant/Paraveterinary 22238 – The Netherlands ii. consider exempting applicants who pass the RCVS Pre-registration MCQ examination from completing the separate Code of Professional Conduct course.
Attachments	Annex A – Registration process for VNs educated outside the UK
Authors	Victoria Hedges VN Examinations Qualifications Lead v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0782 Jasmine Winter VN Examinations Administrator j.winter@rcvs.org.uk/ 020 7202 0778

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Classifications

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Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a

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Registration for holders of qualifications achieved outside the UK (2023/2024)

Background

1. RCVS considers applications from individuals intending to enter the register of veterinary nurses in the UK. Annex A provides an overview of the process followed to determine the suitability of applicants.

2. In keeping with our current processes, where a large number of applications are received from holders of qualifications from one country or awarding organisation, VNC is invited to consider accepting the qualification so that future applicants holding that qualification are not required to map their qualification to the RCVS Day One Competences (DOC) and RCVS Day One Skills (DOS).

3. This paper provides details of the outcome of applications received between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

Outcome of applications received between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024

4. Table 1 details the data for completed applications processed between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. A completed application is one where all information has been received and the decision has been conveyed to the applicant. The figures in brackets relate to the previous reporting period (1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023) and have been provided for comparison.

Key:

Accepted   Application accepted without further assessment. Applicants are invited to register without completing examinations. This is only applicable for individuals educated in an institution accredited by ACOVENE.

Adaptation   Additional assessment required. This is normally in the form of the Pre-registration examination, but in some cases could include a compulsory Period of Supervised Adaptation (PSA) in a UK veterinary practice and/or the completion of an assignment. The Pre-registration examination is compulsory for everyone except for those educated in an ACOVENE accredited institution.

Rejected   Applicant does not meet the minimum RCVS requirement for entry onto the register of veterinary nurses. Applications from veterinary surgeons fall into this category.

Table 1 Applications for entry onto the register by nurses trained outside the UK

Applicant qualification origin	Total Applications	Accepted (ACOVENE)	Adaptation	Rejected	Registered
Australia	23 (18)	0 (0)	23 (18)	0 (0)	14 (15)
Austria	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
Cameroon	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
Canada	3 (0)	0 (0)	3 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)
Denmark	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Finland	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
France	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Germany	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Hong Kong	12 (21)	0 (0)	12 (21)	0 (0)	20 (5)
Italy	2 (0)	2 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)
Japan	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Netherlands	2 (4)	1 (3)	1 (1)	0 (0)	1 (3)
New Zealand	13 (5)	0 (0)	13 (5)	0 (0)	8 (6)
Pakistan	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Portugal	4 (3)	2 (2)	2 (1)	0 (0)	3 (3)
Republic of Ireland	22 (22)	22 (22)	0 (0)	0 (0)	21 (24)
Singapore	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
South Africa	3 (8)	0 (0)	3 (8)	0 (0)	8 (10)
USA	10 (7)	0 (0)	10 (7)	0 (0)	4 (9)
Zimbabwe	8 (7)	0 (0)	8 (7)	0 (0)	5 (1)
Total	**109 (97)**	**27 (27)**	**80 (70)**	**2 (0)**	**90 (78)**

5. There were 109 completed applications processed in the reporting period. This is an increase of 12% on the previous year. As usual, the highest number of applications were received from applicants educated in the Republic of Ireland. This is followed by applicants educated in Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

6. With the exception of those educated in the Republic of Ireland, very few applications were received from veterinary nurses educated within the EU.

7. As of 31 March 2024 there were 16 partially completed applications. Reasons for non-completion relate to lack of / incorrect affidavits, non-payment or insufficient evidence about the content of the qualification. Where applications are incomplete, we communicate with the applicant and support them to obtain the required information.

8. The number of applicants entering the register increased from 78 in 2022/23 to 90 in 2023/24.

9. As of 31 March 2024, 568 nurses educated outside the UK were active on the register. This equates to 2.4% of all RVNs on that date. It should be noted that this is an increase of 55 RVNs from the previous year.

Items for consideration by VNC

Consideration to accept applications without submission of the course content

10. Annex A contains the process followed to 'accept' a qualification where a large number of applications are received from candidates who achieved their qualification in a particular country or with a particular awarding organisation.

11. Table 2 outlines qualifications which are currently 'accepted' and highlights proposed changes to the list. The rationale for the proposed changes is detailed below.

The Netherlands

12. Since 2000 we have processed 41 applications from veterinary nurses educated in The Netherlands. Of these 17 were educated at an ACOVENE accredited school and were able to apply to enter the register without further assessment.

13. All other applicants were required to submit a copy of the qualification syllabus mapped to the RCVS Day One Skills and Competences. In most cases they submit the national veterinary nurse dossier of competence. These applications are viewed by the Equivalency Officer and if accepted the applicant is required to pass the RCVS Pre-registration examination. Each version of the dossier has a numerical code, and this is printed on the qualification certificate. Everyone achieving the qualification is entitled to apply to register with CIBG (Ministry of Health, wellbeing and sports) which holds the national register of veterinary professionals. All applicants to date have had the dossier with qualification code 97590 or 22238 have been 'accepted' to proceed to the Pre-registration examination. In all cases the Equivalency Officer has confirmed that the qualification is a veterinary nursing qualification similar to those completed in the UK.

Table 2 – Qualifications accepted without submission of syllabus/curriculum

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required	Proposed Change
Australia	Government approved Regional Training Organisations	Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40412	2012	No	None
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40410	2010	No	None
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	RUV40404	2004	No	None
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	RUV40198	1998	Yes	None
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40418	2018	No	None
	University of Queensland	BSc Science with extended Major in Veterinary Technology	No info	No Info	No if Awarded prior to 2022 (including 2022)	None
	La Trobe University	Bachelor of Veterinary Nursing	No info	No info	Yes	None
Canada	Various organisations accredited by the CVMA	All CVMA accredited qualifications	N/A	N/A	No	None
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Polytechnic University	BSc (Hons) in veterinary nursing	N/A	2010	Awarded in 2014	None

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required	Proposed Change
	School of Continuing and Professional Education (SCOPE) City University of Hong Kong	Advanced Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	163-30280	2016	No	None
			173-30280	2017	No	None
			183-30280	2018	No	None
			193-30280	2019	No	None
			203-30280	2020	No	None
			213-30280	2021	No	None
			223-30280	2022	No	None
The Netherlands	Kwalificaties mbo Vocational Education and Business qualifications	Veterinary assistant/Paraveterinary	97590	2009	Yes	Accept without syllabus
			22238	2012	Yes	Accept without syllabus
New Zealand	Training organisations approved by the New Zealand Qualifications authority	National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	NCF 0222	1996	No	None
		National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	NCF 2491	2019	No	None
		National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing with strands in	NCF 4389	2021	Yes	None

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required	Proposed Change
		Companion Animal, and Equine Veterinary Nursing				
	Massey University	Bachelor of Veterinary Technology	Before 2018	No information	No	None
Portugal	Castelo Branco University of Applied Sciences	Bachelor in Veterinary Nursing	Before 2018	No information	No	None
South Africa	University of Pretoria	University Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	0812002	Before 2022	No	None
		Bachelor of Veterinary Nursing	0813006	After 2019	Yes	None
USA	Various organisations accredited by the AVMA	AVMA-accredited college qualifications	N/A	N/A	No	None
Zimbabwe	University of Zimbabwe	Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	N/A	N/A	No for qualifications issued between 2006-2022.	None

Code of Professional Conduct

14. Over the last ten years all registration applicants educated outside the UK have been required to submit evidence that they have an understanding of the Code of Professional Conduct (CoPC) for veterinary nurses. This was originally facilitated during a monthly in person talk delivered at Belgravia House. From 2020 the monthly talk moved online and more recently it has been embedded within the 'Working in the UK for veterinary nurses' course on the RCVS Academy.

15. From 2024 all applicants (except holders of ACOVENE accredited qualifications) are required to pass the Pre-registration OSCE and Theory examination. One of the theory examination papers focuses on the CoPC. It is therefore proposed that if this examination is passed the applicant has demonstrated knowledge of this subject and they should no longer be required to complete the CoPC course. This course will continue to be utilised as preparation for the examination alongside a number of the Academy courses. In addition, holders of ACOVENE accredited qualification will continue to be required to demonstrate that they have completed the course.

Recommendations

16. VNC is invited to consider exempting applicants who hold the following qualifications from providing the course syllabus/curriculum. Applicants will continue to be required to pass the RCVS Pre-registration Examination and we will continue to spot check applications.
    - Veterinary assistant/Paraveterinary 97590 – The Netherlands
    - Veterinary assistant/Paraveterinary 22238 – The Netherlands

17. VNC is also invited to consider exempting applicants who pass the Pre-registration MCQ examination from being required to complete the CoPC course on the RCVS Academy.

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	Report on temporary student enrolments
Summary	This paper summarises the applications for temporary student enrolment completed between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	Lucy Blampied Qualifications Officer l.blampied@rcvs.org.uk / 020 8148 5562 Victoria Hedges VN Examinations Quality Lead v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0782

Classifications

Document	Classification[1]	Rationales[2]
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Report on temporary student enrolments

Background

1. Student veterinary nurses studying outside the UK may apply for temporary student enrolment to allow them to complete a short period of work experience in the UK.

2. Applications are either made on behalf of large groups of students travelling as part of an organised exchange programme or individuals travelling on their own.

3. The length of temporary student enrolment is for a maximum period of 12 weeks which can be undertaken as one block or split into several short blocks.   The majority of the student's required practical experience must be completed outside the UK.

4. The application must be supported by the student's school / college and the training practice that they will be attending.

5. This paper provides details of the outcome of applications for temporary student enrolment commenced between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

Temporary enrolments between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024

6. Table 1 shows details of application for temporary student enrolment for the reporting period. The figures in brackets relate to the previous reporting period (1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023) and have been provided for comparison.

   Table 1

   Applications for temporary enrolments

Applicant's qualification origin	Number of Applications
Netherlands	3 (5)
Portugal	0 (1)
Republic of Ireland	13 (12)
Total	19 (22)

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	22 May 2024
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual Report to VN Council
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	Sandra Neary Professional Conduct Officer / Secretary to the RVN PIC s.neary@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0730 Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0740

Classifications

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Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Annual Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there have been two meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee which took place on 5 March and 16 April 2024. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 28 May.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 10 February and 9 May 2024, there were 9 new concerns relating to RVNs. Of these 9 new concerns:

- One case was closed by the Stage 1 PIC.

- Seven are currently under investigation by a Case Manager, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary surgeon, and a lay member (Stage 1 PIC).

- One case was referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee following referral to Stage 2 PIC.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There have been five new cases considered by the RVN PIC between 10 February and 9 May 2024. Four cases were referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken and one case was referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. At the meeting on 5 March, the Committee considered one ongoing case which it referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

Ongoing Investigations

4. Ten concerns involving six veterinary nurses are currently under investigation, and these will be returned to the RVN PIC for a decision in due course.

Health Concerns

5. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

6. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.
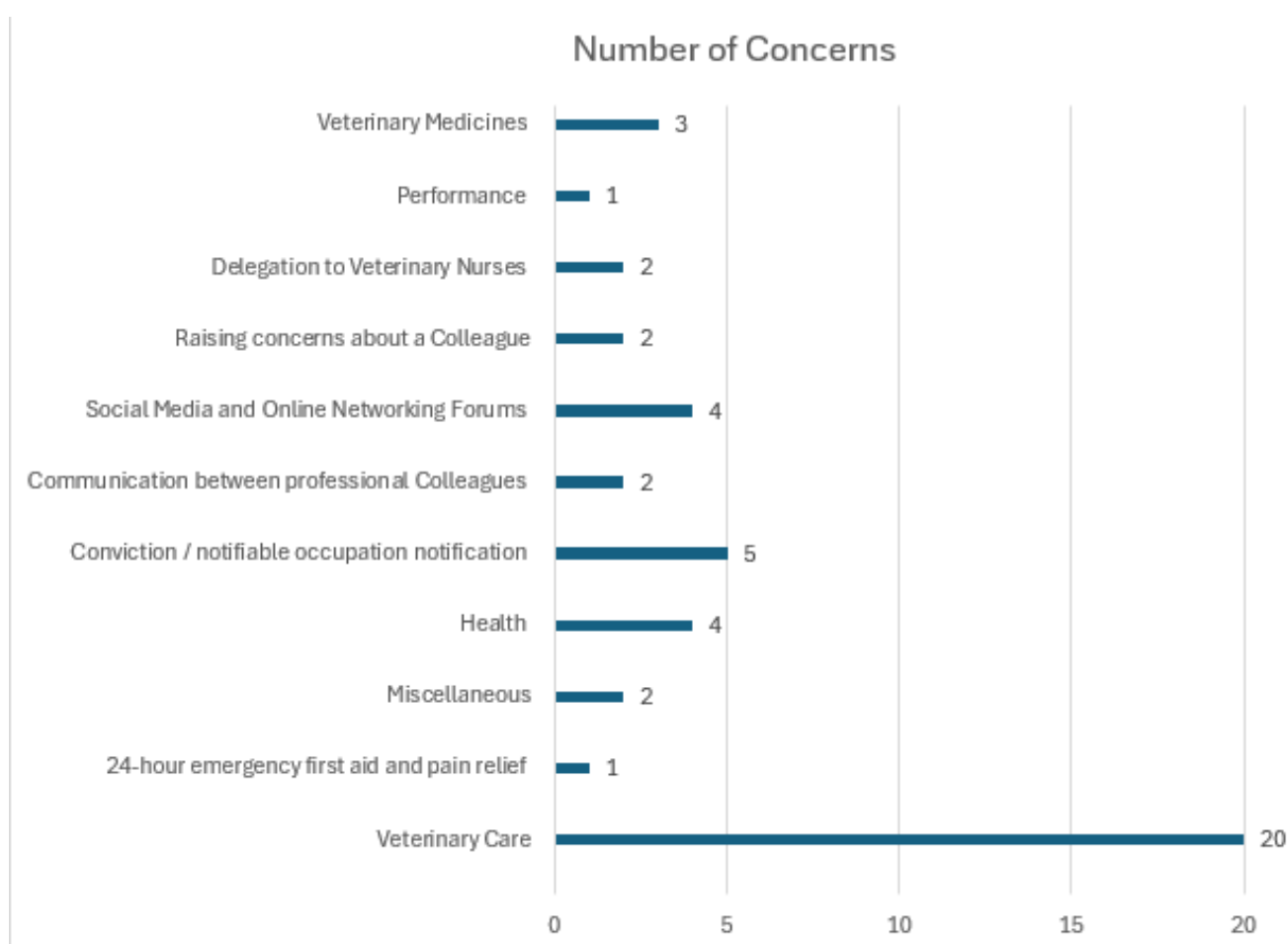
Referral to Disciplinary Committee

7. Since the last report, two cases have been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. The hearing dates will be confirmed in due course.

Disciplinary Hearings

8. Since the last report, four disciplinary hearings have taken place in relation to veterinary nurses. The first hearing took place between 19 and 26 February 2024 and the Disciplinary Committee found the veterinary nurse not guilty of serious professional misconduct. The second hearing took place on 18 and 19 March 2024. The Disciplinary Committee directed that the veterinary nurse should be removed from the Register. The third hearing took place on 26 and 27 March 2024 and related to a veterinary nurse's conviction. The Disciplinary Committee did not consider that the conviction rendered the veterinary nurse unfit to practise. The fourth hearing took place between 3 and 5 April 2024 in relation to a veterinary nurse's conviction. The Disciplinary Committee found that the veterinary nurse's behaviour and conviction brings the veterinary nursing profession into disrepute but after taking all the facts and circumstances into consideration, the DC decided that it would be most appropriate to take no further action against the veterinary nurse.

Professional Conduct Department

9. The chart below shows the number and categories of the **46** concerns relating to RVNs registered between **1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.**

Number of Concerns

Category	Number
Veterinary Medicines	3
Performance	1
Delegation to Veterinary Nurses	2
Raising concerns about a Colleague	2
Social Media and Online Networking Forums	4
Communication between professional Colleagues	2
Conviction / notifiable occupation notification	5
Health	4
Miscellaneous	2
24-hour emergency first aid and pain relief	1
Veterinary Care	20

10. Of the 46 concerns registered between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024:

- 24 were closed at Stage 1 (2 with formal advice issued to the RVN).
- 8 were referred to Stage 2 PIC
- 3 were referred to Stage 3 (RVN Disciplinary Committee)
- 11 are currently under investigation at Stage 1.

In the preceding five years, the total number of concerns registered against RVNs for each year is as follows:

- 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 – 34
- 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 – 36
- 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 – 37
- 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 – 27
- 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 – 37

Cases considered by RVN PIC (Stage 2)

11. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, the RVN PIC considered **15 new cases**. Of these:

- 1 case closed.
- 1 case closed with formal advice issued to the RVN.
- 12 cases were referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken.
- 1 case was referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

During the same period, the RVN PIC considered **8 ongoing cases.** 2 cases were closed; 1 case closed with formal advice issued to the RVN; 5 cases were referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

Disciplinary Hearings

12. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, there have been five DC hearings involving RVNs. The Disciplinary Committee concluded that the conduct of the RVNs amounted to serious professional misconduct in three of the cases. In terms of sanction, two RVNs were removed from the Register and one RVN received a period of suspension from the Register for 3 months. For the two remaining cases, the Disciplinary Committee found one veterinary nurse not guilty of serious professional misconduct and in the other case, the Disciplinary Committee did not consider that the conviction rendered the veterinary nurse unfit to practise.

Year overview

13. The majority of the Stage 2 PIC meetings continue to be held remotely. The meetings on 27 June 2023, 31 October 2023 and 5 March 2024 were held in person and two more in person meetings are scheduled to take place on 9 July and 1 October 2024.

An in-person training day for members of the department and Committee members took place on 25 March 2024. The topics included dishonesty, convictions, and common issues/FAQs for S1 PICs.

In July 2023, the RVN PIC welcomed two new members – Kelly Tillett RVN and Jane Downes MRCVS. At the end of June 2024, we will say goodbye to our Chair (Sally Bowden RVN) who has served on the Committee for 8 years. We are very grateful for the contributions Sally has made to the Committee and we will miss her vast experience and knowledge.