

07 May 2021

Email: president@rcvs.org.uk

Website: www.rcvs.org.uk

Dear Veterinary Student,

Re: Temporary changes to EMS regulations, to support veterinary students during the Covid-19 pandemic

The RCVS has made a commitment to keep the temporary policy on EMS completion under review during the pandemic, in order to support students to obtain as much valuable experience as possible, whilst recognising the Covid restrictions in place have reduced the availability of EMS placements.

A further review of the temporary EMS Policy has recently taken place to consider whether the reduction in the number of weeks' EMS required currently in place should be cut further, and I am writing to update you on the outcomes. The RCVS Covid-19 Taskforce has considered the situation carefully and agreed that no further amendments will be made at this time. However, we will review the position again in July.

This decision was not made lightly, and the issues faced by students were discussed at length. We are still very much aware that opportunities for EMS placements over the last few months and going forward in the short term remain limited, and this is still causing concerns for some of you. However, we also need to consider the advantages and the valuable experience that EMS placements bring in helping to prepare you for your career as a veterinary surgeon, and with the government road map for moving out of lockdown and restrictions being removed there is the strong possibility that placement availability will soon begin to pick up. Therefore, at this time we did not want to take a decision on any reductions that might impact on experience gained while there remains a growing probability of more placements becoming available.

This decision does not rule out any further reductions in future and we will continue to monitor the situation, with the next review planned to take place in July. We will be particularly keeping a close eye on the situation for those of you currently in your 3rd year as we are aware that recent placement completion rates and availability has been lower in comparison with other year groups.

Whilst I appreciate that this may cause some uncertainty in the short term, I do hope that you understand our reasons for not taking any further decisions at this time.

I will be in touch again in July, and wish you all the best in the meantime,



Dr Mandisa Greene
President, RCVS